Lecturer and Student Accounts of Critical Reading Practices in Higher Education

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Overview

• To compare lecturer and student accounts of their critical reading practices
• Apprenticeship pedagogy of reading
• Semi-structured interviews with lecturers and students in 4 humanities subjects
• 3 comparative categories emerged from the data analysis
Textual creation or the expression of “points of view”

I think it’s important that students understand what reading is – how the reader creates the text [...] they understand they are going to read from certain points of view but I am more interested in their awareness of the way in which they create the text by their reading.

(Student, Theology)

people’s opinions [and] often you are almost persuaded to treat them on a par with the text itself which they’re not. (Student, Comparative Literature)

(Lecturer, American Studies)
Defamiliarising or domesticating

If I am going back over something I am going to use for writing a lecture, I will be trying to put it into categories which will be easy to get across [...], so in a way it’s a caricaturing process so that they’ll get the message. Initially a caricaturing and then, on the back of that, specifying...
Critical reading as close reading

What I normally do in lectures is that I gloss that primary text [...] I also encourage them to [...] I pay attention to the detail, to the textual details and [...] language because that’s what signifies, that’s what’s important for a literary critic or a critical reader of literature.

(Student, American Studies)

(Lecturer, English)

I sat in the library with it with a pencil and literally tore every paragraph up. And there was scribble all over it because I needed to know why the author had done this and if I could see certain patterns that were throughout the book.

(Student, American Studies)