

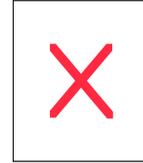
# Kaye College of Education Beer Sheva

## Research Department

Yehuda Halevy St. , P.O. Box 13001, , Beer Sheva, ISRAEL, 84536,

TEL. 972-8-6402752/777, Fax. 972-8-6413020,

E-mail: keinan\_a@kaye.ac.il



## **Critical Pedagogy or Whose Pedagogy is it?**

### **The Case of Teachers in the Newspapers**

Merav Asaf, Yocheved Bezalel, Ron Hoz, Nurit Elam, Anat Kainan

One of the questions connected to the public sphere is the question of who get permission to talk and about what in the media. We were interested in the big group of teachers so, this research deals with the question of how teachers are portrayed in newspapers articles dealing with schools and education.

#### The Methods:

1. We collected all the articles dealing with education from the Friday editions of 3 national and 2 local Israeli newspapers during 8 months in 2003. 163 items dealing with teachers were found and analyzed using two methods:
  - a. A qualitative deep analysis to 5 items (one from each paper).
  - b. A qualitative analysis of all the articles revealing the main topic, the main characters, gender aspects.

The fact that only 163 items were found means that from the beginning those subjects got very small place in the papers.

#### **Findings:**

Main Topics: The two most common main topics in all the articles were either - new projects and programs (2/5) or ethical violations, trials and

violence (1/3). For example: A special program against drugs or a teacher pushed a subject strongly.

### **Main Characters:**

80% of the main characters are not teachers.

A quarter of the characters were politician's (especially local ones) and high ranked public administrators. They are presented as opening new programs or talking about better achievement because of it. 9% were teachers referred to as an anonymous group 9% were teachers with a specific name.

Others were principals (11%), students (10%), parents (8%).

Combining the main topic and the main characters reveals that politicians are connected with positive issues (as programs, projects, etc.), while teachers are connected to ethical violations, trials and violence.

### **Gender**

Male teachers appear 1.6 times more than female teachers, in spite of the fact that women consist 89% of the teaching force, in Israel.

Also whenever they are talking about a group of teachers they call it in the masculine form and not the feminine one.

### **Qualitative Analysis:**

1. Teachers do not participate in debates and issues connected to them. In spite of the fact that they specialize in education, pedagogy and didactics, they are not invited to show their knowledge.

2. The articles portray a tendency to bring help from the outside to the schools, insinuating that the teachers work is not sufficiently performed.  
"Specialists from the University" or special companies who considered knowledgeable.
3. Teachers are identified with the poor, nonintellectual, boring reality of the schools.  
The good things in schools come from outside.
4. The teachers are rarely mentioned in the articles. Otherwise, they are referred to an anonymous group: "The staff", "the teachers".

### **Conclusions:**

Political leaders and high public administrators are presented as the representatives of the educational system. Reports on individual teachers appear mostly in regards with criminal or unethical activities. Otherwise, teachers rarely appear in the articles, or are portrayed as a voiceless, nameless group. Most of the articles describe educational projects and curricula that are imported into the schools by external socio-political factors.

The picture which arises is that of impotent teachers with no professional expertise and little influence in their schools. The teachers are portrayed as intellectually unchallenging or as social objects operating within a deficient, unsafe surrounding,

Four groups benefit from this picture:

Politicians and Public administrators, In Israel, especially in local government, the issue of education is very popular. Politicians had to

show their voters that they "did" something in the subject. Showing different programs at school is one way of doing it.

Middle class parents, Middle class parents are interested in private or different education from the general one. They are interested in showing how had schools are in order to promote building different schools.

School principals, They are interested in showing how their school succeed and in the meantime how they succeed in their job.

The Academia. Academy people are invited to schools as counselors or as projects leaders earn money and respect from it.

All are interested in this public sphere for different reasons.

The absence of teachers from the educational debate stresses their negative image and lowers their social value. This in turn, justifies the entrance of other interested parties into schools which earn money and prestige on the teachers' expense.

Teachers stand in the class every day and work in all these new projects and curriculum are those who suffer from it but they are powerless to resist because they don't have part in the public sphere.