



JOURNAL of SOCIAL and HUMANITIES SCIENCES RESEARCH (JSHSR)

Uluslararası Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırma Dergisi

Received/Makale Geliş 11.08.2021
Published /Yayınlanma 30.11.2021
Article Type/Makale Türü Research Article

Citation/Alıntı: Fakazlı, Ö. (2021). Critical pedagogy as a teaching approach to education. *Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences Research*, 8(76), 2704-2713.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.26450/jshsr.2734>



Lect. Özlem FAKAZLI

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4509-607X>

Kastamonu University, School of Foreign Languages, Kastamonu / TURKEY

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AS A TEACHING APPROACH TO EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

Critical pedagogy, which is regarded as a transformation-based approach to education, has attracted much attention lately because the concept of “critical” has been positioned at the very center of contemporary education models. This pedagogy is believed to have the potential to enable students to question inequalities that exist in the current social order, criticize structures of power and domination, become aware of repressive conditions around them, and take an action and create an equal society for everyone. Considering critical pedagogy as a powerful instrument, firstly the current paper focused on what critical pedagogy is and how it is defined. Then, the history, vision, main arguments, and concepts of critical pedagogy were explained. Following this, the paper discussed the educational implications of critical pedagogy as a teaching approach including the aim of education and school, the teaching method, the role of the student and the teacher, etc. Based on the arguments proposed by critical pedagogues, some suggestions and solutions for educational contexts were given. Finally, some criticisms directed towards critical pedagogy were provided.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy, Critical theory, Transformation, Critical consciousness.

1. INTRODUCTION

Critical pedagogy, which is one of the contemporary teaching approaches to education, is worth understanding in detail. One fundamental reason is that there seems a need to speak of and apply a pedagogy, which can have the power to change and aspire transformation when current education systems in the world are generally based on non-critical thinking, individualism, transmitting and accumulation of knowledge, protecting and maintaining the existing order, traditions and beliefs. As Abraham (2014:1) states “there is a need for a solidarity-based pedagogy, where disadvantaged social groups and society at large are given sufficient focus”. In a context where people are transferred with information, which aims to persuade them on certain issues and enable them to accept capitalist values, critical pedagogy is believed to be a momentous instrument to reflect upon those issues in a critical way, understand who they serve for, react to oppressive conditions, and take an action for transformation.

In the literature, critical pedagogy has been defined by many scholars. For example, Freire (2001:43) identified critical pedagogy as “a correct way of thinking that goes beyond the ingenious.” Kirylo, Thirumurthy, Smith and McLaren (2010:332) described the critical theory as “an approach to understanding and engaging the political and economic realities of everyday life” According to Macedo (2006:394), “critical pedagogy is a state of becoming, a way of being in the world and with the world- a never ending process that involves struggle and pain but also hope and joy shaped and maintained by a humanizing pedagogy”. McLaren (1998:45) described critical pedagogy as:

“A way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structure of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society, and, nation state.”

Issue/Sayı: 76

Volume/Cilt: 8

jshsr.org

ISSN: 2459-1149

This way of thinking was further deepened by Ira Shor (1992:129) and defined as:

“Habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse.”

Critical pedagogy can also be defined as an educational philosophy that focuses on inequality issues such as social class, power, gender, race, and believes that individuals can transform society by raising critical awareness (Cevizci, 2018).

2. THE ORIGIN OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Critical pedagogy is a radical educational philosophy approach, mainly influenced by Marxism and the Frankfurt school (Critical Theory) in the second half of the 20th century. However, before Marxism and critical theory emerged as a philosophical field, critical thinking was practiced by scholars in different periods of history. It can be said that critical thinking dates back to Greek philosophers, the Renaissance intellectuals, and scholars of the 1800s and 1900s (Abraham, 2014).

It would be appropriate to briefly mention critical theory here since the source of critical pedagogy is essentially critical theory. Critical theory may first be thought of as a critical reappropriation of Marxism, but over time it has gone further from these roots. One of the most influential commitments of Marxism in Critical Theory is to get rid of "false consciousness" in general. There are many lines of thought in Frankfurt School; the best known names of the school can be listed as Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin, Marcuse, Fromm and later Habermas, and it is also known that these scholars changed their minds over time. While it is difficult to define the ideas of Critical Theory precisely, it is possible to point out a fundamental theoretical interest that poses this tradition. Among the motives of the school is a strong ethical concern for the individual, the rejection of all possible excuses for hunger, domination, humiliation or injustice, and the longing for a better world (Blake & Masschelein, 2003).

The defeat of the workers' movements at the end of the First World War, the rise of Stalinism after the revolution in Russia, the USSR's control of the left tendencies in the European continent, the rise of Nazism and Fascism were effective in the emergence of the Frankfurt School. Under the difficult conditions of the 1930s, important representatives of critical theory added different dimensions to Marxism. First of all, they criticized the economic determinism introduced by classical Marxist thought although they did not deny Marx's view; they claimed that Marxist theory was not sufficient to understand the current sociology. While Marcuse and a few group members chose to fight against fascism during the Second World War, Horkheimer and Adorno emphasized the destructiveness of science and technology and stated that democracies turned into despotism due to oppressive rulers (Cevizci, 2017).

According to Bottomore (1997), critical theory mainly focused on three basic issues and tried to analyze these issues critically. The first of these issues is the critique of positivism; the second is a critical attitude towards technocratic bureaucratic domination created by science and technology, and the last one is the analysis of modern totalitarianism created through the culture industry.

Critical pedagogy, one of the most influential contemporary educational theories, has enriched its critical attitude, which it inherited from critical theory (Abraham, 2014) and harshly criticized the school and society in order to reveal the colonial power relations and to establish equality and social justice (Kellner, 2006). Critical pedagogy is a field of study and practice which has been put forward for a democratic and emancipatory school idea that derives from various radical ideas, beliefs and practices (Kincheloe, 2008). Critical pedagogy is a humanist and libertarian approach to educational philosophy that aims to eliminate the prevailing pressure by transforming education and pedagogy in the 1980s, taking care of the interests of disadvantaged groups (Merriam, Rosemary, & Lisa, 2007). Critical pedagogy mainly "criticizes existing education systems and policies and making promises for democratic education" (Durakoğlu, 2018:179) and "tries to present educational models based on the concept of freedom" (Ergün, 2018:114).

The most prominent representatives of critical pedagogy are Paolo Freire, Antonio Gramsci, Ivan Illich, Ira Shor, Henry Giroux, Michael Apple, Peter McLaren; these scholars are educational philosophers who especially think about education. The most important name among these thinkers is the Brazilian

educationalist Paolo Freire. He had a great impact on the last quarter of the 20th century and contributed to critical pedagogy a lot especially with his terms such as conscientization, critical consciousness, praxis (reflection and action). Freire is also considered as the foremost representative and pioneer of critical pedagogy and his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is regarded as the main text of critical pedagogy.

3. BASIC ARGUMENTS OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Critical pedagogy, mainly rooted in the critical theory developed by the Frankfurt School, can almost be regarded as the educational expression of critical theory. Critical pedagogy emerged with some important arguments.

First of all, critical pedagogy finds the cause of the global education crisis of the 20th century in instrumental rationality. The basis of this crisis is that the rationality which was developed to dominate nature has dominated society and served capitalism and its mode of production. In addition, increasing productivity and production is the most important goal of this instrumental rationality. In this regard, education, school, classes and curricula have become political structures shaped by the ideologies, but educational practices created by different groups and ideologies can be authoritarian and repressive and can serve to protect the unequal and undemocratic status quo by legitimizing it and to maintain the current order (Cevizci, 2018).

In the 19th and 20th centuries, critical pedagogy, which is a reaction to the mass school education that is regulated by the state, opposes the general education given under the control of the state because it trains individuals in the direction of the needs of modern industry and prepares them to support the practices of the state without questioning (Spring, 1991). Critical pedagogues are particularly concerned with the close relationship between education and politics. One of the issues that they focus on the most is capitalism and neoliberal economic policies. It is stated that these policies are based on inequality and powerful classes are striving to maintain their existence through education by creating individuals who are compliant, who do not criticize, who do not think and cannot act (Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2011). In other words; critical pedagogy argues that educational practices created by different groups and ideologies can be authoritarian and repressive, and can serve to preserve unjust and undemocratic status quo (Ergün, 2018). Education based on these policies further strengthens the inequalities and clarifies the differences between individuals' social classes (Gramsci, 1997).

For critical pedagogues, schools are political, economic, cultural spaces that operate under the dominant power and ideology. They are used to legitimize a certain authority and knowledge under the guise of being impartial and to reproduce the existing class structure. In reality, schools privilege children of the ruling class over disadvantaged children from marginalized sections of society; so they are not democratic. Therefore, critical pedagogy seeks to identify and fight undemocratic educational practices and supports culturally and economically disadvantaged students (Kincheloe, 2008).

Critical pedagogy also emphasizes that economically, politically and socially dominant classes use schools to maintain social control. In order for these dominant groups to maintain their power to rule, their children go to prestigious educational institutions where they can prepare for high-degree careers in business, industry, and government. On the other hand, children of subgroups and classes are discriminated against and indoctrinated at the schools to accept conditions that will weaken them. Thus, the information is distributed for the benefit of those in the ruling class. In this context, critical theorists aim to awaken the awareness of individuals who have been subordinated and marginalized in society, especially because of race, ethnicity, language, class, gender, by emphasizing that knowledge is an issue of social, political, economic and educational power and control (Ornstein & Levine, 2006).

According to Freire (2017), the most important place where silence is created in society is domesticated educational institutions. Freire (2017) in his famous book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, defines this form of education, as a banking education model, which oppressors use as the greatest means of oppressing. In this model, there is a standard curriculum for each group; this curriculum isolates learners from the social world. In a sense, curriculum separates theory and practice; fills the minds of individuals with theoretical information far from real life. In the banking education model, education suffers from the disease of passing on knowledge; the information conveyed is not open to questioning, criticism, or research. In this transfer process, the educator is active; students are passive. In education, the educator conveys information, makes explanations, and his task is actually to fill the students' minds with content that is detached from reality. The more the teacher fills the cups, the better teacher he is. The better the

student memorizes and classifies the things conveyed to him, the more successful he/she is. This banking education enables the storage of theoretical information that is far from practicality and individuals become submissive to everything. This educational model, which does not lead students to think critically, clearly supports the existing order which is repressive and authoritarian. Therefore, these purposefully designed educational systems are a powerful tool used to preserve and strengthen the political ideology and schools become places that produce inequality and injustice.

Illich (2016), on the other hand, focuses on the instrumentalization of the school and the function of the school, while revealing the contradictions of education. One of his most important works is *Deschooling Society*. Illich (2016) claims that education makes individuals believe that they cannot learn independently and destroys their self-learning impulse, deliberately shapes individuals' view of the world, and deprives them of education in a real sense. In such a system, they have been turned into a product that can be bought and sold, and school has been a political place that is used to consolidate this dominant system. According to Illich (2016), schools are not a place that improves skills; it is a place where only a diploma is obtained by jumping to the upper classes respectively with success; it is not possible to learn the reality and to realize creative activities here. Therefore, Illich believes that compulsory education is not correct; a society without schools is possible.

Similarly, Giroux (2009) describes schools as prisons that are increasingly preoccupied with discipline. The school basically functions as an institution that tries to protect the security of the white and middle class, to discipline and supervise young people so that they do not become a problem in the future, and to differentiate students according to their class and color. McLaren (2011) also states that schools are a place that shelters, deepens and sustains intolerance and inequality rather than being an area of consensus. Because schools do not only teach course content, they direct individuals to adopt the inequality created by capitalism. She further states that individuals are transformed into passive beings rather than individuals who criticize and produce knowledge. Thus, education shaped by neoliberalism both raises the human power needed by capitalism and keeps individuals from being active subjects and supports authoritarianism by preventing critical thinking and creativity.

Apple (2019), another leading thinker in critical pedagogy, analyzed the political nature of the school and the school curriculum in detail in his book *Ideology and Curriculum*. Apple sees schools as areas that reproduce existing social relationships. Apple highlights how schools accomplish the function assigned to them by analyzing the official and hidden curriculum. He argues that the content of the curriculum was chosen by a particular group of people for a specific purpose. For this reason, the information conveyed to students in schools is not neutral as thought. The fact that the concerns and contradictions of the society do not find a place in the curriculum shows that the curriculum was developed to maintain the existing system. As a result, the information passed on to students is ideological. Apple states that schools teach students certain values and norms through the hidden curriculum and subtly expose students to ruling ideology. The organizational style of the schools, the hierarchical relationship between the teacher and the student, the reward and punishment system enable students to internalize the existing conditions. Students who learn to abide by the rules in schools become loyal employees who accept their social position in the future without resistance. The school system, which functions as a selection and elimination tool to produce the human resources needed by the market, legitimizes the privileged status of the ruling class. Thus, education is used as a political instrument, which turns its own citizens into consumers and objects. In addition, it serves to produce the values demanded by the privileged class and train the elements needed by capitalism.

In the context of critical pedagogy, it would be appropriate to explain the concept of hegemony, one of the most important concepts introduced by Gramsci regarding education. He mentioned this concept in his work, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*. Gramsci (1997) emphasized that the pressure and hegemony exerted on subgroups are realized not only by power relations but also by cultural tools and structures in today's modern societies. The bourgeoisie, which holds the rule in capitalist societies, does this not only by using force but also by the consent of individuals or classes. In other words, society's beliefs, consciousness, wishes and desires are formed and governed by hegemony. The ruling classes marginalize and exclude certain ideas and perspectives, and impose others. Consequently, individuals or societies willingly accept and internalize the belief systems, understandings, thoughts produced and imposed by capitalism through cultural hegemony. In other words, capitalist hegemony governs consent, shapes minds and consciousness, so this domination is realized by the individual's own free will. In short, Gramsci states that capitalist hegemony is established through ideology and that schools have a fundamental role in the formation of hegemony, which is one of the most effective means of domination.

According to Freire, domination will end, transformation and emancipation will occur when individuals realize their object status, start to struggle against oppressive conditions and win this struggle at the end. In schools with a culture of criticism, people can gain consciousness (conscientization) and transform the world they live in through praxis, which refers to people's reflection and action. In order for the oppressed to liberate themselves, they must first understand that they are oppressed and living in inequalities, realize the reasons for their situation, take responsibility for their own actions, and then transform this situation. Instead of being manipulated and silenced by the oppressors, they now make their own decisions, speak their own voices, express their own opinions. The sentences in Freire's (2017: 49) book *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* also support this:

“Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators.”

4. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

According to critical pedagogy, the purpose of education is to realize the emancipation of individuals and the society as a whole and the construction of a fair and democratic society with the support and contribution of education (Cevizci, 2018:218). While critical pedagogy accomplishes this goal, it essentially wants to “strengthen the weak and eliminate existing social inequality and injustices” (McLaren, 2011: 274). Broadly speaking, this original philosophy of education approach aims to enable individuals to recognize and criticize social structures, government-power relations, oppressive, hierarchical practices, take transformative actions for the liberation of society, and make the world a more equal and humanistic world (McKernan, 2013). It focuses on forms of socialization that will support the authoritarian and revolutionary character structures, and it attempts to abolish the ideological control by raising the consciousness of individuals (Spring, 1991). As Breunig (2005:109) states, “critical pedagogy... encourages critical thinking and promotes practices that have the potential to transform oppressive institutions or social relations”. In this sense, the main purpose of education can be considered as awareness, liberation and humanization (Freire, 2017). As understood, critical pedagogy tries to eliminate the effects of neoliberal and conservative policies on education and develop libertarian and alternative education models.

In order to achieve those goals mentioned above, a major transformation in education is required (Freire, 2017). Education should be transformed in a way that rejects the ruling class, enables the language of criticism, and develops pluralism, social justice, equality, solidarity and democracy (Giroux, 2009). This unique pedagogy, which Freire calls ‘the pedagogy of the oppressed’, enables individuals to become free from being objects of hegemonic relations and oppressive education system that they were not aware of before, to become subjects, and to be able to transform and humanize the world. Although privileged classes have dominated schools throughout history, critical pedagogy does not see this domination as inevitable. On the contrary, this pedagogy believes that a more democratic and fair reorganization of education will result in a more peaceful and humanistic society at the same time. Critical pedagogy refers to an education that enables students to gain a critical perspective and have the confidence to struggle to improve themselves and the society they live in (Kincheloe, 2008).

Schools should also be the place where critical knowledge is produced. In such a school system, the culture of silence should be replaced by a culture of criticism, because criticism is the most fundamental condition for emancipation. Schools should educate students as representatives of social transformation and critical citizenship and strive for ending discriminations such as racism, sexism, exploitation and ensure social justice and solidarity for all segments of society (McLaren, 2007).

Freire (2017) proposed a problem-posing education model, which supports critical education versus the banking education model, which is the mainstream education model. In the problem-posing education model, the teacher is the guide and learners actively participate in every stage of the education. In addition, learners are not isolated from the world they live in. On the contrary, they receive education related to the world they live in. Dialogue is the most fundamental method in the problem-posing education model. Critical reflective thinking and acting through dialogue is the only way to end up domination. Dialogue and the dialogic method, as the main element and method of liberating education, are extremely necessary for the humanization of the world. Since there is no communication without dialogue, education cannot take place either. People need to engage in dialogue in order to first make sense of the society they live in, recognize inequalities, reflect on them and act to change the world.

Freire (2017) stated that just as language can be used as a tool used to implement and legitimize the policies and practices of power and to form and consolidate sovereignty, it can also be used to gain awareness and bring liberation. Freire paid special attention to the role of language in detecting contradictions in the system, reading and understanding the world, and making it a better place. He suggested that the oppressed must first realize that they are exploited and discriminated, and then take action to eliminate this situation. In this way, humanization will occur for both the oppressor and the oppressed. He further emphasized that no one can liberate another, people will liberate themselves through dialogue and solidarity.

In the emancipatory pedagogy proposed by Freire (2017), teachers and students should work together for transformation and liberation. Freire believed that educators should work with the oppressed, not for the oppressed, so that the oppressed can think critically about the causes of oppression and mobilize for emancipation. Freire specifically warned that educators should not do liberation by imposing their own beliefs because it would be to use the same method as the oppressors and treat the oppressed as objects. According to Freire, people can only act as a result of reflective thinking. In order for them to act and for education to be successful, educators must have a genuine belief that the oppressed can judge. Freire, who gave great importance to liberating dialogue, also emphasized that teachers should have the humility to learn from their students while in dialogue with their students.

Thus, it is understood that teachers play a significant role in transforming the society. The concept of the teachers as transformative intellectuals was introduced by Giroux as a reaction to attempts to devalue and disqualify the teaching profession. Giroux (1988) stated that in the current political and ideological climate, teachers are reduced to the role of technicians responsible for implementing the centrally prepared curriculum rather than developing a program in line with the social context and the needs of students. He also argued that pre-service teachers are not allowed to discover teaching methods on their own, and that there is an instrumental technocratic approach in teacher training programs that include pre-thought subject areas and methods. As a result, teacher training programs focus on how to effectively teach certain skills to prospective teachers, preventing them from seeing the basic principles behind various theories, methods and techniques. Giroux (1988) argued that the reconceptualization of the teaching profession can be achieved by seeing teachers as transformative intellectuals. According to him, teachers should be transformative as well as reflective thinking intellectuals, opposing social and political movements that ignore their intelligence, thought, and experience. Teachers' role as transformative intellectuals is to scientifically combine reflective thinking and practice while educating students as active citizens so that democracy can exist well (Giroux, 1988). Transformative teachers encourage their students to increase awareness of the political nature of the school that deepens inequalities in society, become critical agents of change, and gain a critical perspective to fight against injustice and exploitation in the school and in the world (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Similarly, Gramsci (1971:350) also emphasized the important role of teachers as organic intellectuals, and points out that the relationship between teacher and student is active and mutual; "every teacher is always a student and every student is a teacher". Teachers should have the responsibility of making their students believe that another system is possible (Lombardi, 2000). Gramsci further underlined that if individuals are educated by critical teachers, they can mobilize their own common sense and resist dominant ideologies (Anjon, 2011).

5. SUGGESTIONS FROM CRITICAL PEDAGOGY PERSPECTIVE

In order for individuals to take action to terminate oppressive, hegemonic relations and practices and become subjects rather than objects, first of all, it seems necessary to make some changes in the programs of education. Critical pedagogy can be useful when making changes in the objectives, content, educational methods, and assessment and evaluation stages. The program may include goals that will enable individuals to gain critical awareness, allow them to question and develop their ability to explore deeper meanings beyond the surface. From this perspective, objectives that will teach students to learn on their own and help them gain self-confidence and self-esteem can also be added to the programs. For a radical transformation in the society, the existence of criticism in schools emerges as a great necessity. One way to create this culture in schools may be to include philosophy lessons in educational programs starting from early classes because philosophy is known as the basis of critical thinking. Without critical thinking, there can be no democracy; without democracy, there can be no emancipation.

In addition, schools can initiate a change in society through critical pedagogy, including a pluralistic approach that values students' creative potential, develops and enriches them, and responds to their

interests, wishes and problems. Otherwise; due to oppressive, hierarchical, imposing educational practices, students' natural talents and creativity will disappear; individuals will be uniformed and standardized as objects which are easy to manage in the future. While creating the content of the education program, social, economic, or political problems that children can think about can be presented as learning content. In this way, students will be given the opportunity to reflect on many problems that concern society, and to develop methods and solutions that can eliminate these problems.

The educational procedure is the stage that is related to how to achieve the goals in the classroom. At this stage, teachers can benefit from a critical pedagogy perspective by providing children with active participation in the process, offering them the chance to gain experiences, taking into account their feelings and thoughts during the decision-making process, using problem-solving or project-based learning methods. In the evaluation, which is the last stage, teachers can make the student's success not only with the product or academic success at the end of the process but also by looking at the child's gradual development and holistic change. The teacher can also design tools or projects that measure how much they have developed their critical skills.

In critical pedagogy, teacher-student dialogue, dialogue between students, mutual understanding, seeing different perspectives, and enrichment with these perspectives are very important. The transformation needed in education can only be possible with critical pedagogy praxis that allows new voices and colors. This emancipatory education system based on critical pedagogy should also provide education for democracy, teach the requirements of democracy, and develop emancipatory citizenship. Thus, learners will grow up as individuals who know their rights, reject any kind of authority, have a critical language, and take radical actions for the transformation of society. The role of schools is to train individuals to be responsible for both the society they live in and the system they are a part of, to enable them to learn from their own experiences, to make them conscious subjects that can eliminate race, class, gender, social stratification.

Critical pedagogy can also offer solutions to teacher training problems. Today, there are many teachers who have never heard of critical pedagogy or reflective teaching, who do not know exactly what it is and how to use it in educational processes even if they have heard of it. Now that emancipatory teachers are needed, faculties of education should provide educational opportunities by giving critical pedagogy as an undergraduate course. This may help to train critical and reflective teachers who can look back on their experiences, do critical thinking, improve their teaching practices, solve unexpected problems and cater to the needs of today's children and society (Fakazlı & Gönen, 2017). Through this education, teachers may have the chance of learning different ways of doing reflection and how they can implement reflective teaching (Fakazlı, 2021). By reflecting on their teaching actions, feelings and beliefs, gaining consciousness of their strengths and weaknesses, and making self-assessment, they enhance their professional growth (Farrell, 2007; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Valli, 1997). Additionally, with the help of critical pedagogy course, every graduate teacher can have ideas about what critical pedagogy basically is, what its purpose is, by whom it is represented, what transformations it can realize and how it can come to life in classrooms. They can start their profession as emancipatory teachers who have learned that critical pedagogy can be a lifestyle, a form of character, can be used not only in education but in many fields, and can be a powerful way to humanize the society. As Giroux (2009) states, at least higher education should not only provide students with general education but also give them the habit of critical thinking and a passion for social responsibility.

6. CRITIQUES OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Even though critical pedagogy, which aims to liberate and transform society, has received much interest in the literature, it has also been criticized for several reasons.

One of the main criticisms against critical pedagogy is that that it only criticizes the system at the macro level and does not act in real life (McArthur, 2010). In other words, it is criticized for being "...excessively abstract and too far removed from everyday life of the school" (Breunig, 2005: 110), so it is more concerned with criticizing than acting. In short, critical pedagogy is claimed to be far from reality; it is mostly at the theoretical level, so it cannot provide a practical basis for students, teachers, and academics, and cannot provide necessary solutions.

Especially Freire's pedagogy has been the target of criticism. His formulations have been found general, abstract and assertive. For example, there are few explanations showing teachers' transition from critical thinking to critical practice. His book *Education: The Practice of Freedom* only contains an explanation

of the application of generative themes and concrete words (Cohn, 1988; Lucio-Villegas, 2009). The biggest weakness of Freire's philosophy is that it does not provide concrete applications for in-class applications. While critics appreciate their guiding views on practices in terms of epistemological, philosophical, and social principles, they also wish that Freire proposed a specific method for teaching literacy or for practical suggestions that educators could use in the pedagogical process. However, Freire refused to write a "how-to" book because he felt that educators should reconsider the ideas that he put forward and use them creatively (Schugurensky, 1998).

Educators mostly criticized Freire's critical pedagogy and found this educational approach to be quite idealistic for social transformation, whereas those who supported Freire's views complained about the domestication of critical pedagogy and its reduction to student-oriented learning approaches (McLaren, 1999). Freire's advocacy of an educational process based on a critical / political reading of the world has been considered as reformist, populist, and full of myths. In short, Freire's vision was seen as utopian (Mayo, 2012). Freire's work is also considered eclectic by most educators, and this is why the originality of Freire's work has been criticized (Mithra, 2014). It is said that the alternatives he offered from a global perspective were rhetorical and he was seen as a politician producing theories based on a particular ideology, not an educator (Egerton, 1973). On the other hand, Gibson (1999) compared Freire's and Hegel's work and revealed the similarities, saying that Freire made too many quotes and adaptations from Hegel.

Freire suggested that reading the world is necessary and sufficient to change the world. He supposes that a critical reading of reality will automatically transform the world. In this regard, critics say that Freire puts more emphasis on thinking and theory than action. They further put forward that it lacks a political scope for social change that associates emancipation with consciousness (Cohn, 1988; Lucio-Villegas, 2009).

In conclusion, perhaps the most important thing critical pedagogy needs to do is to propose a practical methodology within the praxis rather than presenting utopian and idealistic claims and theories, and to be oriented towards real life.

7. CONCLUSION

Critical pedagogy generally puts forward that educational changes have been mainly caused by political agendas, economic, social, historical conditions so that education can serve the privileged and powerful classes, suppress the other groups of the society, maintain the existing inequalities.

Having its roots in critical theory, critical pedagogy primarily aims to reform education in a way that it can change the existing economic, social, political order for a better, humanist, democratic, fair world. The education should be changed based on emancipatory pedagogy in order to allow learners to think critically, reflect on injustices, hegemonic relations, discrimination in the society, raise awareness of these issues, struggle against oppressive conditions, and take action to create social change. For these purposes to be achieved, education should empower learners and make them active, independent, conscious, responsible individuals.

In spite of some critics directed at critical pedagogy, it seems that this pedagogy still has a great potential to strengthen the individuals, enhance their critical consciousness, make them involved in the transformation of the society and the world into a better, fair, democratic place for everyone.

REFERENCES

- ABRAHAM, G.Y. (2014). Critical Pedagogy: Origin, Vision, Action & Consequences. *Karlstads universitet*, 10(1), 90-98.
- ANJON, J. (2011). *Marx and education*. New York: Routledge.
- APPLE, M. W. (2019). *Ideology and curriculum* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- BLAKE, N. & MASSCHELEIN, J. (2003). Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy. In N. Blake, P. Smeyers, R. Smith & P. Standish (Eds.), *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education*, (pp. 38-56). UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- BOTTOMORE, T. (1997). *Frankfurt Okulu ve Eleştirisi*. (Çev. A. Çiğdem). İstanbul: Vadi Yayınları.
- BREUNIG, M. (2005). Turning Experiential Education and Critical Pedagogy Theory into Praxis. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 28(2), 106-122.

- CEVIZCI, A. (2017). *Felsefenin Kısa Tarihi*. İstanbul: Say Yayınları.
- CEVIZCI, A. (2018). *Eğitim Felsefesi*. İstanbul: Say Yayınları.
- COHN, S. L. (1988). Paulo Freire: The Man and His Educational Theory. *ERIC*.
- DURAKOGLU, A. (2018). Eleştirel Pedagoji ve Temsilcileri. F. Manav (Ed.), *Eğitim Felsefesi* içinde (s.179-188). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- EGERTON, J. (1973). Searching for Freiré. *Saturday Review of Education*, 10, 32-35.
- ERGUN, M. (2018). *Eğitim Felsefesi*. Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- FAKAZLI, Ö., & GONEN, S. İ. K. (2017). Reflection on reflection: EFL university instructors' perceptions on reflective practices. *HU Journal of Education*, 32(3), 708-726.
- FAKAZLI, Ö. (2021). Different ways of promoting reflective teaching. *Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences Research*, 8(69), 1255-1267.
- FARRELL, T. (2007). *Reflective language teaching: From research to practice*. London: Continuum Press.
- FREIRE, P. (2001). *Pedagogy of freedom: ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- FREIRE, P. (2017). *Ezilenlerin Pedagojisi*. (Çev.D. Hattatoğlu & E. Özbek). İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- GIBSON, R. (1999). Paulo Freire and Pedagogy for Social Justice. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 27(2), 129-159.
- GIROUX, H. A. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.
- GIROUX, H. A. (2009). *Dil/kültürel incelemeler alanında eleştirel pedagojinin bir rolü var mıdır? Eleştirel pedagoji söyleşileri*. (Çev. E. Ç. Babaoğlu). İstanbul: Kalkedon Yayınları.
- GRAMSCI, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, Q. Hoare & G. Nowell Smith (Eds). New York: International Publishers.
- GRAMSCI, A. (1997). *Hapishane Defterleri*. (Çev. A. Cemgil). İstanbul: Belge Yayınları.
- ILLICH, I. (2016). *Okulsuz Toplum*. (Çev. C. Öner). İstanbul: Roman Oda Yayınları.
- JAY J. K. & JOHNSON, K.L. (2002). Capturing complexity: a typology of reflective practice for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18, 73-85.
- KELLNER, D. (2006). Critical Theory. In Randall Curren (Ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Education*, (pp.161-175). Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishing.
- KINCHELOE, J. K. (2008). *Critical pedagogy* (2nd ed.). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- KIRYLO, J. D., THIRUMURTHY, V., SMITH, M., & MCLAREN, P. (2010). Issues in education: Critical pedagogy: An overview. *Childhood Education*, 86(5), 332-334.
- KUMARAVADIVELU, B. (2003). *Beyond methods macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- LOMBARDI, F. (2000). *Antonio Gramsci'nin marksist pedagojisi*. (Çev. S. Özbudun & B. Ekmen). Ankara: Ütopya Yayınevi.
- LUCIO-VILLEGAS, E. (2009). Paulo Freire : A beginner's guide. *Concept : The Journal of Contemporary Community Education Practice Theory*, 1(1), 1-5.
- MACEDO, D. (2018). *Literacies of power: What Americans are not allowed to know*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- MAYO, P. (2012). *Özgürleştirilen Praksis: Paulo Freire'nin Radikal Eğitim ve Politika Mirası*. Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları.
- MCARTHUR, J. (2010). Achieving Social Justice within and through Higher Education: Challenge for Critical Pedagogy. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 15(5), 493-504.

- MCKERNAN, J.A. (2013). The origins of Critical Theory in Education: Fabian socialism as Social Reconstructionism in Nineteenth-Century Britain. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 61(4), 417-433.
- MCLAREN, P. (1998). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*. New York: Longman.
- MCLAREN, P. (1999). A Pedagogy of Possibility: Reflecting upon Paulo Freire's Politics of Education: In Memory of Paulo Freire. *Educational Researcher*, 28(2), 49-54.
- MCLAREN, P. (2007). The future of the past: Reflections on the present state of empire and pedagogy. In P. McLaren & J. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Critical pedagogy: Where are we now?* (pp. 289-314) New York: Peter Lang.
- MCLAREN, P. (2011). *Okullarda yaşam. Eleştirel pedagojiye giriş*. (Çev.M. Y. Eryaman ve H. Arslan). Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- MERRIAM, S.B., ROSEMARY, S.C., & LISA, M.B. (2007). *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons/Jossey-Bass.
- MITHRA, H. G. (2014). Paulo Freire's Educational Theory and Approach: A Critique. *Asia Journal of Theology*, 28(1), 96-118.
- ORNSTEIN, A.C., & LEVINE, D.U (2008). *Foundations of Education* (10th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- SCHUGURENSKY, D. (1998). The Legacy of Paulo Freire: A Critical Review of His Contributions. *Convergence*, 31(2), 17-29.
- SHOR, I. (1992). *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- SPRING, J. H. (1991). *Özgür eğitim*. (Çev. A. Ekmekçi). İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınevi.
- VALLI, L. (1997). Listening to other voices: A description of teacher reflection in the United States. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 72 (1), 67-88.
- YILMAZ, K., & ALTINKURT, Y. (2011). Öğretmen Adaylarının Eleştirel Pedagoji ile İlgili Görüşleri. *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 12(3), 195-213.