



UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

***Fostering Critical Thinking and Ethical Awareness in English
through Historical Consciousness***

*An interdisciplinary didactical approach based on the Education Act 2020 for English teachers working
in upper secondary schools in Norway*

Andreia dos Santos

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Abstract

This thesis investigates how historical consciousness can be used as a literary tool of analysis in English in upper secondary school to foster the core value “Critical thinking and ethical awareness” specified in the Norwegian Education Act 2020. Based on the research on critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness, and considering the competence aims in English, a lesson plan is proposed that concentrates on the development of critical thinking and ethical awareness through literary analysis. Additionally, the two border-crossing novels *Lost Children Archive* by Valeria Luiselli and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* by Julia Alvarez, which were chosen due to the research discussed on critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness, are analysed by applying historical consciousness as a literary tool of analysis. The literary analysis indicates that the synthesis materialized in the lesson plan of mainly Paulo Freire’s research linked to critical thinking, Suzanne Keen and Antonio Damasio’s research associated with ethical awareness and Hayden White and Paul Ricœur’s research related to historical consciousness effectively fosters competence, such as perspective-taking, empathy and narrative imagination, required to think critically, act ethically and to be historically conscious.

Keywords: Critical Thinking; Ethical Awareness; Historical Consciousness; Education Act 2020; Interdisciplinarity; English Didactics; Problem-Posing Education; Paulo Freire; All-Round Development; Critical Consciousness; Decodification; Empathy; Close Reading; Emplotment; Human Temporality; Referentiality; Intertextuality; How the García Girls Lost Their Accent; Julia Alvarez; Lost Children Archive; Valeria Luiselli; Border-Crossing Narratives

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“Avó” photograph by my aunt Fatima Mendes dos Santos (13.09.2009)

1 Introduction

According to the objectives clause in the Education Act, education and training in schools and training establishments shall together with the home, open doors to the world and provide pupils and apprentices with a historical and cultural understanding and anchorage (udir.no, “The Purpose of the Education Act”). The opening of doors is further specified in the clause as a development of knowledge, skills and attitudes, so that pupils and apprentices can master their lives and are able to participate in working life and society. Several terms which connote knowledge, skills and attitudes are mentioned in the clause, such as environmental awareness, democracy, equality, scientific thinking, acting ethically and thinking critically.

Consequently, these factors must be acquired by pupils and apprentices in order for them to step into the world. Although all these factors are interconnected and cannot be taught in isolation, one of them is a prerequisite for all the others: no human can be environmentally aware, participate in democracy, fight for equality, think scientifically and act ethically without being able to think critically. Critical thinking can be defined as a type of thinking pattern that requires people to be reflective, and pay attention to decision-making which guides their beliefs and actions. Critical thinking allows people “to deduct with more logic, to process sophisticated information and look at various sides of an issue so they can produce more solid conclusions.” (Baron, *Teaching Thinking Skills*, 156). This definition illustrates that critical thinking encompasses different components, such as metacognition¹ and multiperspectivity². Many different teaching strategies which foster critical thinking have been used in all subjects and a substantial amount of these strategies have also been scientifically examined. However, the introduction of a new Education Act invites teachers to reconsider their teaching strategies, since the new Education Act will include some novel elements which were not part of the previous one.

In Norway, a new Education Act was introduced in 2020. This new Education Act puts more emphasis on interdisciplinarity by for example specifying three interdisciplinary topics, namely health and life skills, democracy and citizenship and sustainable development (udir.no, “Interdisciplinary topics in the Education Act”). These interdisciplinary topics are

¹ Metacognition is an “awareness or analysis of one's own learning or thinking processes” (merriam-webster.com, “Metacognition”).

² Multiperspectivity denotes to a narrative representation where the reader is presented with more than one perspective of a story (lhn.uni-hamburg.de, “Multiperspectivity”).

almost identical to the knowledge, skills and attitudes mentioned in the objectives clause of the Education Act, which means that a focus on the core values also facilitates the inclusion of the interdisciplinary topics in teaching.

In this thesis, I will investigate how teachers can use an interdisciplinary approach in English in the upper secondary school in Norway to develop the core value “critical thinking and ethical awareness”. Competence aims and core elements from the English curriculum of the study specialization program will be used for the interdisciplinary approach. The new curriculum in English lists three core elements, namely “communication”, “language learning” and “working with texts in English”. The core value “working with texts in English” is particularly suitable for the development of critical thinking and ethical awareness since it enables pupils’ engagement with literature, as it states that language learning takes place in the encounter with texts in English, which can be for example written, fictional, factual, contemporary or historical (udir.no, “Core Elements English Curriculum”). Additionally, this core element specifies that by reflecting on, interpreting and critically assessing different types of texts in English, pupils shall get a foundation for seeing their own identity and others’ identities in a multilingual and multicultural context. To see one’s own identity and others’ identities requires a plurality of perspectives, which is the same component, multiperspectivity, which critical thinking also requires. Martha Nussbaum has been a prominent scholar who has argued for the inclusion of literature in a curriculum for world citizenship (Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, 2140), which has the aim to develop three essential capacities, namely the capacity for critical examination of oneself and one’s traditions, the capacity to see oneself as a human being bound together to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern and the capacity for narrative imagination, which can be closely connected to the definition of critical thinking as these capacities also demand metacognition and multiperspectivity.

Historical consciousness, which is defined as a core element in History (udir.no, “Core Elements History Curriculum”), relies heavily on metacognition and multiperspectivity as well. Because of these overlaps, it makes sense to combine working with literature with an analysis of historical consciousness. Consequently, the research question for this paper can be summarized as follows:

How can the analysis of historical consciousness in the two novels *Lost Children Archive* by Valeria Luiselli and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* by Julia Alvarez be used in the English classroom to develop the core value “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”?

The two novels *Lost Children Archive* and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* have been chosen because both novels are well suited to illustrate the constructedness of history since paratexts and multiple narrators are used to enhance the stories. The understanding of history as a constructed entity is an essential component in historical consciousness. Moreover, historical consciousness demands the inclusion of multiple perspectives, which these novels also enable through the authors’ use of multiple narrators and focalizers.

This thesis is divided into five parts: introduction, theoretical background, methodology, analysis and conclusion. In the theoretical part of this thesis, I will define the concepts and discuss research on critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness. The definition of critical thinking will have a focus on the development of metacognition and multiperspectivity, while the relevant research will center around Paulo Freire’s research on critical consciousness, which also requires metacognitive thinking and perspective-taking in addition to ethical commitment. Paulo Freire’s theory will also serve as the framework for the lesson plan that concentrates on the development of critical thinking and ethical awareness through literary analysis. Ethical awareness has been linked to critical thinking in the core values, and I will examine the reasoning behind this fusion in this section. The development of empathy is needed to be ethically aware. I will, therefore, discuss the research which links empathy to ethical awareness and propose specific strategies to foster this competence. Moreover, a definition of historical consciousness will be given by focusing on its connection to critical thinking and ethical awareness, and by examining how historical consciousness has been specified as a core value in the History curriculum. Additionally, the research on historical consciousness will be reviewed with a particular emphasis on Hayden White and Paul Ricœur’s research in this field. The core value in English “working with texts in English” will also be discussed by deconstructing its meaning through a close reading of its definition in the English curriculum, and by connecting it to the key terms critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness. Lastly, the reason for choosing the novels *Lost Children Archive* and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* when working with critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness will also be explained by

focusing on Freire's demand for a generative theme relevant for the pupils and in connection with the pupils' world.

The third section of this thesis, methodology, will consist of an elaboration of historical consciousness as a tool to analyze literary texts. The lesson plan that synthesizes the research on critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness will be scrutinized and dissected into the parts that are relevant for the literary analysis of this paper. A partial application of the lesson plan will be conducted in the fourth part, analysis, where the novels *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* and *Lost Children Archive* will be interpreted by using the specific literary points from the synthesized lesson plan. Lastly, I will conclude the thesis by responding concretely to my research question, and by discussing the findings of this thesis. Any shortcoming of this thesis and possible solutions for them will also be offered.

2 Theoretical background

This section will provide the reader with a definition of the concepts “critical thinking”, “ethical awareness” and “historical consciousness”. Moreover, a reading of the core curriculum as a whole will be given, and this reading will include a discussion of the function of the core values. Furthermore, I will analyze one of the core values of the English subject, namely “working with texts in English”, and establish a connection between this core value and the three previously mentioned concepts. Lastly, I will suggest two novels which are particularly suitable to use when working with the three concepts and the core value “working with texts in English”, and I will give a justification for this suggestion.

2.1 The core values of education and training in Norway

“The whole point of *seeing through something* is to *see something* through it.” (Lewis, *On the Abolition of Man*, 4)

Subject curriculums are a part of the Education Act and they should be read, understood and enacted in light of this legal document. A core curriculum is defined in the Education act, which specifies values and principles upon which primary and secondary education rests (udir.no, “About the Core Curriculum”). These principles and values are human dignity, identity and cultural diversity, the joy of creating, engagement and urge to explore, respect for nature and environmental awareness, democracy and participation and critical thinking and ethical awareness. The core values which are stated in the Education Act express values which unify Norway as a nation, and these core values are considered the base for the conservation of Norway’s democracy (udir.no, “Core Values of the Education and Training”). These core values enable peaceful coexistence between Norwegians with different backgrounds in a complex world, even when confronted with an unknown future. Such core values which all Norwegians have in common are derived from Norway’s Christian and humanist heritage and tradition. However, these core values are also highlighted in other religions and other world views, and they are also based upon the declaration of human rights (udir.no, “Core Values of the Education and Training”). Human actions are influenced by the values of its agent (Ohnstad, *Læreres Profesjonsetikk*, 240), and the core values can be

interpreted to be the values which shall influence teachers' behavior and their practice. All teaching practice which happens in Norway should be based on these core values, and the core values also signal attitudes and competence which shall be developed through teaching in pupils.

Consequently, teachers are asked by the Education Act to help pupils acquire these core values. The aim is that these core values shall become a part of the pupils' habitus. The habitus has been described to be a system of dispositions which influences a person's acts, thinking and understanding of the social world (Bourdieu, *Distinksjonen – en sosiologisk kritikk av dømmekraften*, 64). The habitus has a twofold effect: it does structure and limit the pupils' agency, but at the same time, it provides them with the opportunity for creative agency. Pupils should be able to change their social position through their actions which are linked to their habitus. Also, the habitus is not static but alterable. Pupils come to school with a habitus which has been shaped by their upbringing (Nordahl, *Eleven som aktør*, 65). Some pupils' habitus might consist of values which are similar or identical to the core values of the Education Act. It will, therefore, be easier for these pupils to accommodate the core values of the Education Act to their habitus, while other pupils, whose habitus consists of values which either are dissimilar or even contradict the core values, may struggle to accommodate the core values of the Education Act into their habitus and their cognitive structures (also called *cognitive schema*). According to the psychologist Jean Piaget, pupils either assimilate information to their cognitive schema, which may consist of experiences and knowledge they possess, or they accommodate new knowledge to their cognitive schema (Lyngsnes and Rismark, *Didaktisk arbeid*, 63). Accommodation is a more laborious process than assimilation since it involves more substantial changes to the cognitive schema. These substantial changes are a result of an imbalance between the new experience and the pupils' cognitive schema. Pupils may either fail to identify similarities between the new experience and their cognitive schema, or they may lack appropriate cognitive schema which can be used to compare the new experience with. Teachers should have knowledge of their pupils' habitus and identify possible discrepancies between the pupils' habitus and the core values stated in the Education Act to facilitate the acquisition of the core values by the pupils.

On the one hand, the core values should be acquired by the pupils as attitudes or moral principles which shall influence and guide their behavior, and which can be used to judge their own behavior and other people's behavior (Thommessen et al., *Etisk tenkning*, 222). On

the other hand, the core values also constitute faculties which teachers should develop in the pupils. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training uses the following definition of competence in the Education Act of 2020:

“Competence is to acquire and use knowledge and skills to master challenges and solve tasks in known and unknown contexts and situations. Competence involves an understanding of a subject and the ability to reflect and to think critically about it (udir.no, “Definition of Competence”).”

This definition has mainly been used as a tool which helps teachers to operationalize the competence aims stated in the different subject curricula. However, since the core values of the core curriculum are both understood to be attitudes and abilities, the definition of competence can also be used to operationalize the different core values. An operationalization of competence must consider the two crucial aspects knowledge and skills. Knowledge can be described to be an understanding or an insight about a particular subject (snl.no, “Knowledge”). This understanding or insight about a subject is closely connected to concepts or ideas which humans inquire into. Hence, knowledge is acquired by investigating different concepts or ideas connected to the world. Concepts are encoded in language (britannica.com, “Epistemology”), and one can, thus, gain an understanding into a concept by analyzing the words which are used to describe it. Skills, on the other hand, are defined as abilities to perform activities successfully and they are acquired through practice (dictionary.cambridge.org, “Skill”). Ultimately, the term competence can be broken down into the two independent phrases, namely *knowing that* and *knowing how* (britannica.com, “Gilbert Ryle”), and the definition of competence which the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training uses emphasizes that both these aspects must be present if something shall be defined as a competence.

The term competence is closely connected to one of the intentions with education, namely to form pupils in a particular way. The aim of such an intervention is to help to cover the different needs of a society. For example, the national exams enable monitoring by the government and a certainty that society will receive suitable candidates for the labor force in the pupils at some point in the future (Foros, *Dannelsens dialektikk*, 8). This intention fits some of the criteria of the definition of the German term *Bildung*. The term *Bildung* denotes that pupils should be educated into a particular culture and acquire the language and the

different expressions of a culture (Nordahl, *Eleven som aktør*, 82). Yet, this term also implies self-actualization and independence based on the pupils' own personal wishes (Klafki, *Kategorial dannelse*, 82). While teaching has the aim to form the pupils in a particular way based on the criteria which both society and the economic sector determine, education should also provide pupils with the opportunity to determine their own competence aims. Teaching and learning require both influence by the teacher and self-determination and agency by the pupils. The Norwegian term *dannelse* includes both these aspects. The core curriculum shall ensure that both aspects of *dannelse*³ are secured by stating different core values which have the function to enable both adaption to society's norms and traditions and which, at the same time, ensure the pupils' possibility for independence and self-determination.

This section discussed the function of the core values stated in the Education Act 2020. These core values cover abilities which society wants the pupils to acquire so that specific societal needs can be met. Additionally, these core values ensure that pupils are given the tools which provide them with vigor for action and the power to form their identity according to their own wishes. Our skills and knowledge⁴ about different subjects generate our identity (Stafseng, *Framtiden bør ikke lenger sitte på skolebenken*, 100). Thus, what we do and what we know becomes our identity. *Dannelse* is a process which shall guarantee that pupils are able to realize their full potential by equipping them with the necessary attitudes and competence illustrated through the core values.

³ There is no suitable equivalent in the English language for the Norwegian term *danning*. To ensure that the connotation and the meaning of the Norwegian term is conveyed, the Norwegian term will consistently be used in this thesis.

⁴ Knowledge in this context refers to figurative knowledge about static things. This knowledge is acquired by remembering specific factual information or perceptual details, such as words, dates, colors or shapes (dictionary.apa.org, "Figurative knowledge").

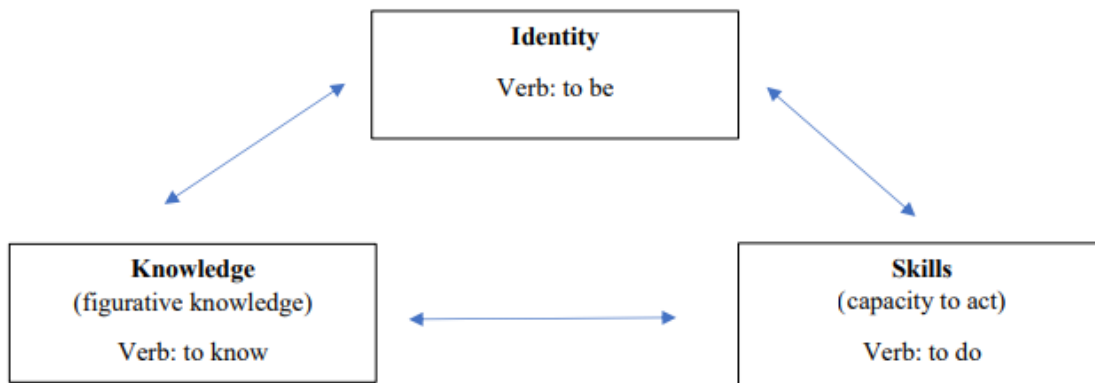


Figure 2: The constituents of identity taken from Nordahl (p. 100) (2002)

The Education Act 2020 stipulates that teaching shall adhere to the wide definition of the Norwegian word *dannelse* (snl.no, “Education”), which represents a continuous process of acquisition and modification of spiritual, cultural and practical abilities and knowledge about ethical norms and cultural expressions (Brekke, *Dannelse i skolen og lærerutdanning*, 109). Hence, in education, *dannelse* happens through the core values, which are both attitudes and abilities that shall be fostered in the pupils. As attitudes, pupils should make the core values a part of their habitus, while the core values also represent faculties which include having knowledge of a particular subject and skills to investigate the same subject. *Dannelse* requires both knowledge of and the deconstruction of biases and myths which each human uncritically acquires during her upbringing, and there is one particular core value which specifically focuses on the deconstructive process and the construction of knowledge, namely the core value *critical thinking and ethical awareness*.

2.2 Critical thinking

This section is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the definition of critical thinking through a close reading of the core value critical thinking and ethical awareness. Specific words will, therefore, be highlighted and described in detail. The second part of this section will discuss previous research which has investigated how critical thinking can be fostered.

2.2.1 Definition of critical thinking

“Children must be taught *how* to think, *not what* to think.” (Mead, *Education for Choice*, 246)

Critical thinking and ethical awareness are together defined as one of the core values in the Education Act 2020 in Norway. The core value *critical thinking and ethical awareness* states that school shall contribute to the development of curiosity and questioning in pupils (udir.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”). Also, this core value asks for the development of scientific and critical thinking and the fostering of the ability to act with ethical awareness. Critical and scientific thinking means that pupils use reason in an investigatory and systematic way when they meet practical challenges, phenomena, statements or different forms of knowledge. Education shall create an understanding in pupils that the choice of scientific method which they use to examine reality should be based on their study subject, and that this choice of method will determine what they will be able to observe (udir.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”).

The ability to be curious is one of the first keywords which this core value attaches to the meaning of critical thinking. Curiosity is defined as a wish to investigate a subject or to acquire knowledge about a subject or an experience (snl.no, “Curiosity”). It is a human trait which is considered to be crucial to achieve scientific progress and human development. Two forms of curiosity have been established by the academic field of psychology, namely curiosity linked to behavior which results from seeking information or semantic knowledge, and the second form of curiosity which is linked to a strong desire to expose oneself to new surroundings and experiences which stimulate one’s senses (snl.no, “Curiosity”). Pupils should learn to find information through their behavior and expose themselves to unknown contexts which stimulate their different senses. While none of the competence aims in the English subject specify the development of curiosity as an aim, curiosity is mentioned explicitly under the section “Relevance and central values” in the English curriculum. English shall contribute to an understanding by the pupils that their opinions and views are a result of their own culture (udir.no, “Relevance and central values”). Such an understanding allows for different legitimate interpretations of the world and it creates curiosity and engagement. Curiosity is, in this context, defined as something which arises by acknowledging that our thinking is directly connected to and a result of our culture. Our opinions and views are inseparable and a result of the culture we experienced during our upbringing (Fastvold, *Kritisk tenkning*, 48). Pupils should learn to question their own thinking and to try to find

causes in their own culture⁵ for their beliefs and views. This cognitive investigation of one's own thoughts has been coined metacognition (Schjelderup, *Kritisk tenkning i klasserommet*, 18). By thinking about their own thinking, pupils shall become aware of the dual character of culture: culture may limit their thinking, and, therefore, ultimately their actions and behavior, but at the same time, culture also enables a sense of belonging to a group; a need which humans need to cover by virtue of being humans (psychology.org.au, "Making sense of belonging").

If pupils want to be better equipped to investigate a world which consists of different people who have been influenced by different cultures, they need to communicate with foreign people who have internalized the norms and expressions of different cultures. Pupils should be curious about other people and their culture, and this is also specified under interdisciplinary topics in the English curriculum. One of the interdisciplinary topics, democracy and citizenship, should be approached by using English to experience different societies and cultures irrespective of their interlocutor's linguistic or cultural background (udir.no, "Interdisciplinary topics"). By experiencing different cultural expressions and different points of view, pupils acquire a richer repertoire of perspectives which they can use to investigate a subject of interest. To use multiple perspectives to investigate and to discuss a subject is a crucial part of critical thinking (Eriksson, *Kritisk tenkning*, 28)

The use of multiple perspectives can be taught by creating learning situations where pupils are asked to take the perspective of another person. This activity helps pupils to predict other people's reactions to their actions and words. Being able to take a different perspective is essential in the context of communication. Understanding our interlocutor's point of view does not only help us to understand her, but it also helps us to understand ourselves.

According to philosopher Georg Herbert Mead, we are only able to grasp our self ("the self") by taking another person's perspective, because this activity makes us aware of the different expectations that other people and society have of us (snl.no, "Georg Herbert Mead"). We objectify ourselves by looking upon ourselves from another person's point of view, but simultaneously, this activity fosters our acknowledgement of the other person's status as a subject. Perspective-taking is crucial in dialogue (Schjelderup, *Kritisk tenkning i*

⁵ Culture refers to general customs and beliefs of a particular group or a particular society at a specific time (dictionary.cambridge.org, "Culture").

klasserommet, 32), since the creation of meaning is dependent on the participants' responses to one another, which are linked to our ability to understand our interlocutor's message.

The ability to understand and to analyze the sources on which our interlocutor's messages are based is pivotal for the interpretation of our interlocutor's message. Such sources may be myths, memories or knowledge derived from reason to name a few (plato.stanford.edu, "The analysis of knowledge"). The core value *critical thinking and ethical awareness* highlights that pupils should get the opportunity to evaluate different sources which produce knowledge, but they shall also learn to think critically about how knowledge is produced (udir.no, "Critical thinking and ethical awareness"). Knowledge, beliefs, views or opinions may be acquired from different sources. Different sources may even be tied to the same belief or view. Pupils should, thus, use different sources when they try to shed light on knowledge, beliefs or opinions. Additionally, the mentioned sentence from the core value also puts emphasis on the evaluation of these sources.

The academic field of history has concerned itself with the evaluation of sources to investigate happenings in the past, and the same type of evaluation may in certain contexts be used to assess sources on which people's thoughts are based. On the one hand, evaluating a source will involve assessing the credibility of the source and its relevance to our investigation (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbeidsmåter*, 41). Furthermore, if the source is structured as an argument, the argument needs to be perused. Evaluating the credibility of a source will include categorizing it as either a primary or secondary source. Primary sources are usually closer in time and space to the happening that one tries to shed light upon, while secondary sources tend to be based on primary sources (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbeidsmåter*, 37). Some academics claim, therefore, that only primary sources have the character of a witness (Melve, *Historie: Historieskriving frå antikken til i dag*, 112-123). Another factor which must be analyzed to determine the credibility of a source is whether the source is considered to be a first-hand source or a second-hand source. The content of first-hand sources derives directly from the happening or situation which the source tries to describe. For example, if the author of the source was present during the happening or situation, the source would be considered a first-hand source. Second-hand sources are based on first-hand sources, and are, hence, also often considered to be secondary sources. A third factor which should be considered is whether the source can be used as a report or as a remnant of a past happening. If the source can be used as a report, its point of origin will be

the information which the source conveys. This means that the performative aspect of the source, hence, the author's intentions and the meaning which she creates with the source, is scrutinized (Dahl, *Grunntrekk i historieforskningens metodelære*, 82-97). If the source is identified as a remnant, it is a piece of the past. For this reason, we will be able to learn from the source about the author's intentions, her views and beliefs and her character traits. Sources which are remnants are also in position to inform us about the norms, the thinking patterns and concepts of the past (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbeidsmåter*, 38).

This list of factors is easier for pupils to use when they are confronted with written sources. However, when pupils do not have access to written sources, but must investigate beliefs or views upon which a person's thinking rests, they are still able to use certain factors from the list above, namely the analysis of the performative act of a source. This analysis involves deconstructing claims as arguments and analyzing the different discourses on which the claim or argument rely. For example, the academic Leonel Lim (*Critical thinking, social education and the curriculum*, 15-16) states that argument analysis is a central part of critical thinking as a competence. Lim connects three aspects to argument analysis: the idea of connectedness, the inclusion of different and conflicting perspectives in a discussion and the display of power relations in society. The idea of connectedness implies investigating causes and effects of actions, while the inclusion of different and conflicting perspectives is closely related to using multiple perspectives, but it highlights the need of incorporating competing interests and social realities of different groups in the investigation. Lastly, the display of power relations in society relates to the analysis of class, race, gender or colonial forms of domination which are present in different contexts and shape social realities.

The analysis of sources and deconstruction of arguments has been highlighted as crucial for critical thinking (Børhaug, *Selective Critical Thinking*, 439; Lim, *Critical thinking, social education and the curriculum*, 15; Schjelderup, *Kritisk tenkning i klasserommet*, 32).

However, critical thinking is ultimately a tool which is deployed to investigate a particular study subject, regardless of whether the study subject is considered a claim, a thought, an opinion, an argument or a belief. The structure of the study subject is represented as a problem of interest which we want to understand, and this problem of interest will be able to be linked to a specific academic field. The definition of the core value takes this into account and specifies that pupils need to learn to examine their study subject by using a relevant scientific method (udir.no, "Critical thinking and ethical awareness"). The English subject can

be divided into two major fields of knowledge, namely literary studies and linguistics. An analysis of a problem of interest will, therefore, be based on the question which the pupils want to investigate. Nonetheless, problems which revolve around the research into culture or literature in the English subject have been analyzed by using similar methods as source criticism or argument analysis. In the following section, I will present research which supports this statement.

2.2.2 Previous research on critical thinking

Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed examines how problem-posing and decodification of existential situations⁶ can lead to an attuned consciousness. His theory focuses on giving peasants a voice and power to influence their surroundings by changing the peasants' fatalistic state of mind. However, his theory can also be applied to the Norwegian school context since all-round development (*danning*) relies on the pupils' ability to understand themselves, others and the world, and it implies fostering in the pupils a tradition of participation in all areas of education, work and societal life (udir.no, "Principles for education and all-round development"). For Paulo Freire, the ability of understanding and the tradition of participation is connected to the fostering of an attuned consciousness, which he also defines to be the people's true ontological and historical vocation (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 17). One of the central claims of Paulo Freire is that people house the oppressor in themselves since they have internalized the oppressor's cultural expressions and attitudes (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 20). An attuned or critical consciousness, which Freire equates with exercising freedom, can, therefore, only be developed by rejecting the oppressor's cultural expressions and attitudes. This requires an analysis and a decoding of the internalized oppressive expressions and attitudes in oneself, and an avoidance of prescriptions as solutions to challenges or problems, since the prescriptions are based on the guidelines of the inner oppressor. By questioning the internalized oppressive system, true autonomy and responsibility can be achieved. However, Freire highlights that this is a process which must be pursued constantly and responsibly (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 21), and this demands commitment to a critical consciousness whenever one tries to understand something.

⁶ Existential situations refer to specific situations based in the world which are characterized by history and culture. These situations both condition the humans who reside in them, but these situations are, at the same time, re-created by the same humans through their actions (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 97).

Hence, when considering the Norwegian school context, this critical consciousness should become a reflex in the pupils.

Freire proposes a specific approach to foster a critical consciousness, namely, to use and investigate generative or meaningful themes, which are existential situations taken from the pupils' social reality (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 153). Firstly, these existential situations must be coded by the teacher in a way which makes the constituent elements of these existential situations accessible to the pupils. The display of the constituents of an existential situation is crucial since the pupils, in the second step, shall decodify the coded situation through critical analysis. The meaningful themes should be able to unfold in a network of interrelated themes, they should be posed as problems to the pupils, and these themes should be directly connected to the historical-cultural context of the pupils (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 81). Generative themes are usually located in concentric circles, which means that their decodification will result in a dialectical movement of thought⁷, where pupils' thinking will move from the abstract to the concrete, from particular parts to the whole, and it ends by returning to these particular parts again (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 78). This movement of thought will help the pupils, who are the subjects, to recognize that they are connected to the object, which is the coded concrete existential situation, and that they reside there with other subjects. Each existential situation has its particular situationality and temporality. Since these existential situations derive from the thematic universe of the pupils, pupils are a part of these situations. In fact, human beings are because they exist permanently and unavoidably with the world. By analyzing the historical condition of the existential situations, hence, how space, time and culture are expressed, pupils can grasp their *raison d'être*⁸ (reason to exist); the reason for finding themselves in seemingly limiting situations, and through this analysis, they will be able to challenge the sources of their oppression and transform their situation (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,

⁷ Freire's theory has been heavily influenced by G. W. F. Hegel's dialectics. Therefore, the dialectical movement which he describes here points to the particular dialectical method of argument which relies on a contradictory process between opposing sides of a subject matter. This dialectical method or *speculative mode of cognition* leads to a linear evolution or development from less sophisticated definitions or views to more sophisticated ones (hence, from thesis to antithesis and concluding with *synthesis which includes elements from both the thesis and antithesis*) (plato.stanford.edu, "Hegel's Dialectics").

⁸ Freire refers to the concept *raison d'être* coined by the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre which describes a person's reason or justification for existence (merriam-webster.com, "*raison d'être*").

40). For Freire, transforming action derives directly from the confrontation and objectification of reality (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 26). With his theory, Freire tries to illustrate that our thoughts, our acts and our historical condition are interconnected. The pupils' cognition of their historical reality will result into transformative liberating action and intervention.

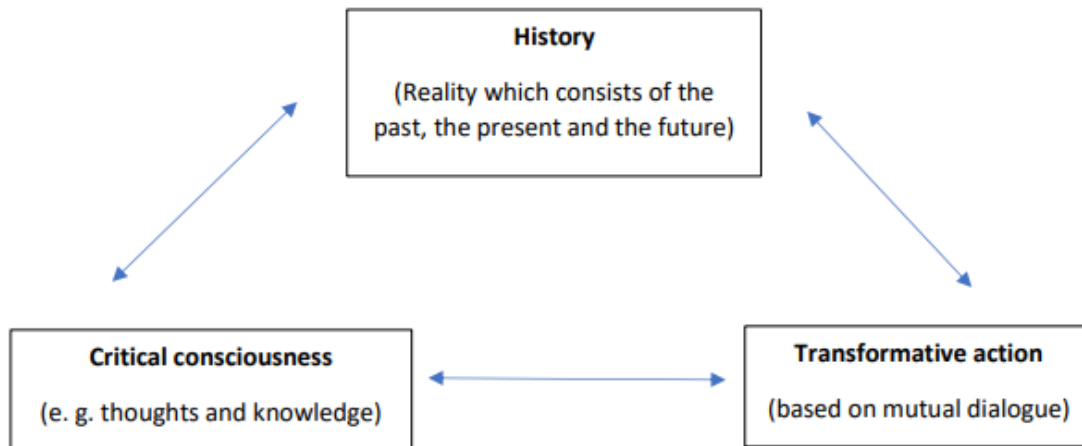


Figure 3: Model “Critical Pedagogy” based on Freire’s theory

Freire’s theory fosters what he describes as *conscientização*, which is the deepening of the attitude of awareness towards one’s own situation (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 82). This *conscientização* will enable intervention in one’s own reality, because the development of *conscientização* includes the thematic investigation which stimulates historical consciousness. Freire claims that only education which investigates thinking can be considered authentic education (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 83). *Conscientização* can only be achieved through the pupils’ own detachment from their surroundings, because this will enable them to objectify their surroundings and transform their surroundings anew based on this analysis (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 99). Freire links *conscientização* to being a political person; someone who has overcome the perception of life as pure biological process and substituted this perception with life as being an autobiographical, historical and collective process (Freire and Macedo 130). He contrasts the necessary tool of *conscientização*, namely critical thinking, with naïve thinking, which considers historical time to be a static sum of all insights and experiences of the past. The present is, therefore, something which one accommodates to rather than transforms (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 65).

Freire's theory includes a literacy campaign and a post-literacy phase. During the literacy campaign, pupils investigate the generative word through a problem-posing education, while the post-literacy phase focuses on the investigation of the generative word as a broader theme from the pupils' thematic universe (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 83). Learning to read the word goes hand in hand with learning to read the world for Freire. Humans remember through language, and language is codified in both utterances and meaning. When a word is uttered, we do not only register the phonetic representation of the word; we register its semantic information simultaneously. Language cannot exist without the social setting which it refers to. That is why the decodification of our environment must start with the decodification of the words which we use to describe the environment. *Culture* is one of the central concepts which Freire lets the pupils decodify in his studies. Freire claims that it is through culture that the active role of men in and with reality can be perceived (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 44). In the post-literacy phase, the fundamental aspects of the concept *culture* are established. The fundamental aspects are then codified and presented to the pupils either visually or orally as ten existential situations which they should be able recognize from their own life. One central aspect in Freire's theory is that words must be deconstructed, analyzed and reconstructed by communicating with other people through dialogue. By renaming a situation and by consciously choosing the words we use in this process, we establish praxis, which is the conscious intervention of the human in the world (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 60). Praxis through dialogue is essential for liberating education. Generative themes must be investigated by acts of cognition which are based on the dialogical mediation of the cognitive actors. However, the requirement for the methodological success of this theory lies in the ideological commitment to equality, the abolition of privileges and to non-elitist forms of leadership which enable dialogue and reciprocity in learning situations (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, xiii).

Freire's method also highlights some crucial points which must be present in the dialogical analysis of the generative themes. Firstly, the analysis must scrutinize the dialectical relationship between the consciousness of the master and the consciousness of the oppressed (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 24). While the master's essence is independent and exists for itself, the consciousness of the oppressed is dependent on the master's and exists for her. This dependence must first be acknowledged, then analyzed, so that it can afterwards be transformed into liberating situation. Freire insists that the transformation from dependence to

independence must be objectively verifiable (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 54). Verifiable objectivity must include demythification by establishing the logos and the doxa⁹, and the designation of causal links. The ungrounded view, the doxa, can be overcome by the knowledge based on evidence or rational considerations, the logos (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 97), and these rational considerations must determine the problem's causes. Freire defines rational causality to a certain extent by specifying that causality is the understanding that present truths are fluid and may even become untrue in the future (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 41). Additionally, causality may be determined through logical reasoning which verifies the causality of a hypothesis. Solberg (*Innføring i logikk*, 230) proposes as a starting method, the analysis of the logical form in a sentence to determine causality. This logical form contains two premises and one conclusion. Each premise is illustrated through a simple sentence (compound sentence) with a main and/or subordinate clause, and each clause has one subject and one predicate (intrologic.stanford.edu, "Propositional Logic"). Propositional logic is used for descriptive assumptions which do not have a normative character, which may include norms or evaluations (such as golden rules like *treat others as you would like others to treat you*). Norms and evaluations are excluded from this model since they are not based on natural laws and can, therefore, not be quantitatively measured. Models which are considered as logically valid are *modus ponens* and *modus tollens*, and the models which are considered logically invalid are the *falsification of the antecedent* and *the confirmation of the consequence* (Solberg, *Innføring i logikk*, 245-246).

⁹ Freire differentiates between logos, hence a view or belief derived from reason and judgement, and doxa, which is an ungrounded belief or mythical thinking, as sources of understanding and actions. However, only logos is considered to lead to *episteme* (knowledge).

Modus ponens (valid)

Premise 1: If the carbon dioxide concentration increases, the temperature rises.

Premise 2: The carbon dioxide concentration increases.

Conclusion: The temperature rises.

Modus tollens (valid)

P1: If the carbon dioxide concentration increases, the temperature rises.

P2: The temperature does not rise.

Conclusion: Carbon dioxide concentration did not increase.

The confirmation of the consequence (invalid)

P1: If the carbon dioxide concentration increases, the temperature rises.

P2: The temperature rises.

Conclusion: The carbon dioxide concentration increases.

Falsification of the antecedent (invalid)

P1: If the carbon dioxide concentration increases, the temperature rises.

P2: The carbon dioxide concentration increases.

Conclusion: The temperature rises.

Figure 4: Model “logical forms of sentences” based on Solberg’s descriptions (p. 245-248) (2014)

Analyzing logic is considered essential in the academic sphere, since it is one of the fundamentals for the establishment of a scientific hypothesis. The illustrated logical models may have been simplified. However, they are a useful starting point for pupils to think about logics when analyzing claims.

Moreover, the last crucial point which should be present in the dialogical analysis of the generative themes is the analysis of one’s own consciousness, hence, a Jasperian split consciousness¹⁰ as consciousness of the consciousness (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 52). Pupils must turn their attention not only on the study object, but also inward and consider their own thinking as an additional study object which must be studied and analyzed to be able to understand the initial study subject. By doing this, they manage to identify elements from their background awareness which hitherto have influenced their action on a

¹⁰ The philosopher Karl Jasper declared that human existence is, on the one hand, split into empirical existence, which means that humans are physical beings occupying a physical space (*consciousness-as-such*) which enables them to acquire information rationally, and, on the other hand, humans exist of a spirit, which craves wholeness (plato.stanford.edu, “Karl Jaspers”).

subconscious level, and transform these elements into favorable influences for their actions through conscious reflection upon them. These elements will ultimately be connected to structural conditions, since language cannot exist without a structure to which it refers (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 69). The realization of such interconnections deepens the pupils' involvement in the process of becoming and helps them to become agents of history.

During the dialogical analysis of the generative themes, it is of utmost importance that the teacher does not reveal or unveil these interconnections to the pupils; the pupils must establish these interconnections themselves. Freire stresses that knowledge can only be established dialogically by people who are equal (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 90). If the teacher sticks to the notion of a "correct" knowledge, she puts herself above the pupils and reinforces hierarchical and oppressive relations of existence. Taking that into account, teachers may implement Freire's theory in the classroom as follows:

1. Content: Finding generative theme from the thematic universe of the pupils
 - a. Theme must be connected to historical-cultural context of the pupils
2. Codification: Codify thematic theme according to following criteria:
 - a. Exhibit theme as a problem;
 - b. Ensure that theme can unfold into interrelated themes;
 - c. Thematic nucleus¹¹ cannot be overtly explicit nor overly enigmatic.
3. Presentation of generative theme: either orally as a narrative or visually through photographs or drawings/paintings
4. Decodification of the generative theme: climate of creativity (group and class discussions)
 - a. Situated in praxis, cultural circles (group debate and clarifications) and through dialogue, which ensures that one's own interpretations are interpreted, multiple definitions are developed, and ambiguous viewpoints are tolerated.
 - b. Decodification may open up into auxiliary codification, which should be analyzed like the generative themes.

¹¹ For Freire, the thematic nucleus refers to a central and highly important situation in a person's or a group's existence. This existential situation forms the basis for the person's or group's activity and growth.

- c. Resolution of contradiction between oppressor and oppressed through dialectical resolution (synthesis) or thinking in paradigms of threes (e. g. naïve/astute/critical)
 - d. Resolution must be objectively verifiable (logics and appropriate study methods)
 - e. Stimulating perception of the previous perception or knowledge of previous knowledge (metacognition) through recognition
5. Reconfiguration or reinvention of generative theme: give pupils a new sense of totality and culminates in a cultural synthesis (oral presentation by pupils)
 6. Action: Concrete situation must be transformed (written essays with proposal or other action)
 - a. Plan of subsequent stages of action / transformative labor should be included in proposal

Figure 5: Didactical suggestions based on Freire “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”(1970, 1993) and “Education for Critical Consciousness” (1965) and Freire and Macedo “Literacy: Reading the word and the world” (1987)

Paulo Freire’s theory focuses on many of the same concepts which we also find in the definition of critical thinking from the Education Act 2020, and it is, therefore, suitable to use by teachers who are trying to foster critical thinking in their pupils. Metacognition, or as Freire describes it “consciousness of consciousness”, is a part of critical thinking. Pupils need to learn to question their own consciousness, which consists of memories connected to culture, history and their upbringing. Pupils should become aware of how their internalized culture and historical views influence their thinking and actions. This can be juxtaposed to Freire’s demand for the analysis of the internalized oppressor. The analysis of the historical conditions and the cultural sources by the decoding of the generative themes will result in an understanding of the *raison d’être* which will ultimately enable the pupils to free themselves from their internalized oppressor. Additionally, the development of curiosity is considered an essential part of critical thinking in the Education Act. Curiosity can be connected to the use of dialogue in Freire’s theory. Through dialogue, we understand that our thinking might be incomplete by exposing ourselves to unknown ideas presented to us by our interlocutor. Curiosity is the foundation of dialogue, while dialogue permits new knowledge to arise. By decoding the generative themes through dialogue, people can understand that their beliefs are incomplete since they differ from the beliefs of other people. The importance of dialogue to foster *conscientização* as argued by Freire seems particularly relevant when considering that

dialogue strengthens perspective-taking and the use of multiple perspectives to understand a generative theme, which is an essential part of critical thinking according to the Education Act 2020. *Conscientização* is the attitude of awareness of one's own situation; a historical and cultural situation which pupils share with other people. By experiencing different points of view, they are able to investigate the historically and culturally conditioned situation and establish an understanding which enables everyone to become liberating agents of history. Freire reasons that detached and objective thinking through dialogue is essential for agency to arise which will be attached anew to the same environment. Detached and objective thinking requires the analysis of different historical and cultural sources and the establishment of their relevance and credibility regarding the generative theme. Freire points out that verifiable objectivity, hence the demythification of the generative theme and the classification of the elements into logos and doxa, is an integrated part of critical thinking. The Education Act 2020 puts the same importance on these cognitive operations, although the same assumption is described differently there. Critical thinking is linked to critical and scientific thinking, which involves the use of an appropriate method and the determination of correlations through logic when investigating a generative theme. Both the Education Act and Freire understand critical thinking, or a critical consciousness, to be a mindset which pupils need to internalize so that they can continually and systematically analyze their surroundings by decoding the generative theme, which is culturally and historically conditioned. Consequently, the description of critical thinking, or critical consciousness, given by the Education Act and Freire has many overlaps which can be potently used in the teaching context.

However, Freire's method depends on a teaching context which allows for a substantial amount of time to be used to foster the critical consciousness which Freire describes. This use of time would, on the other hand, result in the negligence of fostering other skills, such as the basic skills reading, writing, numeracy, oral skills and digital skills, which are considered to be a part of the competence in all subjects and fundamental for all learning (udir.no, "The basic skills"). Freire defends the focus on fostering a critical consciousness and using the time needed to do this by stating that the goal of education must not merely be to change societal structures but to transform people into agents of their own lives (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, xiii). People can only become agents of their own lives by attaining *conscientização*. Hence, any dialogical method which enables this is considered a gain of time rather than time lost. In his defense, Freire prioritizes the development of critical

consciousness over other skills, such as basic skills, because no agency can emerge without *conscientização*.

Moreover, Freire discusses the different stages of the *path to conscientização* which resemble Bloom's taxonomy strongly. This resemblance raises, therefore, the question of whether *conscientização* is realistically attainable by everyone, provided that the achievement of each new learning stage depends on the achievement of the previous stage. Bloom's hierarchical taxonomy focuses on the development of educational objectives which consists of six major categories, starting with knowledge and followed by comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. All the categories presented after knowledge refer to skills and

1. **Types of knowledge**
 - 1.2. Factual Knowledge
 - Knowledge of terminology
 - Knowledge of specific details and elements
 - 1.3. Conceptual Knowledge
 - Knowledge of classifications and categories
 - Knowledge of principles and generalizations
 - Knowledge of theories, models, and structures
 - 1.4. Procedural Knowledge
 - Knowledge of subject-specific skills and algorithms
 - Knowledge of subject-specific techniques and methods
 - Knowledge of criteria for determining when to use appropriate procedures
 - 1.5. Metacognitive Knowledge
 - Strategic Knowledge
 - Knowledge about cognitive tasks, including appropriate contextual and conditional knowledge
 - Self-knowledge
2. **Remember**
 - Recognizing, recalling
3. **Understand**
 - Interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, explaining
4. **Apply**
 - Executing, implementing
5. **Analyze**
Differentiating, organizing, attributing
6. **Evaluate**
Checking, critiquing
7. **Create**
Generating, planning, producing

abilities, while knowledge is considered a precondition for using skills and abilities in practice (cft.vanderbilt.edu, "Bloom's taxonomy"). A group of cognitive psychologists revised Bloom's model by giving the categories a more dynamic conception. To highlight this

Figure 6: Revised version of Bloom's taxonomy with the title "A Taxonomy for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment" (2001)

dynamism of the taxonomy, the authors used verbs and gerunds to describe the categories and subcategories instead of the nouns which were used in the original taxonomy. These action words depict the cognitive processes which happen in the pupils when they encounter and work with knowledge. Both Bloom's model and Freire's model describe a hierarchical learning process where the ultimate goal is to generate new knowledge through the decoding of previous knowledge. However, besides putting more emphasis on dialogue as a requirement for the development of critical consciousness, Freire also labels these stages differently and describes them differently. *Conscientização*, which is described as a model which depicts the development of the awakening of critical awareness in *Education for Critical Consciousness* (Freire 15), includes different stages. Freire differentiates between naïve transitivity, semi-intransitivity of consciousness, critically transitive consciousness and critical awareness. Like Bloom, each stage in Freire's model describes a cognitive process

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Naïve transitivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-simplification of problems • Nostalgia for past • Underestimation of the common man • Strong tendency for gregariousness • Lack of interest in investigation • Accentuated taste for fanciful explanations • Fragility of argument • Strong emotional style • Practice of polemic instead of dialogue • Magical explanations 2. Semi-intransitivity of consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus solely on sphere of biological necessity • Interests center around survival • Lack sense of life on historical plane 3. Critical transitive consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth in interpretation of problems • Substitution of causal principles for magical explanations (logics) • Testing of one's findings (empiricism) • Openness to revision of findings • Avoid distortion and preconceived notions when analyzing generative themes • Soundness of argumentation • Refusing to transfer responsibility • Rejection of passivity • Practice of dialogue rather than polemics • Receptivity to new and acceptance of old based on well-grounded reasons (validity) 4. Critical consciousness | <p>which is more demanding than the previous one, including cognitive mechanisms such as the use of multiple perspectives, the determination of causality and analysis through argumentation and empiricism. If teachers</p> |
|---|--|

Figure 7: Model *Conscientização* based on Freire's explanations from his book *"Education for Critical Consciousness"* (14-15) (1965)

structure their classes and assess performance based on Bloom's and Freire's model, not every pupil will be able to meet the criteria to achieve the highest stage because of reasons which might limit their capacity for mental cognition. For example, complex evaluations

where pupils must consider different perspectives are cognitively more demanding than others (Eriksson, *Kritisk tenkning*, 58). Since critical thinking is considered a core value in the Education Act, it is something which we should foster, and we can use Freire's and Bloom's model to plan this. However, teachers must be conscious about the implications of using these models and think about strategies, which harmonize with the principal of adapted teaching, and which enable each pupil in the class to develop critical thinking according to their own cognitive abilities and their own wishes.

Additionally, if teachers intend to use Freire's theory to foster critical thinking or consciousness, they must commit to the principal of eternal dialogue. Because, as Freire emphasizes, "knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other." (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 45). Interactions with other human beings require knowledge of how to interact with other people. Hence, pupils need knowledge of ethics to enter into dialogue with the teacher and other pupils, and dialogue is a required method in the development of critical thinking. The focus on dialogue makes it easier to understand why critical thinking has been linked together with ethical awareness as one core value in the Education Act. One cannot exist and be fostered without the other. The next section of this paper will, therefore, discuss ethical awareness in more detail.

2.3 Ethical awareness

The discussion about ethical awareness will be initiated by presenting its definition through a close reading of the core value critical thinking and ethical awareness, and by analyzing superordinate documents which frame this core value. After this, previous research on how ethical awareness has been implemented will be presented and discussed.

2.3.1 Definition of ethical awareness

"There is an ethical investment in particular normative orders, but no normative order which is, in and for itself, ethical." (Laclau, *Identity and Hegemony*, 81)

Ethical awareness has been linked to critical thinking in the core values. While critical thinking focuses on the development of a critical mindset which is able to navigate in a post-truth society where knowledge is considered fluid and temporary, ethical awareness operates in a space of permanent truths. Ethical awareness includes, like critical thinking, the use of multiperspectivity when investigating and discussing a subject (ndla.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”). Ethical awareness is defined as the ability to evaluate different views against each other. It is an ability which is essential to be a reflected and responsible human being. Critical thinking and ethical awareness are prerequisites for and a part of all learning, and both contribute to the development of a good power of judgement. Both practical work and artistic work demand the ability to reflect and make evaluations by thinking critically and being ethically aware (udir.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”). However, ethical awareness has a slightly tighter focus on the consequences of critical thinking. After having analyzed and discussed different relevant perspectives of a study subject, pupils should be able to conclude. Concluding does often involve prioritizing certain ideas or aspects over others to come to the most optimal conclusion which will help to create the best conditions for a particular problem of interest. This sentence already indicates that prioritization involves determining and choosing particular values which one considers superior to others. Ethical awareness shall give the pupils a framework of values which shall ensure that the pupils’ conclusions will benefit society in general, other people and themselves.

The definition of the core value does not specify what kind of values the pupils should acquire. But it asks teachers to implement a teaching approach where pupils learn to make ethical evaluations and to expose them to ethical dilemmas (udir.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”). While we do not find any specific values in the definition of this core value, some values are explicitly stated in the *purpose of the education* section. Education in Norway shall rest upon fundamental values from Christianity and humanist heritage and tradition, like respect for human dignity and nature, intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity (udir.no, “The purpose of the education”). These values can also be found in different religions and beliefs and they are deeply entrenched in human rights. Moreover, the section “core values of the education and training”, mentions, apart from critical thinking and ethical awareness, other values, such as human dignity, identity and cultural diversity, the joy of creating, engagement and the urge to explore, respect for nature and environmental awareness, critical thinking and democracy and participating (udir.no, “Core values of the education and training”). While the *purpose of the education* does not

provide a precise meaning for the Christian and humanitarian values, the core values of education and training are elaborated on in more detail. For example, the core value *human dignity* is described as a value which proclaims all humans to be of equal worth based on their human existence (udir.no, “Human dignity”). Additionally, this core value names specific documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations, which elucidate this core value in detail.

As specified in the “Purpose of the education”, the core values are not considered exclusively Christian; they belong to and can be found in other religions. However, people may associate different meanings with the core values which derive from their upbringing and the experiences which they have had with these core values. This assumption can be connected to Ferdinand de Saussure’s theory on language, according to which language is ultimately shaped by the external world where we perceive phenomena through concepts (signified) and name them (sound-image) by using the language or languages to which we have access (De Saussure, *The Object of Linguistics*, 821). The way certain words are understood is specific to each language. Hence, the concept of the value *freedom of speech* may exist in most languages, but its connotation will diverge in different languages because of the unique circumstances in each society which will influence how freedom of speech will be experienced.

Apart from the ambiguous character of these core values which may make it difficult for teachers to employ these values in class, these values may also stand in direct opposition to each other in certain situations, which will put the agent in a moral dilemma. For example, the right to freedom of speech ensures that individuals may articulate their opinions and ideas without having to fear acts of retaliation or prosecution (britannica.no, “Freedom of speech”). Yet, this value may in certain situations clash with the principal of prohibiting hate speech and incitement, and freedom of speech may, therefore, be restricted (amnesty.org.uk, “What is freedom of speech”). Such ethical dilemmas do not only happen in connection with freedom of speech and the prohibition of hate speech. They may apply to an array of different values. The definition of ethical awareness seems to acknowledge the importance of developing the pupils’ ability to solve ethical dilemmas by explicitly stating that pupils should be made familiar with ethical issues and learn how these issues can be assessed (udir.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”). Different approaches have been adopted to develop the

pupils' ability to assess ethical issues. The following section will present some research which discusses and evaluates some of these approaches.

2.3.2 Previous research on ethical awareness

Despite not being mentioned explicitly as an element of ethical awareness, the development of empathy has been one focus area in research which deals with ethical awareness in pupils. This makes sense if we accept the definition of ethics as a philosophy which deals with morality; hence, the evaluation of and reflection on whether human actions are good or bad, organized or unorganized and fair or unfair (Mendelson-Maoz, *Ethics and Literature*, 113). These human actions will be conducted in a physical space which we share with other people, and they will, therefore, also have a consequence on other people's lives. Imagining how other people might get affected by our actions is, thus, appropriate and desirable. Empathy is one of the tools which enhances this imagination for the other since it makes us observe and understand another person's mental or emotional state. This process involves, on the one hand, shifting the focus from one's own feelings to another person's feelings, and, on the other hand, to feel and to think what the other person is feeling and thinking (Lauritzen, *Bridging Disciplines: On Teaching Empathy Through Fiction*, 130). Hence, empathy focuses on the relationships that are established with others, and these relationships rely on an interpretive passionate-intellective cognitive exercise which the concept of empathy describes. Hogan (*The Epilogue of Suffering*, 137) divides empathy into categorical and situational empathy. While categorical empathy describes the process of connecting with people who are similar to oneself in aspects such as gender, age and ethnicity, situational empathy focuses on similar experiences that the interpreter shares with the other. Also, this empathetic exercise involves putting oneself as an interpreter in the situation of the other person to imagine how the other perceives reality. Such an envisioning depends on one common denominator, namely connecting oneself to another person through the humanity which both parts share. But at the same time, this hermeneutic exercise must also be analogical, and consider that the circumstances of the other persons have a unique element of time and space which the interpreter will never be able to fully comprehend (Buganza, *Ethics, Literature and Education*, 130).

This ability to comprehend the other through empathic cognitive exercise can be enhanced by literature, more particularly close reading. Martha Nussbaum (*Litteraturens etik*, 11) is one

of the scholars who points out that literature can stimulate ethical reflection since readers are able challenge their biases by identifying with characters and by feeling compassion, but at the same time, they remain analytical and critical. This balance between being simultaneously a close and a distant interpreter is essential for ethical reflection. Suzanne Keen has looked more closely into the relations between reading novels and empathy. Her theory of narrative empathy focuses on the potential of literary techniques to shape reader responses and how these techniques may provoke strong feelings and stimulate the reader mentally (Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, 96-97). More specifically, Keen argues that the literary techniques which enhance empathy are character identification and narrative situation. The depictions of characters, the characters' demeanour, ambitions, motives, their skills and qualities and whether the reader finds them reliable will influence how the reader will identify with the character. Moreover, Keen claims that the plot structure is an additional factor which may influence the reader's identification with the character and her ability to feel empathy towards the characters. For example, narrative situation may be narrated consonantly, hence where the narrator is temporally closely linked to the narrated story demonstrated by the usage of the present tense, or dissonantly, hence where the narrator comments on experiences in retrospect thereby exhibiting judgments and reflections of the narrated experience (Keen, *Narrative Form*, 36). A novel may exhibit traces of both consonant and dissonant narration, which helps the reader to experience differentiated voices of the same narrator, so the narrator's experiencing self and the retrospective self. Such a literary technique which purposefully engages the reader on an empathic level enables a holistic view on experiences and outcomes of the story. Readers are, thus, better positioned to understand the characters motives and behaviour, and reflect more deeply on how certain narrated happenings were able to occur or why the characters behaved the way they did. Nonetheless, Van Lissa et al. (*Difficult Empathy: The Effect of Narrative Perspective on Readers Engagement with a First- Person Narrator*, 51) have investigated reader empathy and they highlight that more experienced readers may feel less concern for the character, while readers with a higher amount of dispositional affective empathy are more inclined to connect more deeply with the protagonists. Moreover, perspective-taking, which is a crucial element of empathy, is facilitated by a first-person perspective rather than a third-person perspective for readers older than 17.44, while neither first-person perspective nor third-person perspective had a significant empathic effect on younger readers (below the age of 17.44) (Van Lissa et al., *Difficult Empathy: The Effect of Narrative Perspective on Readers Engagement with a First- Person Narrator*, 52). Narrative perspective may only be able to create a limited empathic

response, but empathic competence can still be strengthened through literary reading since young readers learn about complex and ambivalent social situations which form the basis for ethical thinking.

While there is disagreement on whether literature fosters empathy, and, assuming that literature fosters empathy, whether it is desirable to foster empathy through literature¹², there is a broad consensus among academics that literature is particularly suitable to supply readers with the necessary experiences which are needed to promote a person's faculty of moral judgment since ethical issues are performed and illustrated in practice and the abstract ethical principles are illustrated through concrete circumstances in the literary text (DePaul, *Argument and Perception: The Role of Literature in Moral Inquiry*, 563; Tomlinson, *Perplexed about Narrative Ethics*, 126; Adamson, *Against Tidiness: Literature and/versus Moral Philosophy*, 92-93). Both ethics and literature deal with human lives and they do, therefore, also demand the reader's moral attention. The literary text can be an educational instrument which gives the reader the opportunity to question established beliefs and practices, test theories and their applications, imagine different scenarios and construct favorable principles (Diamond, *Martha Nussbaum and the Need for Novels*, 43). Thus, the literary text's imaginary character also guarantees a secure space for thought experiments connected to morals, and more specifically ethical dilemmas. Readers' ethical reading can be strengthened by letting them become aware of social and political power relations, by recognizing the power of voice and agency, and by concerning themselves with the effects of presence and absence in the literary text (Fahraeus, *Introduction*, 7).

Ethical reading should also contain one of ethics' key elements, namely the acknowledgment of the other, which focuses on recognizing the essence of a person; hence, his or her humanity. A person may be acknowledged on three levels: the individual level, the moral level and the personal level (Honneth, *Entre Aristóteles y Kant*, 32). On the individual level, a person is acknowledged as an individual who has a unique value for someone else because of

¹² Wiseman (*A Concept Analysis of Empathy*, 1164) has pointed out that empathy seldom brings forth an act of caring which might be significant for the receiver. The reason for this might be that the appreciation of the other rests on a known ideal encoded in a paradigm (Ricoeur, *Lo Justo*, 27-30). Hence, empathy or sympathy for another person rests on the other's resemblance of this loved paradigm. Such a requirement for resemblance may even lead to a biased form of empathy which creates structures of parochialism and racism (Bloom, *The Breaking of Form*, 25).

her particular needs and desires. On the moral level, a person is acknowledged through her moral responsibility over her actions, which also have an impact on other human beings. The acknowledgment of the last level, the personal level, refers to the acknowledgment of a person's abilities which have an important value for a specific community. By acknowledging these three levels, readers are in a better position to accept direct knowledge about the essence of a person, and determine her unique capacities (which may also be termed "intelligence"). An analysis of a person's unique capacities will also help the reader understand how the same person manifests freedom through her choices and sheds light on the person's reasoning for the same choices. A central part of acknowledgment is that the other, which in our case may be a literary character, in some possible world, could share character traits and circumstances with ourselves as readers (Pereira and Modzelewski, *Ética, Literatura y Educación para un Mundo Global*, 118). Therefore, the character's vulnerability could become our own. One may never be able to be completely the other, but the acknowledgment of the other asks of us to conduct an empathetic exercise where we try to envision the world through the other person's eyes. The emotional intellectual compassion which empathy denotes is necessary in this process of acknowledgement, and this process is not only experiencing what the other person experiences, but it is also feeling touched by the same experience. Close reading may help to cultivate this empathic ability since it produces a sustained focus of contemplation and introspection by slowing the reader's thinking down. Through close reading, readers learn to pay attention to details such as verb tenses and descriptions, and this may aid the reader in perceiving textual connections (Charon et al., *Close Reading and Creative Writing in Clinical Education: Teaching Attention, Representation and Affiliation*, 347). Real-life situations demand the same kind of attention, which means that this sustained focus will be beneficial for and it will be sustained in real-life interactions.

The sustained attention which is fostered through the engagement with literature is relevant for real-life situations since we may encounter different complex situations, such as ethical dilemmas. The description of this core value stresses that pupils should be exposed to ethical dilemmas and they should get the opportunity to engage in ethical evaluations (udir.no, "Critical thinking and ethical awareness"). Literature is a competent tool to achieve this since it demonstrates how ethics is enacted, and which according to Wittgenstein, it makes ethics more comprehensible for the pupils since its form and possible implications are depicted to them through aesthetics (*A Lecture on Ethics*, 37-44). Ethical dilemmas are ultimately models or paradigms which consist of representations of models or signs. These models or signs,

whether icons, objects or symbols, lead the interpreter to a different knowledge which is exclusively connected to the experience of being human (Piotrowski, *Paradigmas Axiológicos en la Literatura y su Interpretación*, 83-96). The understanding of ethical dilemmas and the engagement in ethical evaluations require a hermeneutic approach where the interpreter decodes personal signs to understand a person's behavior, character and motives. While signs, paradigms and models may function as a representation of a person's cause of action, they should never be considered completely accurate representations of a person's cause of action, rather, they should be used analogically. Careful examination of everyday life can never be embodied in an incontestable manner, since humans are complex beings who are often presented with the freedom to act based on many different suitable alternatives, and these alternatives may not always be intelligible or accessible to the interpreter (Maffesoli, *El Conocimiento Ordinario*, 100). Literature which uses polyphonic points of view¹³ is particularly suitable to open a map of analogies which may help pupils to comprehend and evaluate the multiple causes and considerations behind social and moral phenomena. This approach also harmonizes with the description of ethical awareness in the core value, where ethical awareness is considered an ability to evaluate different points of view against each other (udir.no, "Critical thinking and ethical awareness").

While signs, models and paradigms should not be taken literally, the effect of these phenomena do still have a great pedagogical significance. Teleological ethics¹⁴ emphasizes that paradigms and models provided by literature may be used as an orientation by an agent (Wojtyla, *Max Scheler y la Ética Cristiana*, 53-57). Models or paradigms may exercise a force of attraction upon the agent who may consider following it if she finds herself in a similar context. This attraction to resemble the paradigm is based on emphatical abilities which the reader uses to acknowledge the literary character(s) as a possible I who are connected through one shared humanity. The literary character becomes, thus, an object of imitation which the reader may desire to resemble (Buganza, *Ethics, Literature and Education*, 133). Nonetheless, this approach has no absolute character. The reader, who may

¹³ The concept of polyphony in literature was introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin and it denotes a diversity of simultaneous points of view and voices. This literary feature ensures validity to all viewpoints and voices by rejecting an authorial standpoint (filosofia.dickonson.edu, "Mikhail Bakhtin").

¹⁴ Teleological ethics claims that duty and moral obligation should be guided by the good or evil generated by an action. It is opposed to deontological ethics which suggests that the moral obligations should be independent from the consequences of the action (Britannica.com, "Teleological ethics").

potentially be a pupil, is simply invited to put the model into practice if she wishes. These models or paradigms, hence, never limit a reader's personal autonomy or responsibility for her actions since they simply have an aspirational nature.

The emphasis on autonomy is as relevant for the development of ethical awareness as it is for the development of critical thinking. Freire highlights that the critical consciousness can only be developed if the pupil is able to confront reality critically and identify and challenge the sources of oppression (Freire 26, "*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*"). This process involves active participation and intentional actions which are necessary to perform transformative actions. Both Freire's research and the presented research on ethical awareness regard dialogue and analysis, through close reading or decodification, as crucial tools to sensitize pupils to social justice. The presented research on ethical awareness and Freire's research also focus on the capability of having compassion for another person who in some way is similar to us and requires our recognition and sympathy. True liberation rests on intelligent cooperation and empathic understanding of people who are different from us. Therefore, Freire's education for critical consciousness depends upon the element of ethical awareness which prepares pupils for moral interactions and makes them more attuned to other people's misfortunes and pain. Apart from these intersections, Freire's theory and the presented research on ethical awareness also converge in other areas. Because of this, both bodies of research can be synthesized and implemented in the classroom as follows (the suggested modifications only involve points 3. and 4. of the lesson plan presented on page 20-21):

3. Presentation of generative theme: through narrative
4. Decodification of the generative theme through close reading: climate of creativity (group and class discussions)
 - f. Establish categorical and/or situational empathy with the characters in the narrative
 - i. Categorical empathy: determined through character identification (the depictions of characters, the characters' demeanor, ambitions, motives, personal signs their skills and qualities and the readers perception of whether they are reliable)

1. Acknowledgment of the character/s on the individual level, the moral level and the personal level
 - ii. Situational empathy: identified through consonant or dissonant narration (narrator's experiencing self and the retrospective self)
- g. Determine the unique elements of time and space that led to the character's situation
- h. Investigation of ethical dilemmas through analysis of social and political power relations, recognition of the power of voice and agency, evaluation of the multiple causes and considerations behind the social or moral phenomena and the inquiry into the effects of presence and absence in the literary text

Figure 8: Didactical suggestions based on a synthesis of Freire's research and the research presented in this thesis on ethical awareness

Freire suggests that the generative theme may either be presented orally as a narrative or visually with pictures/drawings to the pupils (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 87). He argues that the codifications must be familiar to the pupils, but they should not be overtly explicit for them. The reason for choosing an oral narrative rather than a written narrative is based on his focus on mutual oral dialogue among the pupils in praxis, cultural circles about the generative theme. While this is an essential part in his theory and it is also advantageous to include this to strengthen multiple definitions and enable ambiguous viewpoints, this part must be expended, if we take into account that critical thinking has been linked with ethical awareness. As presented in this section, ethical awareness is fostered particularly well with written literature because it enables sympathetic imagination with the other; an other who is also central in Freire's theory. The presentation of the generative theme is then followed by its decodification through close reading. The dialogue between the pupils can be guided by questions concerning the categorical and situational empathy, the designation of unique elements of time and space which led to the character situation and the investigation of ethical dilemmas. These suggestions harmonize with Freire's theory since consciousness means being with the world, and, hence, a world which consists of human beings who interact with one another. The starting point must always be with all the women and men who are part of the situation which the generative theme describes (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 58). To be able to comprehend another person's situation, whether it is the

situation of an oppressed person or of an oppressor, empathy and compassion must be exercised since these elements ensure that the pupils are able to develop an awareness of our shared vulnerability. The ability to perceive another person's suffering will ultimately deepen the consciousness of the pupils and help them realize that the historical reality described by the generative theme is prone to transformation.

Both Freire's theory and the research presented in this section illustrate that the ability to think critically and to be ethically aware share many important intersections. Both rely on the ability to apply multiple perspectives to shed light upon a theme or an ethical dilemma, so that pupils are able to perceive the deepness and spaciousness of which each person consists. Essential tools which promote multiperspectivity are narrative imagination and dialogue. One of the goals of this procedure is to strengthen reflection on our failures of perception and recognition. We must reconstruct our own eyes and help to reconstruct our pupils' inner eyes so that hitherto invisible people and viewpoints become visible. Good education includes the acknowledgement of the poor or members of lower classes, and it develops the critical thinking ability which ensures that the circumstances of oppression can be transformed into liberation (Nussbaum, *Narrative Imagination*, 2148). The interdependence between critical thinking and ethical awareness has also been highlighted in the Education Act, which forces teachers to work simultaneously with both abilities through their fusion as one core value coined "critical thinking and ethical awareness". In the Parliamentary Act number 28 which deals with the renewal of the Education Act the expert committee recommends a broad definition of competence which encompasses both thinking and practical abilities, but also social and emotional learning and development (regjeringen.no, "Fag – Fordypning – Forståelse – En fornyelse av Kunnskapsløftet"). The committee expresses the wish that this definition of competence should be reflected in the competence aims of all subjects. At the same time, ethical awareness was given prominence because of its clear reference in the section "Purpose of the Education" in the Core Curriculum, where it is mentioned explicitly together with critical thinking and environmental awareness as abilities which pupils and apprentices shall learn (udir.no, "The Purpose of Education"). Since one of the motivations for renewing the Education Act was to create more consistency between the core curriculum and the subject curricula (regjeringen.no, "Fag – Fordypning – Forståelse – En fornyelse av Kunnskapsløftet"), the core values of Education and Training had to be renewed according to this premise. The committee's aim was that the entire Education Act, hence, the purpose of the Education, the core curriculum and the subject curriculum, could be used by teachers in

their planning (see appendix 1). Taking this into consideration, it made sense for the Department of Education to unify ethical awareness and critical thinking as one core value.

The renewal of the Education Act was also motivated by the aim to strengthen the teachers' perception of the multiple interconnections between the different subjects (regjeringen.no, "Fag – Fordypning – Forståelse – En fornyelse av Kunnskapsløftet"). Interdisciplinarity was strengthened not only through the introduction of the three interdisciplinary subjects, health and life skills, democracy and citizenship and sustainable development, but also through the special attention given to the concept of deep learning, which promotes the creation of learning networks which touch upon competence aims belonging to different subjects (Fullan et. al., *Dybdelæring*, 42). Teachers are asked to see the similarities between the subjects rather than to focus on the differences to facilitate the learning for transfer in the pupils. This method can also be exploited when working with the core value critical thinking and ethical awareness in English. The research presented on critical thinking and ethical awareness has various interesting intersections, but interdisciplinarity is a crucial one. Another important intersection which critical thinking and ethical awareness share is their emphasis on understanding a situation and a person's *Geschiedtlichkeit*¹⁵. The hermeneutic process which ethical awareness requires demands the interpreter to put herself in the place of the other. The empathic understanding depends upon an analysis of the circumstances which shape the needs and wishes of this unique but at the same time, similar other. These circumstances or situations consist of times and places which must be inspected. Literature is an appropriate tool to inspect these elements, since it describes, whether overtly or implicitly, social, political and ethical issues which influence the circumstances and situations which humans find themselves in and which ultimately shape people's decision making (Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, 112). The interpretation and understanding of these elements of time and space will help the interpreter to put himself in a better position to imagine how and why the other acts and thinks the way she does. This same historical understanding is also dealt with in Freire's theory. The manner of acknowledgment or recognition of the other, and the content of the dialogue must be grounded in the historical conditions at which the other, or in Freire's theory the oppressed, apprehends reality (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 39). Each situation has a historical reality which is susceptible to transformation. This transformation

¹⁵ *Geschiedtlichkeit* denotes the temporality and spacious dimensionality in which human identities and physical situations are embedded (Koselleck, *Historia Magistra Vitae*, 33).

results from the cognition of the oppressive situation, which is constituted by elements of time and space that can be scrutinized, decomposed, reflected on and transformed through praxis and interaction. In fact, for Freire the historical condition is what differentiates humans from a pure animalistic existence, since animals, he argues, exist in an all-encompassing present, while humans are located in a present which is comprised of culture and history (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 71). The deeper involvement in this historical space through critical reflection will lead to the process of becoming rather than only surviving life. Freire's notion of a reflected life draws on Socrates concept of the examined life, on Aristoteles notion of reflective citizenship and on Greek and Roman Stoic perceptions that education should liberate the mind from the limiting concepts of habit and custom.

Hence, an interdisciplinary approach which includes historical methods and literary methods might be apt to aid English teachers to stimulate critical thinking and ethical awareness in the pupils. The next section will, therefore, deal with historical consciousness which has been defined as a core element in history and provide an analysis of the intersections between historical consciousness and the previous research presented on critical thinking and ethical awareness. The aim of this analysis is to complement the didactical suggestions based on a synthesis of Freire's research and the research discussed on ethical awareness, and to use parts of the lesson plan, thereafter, as a method to analyze two novels.

2.4 Historical consciousness

This section will start by introducing the definition of historical consciousness through a close reading of historical consciousness as a core element in the History curriculum. The other core elements in History will also be elaborated on to establish a more precise meaning of this concept. This section will finish by presenting and analyzing previous research on how historical consciousness has been developed as a competence.

2.4.1 Definition of historical consciousness

“Being is not temporal, because it is in history, but because, on the contrary, it exists and can exist historically because it is temporal in the ground of its being.” (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 37)

Historical consciousness has been listed as one of the core elements in the History curriculum. According to this definition, historical consciousness is described as the ability to comprehend oneself as both a product of history and a producer of history (udir.no, “Core elements in History”). Kvande and Naastad (*Hva skal vi med Historie*, 44) define historical consciousness as a tool which we use to orient ourselves in time, a time which consists of an understanding of the now, an interpretation of the past and the expectations which we have of the future. Human acts and human behaviour are temporally and spatially determined. Every act, thinking or behaviour is regulated by a context which can be characterised through time and space. Historical consciousness involves analysing and discussing the time and space of a particular past happening. The time and space of a particular past happening is not only located in the past, but also in the present and the future; past happenings are the sources of experiences and myths which stabilize our notion of identity, and they are the sources of all our future expectations. For example, historical culture, such as sources, artifacts, rituals or other historical presentations, illustrates how past happenings shape our society. The reason for upholding traditions like celebrating Christmas or Seventeenth of May in Norway is partially rooted in past happenings which have been performed by our ancestors on a regular basis and which we continue to honour because we identify with these past happenings; these past happenings are an integral part of our identity. Historical culture is used or misused in different ways, such as when we celebrate or commemorate a past happening. History has a paramount functionality for humans, since our humanness is ultimately established in the spaces created by history. Since our humanness is inseparable from history, historical consciousness denotes not only reflecting upon other people’s historicity¹⁶; it means also reflecting upon and understanding one’s own historicity, which includes putting oneself in a historical context marked by time and space (Kvande and Naastad, *Hva skal vi med Historie*, 44-45). This ability or competence of historicising oneself is also described in the History curriculum. In History, pupils shall develop historical consciousness by having an explorative approach to history, by developing competence in source criticism and by acquiring the ability to see different perspectives and connections. Pupils are also asked to develop historical empathy and acquire a historical overview. At first glance, this definition might

¹⁶ The definition used for historicity is based on the philosophical meaning of the word, where it is described as an idea or fact of a phenomena which can be located in history, hence, in the past, and which has been developed through history, concepts, practices or values (plato.stanford.edu, “Philosophy of History”).

seem diffuse. However, reading this definition together with the other two core elements creates more clarity. The second core element, namely *exploratory history and source critical awareness*, specifies that having an explorative approach to history allows pupils to wonder at, reflect on and evaluate how knowledge about the past is established. It is particularly interesting that the verb *to wonder at* has been chosen to describe what an explorative approach to history is. The verb wonder has many definitions, but one of them is “to think about things in a questioning and sometimes doubting way” (dictionary.cambridge.org, “Wonder”). The meaning of *wonder* connects one of the features of historical consciousness directly to the definition of critical thinking from the Education Act, since pupils are specifically asked to question and doubt established ideas by using theories, methods, arguments, experiences or other evidence (udir.no, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”). Moreover, historical knowledge originates from the sources which are used to shed light on a particular subject of interest from the past. Source criticism is, therefore, connected to a critical evaluation of the sources by using specific criteria which establish the source’s relevance and credibility. At the same time, the ability to evaluate sources critically also involves determining the information which a source can give or cannot give. This ability means that pupils should understand that inadequate sources may result in incomplete or even erroneous knowledge.

The ability to perceive different perspectives and to see different connections can be elaborated on through another core element, namely *historical empathy, interconnections and perspectives*. Pupils should be able to establish connections between different acts, happenings and phenomena from the past and understand that their views determine how they understand and present the past (udir.no, “Core elements in History”). Additionally, pupils should be able to understand the challenges which past humans faced and that the actions by these humans were not predetermined but subject to choice and priorities. Such an understanding implies that pupils identify themselves with and emphasize with people from the past (Kvande and Naastad, *Hva skal vi med Historie*, 47). The act and ability of identification and empathy require a comparative approach. When we compare something, we identify both similarities and particularities of two or more entities. Comparison requires some amount of factual knowledge and the ability to abstract knowledge to a higher analytical level (Kvande and Naastad, *Hva skal vi med Historie*, 49). One of the core elements in History, namely *humans and societies in the past, present and future*, specifies that pupils should be able to acquire an understanding and overview of important historical content and

central themes and periods in Norwegian and international history by working with larger questions (udir.no, “Core elements in History”). This core element highlights the need for factual knowledge, especially when working with comparison.

Factual knowledge is not the same as historical presentation, but it is a part of it. History must be narrated to be understood and conveyed. If factual knowledge about history is listed without being narrated, one would describe it as a chronology (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbeidsmåter*, 64). However, chronologies do not carry meaning without being explained in detail, contextualized and narrated with words. Historians differentiate between history as a narrated story and history as an argumentative text, or between story and history of structure (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbeidsmåter*, 61). One of these historians, Hayden White, claims that historical meaning cannot be found in particular happenings in the past; historical meaning is found in the ethical and aesthetical perspectives and choices of the historian (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 55). Hence, he reasons that “Historical narratives... are verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much invented as found.” (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 82). Other historians, like Hilde Slottemo, agree with White to a certain extent that historical presentation is equal to verbal presentation. But she emphasizes that historical research must be firmly tied to the historical sources which are used to investigate the research question and that historians should be conscious of the inherent fictional elements in their historical presentation (Slottemo, *En Historie om Samhold og Splittelse*, 23). The fluid division between fiction and fact can also be illustrated through one of the meanings of the German word for history, namely *Geschichte*, which refers to an account of an incident rather than to the incident itself (Koselleck, *Historia Magistra Vitae*, 32). The manifold meaning of *History* can also be illustrated through its Norwegian counterpart, namely *historie*, which denotes past events, the discipline of History and fictional story (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbeidsmåter*, 65). One of the components of the English word *history* is story which indicates that historical accounts are narrative accounts. White, therefore, declares that literary discourses and historical discourses share more similarities than differences. (White, *Figural Realism*, 6). While the primary referent of historical discourse may be a different one, literary and historical discourse remain stories and are, for that reason, fictions. The next section will elaborate White’s argument by deconstructing his claim and it will determine the relevance of his claim for the development of historical consciousness.

2.4.2 Previous research on historical consciousness

Historical consciousness denotes the internal cognitive process which is marked by an interaction between past, present and the future in humans and societies (Jensen, *Historiebevidsthed/Fortidsbrug*, 14). Usually the term “historical consciousness” is used in contexts where one tries to point out the difference between chronological time, which has a fixed sequence starting with a point in the past, which is followed by a present and which then ends with a future, and human temporality where these three times interact with each other. Human temporality is central in the understanding of social-historical processes, since this concept is the foundation for all human action (Jensen, *At handle i tid og rum. Et socialkonstruktivistisk historiebegreb*, 197-223). This logic implies that the interwoven temporality is what informs human actions, and that this temporality, or more specifically the past (*fortidsbrug*) is used by humans when they want to form and direct their life. Historical consciousness has, therefore, also been described as a faculty where a specific past is used by a subject, hence, either a person, a group or an institution to achieve a specific goal or create a specific desired circumstance. The interpretation and understanding of historical consciousness demands, thus, a careful analysis of the subject’s inner depths, so her demeanor, ambitions, motives, personal signs, skills and qualities. The analysis of categorial empathy, which has been highlighted to be an important element in the ability to be ethically aware, demands an understanding of the same concepts. Moreover, the investigation of the subject has been identified to involve the same operations as the study of consciousness (Lonergan, *The Subject*, 33). According to Freire’s research, the study of consciousness must involve the movement towards self-awareness or self-consciousness (consciousness with a sense of self). This self-consciousness is a complex kind of consciousness which ensures that humans sense the self as an identity and a person with an individual historical time consisting of a lived past and an anticipated future. The same sense of self also helps humans to be highly mindful of the world they are embedded in. Damasio operates with a subject-theory which claims that the self is constituted by different parts (*The Feeling of What Happens*, 19). The first part is the core consciousness or self, which functions when the organism is conscious about its feelings resulting out of its bodily state. This self is not prone to cultural influence which makes it quite stable and it functions in pre-verbal contexts. The second one is the autobiographical self and it is characterized by a contemplative self-consciousness. Both these parts are compromised by a unique timely room of experience. However, only the experiences belonging to the autobiographical self are marked by the culture(s) that the individual is a part of. Hence, in other literature the autobiographical self has fittingly been

described the culturally, socially and linguistically embedded self (Zahavi, *Self-Awareness, Temporality, and Alterity*, 50). This autobiographical self can be analyzed by employing a psychoanalytical approach since wishes, anxieties and fantasies which inhabit people's minds are marked by psychic contents which always contain an important historical component (Alexander and Taylor, *History and Psyche*, 2-7).

Interesting parallels can be drawn between the subject-theory and the analysis of situational empathy. I suggested that we can promote situational empathy through the consideration of consonant or dissonant narration where the reader focuses on the narrator's experiencing self and retrospective self. These selves can exhibit characteristics from both the core self and the autobiographical self since the narrator's comments and reflections may focus on bodily experiences, such as physical reactions and feelings, and experiences marked by cultural, societal or linguistic influences. Humans learn to behave in society by becoming part of and being influenced by our interactions with others. The decomposition of these interactions into their different cultural, social and linguistic influences may help us to understand our and other people's mentality and agency. Subjectivation¹⁷, which describes the process of becoming a culturally embedded subject of society, is the basis for the acquisition of actions patterns and more generally, our agency¹⁸. Historical processes which constitute culture produce the experiences which become a part of the selves. Individuals become selves through experiences, and these experiences are, among others, formed by cultural discourses which have a historical element in them. Based on this understanding, J. Scott argues that "Subjects are constituted discursively and experience is a linguistic event." (*Evidence of Experience*, 793-779).

¹⁷ The idea of subjectivation is tied to Foucault's understanding of this process, where he declares this to be a historical specific classification of a process where individuals are formed into subjects of various kinds. An analysis of subjectivation can according to Foucault be achieved by finding analogies between the corpus of statements which are presumed true at any given historical moment about the individual and the artifacts of some historical site. His analysis of the subjects, thus, unifies the importance of determining frequent allusions, discourses based on *pouvoir-savoir* and archeological *épistémès* (britannica.com, "Foucault's ideas").

¹⁸ Human agency denotes here a human being, also the agent, who has the capacity to manifest or exercise an or several actions. Actions can be analyzed based on their intentionality which would involve a discussion of the agent's mental states and events which caused the action (plato.stanford.edu, "Agency").

We become subjects through historical, cultural and social experiences and discourses which come to us in a linguistic cover. These experiences often remain unexamined cultural and personal connotations. However, once we start to examine these connotations, we are in the midst of the process of *conscientização*. The unique elements of time and space that lead to a person's situation are linguistic embedded entities. Indeed, "the generative act is linguistic in nature" (Leitch, *Deconstructive Criticism*, 127). We can, therefore, use linguistic tools, or more specifically literary tools, to decode the verbal emplotment which compromises the historical selves of each subject. Hayden White argues that all history is determined by a metahistory which is responsible for the choice of narrative strategy, the choice of an explanatory paradigm and the ideological implications of the given historical presentation (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 84). White claims that history and literature do not only share commonalities; history's textual characteristic makes it ultimately literature. Hence, all the historically specific discourses which impact our selves have been gathered in a narrative which is defined by a certain number of exclusions and restrictive conditions (White, *The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality*, 7). What is excluded or included in the narrative is determined by a subject or an ego who chooses to highlight certain elements over others to create a particular message with specific implications. Thus, real events which come to us in the form of chaotic historical records are arranged and conjoined to reveal an order of meaning which they initially did not possess. This conjunction of real events, or the narrative representation of them, is the result of an impulse to prioritize events according to their significance for a specific culture or a group (White, *The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality*, 14). For White, the continuity of certain discourses prevails over the discontinuity in historical narrative representation. This continuity of certain discourses relates to the retention of legality, legitimacy and authority. The narrator only receives the authority to narrate through a reader who needs to recognize specific narrative forms and elements from her own culture and moral apparatus to accept the claimed truths constructed through the narrative.

According to White, the narrative forms and elements which reoccur and are used for all types of writing, regardless of whether it is fictional or academical writing, can be associated with four tropological modes or master tropes, namely metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony, which determine the modalities of emplotment, the arguments found in there and the ideological implications of the text. He justifies these tropes by explaining that the understanding of data always moves towards the structures of consciousness which we

unconsciously use to make sense of reality. Hence, coherency in the data is created and previously disjointed entities are fashioned according to these structures of consciousness (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 1). Unrelated concepts are connected through associations and unexpected figures of speech and thoughts are produced through these tropes. The narrator, thus, deviates towards a favored meaning, conception or ideal of what is true and morally acceptable for her of this reality. This exercise is intrinsically a mimetic one. The in the text found interpretation is a distorted description of the study subject which serves the writer's needs to receive the reader's authority to describe the phenomenon of interest (Auerbach, *Mimesis: the Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, 128). Tropes are ultimately used to render the unfamiliar phenomena found in reality familiar. White claims that the fourfold pattern of tropes has been recurrent in modern discourses in academic historical writing about human consciousness since this fourfold schema of tropes of the modes of mental association he found is characteristic for all human understanding (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 13). The emplotment, or the construction of a story, is, according to White, limited to the four modes which are a result of our general cultural and specifically Western literary heritage, and which are based on the plot structures set up by Northrop Frye in his study *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) (romance, tragedy, comedy and satire).

Mode of Emplotment	Mode of Ideological Implication	Mode of Argument	Associated Trope
Tragedy	Radical	Mechanistic	Metonymy
Comedy	Conservative	Organicist	Synecdoche
Romance	Anarchist	Formist	Metaphor
Satire	Liberal	Contextualist	Irony

Note: Arranged according to the “elective affinities” between categories.

Figure 9: Hayden White's *Historiographical Combinatory* by Matthew Garrett p. 89 (2018)

For this thesis, White's argument about the fourfold pattern of tropes is less important than the implications of his argument itself; he not only limits the generic production for historical writing, but he eliminates the professional historian's insistence on the separation between truth and fiction in historical narrative. Since every history must be emplotted, every historical representation is intrinsically narrative (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 81). Characterization, motific repetition, variation of tone and point of view are literary techniques which are usually used in novels and plays, but which according to White, are also found in historical writing to produce the stories which conjoin historical events. “Historical events are value-neutral.” (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 83). What gives them the generic attributes of

being perceived as tragic, comic, romantic or ironic are the literary choices by the historian or the author which result in suppression or subordination of certain themes or emphasis on others to produce the meaning which she wishes to produce. This conjunction between specific plot structures with the set of historical events is essentially a literary and fiction making procedure for White. He stresses that historical narratives continue to produce an important kind of knowledge in spite of not producing scientific knowledge about human nature. Historical narratives offer us the same kind of valuable knowledge which literature and art grant us about culture rather than nature and they offer us a glimpse of the various dimensions of our humanly being (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 23).

While White's claim about the human natural impulse to narrate in order to create understanding for worldly phenomena is generally accepted, he meets strong opposition in regard to his firm stance on the preconscious tropological historiographical modes and his abolishment of the distinction between academic historical writing and fictional writing. Leitch claims that "the ground for textuality is intertextuality¹⁹." (*Deconstructive Criticism*, 139). Each text is inherently an intertext which is influenced by a preceding spot of time. However, White restricts the notion of intertextuality in history due to his inalterable preconscious tropes which determine the historiographical modes. Also, the preconscious tropes, which he insists on reoccur in modern discourses about human consciousness, could be as much constructed and imposed by White as found. As a practitioner of his academic field, he is also a devotee of one of its academic traditions and is, therefore, biased. His own academic practice may have led him to seek evidence based on a sense of possible recognizable forms, namely the plot structures by Northrop Frye.

Moreover, one of his fiercest critics, Paul Ricœur, may agree with White on the importance of emplotment in historiographical operations, yet, he strongly challenges the abolishment of the distinction between academic historical writing, or, as he terms it, explanatory modes of writing, and fictional writing. Historical writing adapts to mnemonic knowledge insofar as it deals with memory which is about the past (Ricœur, *Memory, History and Forgetting*, 235). Hence, images of what has previously been seen, heard, experienced, learned and acquired are

¹⁹ Intertextuality stands for the influence which other texts may have upon the meaning of a written work. This feature may be displayed through, for example, quotations, allusions, plagiarism, pastiche and parody (Porter, *Intertextuality and the Discourse Community*, 34-47).

invoked to form the remembered phenomena. This operation resembles White's preconscious tropes which are employed when we try to understand past happenings. Yet, historical writing and fictive writing differ among other things on their claim to truth; while fiction sticks to the sphere of the imaginary and suspends its claim to truth, historical writing and historical knowledge rely on truth since the academic field of history concerns itself with depicting *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*²⁰. The historian can establish the claim to truth through a documentary phase which reports back to the testimony and the trust placed in the word of another who has composed or co-composed the sources (Ricœur, *Memory, History and Forgetting*, 244). The documentary proof is often illustrated through notations or annotations which are considered to belong to the first-order documentary reference and which produce the reality effect in fictional and historical narratives (Ricœur, *Memory, History and Forgetting*, 554). Yet, the narrative structure of historical writing has a mandatory referential dimension which is not transferred to other literary texts. While referentiality itself may produce new challenges for historical writing²¹, because of the tendency that humans have to treat history uncritically as a mirror of the past, it is still the component in historical writing that ensures that the past is preserved, even if it's only in traces (Ricœur, *Time and Narrative*, 100).

In terms of the criticism regarding the didactical suitability of White's preconscious tropes for the research question of this thesis, two aspects can be discussed in terms of its appropriateness. Firstly, Freire emphasizes that independent thinking must be objectively verifiable (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 54). This objectivity consists of demythification and determining causal links, and I argued that these correlations can be established through logical reasoning which verifies the causality of a hypothesis. White divides logical reasoning into poetic logic, which the preconscious tropes are a part of, and rational or scientific knowledge which partly violates logical consistency because it consists of at least one move or transition in the sequence of description of reality which does not preserve the logical rules (Hegel, *Logics*, 181-190). For White, rational and scientific knowledge outweigh poetic logic since preconscious tropes are the foundation of all

²⁰ A statement by historian Leopold von Ranke who emphasized that History should concern itself with the study of showing how things actually were (Melve and Ryymin, *Historikerens arbetsmåter*, 21).

²¹ The act of emplotment is rarely able to comprise all extralinguistic and extratextual influences of reality (Hartogs, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, 212).

knowledge and this kind of knowledge can only be raised to the level of abstract concepts and exposed to criticism of logical consistency and coherency by means of poetic and figurative modes of cognition (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 7). While Freire does not categorize objective verifiability through poetic logic and scientific logic, both these concepts belong implicitly to his didactical suggestions which are crucial to foster critical consciousness. The decodification of the generative themes asks the pupils to decompose the themes through dialogue in cultural circles. I have suggested that the pupils should be exposed to the generative themes through narratives and close reading to adapt the lesson plan to the requirements of ethical awareness. In this stage, pupils exert poetic logic since they are asked to pay close attention to the story of the generative theme and to set up their arguments based on the language and the figures which they encounter in the same narrative. Moreover, pupils display scientific logic in the last step of the lesson plan, where they should transform the concrete situation described in the generative theme through action and transformative labor which is objectively verifiable and can be analyzed through empiricism. The findings of the empiric study could afterwards be discussed in the final essay.

Furthermore, White's preconscious tropes resemble Freire's and Bloom's hierarchical models of knowledge which could potentially hinder certain pupils to attain the highest learning stages in the models. For Bloom and Freire, each new learning stage depends on the achievement of the previous stage. However, White stresses that his fourfold schema of tropes should rather be regarded as a model in which each mode is preserved, transcended and assimilated to the mode that follows it and that each new chain of logical reasoning demands a return to a more primitive mode of cognition (White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 10). Hence, the tropes should not be regarded as hierarchical but rather as an infinite process to which we constantly return and which helps us to resituate consciousness regarding the generative theme and the auxiliary codifications which are created during the analysis of the generative theme. In the context of teaching, planning will still be facilitated if teachers do this through learning stages and steps which will most likely be depicted hierarchically. Thus, the precautions for using White's model should be the same as when using Freire's and Bloom's models; these models must be adapted to enable each pupil to develop the cognitive skills according to their own abilities and wishes.

White's theory focuses mainly on inalterable preconscious tropes which constitute the fictive and historical narratives. His deep structures of consciousness do not detail how these

historiographical operations specifically incorporate historical time. Yet, the discussion about historical time is crucial in the study of History and for the understanding of the dynamic that interweaves and is utilized in the process of narrativization of structure and event (Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, 246). The sense of the past persists and is a component of current and future institutions, values and other patterns of human society. Hobsbawm describes the past to be “a permanent dimension of the human consciousness.” (*The Sense of the Past*, 10). This past is what informs and is an integral part of different forms of human interaction and human behavior. For Koselleck, historical time consists of a *Erfahrungsraum*²² and a *Erwartungshorizont*²³ which make historical time a fluctuating entity (*Vergangene Zukunft*, 351). Histories are created in a space where the past (*Erfahrungsraum*), the future (*Erwartungshorizont*) and the present interact, inform and influence human life or where these entities are subjectively performed through human actions. Historical time and historical consciousness are not merely conceptions or ideas. They are an integrated part of conscious actions, social interactions and they invoke strong feelings. An analysis of historical time must, therefore, consider knowledge, experiences, wit, feelings, insights and imagination. Also, in regard to didactics, the specific arenas, such as newspapers, video

games, photographs, music and monuments, have been recommended as tools of analysis to facilitate the understanding of historical time and historical consciousness for the pupils (Jeismann, *Geschichtsbewusstsein*, 42-43). A central insight which this model conveys is that history is and has always been “a hybrid form of knowledge, syncretizing past and

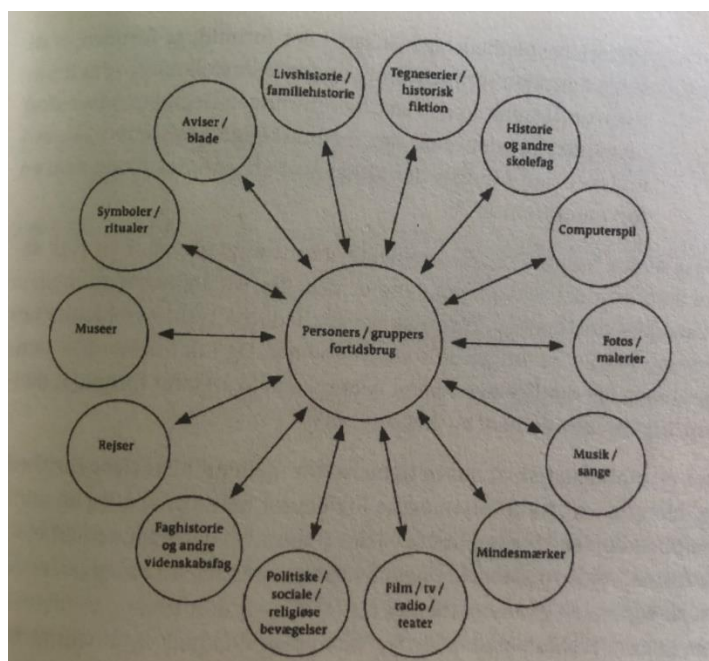


Figure 10: Spaces of Usage and Learning of Historical Consciousness by Bernard Eric Jensen (p. 27, *Historiebevidsthed/Fortidsbrug*) (2017)

²² *Erfahrungsraum* can be translated with «room of experience». It describes the experiences which have been collected, processed and preserved until a particular point in time (Jensen, *Historiebevidsthed/Fortidsbrug*, 23).

²³ *Erwartungshorizont* can be translated with «horizon of expectations», and it points to the future expectations which are based on the *Erfahrungsraum* (Jensen, *Historiebevidsthed/Fortidsbrug*, 23).

present, memory and myth, the written record and the spoken word.” (Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 443). This model, thus, also justifies the usage of a hybrid method which combines for example literary and historical tools to enhance the pupils’ performance and learning.

Based on these insights, and in light of the research presented on ethical awareness and critical thinking, a didactical synthesis of the three study fields historical consciousness, critical thinking and ethical awareness could include the following (the modifications only involve points 3. and 4. f. to h. of the lesson plan presented on p. 20-21. The descriptions in **red** represent the research on historical consciousness, while the descriptions in **green** refer to the research on ethical awareness):

3. Presentation of generative theme: **through historical narrative**
4. Decodification of the generative theme **through close reading**: climate of creativity (group and class discussions)
 - f. **Establish categorical and/or situational empathy with the characters in the narrative**
 - i. **Categorical empathy: determined through character identification (the depictions of characters, the characters’ demeanor, ambitions, motives, personal signs their skills and qualities and the readers perception of whether they are reliable)**
 1. **Acknowledgment of the character/s on the individual level, the moral level and the personal level**
 - ii. **Situational empathy: identified through consonant or dissonant narration (narrator’s experiencing self and the retrospective self)**
 - g. **Determine the unique elements of time and space that led to the character’s situation (human temporality)**
 - i. **Analysis of the core self and the autobiographical self (determining the character’s wishes, anxieties and fantasies, but also their knowledge experiences, wit, feelings and insights)**
 1. **Consider the character’s *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont***
 2. **Examine the historical culture, such as sources, artifacts and rituals, in the text**
 - ii. **Identify referentiality or intertextuality in the text**

1. Discuss documentary phase of the narrative (such as notations or annotations)
- h. Investigation of ethical dilemmas through analysis of social and political power relations, recognition of the power of voice and agency, evaluation of the multiple causes and considerations behind the social or moral phenomena and the inquiry into the effects of presence and absence in the literary text

Figure 11: Didactical suggestions based on a synthesis of Freire's research, the research presented in this thesis on ethical awareness and the research discussed regarding historical consciousness

Determining the unique elements of time and space that led to the character's situation is a common point of interest for both critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness. Freire advocates that the historical condition of each existential situation should be analyzed in order for the pupils to understand why they find themselves in or why others are inhabitants of oppressive situations (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 40). Transformative action is, hence, a result of the objectification of reality by decomposing the existential situation which is encoded in the generative theme into its meaningful historical elements. Furthermore, the analysis of human temporality of existential situations is equally crucial when fostering ethical awareness, since ethical awareness demands an understanding of the person's inner depths, such as personal signs, skills and ambitions. This approach will strengthen the pupils' emotional intellectual compassion which helps them to perceive similarities between themselves and the other and, at the same time, acknowledge the other's unique capacities and circumstance. When analyzing human temporality in historical narratives, it makes sense to establish the core self and the autobiographical self by considering for example the character's wishes, experiences, insights and anxieties, but also by determining the room of experience and the horizon of expectations which influence the character's choices and thinking. Such investigations will be enhanced by identifications of intertextuality and referentiality which involve the establishment of the documentary sources since they help pupils to classify the sources which form and influence the character's motives and behavior. In summary, the analysis of human temporality becomes a part of an interdisciplinary approach which benefits the pupils' comprehension of experiencing themselves and others as being simultaneously products of history and producers of history, and such an insight supports their ethical judgment and puts them in a better position to enact transformative actions which benefit the broader society and themselves.

The didactical suggestions, or lesson plan, also propose that historical narratives are particularly suitable to execute an interdisciplinary approach which fosters historical consciousness, ethical awareness and critical thinking. The emplotment found in historical narratives can be exploited to strengthen the pupils' own judgement about the importance of separation between truth and fiction. Life narratives and border-crossing narratives particularly challenge the strict separation between truth and fiction since they often rely heavily on documentary sources, just as historical academical writing does. In the next chapter, I will discuss the benefits of using the two novels *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* and *Lost Children Archive* as the historical narrative in the developed lesson plan.

2.5 Justification for the use of the novels *Lost Children Archive* and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*

In literary criticism, there is a distinction between an inside and an outside of a text (Ricœur, *Life in Quest of Narrative*, 26). The inside of the text represents the world of the text, while the outside of the text represents the physical external world. However, during the creation of a narrative, the author fuses these two worlds. The narrated story becomes a temporal totality where heterogenous elements from the outside world have been synthesized in a seemingly concordant story plot depicted in the world of the text. The author relies for this process on her narrative understanding which stems from the models handed down to her by her culture. However, the narrative may have an ambivalent relationship to these models; it may either show signs of repetition or of conscious deviance. While the author may be guided by traditional models, she is still able to be innovative and produce a work which is groundbreaking and experimental.

Lost Children Archive by Valeria Luiselli is an example of such a border-crossing narrative that enhances our empathy for the individual and our critical awareness of historical accounts. She explicitly calls attention to archival work, processes of documentation and recording by referring to different intertexts and putting emphasis on the ethics of representation in her fictional border-crossing narrative. By including these elements in her narrative which we normally find in historical narratives, Luiselli challenges the clear-cut separation between fictional and historical narratives. The world of the text and the world of the author intersects because of this referentiality and documentary proof. For example, almost every chapter ends with a section called "box" where all the sources which are described or mentioned in the

chapter are listed (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 34, 70, 110, 148-149, 242-157, 342-344). These strategies produce a reality effect on the reader where the reader is able to experience a textual world in which it would be possible to live, and they simultaneously break down master narratives by echoing history. The reader's horizon of expectation and her horizon of experience enter into a discussion and fuse together in the process of understanding the text (Ricoeur, *Life in Quest of Narrative*, 26). By experimenting with historical elements in her fictional novel, Luiselli creates a borderland where the reader gets to experience, in the mode of the imaginary, the life of the undocumented child migrants appealing for asylum in the US. For example, in the physical borderland, the two groups of children, the documented and undocumented ones, come together. Luiselli not only challenges the rigid borders by blurring the lines between the two groups of children when she turns the boy and his sister into lost children themselves. She also challenges the border between the dead and the living, the dead history and the living history, by applying magic realism when she lets the two groups of children, namely the ones from the elegies and the boy and his sister, meet in an abandoned train car. This merging of the two groups of children illustrates Luiselli's attempt to break down the master narrative of the lost children, which often victimizes them by not giving them a voice, or by disregarding their echoes. To echo the lost children's voices, In the novel, the two groups of lost children meet each other in the borderlands and create new alliances. At a certain point, the boy and the girl seem to have gotten lost in the desert. They have no food or water left. The situation seems hopeless. But they spot an eagle, which they begin to follow (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 328). The eagle leads them into a train wagon, where it has made its nest, but where the protagonists also find the other children from the elegies whom they have been reading about (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 329). Borderlands are not limited to a separated and dividing character, but they carry characteristics which acknowledge the interrelationships of cultures, literatures, aesthetic theories and critical practices in the modern and post-modern world (Elder, *Criticizing from the Borderlands*, 9). Luiselli fuses two opposing categories of children together with their culture and their history through this scene.

The highly asymmetrical relations of dominance and subordination come forth in the borderland represented as contact zones between different people, where the ones who use the borderland as a crossing-over are assigned the status as prohibited and forbidden by the stronger nations. Disorder and ambiguity are central characteristics of borderlands, as well as multidimensionality and transterritoriality, since these borderlands also acknowledge the

interrelationships between different cultures (Manzanas and Sánchez, *Borderlands: Ethnicity, Multiculturalism, and Hybridity*, 16). Thus, during the act of reading, the pupils realize that the borderland can be both a frontier which implies a model for center and periphery (where these two entities confront one another most often in a one-way enforcement of power), or a multidimensional and transterritorial place of connections and categories (Kaplan, *Left Alone with America*, 16-17). The ambiguous character of the novel as being both historical and fictional at the same time enhances this notion and makes the context of description for particular actions, namely the borderlands, susceptible to transformation and recreation. Hence, Freire's theory which focuses on transformative action is suitable when working with this novel, since the generative theme given by the novel is closely inspired by the thematic universe of the pupils. The deportation of illegal child migrants is also a common practice in European countries such as Norway. By regarding the pain of others in this novel, pupils experience a suffering that is outrageous, unjust and that requires transformative action. Yet, an essential part of transformative action is empathic understanding, which the pupils get to exercise since they can glimpse and analyze subaltern voices and question depressing historical circumstances which play an important role in the oppressive situation through the novel's usage of several points of view and different narrators and narratees.

Categories may seem incompatible and unalterable. However, once we look closer, as the boy does in Luiselli's novel, we might be able to see the fluidity in the lines of the categories, and the potential for the lines to be molded by the seer of them. The fluidity of the borderlines is illustrated through the boy's imagination by Luiselli. The boy persistently tries to witness the happenings which are occurring inside the airplane, albeit, without avail. His mother asks him to look hard and tell her everything (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 184). After initial frustration, the boy looks at his mother, then at his father, and then at his sister, and then again into the binoculars. The boy's eye movement displays how we constantly try to make sense of the world by using different categories which our culture communicates to us. Yet, the boy manages to exercise agency and break free of the in-/excluding categories when he stops to look, and takes a deep breath instead, thereby, experiencing the coming together of incompatible frames of reference which cause a cultural collision. This cultural collision opens a space for the boy where he can be creative and establish new categories by using his imagination. Suddenly, because of the boy's imagination, the children on the plane are no longer silent prisoners, but astronauts in a spaceship (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 184). According to Jung, categories are sustained by our own selves (*Definitions*, 781). The subject,

here the boy, cannot clearly distinguish himself from the object, the other children, which is illustrated with his obsession for seeing them. The boy is bound to them by a direct relationship which amounts to a partial identity. This direct relationship enables the coming together of different categories with opposing characteristics. But at the same time, it enables the subject's power to exercise agency and create new categories as he or she wishes. Anzaldúa fittingly asserts "nothing happens in the real world unless it first happens in the images in our head" (*Crossers and Towards a New Consciousness*, 109).

Another novel which challenges the division between fictional and historical narratives is *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* by Julia Alvarez. While Alvarez describes her novel as being a fictional story (Alvarez, *On the Power of Telling Our Stories*, 295), the work has been heavily influenced by her own experiences in life, namely her immigration together with her family from the Dominican Republic to the United States and the feelings of displacement and alienation which were a result of this. These feelings of displacement and alienation can be noticed by the reader for example in the chapter "Trespass" where Carla, one of the sisters and the narrator of this chapter, expresses feelings of regret and self-loathing for not being able to speak English that well and she even considers this to be a legitimate argument by other Americans who use this fact to point out that she does not belong in this country (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 156). Differences in speech and appearance may be used as reasons for excluding someone from the inner group, and these experiences may give the receiver of this rejection the feeling of alienation and displacement, which Alvarez describes through the four García sisters in her novel. Alvarez shares this and many other experiences which inform her story with other people from her family who do not agree with Alvarez's portrayal of certain shared memories. However, her main objective is to tell multiple truths rather than affirming one particular point of view. A truth which may be one and manifold; one truth, because truth may be represented as an agreed representation of a phenomenon by a group or one individual, and manifold truth, because this equally legitimate truth includes complexities and competing realities of the same phenomenon (labloga.blogspot.com, "Interview with Julia Alvarez"). Alvarez's use of shared memories resembles the historian's approach to sources and her analysis and inclusion of these sources in the emplotment of historical narratives. Historians, and Norwegian pupils alike, must both be able to perceive different perspectives and perform source criticism in historical representations. These two aspects are linked, since the execution of source criticism demands the ability to identify multiple perspectives to determine the source's relevance and credibility

in connection with the research question. The identification of present voices is as crucial in this process as the establishment of absent voices. White emphasizes that historians should maximize possible interpretations of history (White, *The Historical Text as Literary Artifact*, 1470), and this maximization can be enabled through the use of multiple perspectives and a manifold truth like Alvarez uses in her novel. For example, the chapter “Daughter of Invention” is narrated by three narrators, Mami, Papi and Yoyo, and different focalizers who all illustrate the different interpretations present in the same experience, such as when Laura, the mother, is working on a sketch for one of her inventions. The focus shifts from the mother to Yoyo, who takes the sketching to her sisters after interpreting it to be a picture of a man’s you-know-what instead of the intended outsized, built-in straw (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 134). The shift of focalization becomes clear through the change of the possessive pronoun “her”. In the sentence “Her daughters would giggle over (...)” the possessive pronoun indicates the mother’s perspective, while the next sentence “Once Yoyo was sure her mother (...)” hints at Yoyo’s perception. Alvarez cleverly illustrates through this literary strategy that people with the same experiences may still pay attention to different sides of this experience. The use of shared experiences as sources in narratives also raises the question about authority and authenticity: who has the right to tell this story through the narrative? Since Alvarez is the sole author of her novel, the manifold truth only encompasses the perspectives which she considers to be significant. Although the novel illuminates the immigrant experience of an entire family by using multiple narrators, such as the four García sisters, Alvarez fails to include independent voices from her real family whom she shares the life experiences with, which can be exemplified through her mother’s strong reaction towards her after the novel was published (Alvarez, *On the Power of Telling Our Stories*, 295). Hence, Alvarez did not receive any proxy from the people whom she seems to be speaking for in the novel to represent these experiences. This meaning of representation must also be considered by the historian, who uses the sources to shed light upon a research question and, thus, claims to be speaking for the often already deceased producers of these sources. Ethical considerations are, therefore, a crucial part in life narratives, even if they claim to be fictional, as in historical narratives. The exertion of empathy and the acknowledgement of others are central parts of this process. Lastly, the novel depicts how prosperous childhoods may be interconnected with the servitude of servants who may live under exploitative social conditions and the novel is, therefore, a good contribution to the narratives with which Freire wishes us to work. For example, the servant Chucha who has been working for the García family before Laura, the mother, was born, is left behind in the Dominican Republic when the

family flees to the United States (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 219), even though the family seems to know that black Haitians have suffered horrific atrocities under Trujillo's regime and continued to have worse living conditions than people like themselves whose lineage can be traced back to the Spanish conquistadores. Both Alvarez's novel and Luiselli's novel portray the lives and fates of marginalized people in the borderlands, "the physical and discursive place where cultures meet and collide" (Nas, *Border Crossings in Latina Narrative*, 129) and they, thus, help readers to question and reflect upon the creation and sustainment of oppressive situations. At the same time, they problematize the separation between fiction and fact in vital ways through the employment of literary techniques, some which they share, like the use of different narrators and the exercise of referentiality, and others which may not be shared but which help to complement the other novel, such as documentary proof. Both these novels are instrumental in redrawing the boundaries between fictional writing and historical writing, and they are effective teaching tools which can be used in class to engage the pupils with this problem of relevance for the achievement of critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness.

The curriculum in English encourages work with literature through its core elements and competence aims. Language learning is inseparably linked to the engagement with texts²⁴ in English (udir.no, "Core Elements in English"). English is a linguistically and culturally diverse language, and pupils should experience and reflect upon the diverse ways of living, ways of thinking and traditions of the English-speaking world through the work with texts in English. A central element of working with texts in English is that pupils are able to consider and analyze how multilingual and multicultural contexts influence their own and others' identities. The consideration and analysis of different parts of our identity is an integral part of the lesson plan developed in this thesis which promotes critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness. Pupils get to investigate generative themes from their own life through the deconstruction and analysis of the generative theme's social, cultural and historical elements. Since humans are a part of each generative theme, pupils must also consider the needs, wishes and feelings of the people who are embedded in and affected by

²⁴ The concept "text" includes spoken and written, printed and digital, graphic and artistic, formal and informal, fictional and factual, contemporary and historical texts which may consist of writing, pictures, audio, drawings, graphs, numbers and other forms of expression that are fused to convey or strengthen a message (udir.no, "Core Elements in English").

this generative theme. A byproduct which pupils get to develop by critically assessing generative situations and their different elements is intercultural competence²⁵; this competence is essential to successfully participate in an interconnected world and multicultural contexts which are marked by different ways of living, ways of thinking and various communication patterns. Alvarez's and Luiselli's novels contribute to the pluralist view of the contemporary English-speaking world by taking up themes about hybrid cultural identities, immigration and cultural and economic assimilation which require cross-cultural and cross-class understanding. Both novels offer us characters that depict this cross-cultural and cross-class understanding through their insider/outsider position which offers them the freedom to reject cultural and national loyalties. For example, the lost children are considered trespassers by law. While Luiselli uses the definition of the law, according to which these children are "people who go into somebody's land without permission" (oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, "Trespasser"), as a tool in her novel, she only does this because it is needed to give voice to the lost children. Luiselli's motivation, which comes through in the main character, the mother, a Hispanic American, is to help the lost children and to *see* them as children rather than as illegal trespassers like the law does. She depicts cross-cultural and cross-class understanding through the main character who decides to tell the story of the children who are missing and whose voices can no longer be heard rather than telling the story of the children who arrive, or the story of the children in immigration courts since their stories are already being told (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 146). She wants to find the indomitable emptiness (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 153) which will enable her to give voice to these children who inhabit this precarious third space and mold predefined categories which produce such children. Although the mother has internalized the law which would usually result in the maintenance of certain oppressive categories, her insider/outsider position helps her to perceive the injustices co-produced and sustained by the law.

Furthermore, Alvarez illustrates the advantage of the insider/outsider position through the teenage protagonist Carla who is able to challenge patriarchy in the Dominican Republic because of her capacity to see multiple legitimate forms of behavior; a capacity which results

²⁵ "Intercultural competence is the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions." (Deardorff, *The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States*, 245).

from her internalization of American values connected to the emancipation of women. Carla discusses women's rights with Manuel, her sister Fifi's boyfriend, who defends the unequal power between women and men in regard to decision making in the Dominican Republic based on the principal of sex (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 122-123). Even Carla's aunt, Tía Flor, considers demonstrations for women's rights counterproductive and unfeminine, since she indicates that these practices strengthen her status as a queen. Tía Flor is unable to employ multiple perspectives in the analysis of this problem. However, Carla, who in addition to her upbringing in the Dominican Republic has enjoyed an American upbringing, is able to identify oppressive elements in the practices of the Dominican Republic. This ability is a result of her insider/outsider position, and it empowers her to become an agent who enacts transformative actions which reconstruct oppressive systems and liberate oppressed people, such as her sister, Fifi.

The literary analysis of generative themes such as the above is encouraged by the competence aims in the English curriculum for VG1 general studies. Pupils should, for example, read, analyze and interpret literature in English, explore and reflect upon the diversity and political structures in the English-speaking world by employing a historical approach and read, discuss and reflect upon the content and the literary strategies found in different types of text (udir.no, "Competence aims and assessment"). Exposing pupils to literature and giving them the opportunity to work with literature contributes not only to the achievement of the competence aims; it also strengthens their ability to think critically and ethically which the core value "critical thinking and ethical awareness" focuses on. In addition, Alvarez's and Luiselli's novels are appropriate texts in interdisciplinary projects which concentrate on developing the pupils' skills in English and History. The next chapter of this thesis will focus on the part in the lesson plan which is relevant for the literary analysis of the novels. I will specify and explain which parts can be used as aids to enable literary reflection and discussion, and use these specifications afterwards in this thesis in the analysis of the novels.

3 Methodology

I have argued for and developed the following lesson plan to enhance critical thinking and ethical awareness through historical consciousness (since the lesson plan presented on p. 20-21 has been modified substantially, I have chosen to show the updated version):

1. Content: Finding generative theme from the thematic universe of the pupils
 - a. Theme must be connected to historical-cultural context of the pupils
2. Codification: Codify thematic theme according to following criteria:
 - a. Exhibit theme as a problem;
 - b. Ensure that theme can unfold into interrelated themes;
 - c. Thematic nucleus cannot be overtly explicit nor overly enigmatic.
3. Presentation of generative theme: through historical narrative
4. Decodification of the generative theme through close reading: climate of creativity (group and class discussions)
 - a. Situated in praxis, cultural circles (group debate and clarifications) and through dialogue, which ensures that one's own interpretations are interpreted, multiple definitions are developed, and ambiguous viewpoints are tolerated.
 - b. Decodification may open up into auxiliary codification, which should be analyzed like the generative themes.
 - c. Resolution of contradiction between oppressor and oppressed through dialectical resolution (synthesis) or thinking in paradigms of threes (e. g. naïve/astute/critical)
 - d. Resolution must be objectively verifiable (logics and appropriate study methods)
 - e. Stimulating perception of the previous perception or knowledge of previous knowledge (metacognition) through recognition
 - f. Establish categorical and/or situational empathy with the characters in the narrative
 - i. Categorical empathy: determined through character identification (the depictions of characters, the characters' demeanor, ambitions, motives, personal signs their skills and qualities and the readers perception of whether they are reliable)

1. Acknowledgment of the character/s on the individual level, the moral level and the personal level
 - ii. Situational empathy: identified through consonant or dissonant narration (narrator's experiencing self and the retrospective self)
- g. Determine the unique elements of time and space that led to the character's situation (human temporality)
 - i. Analysis of the core self and the autobiographical self (determining the character's wishes, anxieties and fantasies, but also their knowledge experiences, wit, feelings and insights)
 1. Consider the character's *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont*
 2. Examine the historical culture, such as sources, artifacts and rituals, in the text
 - ii. Identify referentiality or intertextuality in the text
 1. Discuss documentary phase of the narrative (such as notations or annotations)
- h. Investigation of ethical dilemmas through analysis of social and political power relations, recognition of the power of voice and agency, evaluation of the multiple causes and considerations behind the social or moral phenomena and the inquiry into the effects of presence and absence in the literary text
5. Reconfiguration or reinvention of generative theme: give pupils a new sense of totality and culminates in a cultural synthesis (oral presentation by pupils)
6. Action: Concrete situation must be transformed (written essays with proposal or other action)
 - a. Plan of subsequent stages of action / transformative labor should be included in proposal

Figure 12: Final version of the lesson plan developed in this thesis

However, the points which are relevant to conduct the literary analysis are points f. to h. of the lesson plan. Many commonalities were found between the determination of categorical empathy and the analysis of the core self and the autobiographical self (see section "previous research on historical consciousness"). It, therefore, makes sense to fuse point f. i. with point g. i. This fusion will not result in a loss of important aspects on either side, but rather avoid literary analysis of the same kind. An investigation of the character's demeanor, ambitions

and motives will also require the consideration of the autobiographical self; thus, the character's wishes, anxieties, their knowledge, experiences, wit, feelings and insights, since these aspects influence the human demeanor, ambition and motivation. Hence, the fusion of these aspects will even strengthen empathy and lead to a deeper understanding of the character's choices since the literary analysis gives us the opportunity to elaborate these choices more thoroughly. In addition, aspects such as wishes, anxieties and fantasies contain an important historical element, and the consideration of the character's room of experience and horizon of expectations will, therefore, be a part of this analysis. Furthermore, personal signs may be depicted through icons, objects, symbols, artifacts or rituals. Hence, the examination of historical culture will enhance the literary argumentation, which in turn will reinforce categorical empathy. Lastly, due to the limited length of this thesis, points f. i. 1. and h. will be excluded in the literary analysis. However, they are still relevant for the lesson plan and they should remain a part of the lesson plan since they give pupils a chance to be exposed to enriching perspectives and thoughts which are not taken up by the other points and which foster critical thinking and ethical awareness effectively.

The analysis of the novels will, thus, concentrate on the following points of the lesson plan:

- a. Establish categorical and/or situational empathy with the characters in the narrative
 - i. Categorical empathy: determined through the core self and the autobiographical self (the depictions of characters, the characters' demeanor, ambitions, motives, personal signs, their skills and qualities, wishes, anxieties, fantasies, knowledge, experiences, wit, feelings and insights)
 1. Consider the character's *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont*
 2. Examine the historical culture, such as sources, artifacts and rituals, in the text
 - ii. Situational empathy: identified through consonant or dissonant narration (narrator's experiencing self and the retrospective self)
- b. Determine human temporality: identify referentiality or intertextuality in the text
 - i. Discuss documentary phase of the narrative (such as notations or annotations)

Figure 13: Breakdown of the points from the lesson plan for the literary analysis

4. Analysis

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate how the indicated points of the lesson plan can be answered by teachers to guide their pupils when using this lesson plan. The first part of this chapter will examine Luiselli's novel *Lost Children Archive*, while the last part deals with Alvarez's novel *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*. Teachers may also use this part to illustrate possible responses to the different points to their pupils.

4.1 Categorical empathy in *Lost Children Archive*

Luiselli's novel focuses on the story of child immigrants who try to cross the Mexican-American border. Since they enter the borderlands, they are considered trespassers by the ones who attempt to control the borderlands and they are, therefore, subjected to coercion and marginalization. While marginalization is a common practice in the borderlands since it is considered an inhabitable place characterized by disorder and ambiguity, borderlands are also places which acknowledge interrelationships between different cultures through their multidimensional and transterritorial character (Manzanas and Sánchez, *Borderlands: Ethnicity, Multiculturalism, and Hybridity*, 16). Luiselli depicts the dynamic structures of the borderlands through the first-person narrator, namely the boy, who despite his American identity identifies with the immigrant children, thereby exercising categorical empathy. Through this empathic act, Luiselli reinforces these children's humanness to the reader and she transmits new configurations and new mindsets. The boy, Swift Feather, and his sister, Memphis, get lost in the borderland and meet the other lost children from the elegies there (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 331). The boy and the girl try to create an echo by saying the word "Geronimo". However, instead of an echo, their ears are met by real sounds from the other lost children from the elegies who reply the word "Geronimo" back to them. Luiselli creates character identification by focusing on the lost children's demeanor which imitates the boy's and the girl's demeanor. This strategy diminishes the division between both groups of children and highlights similarities between them which can be connected to their shared humanity, thereby leading to the feeling of empathy towards the lost children. The reader mirrors herself in these characters and this helps her to acknowledge that the lost children's circumstances could possibly become her own. Luiselli's literary choice on focusing on imitation is especially powerful to strengthen emotional intellectual compassion for the lost children. Imitation is never a mere reproduction of reality, but rather a remolding of reality

(Sánchez Palencia, *Catarsis en la Poética de Aristóteles*, 131). A new category can emerge because of this strategy which makes the reader gain an empathic understanding of people who are different from her.

Furthermore, Luiselli creates character identification by using the lost children as focalizers in the elegies, which enhances the readers perception of the lost children's core and autobiographical self. In the eighth elegy, Luiselli depicts the urination process of the lost children on the train during their precarious journey. As readers we perceive the situation through the girls' eyes who had no other option than to climb down a ladder and urinate from a small platform between cars. This situation was so frightening to them that "they closed their eyes, trying to not see the moving ground." (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 269). Through Luiselli's literary strategy, these children indicate that they are aware that their fear is a result of the perilous situation they find themselves in. An awareness of feelings resulting from bodily sensations is a key characteristic of the core consciousness/self. The use of focalizers to depict the children's core self, results in the readers reconceptualization of the children from illegal humans to humans with the same desires, aims and emotions like us, but who differ only in their circumstances.

Furthermore, Luiselli adopts the children's perspective to detail how the children's room of experience and horizon of expectation are indivisibly interconnected and are the foundation for the children's autobiographical self. In the thirteenth elegy, the children are on the train and await their final halt. While their thoughts are partly occupied by the most immediate sensory impressions such as the rhythm of the train wheels, some of their thoughts wander towards stories which they had heard over the previous months and years about beloved people whom they would see again after a long time, such as mothers, fathers and siblings (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 311). These stories maintain the children's room of experience and have a direct influence on their horizon of expectations which is illustrated through their excitement of seeing their loved ones again. Hence, their present situation is informed and interacts with past memories and expectations related to future happenings. Additionally, these temporal entities impact the children's actions which can be illustrated through their decision to undertake the risky journey to the United States through the borderland. The children's decision to undertake the precarious journey highlights that children can become conscious agents of their own lives by entering into contact with the borderland. Since the borderland is a potent site which transforms and configures identities and categories, it enables the children to become agents. Dominant modern discourses of

childhood disempower children by describing them as being innately innocent, passive, unknowing and dependent (Jenks, *Childhood*, 124). Yet, these children are also agents of their own lives. According to Loff and Sanghera people might be influenced to make rational decisions and to act in ways that might be illegal, socially unacceptable and self-harming in a world full of inequality (*Distortions and Difficulties in Data for Trafficking*, 566). Butler explains that we might consent to something with the presumption that we are stable individuals (*Sexual Consent: Some Thoughts on Psychoanalysis and Law*, 405-406). However, our “I” is highly unstable and undergoes transformation, especially in multidimensional sites like borderlands. It is, therefore, more appropriate to talk about the amount of agency that people in precarious situations have. Such explanations must consider the oppressive structures which these people live under, but at the same time, the explanations must also include attempts to identify instances of emancipatory forms of resistance.

Luiselli gives us other examples of emancipatory forms of resistance with the lost children from the elegies, such as when they conceal a broken mobile phone from the coyote (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 305). This act illustrates the use of historical artifacts to enact known culture which is an integrated part of the autobiographical self. The children play with it and use their imagination to turn a broken mobile phone into a communication device which enables them to call their loved ones (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 307), thereby, using their agency to configure the border between reality and fiction. When it comes to agency, children do not differ from adults. According to new sociology of children, children are capable agents who possess the ability to make meaning of the world and shape their own world as they wish (Wrigley, *Contemporary Sociology*, 693). With help of the historical artifact, the mobile phone, the children use their autonomy and competency here to sustain a part of their autobiographical self which is tied to specific people with whom they had interactions and share memories and experiences. The connection which the children feel with their loved ones is an important element of their identity which they feel the need to maintain and foster to not lose sense of whom they are. Historical culture, of which historical artifacts such as phones are a part of, offer us an opportunity to link together relations between the past, the present and future (Kvande and Naastad, *Hva skal vi med Historie*, 50). The children’s autobiographical self is composed of a human temporality which the children reinforce by basing their present actions on past memories, but their present actions, on the other hand, will also impact their future actions by becoming the basis for them (thus, a part of their room of experience).

Luiselli gives us another example of how historical artifacts are used to establish a connection to memories which sustain the autobiographical self through the narrator, Swift Feather. The boy regards a photograph which he took in a previous chapter in the novel about the airplane which deported the undocumented children (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 200). He expresses frustration since he only sees the plane and not the undocumented children in the photograph. His frustration is linked to his wish to document undocumented happenings, such as the disappearances and deportations by the deported children. However, the boy realizes that “everything that happened after he took the picture was also inside, although no one could see it, except of him.”, and he, therefore, concludes that also his sister, who did not see the original moment, could see everything that cannot be documented. Historical culture, such as this photograph, may change its meaning over time and this may result in new insights and new transformative actions which shape reality anew (Jensen, *At handle i tid og rum: Et socialkonstruktivistisk historiebegreb*, 197-223). The boy’s revision of the limits of a photograph reconceptualizes the static division between illegal/legal and documented/undocumented and creates an opportunity for the reader to rethink the framework which upholds the deportations and suffering. Hence, a new historical premise may emerge which transcends and resists the previous limiting political impositions, and new liberating circumstances for the undocumented children may be created.

4.2 Situational empathy in *Lost Children Archive*

The autobiographical self is characterized by a retrospective contemplation where past experiences are revisited and revalued in the present situation. Luiselli depicts this retrospective contemplation through the mother by using dissonant narration to enhance situational empathy in the reader. During her and her family’s journey by car to the south of the country, the first-person narrator, the mother, and her family start listening to the audiobook *Lord of the Flies* (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 89). While Luiselli uses consonant narration by using the present tense in some parts of the chapter, such as when the narrator indicates that “the children complain from the backseat.” (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 90), two paragraphs later the narration shifts to dissonant narration which is announced through the use of the past continuous, such as in the sentence “When my husband and I were just beginning to work on the city soundscape project (...)”. The mother reminisces about past experiences which are relevant for the situation in which she finds herself in that particular moment, since she is considering her children’s capacity to

understand classic literature which adults value highly. The mother uses her past experience to deepen her analysis of her own children's mental capacities. Through this literary strategy, the reader gets a holistic view on the experiences which shape the mother's reaction towards her children. Luiselli's literary strategy fits research which declares that the use of the first-person narrator and an internal perspective, such as the retrospective contemplation shown by the mother, are effective tools to create a close relationship between the character and the reader (Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, 96-97). Thus, the world of the reader and the world of the text get interlocked through the narrative imagination created by the reader, where the reader gets to understand the emotions and wishes of the mother by identifying with her. This capacity for sympathetic imagination is essential to comprehend motives and choices by people who might be different from ourselves, but who still share many problems and possibilities with us. Luiselli not only depicts something that has happened in the textual sphere, but she also shows us something that might happen in our sphere. The mother's critical examination of her own experiences is something that we ourselves can aspire to since it reflects Socrates' idea of an examined life²⁶. By questioning her previous conclusions about children being recipients in need of higher knowledge of the world according to adults, she is a role model for the critical thinking process which Freire asks us to perform and which develops the capacity to reason logically and to test one's own beliefs for consistency and accuracy.

4.3 Referentiality and intertextuality in *Lost Children Archive*

Luiselli's novel continues to intersect with Freire's critical theory in other points. The interpretation of her writing demands a deconstruction of the plot, where several real-life events and happenings have been used as story elements to enhance the storyline. Hence, her fictional story consists of several referential and intertextual elements which resemble the referential dimension of historical writing. The family travels to the Chiricahua Mountains because they want to visit Apacheria, "where the last free peoples on the entire American continent lived before they had to surrender to the white-eyes²⁷" (Luiselli, *Lost Children*

²⁶ The idea of an examined life is related to Socrates' quote "the unexamined life is not worth living" (britannica.com, "Socrates") which means that one's thinking must be scrutinized by questioning, logics and examination to qualify for a life worth living.

²⁷ The white Europeans and white Americans were called white-eyes by the Chiricahuas (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 26).

Archive, 26). The territory of the Apache encompassed today's east-central and southeastern Arizona, southeastern Colorado, southwestern and eastern New Mexico and western Texas before Spanish invasion and colonialization (Britannica.com, "Apache"). This North American indigenous tribe have a rich history which includes the development of flexible subsistence economy and the establishment of a fierce military power. The family's motivation to visit Apacheria illustrates Luiselli's motivation to write the novel; namely, to challenge the current dichotomy between legal and illegal children by adding a source to this dichotomy which is rarely included in the discussion. The reference to Apacheria shapes the reader's interpretation of Luiselli's novel and it helps her to perceive the lost children through a perspective which would have been left out in the mainstream discourse; a perspective of pride for the indigenous people which have lived in the land that was claimed through force by European colonizers and another perspective of absurdity which turn European Americans into illegal migrants themselves. In one of her interviews, Luiselli points out that stories about migrants are rarely told "in a way that is humanizing of the people involved." (theguardian.com, "Valeria Luiselli Interview: Lost Children Archive"). News articles tend to define migrants with words such as "numbers", "surges", "masses" or "caravans", or they remove the migrant's agency by making them an absolute victim of her circumstances. Both these techniques flatten the representation of migrant and other victims of trauma. By including different sources such as the one about the Apacheria in her narrative, Luiselli nuances these people's situation and decision-making which makes them more relatable to the reader. At the same time, through the use of these intertextual elements which echo historical happenings, she challenges the previous presentations of history and breaks down master narratives by introducing liminal characters from the Apache history, such as Geronimo, who was the last leader of the Apache in the novel (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 237). The characters Swift Feather and Memphis use his name to create an echo which is intercepted by the lost children (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 331). Their use of the name "Geronimo" illustrates their identification with this character and defies the confident historicism which literary canons maintain by leaving out central Mexican American experiences. Luiselli's technique (also called "disjoint narrative form"²⁸) of moving between the past and the present

²⁸ Disjoint narrative, or nonlinear story structure, is often used to mimic the structure and recall of human memory and to blur direct causations of the featured events in the story (Heise, *Chronoschisms: Time, Narrative, and Postmodernism*, 77).

reverberates the past in the present and functions as a political performance through which subaltern voices may be glimpsed (Gunnars, *Translating the Subaltern*, 75-81).

In addition, Luiselli resists the normative narrative of historical representation which was set up by the West and instead acknowledges subaltern voices by highlighting the limits of the documenting and archival process. The first-person narrator, the mother, feels divided when it comes to recording the first sounds of the family trip; while she wishes to record them since they feel like the last sounds of something, she is also critical to the idea of recording since she does not want to interfere with her own recording (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 60). What she means with her own recording is, on the one hand, “all the important ways in which experience cannot be documented but only transcribed from its visceral impression into some reproducible linguistic form” (Blouin and Rosenberg, *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory*, 1), and, on the other hand, all her individual moral, aesthetic or historical values which would not have been valued in a future archive by a historian who would not be able to take off the straitjacket, hence, her own consciousness, that her own disciplinary training has given to her. Luiselli is referring here to subjugated knowledge of the subaltern, which is “a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity.” (Foucault, *Two lectures: Power/Knowledge*, 82). These kinds of knowledges deviate from the master narrative and the people who apply such knowledges are, therefore, refused the permission to narrate (Said, *Permission to Narrate*, 53). In the end, only narratives which imitate and reproduce the colonialist historiographic master narratives are allowed to be mentioned and represented. Yet, Luiselli illustrates the beauty of nonconformity by corresponding truly to one’s own social being through the narrator’s daughter, Memphis, who exudes curiosity and deviates from the ideal of the master narrative by inquiring who “Jesus Fucking Christ” is (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 61). The mother’s refusal to answer her question depicts possible approaches which can be used to touch the consciousness of subaltern and to render them visible by avoiding “any kind of analysis of the subject whether psychological, psychoanalytical or linguistic.” (Foucault, *Two lectures: Power/Knowledge*, 49-50).

However, while Luiselli points out the limits of the documenting and archival process, she, at the same time, also acknowledges the importance of archives for individuals and societies in the creation of their autobiographical self. The first-person narrator, the mother, reminisces

about the time where she had to look for one of her sister's IDs in the drawer. In the drawer, she found her sister's "well-ordered pencils, colored clips, and random Post-its notes addressed to herself – visit Mama this week, talk more slowly, buy flowers and long earrings, walk more often." (Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 67). This discovery produces strong feelings in the mother since these belongings expose a deep fragility of the person in that person's absence. However, the fragility which another person's belongings expose are connected to the person who is in contact with those belongings. Archives consist of historical culture which preserves traces of a lived past either of societies or individuals. The process of uncovering an archive becomes "a point of intersection between the actual and the imagined, lived experience and its remembered (or forgotten) image" (Blouin and Rosenberg, *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory*, 1). While historical culture plays an important role in the development of the autobiographical self, this self also consists of relationships with significant others. Humans cannot survive without interacting with others. We are dependent on an intersubjective set-up to become functional (Passerini, *Memory and Utopia*, 37). The tribal affiliation which we develop to others influences us to attribute aspects of ourselves to others, but it also makes us unconsciously adopt the ideas or attitudes of others (Britton, *Between Mind and Brain*, 1). The contact with another person's belongings reminds us of that person's autobiographical self, who, on the other hand, is located in our own autobiographical self. Hence, the absence through the material presence that the mother feels is an absence of a part of herself which is no longer present.

4.4 Categorical empathy in How the García Girls Lost Their Accent

The contact with absent parts in one's autobiographical self is also a topic in Alvarez's novel *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*. The novel follows the García family's life in their adopted home country, the United States, and their country of origin from which they were forced to flee, the Dominican Republic. The story spans over more than thirty years and multiple narrating perspectives and a reversed chronological story order are used as literary techniques to depict the family's process of acculturation²⁹, their sense of displacement and their confusion of identity which are all the result of their forced immigration. Alvarez creates

²⁹ Acculturation denotes to the process of incorporation and change of customs, beliefs and artifacts when a person is in contact with two or more cultures (britannica.com, "Acculturation").

moments in her novel where readers are able to feel categorical empathy for the characters and their vulnerable situation by exposing aspects from their autobiographical self which do not receive the necessary attention in the new immigrant environment. In the chapter “Trespass”, the character Carla is interviewed by the police after a man tries to sexually assault her on her way home (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 163). The police try to get a description of the happening from her. However, she still lacks English vocabulary to express herself in a way which could be equated to a description of the same happening in Spanish, in which she would have been able to highlight details and include nuances of the event. Carla is still unable to express her thoughts and feelings properly in English, because Spanish remains her dominant language. Yet, Carla reflects on her own thoughts and she depicts self-awareness by being conscious of both her limitations in her new environment. Her metacognition is a fitting example for the execution of *conscientização* as Freire advocates for. All the elements in our autobiographical self, our consciousness, are encoded in a language which is characterized by play and dialogism with and of the world (Voloshinov et al., *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, 11). We need language to become conscious of ourselves, but our experiences are also encoded in a language which produce heterogenous discourses of identity in us (Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography*, 81). At some point, Carla will be able to braid English and Spanish to produce a voice which accounts for the heterogenous experience which encompass her autobiographical self. However, in the chapter “Trespass”, her English is still not fully developed to the extent that her functionality in society gets affected by her command of English, and this experience will, on the other hand, affect her behavior and view on her own capabilities. The faculty of using and remembering one’s language is enabled by our autobiographical memory. This memory is what defines us as individuals since it permits the access to past experiences and the planning of future happenings (Markowitsch and Welzer, *The Development of Autobiographical Memory*, 3). Cultural interpretive frameworks are also incorporated in these individual life narratives, and they encompass memory beyond the individual which encodes how socially and culturally constructed narratives shape and transform individual lives (Fivush, *Subjective Perspective and Personal Timeline in the Development of Autobiographical Memory*, 226).

Cultural memories from our autobiographical self are encoded through our bodily experiences. Our core self is responsible for providing us with the contemplative tools to process such bodily states. Alvarez illustrates the importance of the core self in embedding

these initial cultural experiences which will, at a later stage, become a part of the autobiographical self through the use of focalizers in her novel. In the chapter “The Blood of the Conquistadores” Carlos, the father, is one of the narrators and focalizers of the story. He hides from the secret police in a secret chamber (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 216). The darkness of the chamber and the poor air quality due to the lack of ventilation fortify his fear and result in a feeling of suffocation and claustrophobia. Since he is used as a focalizer, as readers, we directly experience this daunting situation and everything that is part of it; his growing claustrophobia and his sharpened attention to smells and sounds, such as when he “hears Laura say distinctly, “Victor!”, sure enough, momentarily the monotone, garbled voice of the American consul nears the living room.” (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 216-217). The phrase “sure enough”, which implies a confirmation of something previously predicted, exhibits his cognitive analysis of his incoming sensory experiences which are pre-verbal and not prone to cultural influence. This particular experience will become a constituent of Carlos’s autobiographical self. Hence, what happened to him in the outside world will also impact his inner world. This idea suits Smith’s argument that “experience is a process by which subjectivity is constructed” (*Reading Autobiography*, 31). Experience as a process enables the becoming of a certain kind of subject who owns certain identities in the social realm which are enforced through material, cultural, economic and psychic relations. As readers, we notice that this experience has an enduring impact on Carlos. Even after having left the Dominican Republic, he remains skeptical of the free speech practices in the United States, because certain memories, such as the loss of his brother and friends to the dictator Trujillo due to their criticizing actions towards the regime (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 146), are still vividly alive in his autobiographical memory. Not only do these experiences become the language through which he understands himself; he also tries to impose a certain behavior on his daughters, namely to restrict their freedom of speech, such as when he tears Yoyo’s speech apart since she insults her teachers in the speech (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 146). While his behavior seems at first incomprehensible, the omniscient narrator appears in a short section in the chapter “Daughter of Invention” to clarify and include important background information about Carlos’s past experiences which shape his behavior at that point to create understanding and empathy in the reader. The dialogic approach in the analysis of one’s behavior and consciousness is created by Alvarez through the use of multiple narrators in this chapter. Alvarez, thereby, highlights the importance of a self-reflexive attitude towards our own experiences which also fits Freire’s process of *conscientização* which asks us to perceive

experience as always already an interpretation and, at the same time, a phenomenon which is constantly in need of being interpreted again.

Our experiences are also the basis for our *Erfahrungsraum* which is in constant interaction with our *Erwartungshorizont*. Alvarez illustrates the sphere of action of and the interaction between these two dimensions through the character Yolanda's process of acquiring English. During a History class, Yolanda has learned enough English to construct a historical narrative out of the few English words she is able to recognize; she uses an atmosphere connected to the Holocaust and fuses it together with the little she understands about the Cuban Missile Crises in the historical narrative. Her narrative includes new vocabulary such as nuclear bomb, radioactive fallout and nuclear shelter (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 167). However, Yolanda also learns other vocabulary in other classes where she is not given a context to, such as laundromat, corn flakes, subway and snow (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 166). Additionally, these words are, unlike the other words, not followed up by a peace ceremony at home and air-raid drills at school. Hence, the words nuclear bomb, radioactive fallout and nuclear shelter receive more attention and fostering in Yolanda's nearest community and become a part of her room of experience which strengthens their availability as tools which can be used to understand new phenomena and constitute her horizon of expectation. When Yolanda, therefore, sees snow for the first time, she associates it with dangerous bombs rather than with white crystals that she had heard of before (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 167). Alvarez demonstrates in this scene how the past, as the room of experience, and the future, as the horizon of expectation, interact and inform human actions in the present. Humans rely on selective remembering of the past to meet the demands of the present and the anticipated future (Bruner, *Making Stories*, 70-71). However, we need to exercise consideration, judgement and choice when we face the present. Polkinghorne insists that "particular instances have priority over general rules, so in deliberation the unique and special requirements of each situation must be taken into account." (*Practice and the Human Sciences*, iii). While our room of experience may be a useful tool of orientation, it is in need of analysis and scrutinization. Freire's process for a critical consciousness must be applied so that we do not merely reproduce narratives but rather incorporate those experiences into new meaningful narratives which empower us in the future. Thus, while the present derives its significance from the past and the future, the past can and should constantly be modified to form the actions that are necessary in a particular

present situation which, on the other hand, will become the memories upon which we base our horizon of expectation.

Our memories are also the foundation for any use of history which can be depicted through the application of historical culture in the present. This use of history and historical culture has a direct influence on our autobiographical self, since happenings from the past are extended to the present through their partial or full reenactment. Alvarez emphasizes the relevance of using historical culture to nourish our autobiographical self through the character named Chucha and her voodoo practices. During her last encounter with the four García sisters, Chucha uses a statue carved out of wood to say her blessings to the four girls who are about to travel to a new country, the United States (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 220). She performs a ritual by holding each of the girls' hands and by saying a prayer for them. The statue is the only item that Chucha brought with her from Haiti when she immigrated to the Dominican Republic (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 221). Through this statue, Chucha nourishes the Haitian part of her autobiographical self. Moreover, the cultural artifact is a way for her to exercise agency and create meaning in her life. While other animals also use culture to communicate meaning, Williams asserts that the conscious use of culture as means to create meaning is most conspicuous in humans (*The Sociology of Culture*, 5). Culture is, therefore, a crucial element in all analyses involving human and societal life. The concept "culture" is also central in Freire's theory. The active role of men in and with reality can be perceived through culture (Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 44), and the decodification of the use of historical artifacts helps us, therefore, to understand how a particular human intervenes in and exercises agency in the world.

4.5 Situational empathy in *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*

Additionally, this section in the novel displays both consonant and dissonant narration which enhance situational empathy in the reader. The story is narrated by Yoyo, the first person-narrator, who recounts her last day with Chucha. In this section, we experience differentiated voices since Alvarez blends consonant and dissonant narration. Consonant narration is deployed through direct speech, such as when the narrator, the experiencing self, invokes the memory of her last day with Chucha by using almost the exact same words that Chucha uttered when she talked to the girls, as in "You are going to a strange land.", or "When I was

a girl, I left my country too and never went back. Never saw father or mother or sisters or brothers. I brought only this along.” (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 220-221). By applying direct speech, Alvarez gives the reader the impression of having physically been present during the last day with Chucha. The intimacy, immediacy and palpability of this narrated situation creates the impression in the reader of having experienced this situation herself. Keen considers direct speech a mimetic exercise which creates the illusion of unmediated representation of reality (*Empathy and the Novel*, 68). As readers, we, thus, manage to get closer to the characters and their circumstances, and this proximity can give us a better understanding of the character’s motives and behavior.

Furthermore, Alvarez’s employment of dissonant narration in the same section enables a holistic view on the impact that experiences and outcomes of a story have on our autobiographical self. Yoyo’s retrospective self reflects on the last day with Chucha by considering Chucha’s specific words, gestures and the historical artifact that was presented to her. For example, right after Chucha’s direct utterance “You are going to a strange land.”, the first-person narrator follows the utterance up with the comment “Something like that, I mean, I don’t remember the exact words.” (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 220). Through the unification of consonant and dissonant narration, as readers, we, thus, experience how human temporality consists of an interaction between different inner times which are all ultimately located in the body of the individual human organism. Alvarez also signals through this literary strategy that while memories may stay with us, they are constantly being made and remade at multiple individual, social, and cultural levels because of the interaction between the different times. However, while specific words may be forgotten, humans are, as illustrated through Yoyo, more capable of remembering specific gestures, such as the piercing look by Chucha that Yoyo remembers which gave her the feeling that Chucha was actually going inside her head (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 220-221). Chucha went inside her head, just in another form: Her memory with Chucha stayed with Yoyo and it became a part of her autobiographical self. In addition, it created permanent associations for certain historical artifacts. Tilly suggests that “interpersonal transactions compound into identities, create and transform social boundaries, and accumulate into durable social ties.” (*Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties*, xiii). The influence that such interpersonal interactions have on our identities and thoughts can be exemplified through the long-lasting association that Yoyo has with the historical artifact, the statue carved out of wood. Years later, she sees an image of a similar statue in an anthropological textbook (Alvarez, *How the*

García Girls Lost Their Accent, 221). While the statue does not bring back all her vivid memories from the past to her, it triggers the specific last encounter with Chucha. Hence, the memory with Chucha changes her understandings and representations of certain aspects of reality. The past is brought to bear on the present, and this feature is important since it effects our engagement with the world through the application of past cases to present experiences (Jensen, *Historiebevidsted/Fortidsbrug*, 84). The dissonant narration style creates an understanding of the impact of the past on the present, and such an understanding helps us to perform the necessary interpretive passionate-intellective exercise which is needed to comprehend the situation of the other or another circumstance that is not our own.

4.6 Referentiality and intertextuality in *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*

The process of remembering remains an important theme in Alvarez's novel. She actively uses the act of remembering to inform her fictional writing. Her novel is a testament to Schacter's idea that "memories are records of how we have experienced events, not replicas of the events themselves" (*Searching for Memory: The Brain, the Mind, and the Past*, 6). In this novel, a reality effect is, hence, not produced through a documentary phase, but rather through the intertextual elements demonstrated through plot elements found in this novel and Alvarez's autobiographical essays in *Something to Declare*. For example, a central plot element that drives the story in the chapter "The Blood of the Conquistadores" is the families escape from the Dominican Republic, and more particularly Trujillo's regime³⁰, to the United States. As readers, we are presented with the subjective perceptions of how the father had to hide from the secret police, how the CIA agent, Vic, assisted their escape, and how they say their farewells to beloved people, such as Chucha, through the characters, Mami, Papi and the four Girls, who serve as focalizers of the plot (Alvarez, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*, 195-224). This plot element in the novel is identical to Alvarez's own memory of escaping her homeland in 1961 with her family because of her parents' involvement in different plots to overthrow the Trujillo (Alvarez, *Genetics of Justice*, 104-107). Though she does not detail their escaping in her essay, the plots share several identical components, like the father's resistance to Trujillo's regime and his imminent arrest by the secret police

³⁰ Rafael Trujillo was an authoritarian leader who ruled the Dominican Republic from 1930 until his assassination in 1961 (britannica.com, "Rafael Trujillo").

(Alvarez, *Genetics of Justice*, 108). Life writing relies on the narrator's access to memory "to narrate the past in such a way as to situate that experiential history within the present" (Smith, *Reading Autobiography*, 22). However, fictional writing can build on the same practice of referentiality, but, unlike historical or autobiographical writing, its essence does not demand a referent (Ricœur, *Memory, History and Forgetting*, 253). But referents are always found in fictional writing, because humans understand themselves and the world through mediation, and fiction is a central part of this process. Ricœur stresses that "we understand what action and passion are through our competence to use in a meaningful way the entire network of expressions and concepts that are offered to us by natural languages" (*Life in Quest of Narrative*, 28), and these natural languages are indivisibly tied to our memories and experiences. We interrogate reality by using different memories, and this interrogation can create a synthesis of the heterogeneous where different components of reality are unified to create new meaning and understanding of reality articulated and presented, as Alvarez does with her novel, in fictional writing. Humans need to represent reality as a history to gain self-consciousness. Interrogating, or decoding, reality helps us to determine the components which are central in a reconfigured plot that describes the actions and behavior which are necessary to reinvent and transform the generative theme. Any analysis of a problem or a generative theme will conclude with a heterogeneous cultural synthesis that will show traces of a referent; whether it is of the author's life or a previous oppressive situation. Ultimately, Freire's transformative action depends, thus, on fictional writing practices, which we should incorporate in our teaching practices to empower our pupils and to foster their agency.

5. Conclusion

“The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn, while being taught, also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow.” (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 53)

Freire’s theory for a critical consciousness has laid the groundwork for the lesson plan developed in this thesis which fosters critical thinking and ethical awareness in the pupils. His approach is based on mutual respect, dialogue and inquiry. The problem-posing education that he suggests overcomes the teacher-student contradiction, namely the banking concept of education³¹, by acknowledging the students’ capability of thinking for themselves. More importantly, his approach is guided by the principle that the teacher cannot impose her thoughts on her pupils; she must authenticate her own thinking by becoming susceptible to the authenticity of her students’ thinking. The method that is essential to generate cognitive authentication is dialogue which is indispensable to the act of cognition; an act which reveals reality as a historical phenomenon prone to transformation through action. The teacher becomes, therefore, a partner in the process of producing knowledge and her sources of knowledge, just like her students, get transformed and reconfigured as well in this process.

While the teacher becomes a critical co-investigator in dialogue with her students, she continues to have a central role in the planning phase necessary for the emerge of a critical consciousness and critical intervention in reality. This thesis has tried to produce a lesson plan that can effectively be used in upper secondary schools in Norway by English teachers to develop such a critical consciousness. Considering the Norwegian educational context, the research question that has given direction to this thesis goes as follows:

³¹ The banking concept of education refers to the idea that knowledge is unequally distributed and that it is the task of the knowledgeable, hence, the teacher, to fill the students with the narrated versions of the cognizable content (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 45).

How can the analysis of historical consciousness in the two novels *Lost Children Archive* by Valeria Luiselli and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* by Julia Alvarez be used in the English classroom to develop the core value “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”?

Historical consciousness can be used as a synthesized literary analytical tool together with Freire’s research and the close reading techniques suggested by the research on ethical awareness to develop the core value “Critical thinking and ethical awareness” and to simultaneously promote the competence aims in English. The literary analytical tool is applied to a generative theme, such as border crossings, that both Alvarez and Luiselli concentrate on in their novels. This generative theme is presented to the pupils in a narrative, like *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* or *Lost Children Archive*, that they are asked to decompose according to the points developed in the lesson plan. This inquisitive process enhances cognitive abilities in the pupils that make them more attuned to the historical dimension encompassing each person’s and situation’s core.

Understanding the historical components of a person’s self and a situation is fundamental to critical thinking and ethical awareness. In Norway, “Critical thinking and ethical awareness” constitute one core value of the Education. Hence, the unification of these two skills proposes that they are dependent on each other and that they should be fostered simultaneously. These core values should be enhanced and included in all subjects. While both skills can be connected to different disciplines, the Education Act, which was introduced in 2020, enables and demands a stronger interdisciplinarity both between the different core values and the different subjects. The research on critical thinking and ethical awareness suggests that some common intersections between these two skills are a focus on historical consciousness and the emplotment or narrativity of our understanding of reality. White and Ricœur’s research has guided the proposed points of implementation which focus explicitly on historical consciousness; a consciousness which is also a part of the ability to think critically. Generative acts which produce understanding are linguistic in nature and they are in need of emplotment, regardless of whether they focus on the production of imaginative or scientific knowledge. This insight by White has, therefore, been used and extended with Ricœur’s claims on referentiality and intertextuality to enhance historical consciousness. Moreover, the points on ethical awareness have been informed by Keen’s suggestions that literary techniques, such as consonant and dissonant narration, enhance empathic understanding in the reader. Her observations have been expanded with Damasio’s subject-theory which notes that

humans consist of an autobiographical self and a core self which must be investigated if genuine acknowledgement shall be produced.

The two aspects historical consciousness and the emplotment or narrativity of our understanding of reality, but also the focus on our ethical commitment to other people, are central in Paulo Freire's theory, which has been presented and discussed as the main research on critical thinking in this thesis. I have, therefore, used his recommended approach as a framework for the lesson plan that shall develop the core value "critical thinking and ethical awareness". This lesson plan, which was introduced on p. 20, was modified (see p. 59) based on relevant research on ethical awareness and historical consciousness. Aspects such as establishing categorical and situational empathy through the analysis of the core self and the autobiographical self have, among other things, been added to the lesson plan. The investigation of the core self and autobiographical self requires an understanding of human temporality. The lesson plan was, thus, refined with points that target historical consciousness, such as the consideration of a character's room of experience and horizon of expectation, the use of historical culture, and the identification of referential and intertextual elements in the novels. Ultimately, the three skills critical thinking, ethical awareness and historical consciousness sustain and are dependent on one another. As teachers, we should highlight their interconnectedness to the students, so that the students become aware of tools and abilities that can be transferred and employed across subjects. Such an approach conforms to the Education Act of 2020 which stresses interdisciplinarity and deep learning.

Parts of the lesson plan were used in the analysis of the novels in this thesis. This illustrates that the points used in the literary analysis can be employed and tested out in English with the pupils. However, the effectiveness of the lesson plan cannot be established solely on the literary analysis of this thesis. Action research should be conducted to determine the lesson plan's effectiveness in developing the core value "critical thinking and ethical awareness". Classroom-based research, such as action research, would probably add further evidence to the efficiency of the lesson plan by verifying or falsifying the arguments discussed in this paper, and it would contribute to more wellbeing among teachers by reminding them of their agency and impact during the learning process. Moreover, it fits the current thinking in education which encourages the integration of research and pedagogy, such as inquiry-based

learning³² and research-based teaching³³. Action research would break with the top-down transmission of knowledge via academic lecture and consequent lack of engagement by teachers by highlighting the deep interdependence between the content and didactical choices and the framing of learning. More fundamentally, conducting action research would create the context of mutual respect which acknowledges the interdependent relationship between the teacher and the students in the creation of knowledge through inquiry and praxis, and it is exactly this kind of context, as Freire's ideas illustrate, that is the precondition for all transformative and liberating action. Expanding the context of mutual respect by adding an inquisitive element such as a reading of the two novels *Lost Children Archive* by Valeria Luiselli and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent* by Julia Alvarez in light of Freire's culture-, history- and language-conscious theory for critical consciousness promotes the Education Act's imperative of developing the skills critical thinking and ethical awareness in upper secondary school that open doors to the world and provide pupils and apprentices with a historical and cultural understanding and anchorage (udir.no, "The Purpose of the Education Act").

³² Inquiry-based learning focuses on the learners' participation in the creation of and responsibility for discovering knowledge. During this process, new casualties are discovered through testing and the application of several problem-solving skills (Pedaste et al., *Improving students' inquiry skills through reflection and self-regulation scaffolds*, 83).

³³ Research-based teaching implies "that students carry out research in their courses independently and with an open outcome." (perle.uni-kiel.de, "Research-based teaching").

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VISUAL MATERIAL

Figure 1 – *Untitled* by Åsta-Synnøve Myhre (2020) photographed by me in May 2021.

Figure 2 – *The Constituents of Identity* taken from Nordahl (p. 100) (2002), Nordahl, Thomas, *Elven Som Aktør*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2013.

Figure 3 – *Model Critical Pedagogy* based on Freire’s theory, Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. ed., Penguin, London: The Continuum Publishing Company,

1970; 1993.

Figure 4 – Model *Logical Forms of Sentences* based on Solberg's descriptions (p. 245-248) (2014), Solberg Marianne, *Innføring i logikk*, chapter 10, in Berg, Bård A.

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Figure 5 – Didactical suggestions based on Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Education for Critical Consciousness* and Freire and Macedo's *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*; See Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. ed., Penguin, London: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1970; 1993; And Freire, Paulo and Macedo, D., *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1987; And Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

Figure 6 – Revised version of Bloom's *Taxonomy* with the title *A Taxonomy for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment* (2001); Vanderbilt University, "Bloom's taxonomy", <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>, accessed on 2.02.21

Figure 7 – Model *Conscientização* based on Freire's explanations from his book *Education for Critical Consciousness* (p. 14-15) (1965); Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

Figure 8 – Didactical suggestions based on a synthesis of Freire's research and the research presented in this thesis on ethical awareness; See Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. ed., Penguin, London: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1970; 1993; And Freire, Paulo and Macedo, D., *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1987; And Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

Figure 9 – *Hayden White's Historiographical Combinatory* by Matthew Garrett (p. 89) (2018); Garrett, Matthew, *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Figure 10 – *Spaces of Usage and Learning of Historical Consciousness* by Bernard Eric Jensen (p. 27, *Historiebevidsthed/Fortidsbrug*) (2017), Jensen, Bernard Eric Jensen, *Historiebevidsthed/Fortidsbrug: Teori og Empiri*, Aarhus: Scandinavian Book, 2017.

Figure 11 – Didactical suggestions based on a synthesis of Freire's research, the research presented in this thesis on ethical awareness and the research discussed regarding historical consciousness; See Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. ed., Penguin, London: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1970; 1993; And Freire,

Paulo and Macedo, D., *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1987; And Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

Figure 12 – Final version of the lesson plan developed in this thesis; See Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. ed., Penguin, London: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1970; 1993; And Freire, Paulo and Macedo, D., *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1987; And Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

Figure 13 – Breakdown of the points from the lesson plan for the literary analysis; See Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. ed., Penguin, London: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1970; 1993; And Freire, Paulo and Macedo, D., *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc., 1987; And Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

Appendix

- Appendix 1: E-mail by the Norwegian Department of Education dated 21.06.21

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 1:49:28 PM
To: Andreia Filipa Dos Santos Figueiredo <asa133@post.uit.no>
Subject: VS: Forespørsel: Kjerneverdien kritisk tenkning og etisk bevissthet - Lektor 8-13

Hei Andreia

Utgangspunktet for teksten i overordnet del var å ligge så tett opp til formuleringene i opplæringsloven (formålsparagrafen) som mulig og samtidig skrive en tekst som kan fungere godt i skolen. Derfor ses kritisk tenkning og det å handle etisk i sammenheng. Vi gjør også oppmerksom på at det etiske perspektivet er tydelig i kapittel 1.5 "Respekt for naturen og miljøbevissthet".



Med vennlig hilsen

[REDACTED]

Avdeling for barnehage og grunnskole (BAG)
Kunnskapsdepartementet
Mobil: [REDACTED]
E-post: [REDACTED]

www.regjeringen.no/kd

Fra: Andreia Filipa Dos Santos Figueiredo <asa133@post.uit.no>
Sendt: 8. juni 2021 19:12
Til: Postmottak KD <postmottak@kd.dep.no>
Emne: Forespørsel: artikler om kjerneverdien kritisk tenkning og etisk bevissthet

Hei!

For tiden skriver jeg masteroppgaven min (lektor 8-13) der jeg blant annet ser litt nærmere på kjerneverdien kritisk tenkning og etisk bevissthet. Dessverre har jeg ikke funnet en forklaring på hvorfor kritisk tenkning og etisk bevissthet har blitt knyttet sammen til en kjerneverdi.

Vet dere om noen dokumenter som spesifiserer denne foreningen?

På forhånd takk for hjelpa.

Med vennlig hilsen
Andreia dos Santos

