

## Pre-service students' perceptions of critical literacy teaching

**Camilla Magnusson**

University of Oslo

A central question in educational research is how teacher education programs can prepare future teachers for developing in students the necessary text competence in the face of a demanding diversity of texts both within and outside of school, and how to engage in critical approaches to texts in classrooms in "these anti-critical times" (Siegel, 2017). This study will seek to investigate pre-service students' perceptions of critical literacy as a concept, their reflections on critical literacy teaching, and whether and how they perceive critical literacy as integrated into their teacher education program. The study is an interview study of pre-service teachers (n=12) in their 8., 9., or 10th semester of their teacher training in Norway. As a theoretical lens, I apply Hilary Janks' framework that focuses on four specific dimensions of critical literacy: power, diversity, access, and de- and re-construction (Janks, 2000; 2010). Preliminary findings show that the pre-service teachers mostly conceptualize critical literacy as a power perspective in terms of source evaluation and

the ability to uncover underlying intentions in texts. Some students also raised diversity perspectives, with a focus on socio-political issues in texts such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc. However, the students also emphasized the challenges of bringing up these questions in the classroom out of fear of a woke/anti-woke debate, which they did not feel comfortable with. In their teacher training, they had discussed some papers on critical literacy, but could not connect the concept to pedagogical or didactical tools they could use in their own future teaching. This study will contribute to more knowledge about how pre-service teachers perceive critical literacy teaching and how the teacher education program contributes to this endeavor. This paper thus fits well with the conference ambition to discuss research on how to improve teaching in teacher education.