

**Report about the considerations behind the lecture on the 12th of November 2008 about
“Teaching Material;
How to use the film ”Some Mother’s Son ” by Terry George
in the Danish Gymnasium and HF.”**

Course:

Northern Ireland: Segregated Peace and Regional Visions

Teacher: Michael Böss

Study Regulation: Kandidatuddannelsen Linje B. 2006

Frit valgt emne med formidling (Elective Course, with presentation to a specified audience)

Intern censur, bestået/ikke bestået.

Department of English
Institute of Language, Literature, and Culture
Aarhus University

Submission Date: The 14th of January 2009

Connie Anette Nordholt
Identification number: 19712853

Report about the considerations behind the lecture on the 12th of November 2008 about “Teaching Material; How to use the film ”Some Mother’s Son ” by Terry George in the Danish Gymnasium and HF.”

This report presents the considerations and reflections about how an example of a course at the Danish Gymnasium and HF (Upper Secondary Schools) could be communicated to teacher candidates who participate in teacher training.

To be a teacher in the Danish Gymnasium it is a requirement that the candidates follow a course of teacher training (Pædagogikum) if they want a permanent appointment.

At present there are two ways to be a teacher candidate in the Danish Upper Secondary School System: A one-year course and a two year-course.¹

Both courses are rather demanding in that they include practical, theoretical, and didactical studies and some candidates may even have to do supplemental studies if they do not meet the requirements of the Upper Secondary School system (Gymnasium and HF).

The teaching material “*How to use the film ”Some Mother’s Son ” by Terry George in the Danish Gymnasium and HF,*” can be seen as a part of the didactic training of a teacher candidate.²

The material was developed in autumn 2008 for a class working with the topic: *Northern Ireland: Segregated Peace and Regional Visions*.

The class consisted of students at the University of Aarhus, Department of English, and some of the students were exchange students from abroad namely Ireland, England, Poland, Czech Republic.

I defined the target group for the presentation as a group of academics who were participants in a teacher training course leading to employment in a Danish Gymnasium.

My presentation dealt with a plan for teaching about the main theme “violence”. I had chosen the sub-themes: individual violence, the individual against the group, and political violence.

The sub-themes were meaningful in themselves but also lead into the complex concept of political violence, as seen, for example, in Northern Ireland.

The course about violence goes from presenting violence in a contemporary context to a presentation of a wider perspective, because the violence in Northern Ireland is both contemporary and is also rooted in history.

The material that I had developed for teacher candidates is suitable for first-year students at A-level.

When a candidate leaves the university for a teaching career, he or she has become an expert in his/ her field.

The material available for the topic Northern Ireland is huge and the candidates who leave the universities to teach in Gymnasium and HF would often have difficulties in selecting from the research and information available. They may have spent a long time studying a topic which they must communicate throughout 10 lessons at the Upper Secondary Level.

¹ Appendix 1 to this report

² All references without further notice are to the material which was handed out to the students, who participated in the class ‘*Northern Ireland: Segregated Peace and Regional Visions*’, 12th of November 2008

The candidates would have to define a very exact focus in their material, and especially in connection with Northern Ireland, it is rather complicated to choose the most essential aspects from the historical background. One risks getting bogged down with historical details with resulting failure in communicating one's topic.

In the teaching material presented, my choice of focus was the film '*Some Mother's Son*'. This can be justified because the film reflects the historical conditions of the Catholics in NI, the cultural, ideological and political differences in the Catholic community and because of the great significance of the hunger strike in 1981 for the entire historical development.

In the planning of a course about Northern Ireland in the Upper Secondary Schools, different aspects must be considered.

First of all the candidates have to make sure that their topic fits into the syllabus for the education of English at this level. This means that the requirements by the Ministry of Education have to be considered. In my paper to the candidates I have given a reference to the syllabus, so that they can see that the topic fits in well.³

After this basic reassurance, the candidates still have the pedagogical planning of their topic to do. The following problems have to be faced:

First, the first-year-students' knowledge of Northern Ireland has to be considered.

Second, the students' abilities of perceiving information about history should also be taken into consideration.

Third, is the topic interesting to the students?

What kind of material should be chosen?

Fourth, the students' language abilities and the classroom facilities also play a role.

Teacher candidates are often surprised at the lack of general knowledge in a first year class, and when it comes to the knowledge of first-year-students about Northern Ireland, it is almost zero.

In order to activate the students' interest in the sub-theme Northern Ireland, my choice was to introduce some pictures. That is why the teaching material has the links to Cain⁴. The pictures make it easier for first-year-students to imagine what the texts are about. Young people today are heavily influenced by other media than the written word and they would find it easier to relate to the subject if images are part of the course.

That is also the reason why I have chosen to let the different parts of the sub-theme lead into the watching of the film "*Some Mother's Son*". The film connects all the various information that the students have received about the subject.

The motivation of the students differs but first-year-students are often inspired by the seriousness of the history of Northern Ireland. Although the conflict is in another country, they can still identify with the population of Northern Ireland, especially if they see the pictures of the area. They can see for themselves that the streets look familiar and the people look much like themselves and through the film they can imagine how it must be to live with a conflict in their neighbourhood. The fact that a bomb could explode right next to you in the street becomes quite vivid.

It is also stimulating for students to watch other young people who participate actively in their communities. This should not lead to an urge for political violence, but the topic is meant for

³ P. 3

⁴ P.4

discussion, and possible conflict resolution strategies should be a part of the course.⁵

The language abilities of first-year-students have to be considered. That is the reason why I have chosen to use the texts from “Contexts”, “Living with the Troubles” and the links listed on the bibliography.⁶

Ruane and Todd’s book, “The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland” would be too complicated for the students to read and that is why I have chosen to make a paper with the information which is relevant for the understanding of the film.⁷

For the link http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2006/03/northern_irelanlinks.html, the film, and the articles from the anthology “Living with the Troubles”, I have chosen to develop questions for the students to guide them into what is the most important information. The survey of the film in the teaching material is meant to help the candidates get an idea of what the film is about.⁸

The classroom facilities are important, because they can widen or limit the possibilities of a teacher candidate. To use the teaching material presented by me, a teacher candidate would need a computer, a projector and the possibility of showing a DVD in the classroom. This depends on the finances of the school.

A natural part of a course is an evaluation, I had not yet developed an evaluation paper for the course at the presentation, but I have now and it is attached to this report.⁹ From the result of the actual evaluation, it can be seen that the majority of the first-year class found that they have far greater knowledge about Northern Ireland than they had before the course.

The aim of my presentation the 12th of November 2008 was to briefly present the possibility of teaching Northern Ireland to a first-year Upper Secondary A-level class. I chose to use the written word, a hand out, the spoken word and some excerpts of the film ‘*Some Mother’s Son*’ to give an introduction to both the film and the framework the film could fit into in an actual teaching plan.

Some of the questions which we discussed afterwards were: Was the film too biased? Was it based on hero worship? These are relevant questions which could be asked by the teacher to the students in a first-year class as well.

The idea with the hand-out was that the candidates could use my material if they choose to teach this subject.

⁵ Appendix 2 to this report. After the presentation of my ‘Teaching Material’, I developed a discussion paper, which could be used in the ending of the whole theme about Violence.

⁶ P.14

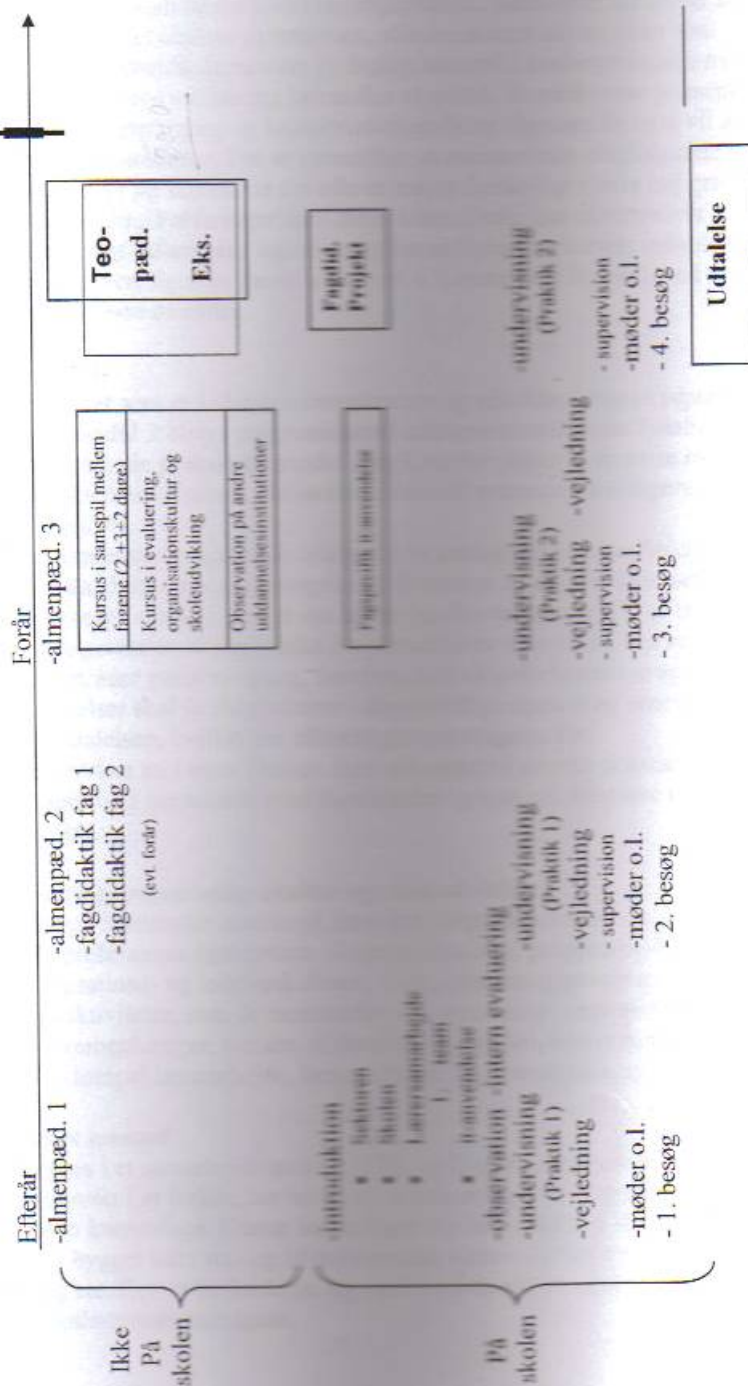
⁷ Appendix 2 p.7

⁸ Appendix 4 p.11

⁹ Appendix 3a to this report

Appendix 3b is the result of an evaluation in a first-year-class.

1.3 Oversigt over kandidatforløbet 1-årig uddannelsesstilling



Appendix 2

Topic: Violence

Under this headline we have dealt with:

Individual violence

Rendevous by Daniel Ransom 1985 (A short story) Contexts, Gyldendal 2004

The individual against the group

Warning by Terry Mccarthy, 2002 (An article) Contexts, Gyldendal 20

Schoolshooting : *Bowling for Columbine*, Michael Moore, 2002 (Film)

Political Violence: Northern Ireland as an example.

Ruane and Todd, 1996 "The dynamics of conflict in Northern Ireland" Chapter 3.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/symbols/index.html>

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/photos/belfast/peaceline/lanark1.htm#lanark1>

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2006/03/northern_irelanlinks.html

http://us.uvm.dk/gymnasie//vejl/laereplan_pdf/stx/stx_engelsk_a.pdf

Lange, Henning: *Living with the Troubles* Systime 1982

Artiklerne : The Legacy of Bobby Sands, Newsweek 1981

Inside the Maze Prison, Newsweek 1981.

Class discussion.

Discuss which features the different kinds of violence, we have dealt with, have in common:

Are there elements of fear connected to the three kinds of violence?

Give examples.

Are there elements of misunderstanding in each case?

Give examples.

Are there elements of maltreatment or discrimination behind the acts of violence?

Give examples.

How do you think violence can be avoided?

Appendix 3a
Evaluering af emnet Violence.

Hvor enig er du i følgende udsagn: (Sæt kryds)

Jeg har været til stort set alle timer i forløbet og kan derfor udtale mig med sikkerhed:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Jeg har været forberedt til alle timer:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Emnet har været vedkommende:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Udvalget af tekster og film har været godt:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Jeg kunne godt lide teksterne om:

Individual violence:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

The individual against the group:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Political Violence: Northern Ireland as an example:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Jeg er blevet bedre til at analysere litterære og ikke litterære tekster:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Jeg ved mere om samfundsmæssige forhold i Storbritannien, særligt Nord Irland:

Slet ikke lidt i nogen grad i høj grad

Appendix 3b
Evaluering af emnet Violence. 23 har besvaret.

Hvor enig er du i følgende udsagn: (Sæt kryds)

Jeg har været til stort set alle timer i forløbet og kan derfor udtale mig med sikkerhed:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	6	13	4

Jeg har været forberedt til alle timer:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	5	14	4

Emnet har været vedkommende:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	6	13	4

Udvalget af tekster og film har været godt:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	3	9	12

Jeg kunne godt lide teksterne om:

Individual violence:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	10	9	3

The individual against the group:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	6	9	7

Political Violence: Northern Ireland as an example:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	6	11	6

Jeg er blevet bedre til at analysere litterære og ikke litterære tekster:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	10	12	

Jeg ved mere om samfundsmæssige forhold i Storbritannien, særligt Nord Irland:

Slet ikke	lidt	i nogen grad	i høj grad
	3	12	8

Bibliography

Nordholt, Connie, "Teaching Material. 'How to use the film' 'Some mother's Son' by Terry George in the Danish Gymnasium and HF" Presentation 12th of November 2008

George, Terry, "Some Mother's Son", 1996

Contexts, Gyldendal 2004

CD or the tasks can be found: www.contexts.gyldendal.dk

Lange, Henning: *Living with the Troubles* Systime 1982

Ruane and Todd, 1996 "The dynamics of conflict in Northern Ireland"

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/symbols/index.html>

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/photos/belfast/peaceline/lanark1.htm#lanark1>

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2006/03/northern_irelanlinks.html

http://us.uvm.dk/gymnasie//vejil/laereplan_pdf/stx/stx_engelsk_a.pdf

"Vejledning og supervision. Bidrag til vejledning og supervision I gymnasiepædagogikum"
Christensen m.fl. Redaktør Erik Damberg, IFPR, Syddansk Universitet. 2008