

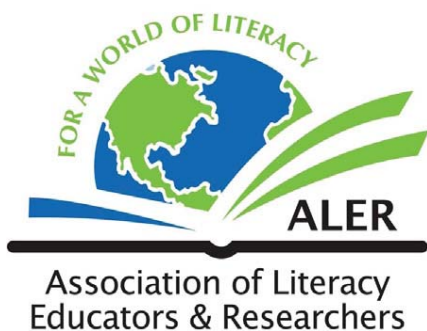
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# ALER

## Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers

Charlotte, North Carolina

November 5-8, 2009



**Awards Breakfast**  
**7:45 to 9:50, Salon E**



**Joan Wink, Ph. D.**

Professor emerita, College of Education

California State University, Stanislaus

Turlock CA

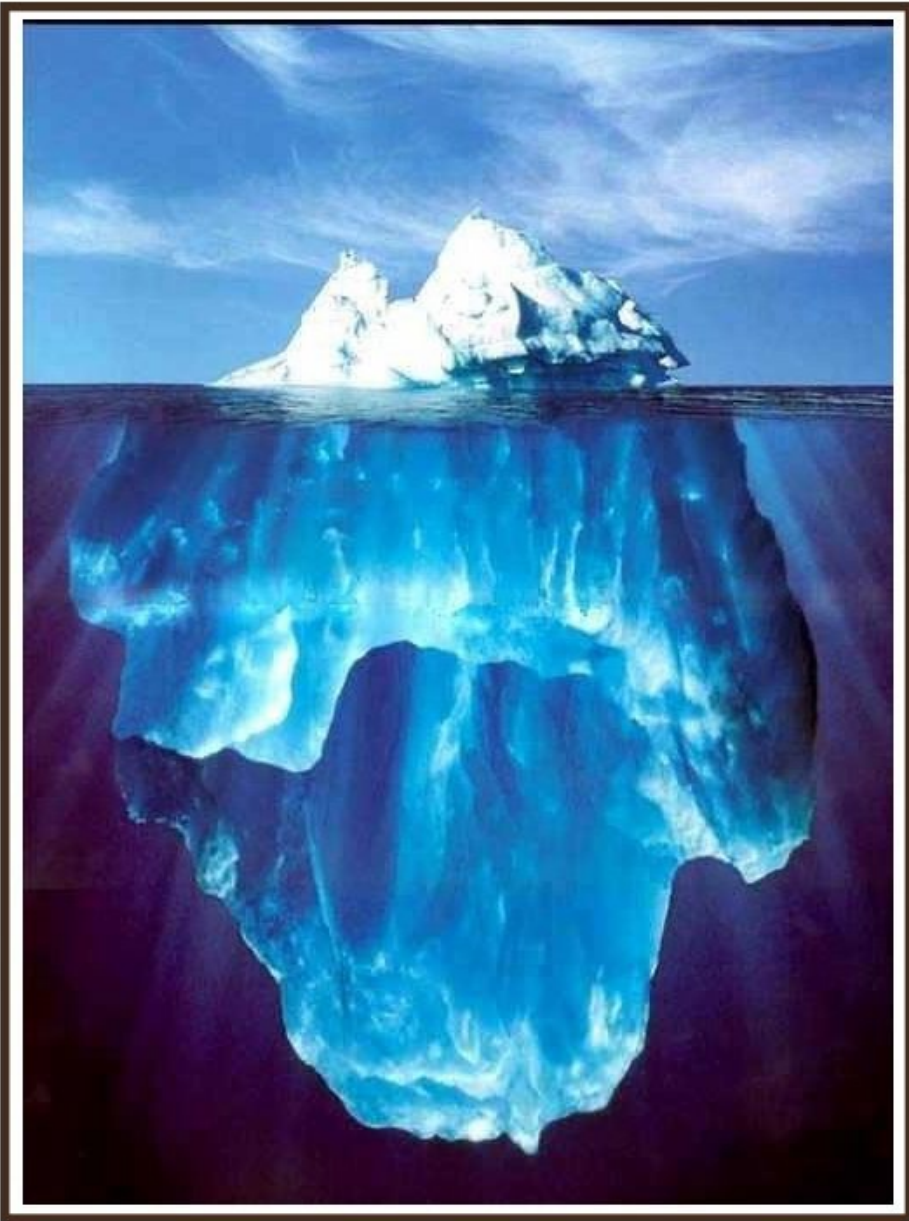
& PO Box 137, Howes SD 57748

[www.JoanWink.com](http://www.JoanWink.com)

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## ***Building Literacy Communities Through Critical Pedagogy***

The purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate how the notions of critical literacy, grounded in critical pedagogy, provide one way of building literacy communities. The presenter will share her understandings of critical pedagogy, critical literacy, and various approaches building literacy communities.



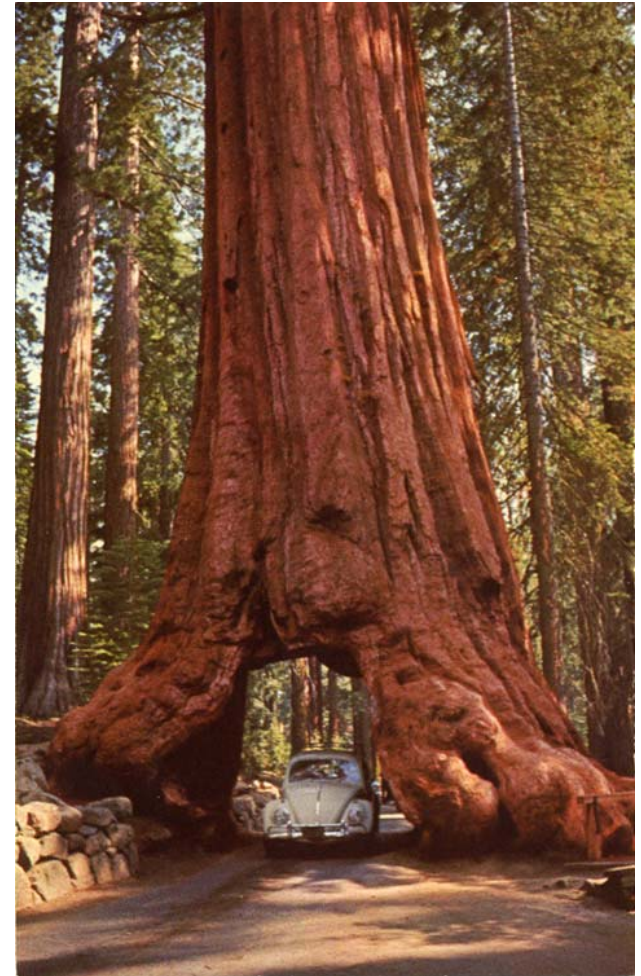
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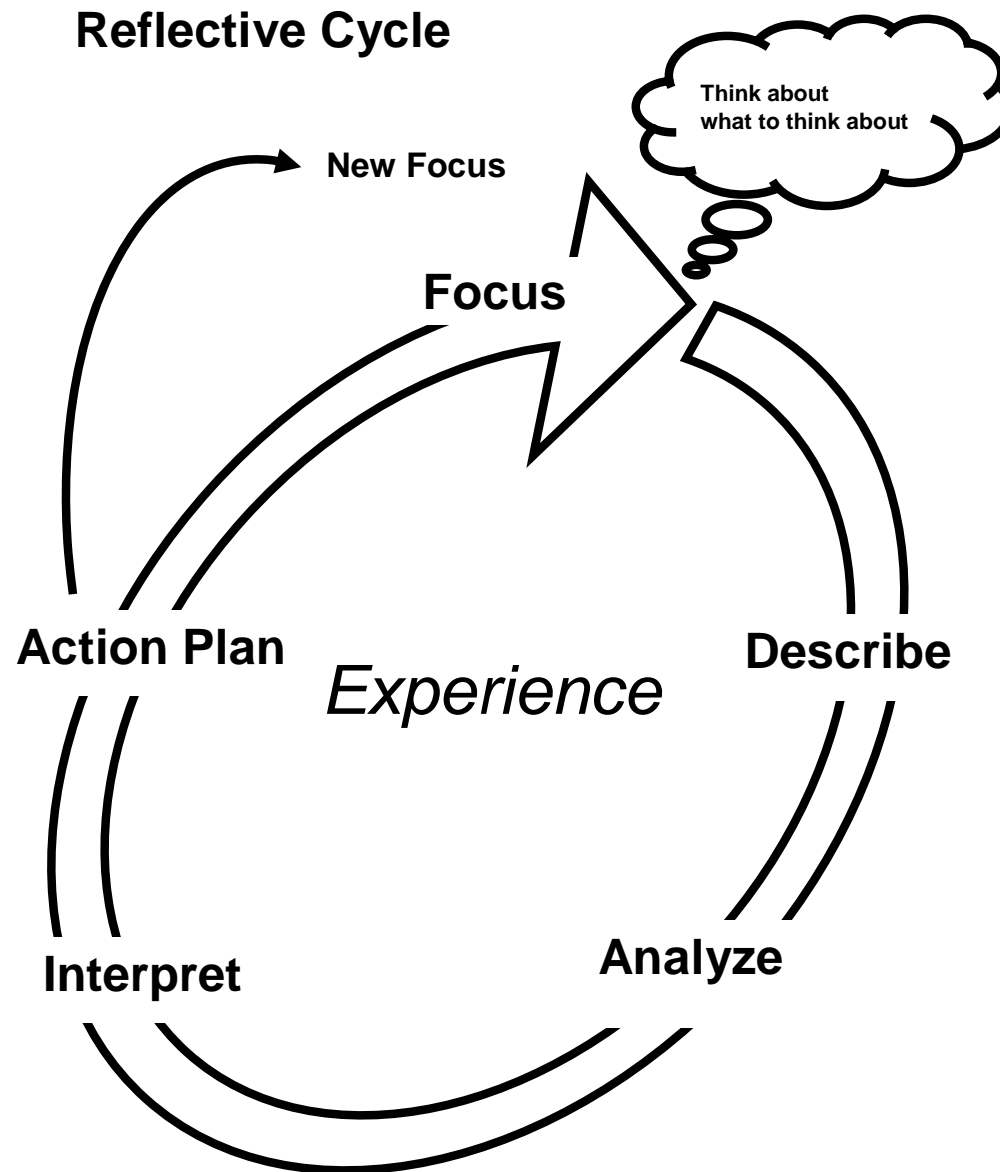
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# What is Critical Pedagogy?



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## What is Critical Pedagogy?

- To name
  - To reflect critically
  - To act
- What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life? The world would split open (Maxine Greene, 2003).



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# What is critical pedagogy?

It is a prism that reflects the complexities between teaching and learning. It is a prism which sheds light on the hidden subtleties that might have escaped our view previously. The prism has a tendency to focus on shades of social, cultural, political, and even economic conditions, and it does all of this under the broad view of history (Wink, 2005, p. 26).

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# What is critical pedagogy?

## Alex's Restaurant



*To Learn*  
*To Relearn*  
*To Unlearn*

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# What is critical pedagogy?

They were eager to create model or framework into which they could slot information. I was intent on letting information do its things. They wanted to get organized at the start; I wanted them to move into confusion. I urged them to create more information than they could possibly handle. I guaranteed them that at some point the information would self-organize in them, crystallizing into interesting forms and ideas (Wheatly, 1992, p. 150; cited in Wink, 2005, p. 24).

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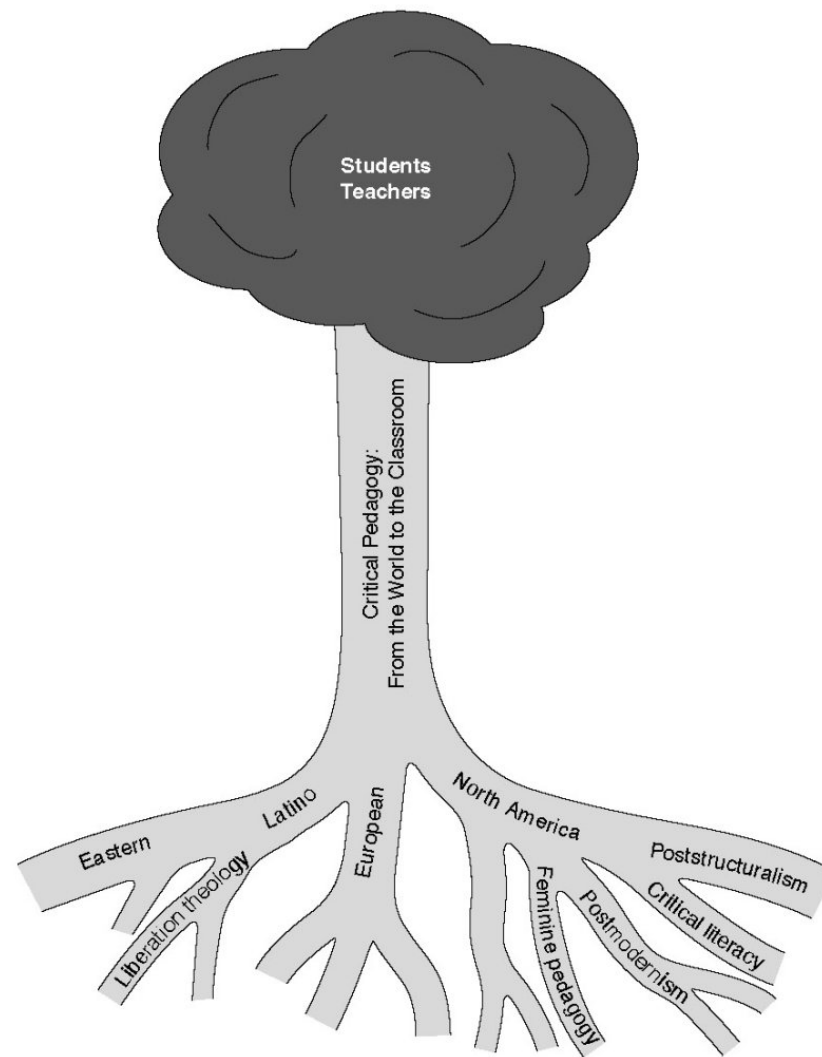
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## What is Critical Pedagogy?

***Education is radically about love.***  
***Paulo Freire***

## Where Did It Come From?



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## Why Does It Matter?

- **Why does critical pedagogy matter?** Kids matter—that's why. Our future matters—that's why. It is as simple as that. It also is something we all know. This is serious business we are talking about. Students and teachers are hurting. We, in education, are a mirror of society. Critical pedagogy challenges our long-held assumptions and leads us to ask new questions, and the questions we ask will determine the answers we get. Critical pedagogy gives voice to the voiceless; gives power to the powerless. Change is often difficult, and critical pedagogy is all about change from coercive to collaborative; from transmission to transformative; from inert to catalytic; from passive to active. Critical pedagogy leads us to advocacy and activism on behalf of those who are the most vulnerable in classrooms and in society.
  - Wink, 2005, p. 165.
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## How to do it

### Methods and (anti)methods

[www.joanwink.com/newsletter/2002/news0902-bb1.php](http://www.joanwink.com/newsletter/2002/news0902-bb1.php)

*We make our road by walking.  
Freire*

Student's question:  
*Do we “do” critical pedagogy, or do we live it?*

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# How to Teach for the 21st Century

- **Teaching is learning.**
- **If it doesn't matter to students, it doesn't matter.**
- **Change and contradictions are in every classroom**
- **Caring Heart**
- **Critical Eye**
- **Courage and Patience**
- **Buttercup**

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-09-02-america-village\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-09-02-america-village_N.htm)

What teachers taught me. Wink, 2005, p. 173

Caring heart and critical eye, Wink, 2005, pp. 167 & 168

Courage and patience. Wink, 2005, p. 169

Buttercup. 171

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## Advocacy and Action

HOW DO WE ADVOCATE?

HOW DO WE TAKE ACTION?

- Bracey
- Krashen: Access to books
- Krashen: Poverty is the problem
- Susan Ohanian



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# The Future of Reading

- Let me recommend another device for reading: It is random-access, highly portable, requires only natural, easily available energy, and is simple to use. You don't have to shut it down when the airline people tell you to turn off your electronic devices and put your tray table up.

These devices are already commercially available and can, in fact, be borrowed for free. They last for decades, even centuries, and no arbitrary changes are planned for the future. When using this device you don't have to call for help to find the right command when the screen goes blank or freezes, or get a new equipment every few months because your electronic reader is now obsolete and your electronic books unusable on the new readers.

The device is, of course, the book and its close relatives, the magazine, the comic book, and the graphic novel. Someday, electronic books will undoubtedly replace the book, but so far none of them has all the advantages of the book. Right now, they are only androids, approximations of the real thing.

Stephen Krashen

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-haber/the-future-of-reading-lea\\_b\\_330523.html#comments](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-haber/the-future-of-reading-lea_b_330523.html#comments)

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## *Stacy Does Critical Pedagogy*

Perennialism is the theory that there are timeless ideas that should be taught to all students including reading and logic. Perennialism also states that there is a collection of "great books" that should be taught to students.

I think what really opened my eyes up to Perennialism is my student teaching. I am teaching sixth grade in a school in which we are told that we are not to use novels in the classroom at all. We are strictly to use the textbooks, which are compilations of 'snip-its' of different stories. I was horrified to learn that this was the case, as some of the most cherished memories I have of school is when we read novels as a class. We got to discuss and learn a variety of lessons from these stories. This helped me to develop logic as we discussed, as a class and as pairs, problem-solutions, and climax-resolution. I also felt that reading these novels pushed us as students onto higher level thinking.

I feel that certain pieces of literature are 'classics' for good reason. They give a window into the time period in which they are written and help to not only learn about history and sociology, but about ourselves. One of my favorites, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (although not a story for children) gives insight into the treatment of women, postpartum depression, and medical treatment of the era. It also gives way to symbolism and analytical thought.

I feel that many of these concepts that we use every day in our speech and actions (how we use shades of language within everyday conversation) will be lost if we do not keep these 'classics' and the teaching of timeless ideas and logic in the classroom. I can personally say that it was the reading and analyzing of these 'classics' that made me fall in love with learning.

### **Flash Forward One Week, when Stacy wrote:**

Fortunately I am with a Master Teacher who is determined to 'bend the rules' in order to incorporate literature. She is therefore, implementing a book (*Maniac Magee*) because she says that it is imperative that I see how a novel is taught in a classroom, regardless of the 'rules.' I am excited, as she has told me that we will start next week!

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# What Is Critical Literacy?

## First, ...What IS literacy?

•Literacy is dangerous and has always been so regarded. It naturally breaks down barriers of time, space, and culture. It threatens one's original identity by broadening it through vicarious experiencing and the incorporation of somebody else's hearth and ethos. So we feel profoundly ambiguous about literacy. Looking at it as a means of transmitting our culture to our children, we give it priority in education, but recognizing the threat of its backfiring we make it so tiresome and personally unrewarding that youngsters won't want to do it on their own, which is of course when it becomes dangerous. . . . The net effect of this ambivalence is to give literacy with one hand and take it back with the other, in keeping with our contradictory wish for youngsters to learn to think but only about what we already have in mind for them. (Moffett, 1989, p. 85)

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# What Is Critical Literacy?

## ***Reading the Word means:***

- to decode/encode those words
- to bring ourselves to those pages
- to make meaning of those pages as they relate to our experiences, our possibilities, our cultures, and our knowledges

## ***Reading the World means:***

- to decode/encode the people around us
- to decode/encode the community that surrounds us
- to decode/encode the visible and invisible messages of the world

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## Anytime we can create classroom practices that help students understand that:

- texts are social constructions
  - texts are not neutral
  - authors draw upon particular discourses (often majority discourses) and assume that readers will be able to draw up on them as well
  - authors make certain conscious and unconscious choices when constructing texts
  - all texts have gaps, or silences, and particular representations within them
  - texts have consequence for how we make sense of ourselves, others, and the world (Sandretto and colleagues, 2006).
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So *critical literacy* is teaching  
so that we come to understand

- ourselves,
- others,
- and the world

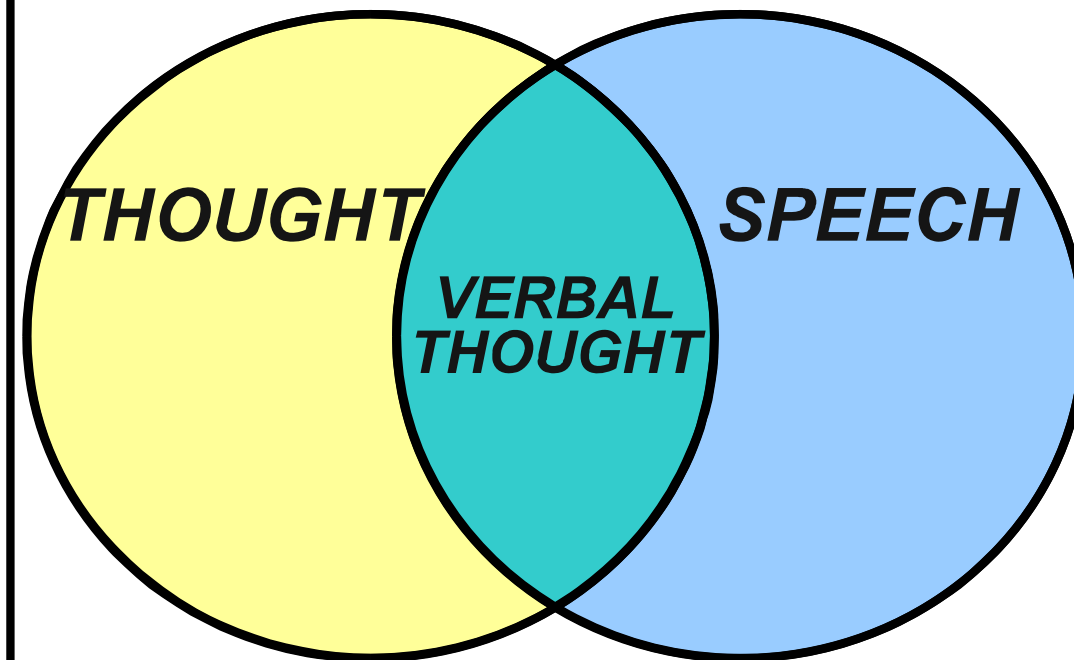
more deeply.

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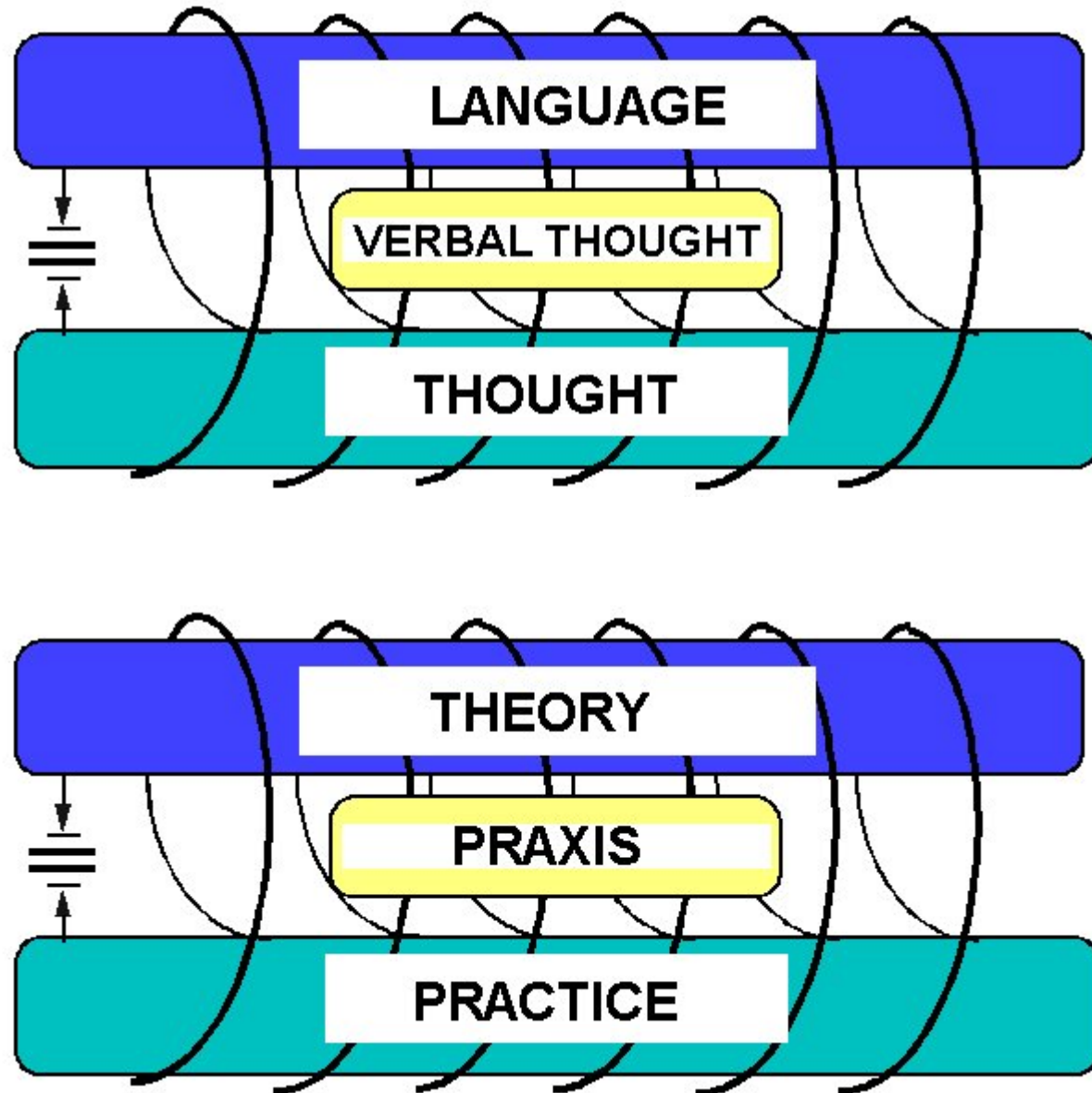
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# Vygotsky's Venn Diagram



Vygotsky, L. (1986, p. 88). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.  
Cited in Wink, J., & Putney, L. (2002, p. xxv). *A vision of Vygotsky*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon



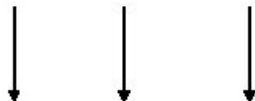
# A Theoretical Framework for Critical Literacy

Human Relations are at the heart of schooling  
*Cummins (1996/2001) p.1*

To name  
To reflect critically  
To act  
*Paulo Freire*

Descriptive Phase  
Personal Interpretive phase  
Critical Analysis Phase  
Creative Action Phase  
*Alma Flor Ada*

This theoretical  
framework informs the  
methods which follow.



The methods, which  
follow inform this  
theoretical framework.