



CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: AN INNOVATIVE IDEA

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What is Critical pedagogy?

Paulo Freire (1921–1997) first introduced critical pedagogy: the belief that teaching should challenge learners to examine power structures and patterns of inequality within the status quo.

Freire emphasized how important it is to remember what it is to be human and saw education as a way to transform oppressive structures. His perspective stemmed from the values of love, care, and solidarity.

Critical pedagogy is a teaching approach which attempts to help students question and challenge domination, and the beliefs and practices that dominate. In other words, it is a theory and practice of helping students achieve critical consciousness.

According to the philosophy of critical pedagogy, teaching is a political act; specifically, teaching should be an act for change that sustains social justice and democracy as its major goals. Educators who support critical pedagogy understand that education is not without biases; on the contrary, government officials, publishers, curriculum writers, administration, and teachers select the content that they wish to share based on their political ideologies and worldviews. Accordingly, critical educators support inclusive practices that encourage students to identify and question the political systems that shape their learning experiences.

Critical pedagogy in classroom

Critical pedagogy focuses on changing the education system, identifying social inequalities with a push for change, and the oppressive power struggle. Changing the education system can occur when educational relations and practices are changed, and teacher also need to energize students to think critically about the world around them. Flexible curriculum and

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discussing experiences and opinions are important components of this theory. Students will be able to share their thoughts and experience a wide range of experiences through sharing.

Critical pedagogy is more than a theory, it is an inclusive teaching practice in which educators consider how students' distinct identities will influence their classroom experience. Instead of working against or ignoring students with differing perspectives, critical educators embrace diversity and even change the direction of lessons and assessments to fit student needs. Because students learn best when they can personally relate to educational materials, critical pedagogy supports multicultural education and culturally sustaining pedagogies which bridge the divide between mainstream and cultural knowledge by placing students' experiences at the center of the curriculum. Students' community practices are then seen as assets in classrooms where sustaining pluralism is the goal.

Critical pedagogy is important because it promotes positive change in society. The theory and practice of critical pedagogy asks teachers and students to combat racism, discrimination, and oppression in and outside of the classroom; through an emancipatory style of education, students are fighting for an equitable and just society.

Roll of Teacher and student in critical pedagogy

Teacher should encourage students to observe and stimulate the students' awareness, with the objective that they value social reality and build knowledge based on their experiences. To achieve this goal teachers problematize the world, creating the right conditions for the learning process to take place.

Students build new expectations, reaching a state of reflection that facilitates the understanding of their own reality, identifying problems and inconsistencies and the search for new possibilities. The use of dialogue is essential for the learning process, as well as to create a mutual commitment among the participants. In addition, students' autonomy and self-management are strengthened as well as responsibility for their own learning. Critical pedagogy dynamics are based on social participation, contextualized education, horizontal communication and the evolution of social reality.

Differences between Traditional Teaching Practices and Critical Pedagogy

The Traditional Teaching Practices give emphasis on instruction, it works on classroom management and it tries to develop 'how to' skill development, where as Critical Pedagogy gives emphasis on human beings, their needs, the contexts and also on histories. The traditional teaching practices focus on the instrumental dimension of education where as the Critical Pedagogy focuses on holistic function of education. The Traditional Teaching Practices are neutral in nature but the Critical Pedagogic Practices are political in nature. Lastly, The Traditional Teaching Practices are unidimensional where as the Critical Pedagogy Practices are multidimensional indeed.

Critical Pedagogy in Science Classroom

In Traditional classroom the teacher presents the content, gives the direction and students follow that. A critical pedagogue prefers to facilitate the learners in developing their basic skills,

critical thinking abilities, the abilities of questioning. When we talk about Critical Pedagogy in Science Classroom , we have to discuss which type of teaching learning is followed in our traditional science classroom. It promotes rote learning and leads to passive acceptance of facts. There is no prominent place to students' own experiences and understanding in the classroom but the class is followed according to the planning of the teacher. Many time the teacher fails to relate the curriculum to the culture and ideology. We have to think for the culture as because science emerges from nature, science emerges from surrounding. So in traditional classroom most of the students become passive learners, they only memorize the facts, presents the facts and follow the steps suggested by their teachers but they never experiments, never exercise, never questions on their own. In this context, we can mention that in the NCF2005 it is said that students are not just young people for whom adults should devise solutions rather they are critical observers of their own conditions and needs, they should be participants in discussions and problem solving related to their education and future opportunities. The NCF2005 also talks about critical pedagogy that critical pedagogy provides an opportunity to reflect critically on issues in terms of their political, social, economic and moral aspects. So, in science classroom the teacher should involve the students in group activities, group projects where they can encourage the views of others, they should accept the views of others. In laboratory classes where critical pedagogy is followed, the learners are not focused on the result of an experiment rather they focus on the process of the experiment.

In the science classroom where critical pedagogy is practiced, the learners are encouraged to comment, compare and think about elements that exists in their own environment. So, in science classroom the learners should be encouraged, should be trained to challenge, ask questions and analyze the established beliefs. We should nurture the learner's ability to inquire about things, events and incidents. We should help the learner in contextualizing the scientific knowledge. Our learners should be encouraged to inquire about the happenings around them in their immediate environment and adopt scientific method to analyze, to question and to explore all these happenings because critical pedagogues focuses on "Read the world " before ' Read the word" . So in brief, to practice Critical Pedagogy in science classroom the teacher should provide environment to learners where they can learn through variety of ways like experimentation , exploration, discussion, reflective-thinking , exchanging views with peer learners , teachers and other community members.

Role of Dialogism in Critical Pedagogy for nurturing critical thinking in learners

In Dialogism , the base of critical education , involves the students actively in their own education . In Critical Pedagogy , the teacher adopts a discourse through which the students seek educational criticism . If we lack dialogue , then there will be no communication and if there will be no communication , then it will obviously result in no education . In this regard according to Freire , the language of the dialogue should be known to both the speaker and the receiver. The teacher should listen to the students and also learn the various problems of them , then only the purpose of dialogic classroom will be fruitful. There should be equal opportunity for all the members of the classroom to speak and everyone should respect another's right to speak and tolerance should prevail in the classroom.

Position of Marginalized Students in Critical Pedagogy

First of all we must remember that Marginalization is avoided in Critical Pedagogy. According to Freire (1970) the aim of Critical Pedagogy is to make the marginalized students talkative and return their lost identities. In the Critical Pedagogy ,the marginalized should be able to reflect on the concrete situations to find out why the things are at that position and it make them aware about the factors for which they are marginalized . The teacher should try to recognize the need to change the conditions of the marginalized students for hindering their success.

Conflict Theory and Critical Pedagogy

Similar to critical pedagogy, conflict theory presents traditional education as a means to perpetuate inequality. For instance, conflict theorists argue that biased education leads to social class reproduction, or the continuance of social inequality, as students with low socioeconomic status are hardly afforded equitable educational opportunities. Educators frequently fail to consider that students from a lower social class may have less time to complete homework since they often have to hold down part-time jobs or care for siblings if they have multiple or single working parents. In addition, educators may just assume that students have laptops or computers, ignoring the expense that many families cannot afford.

Nonetheless, conflict theory sheds light on more educational inequities than only those that exist due to social class. Conflict theorists believe that schools that follow a normative curriculum only stand to reinforce the systemic oppression that minority groups face, whether that oppression is due to their ethnic, gender, nationality, ability, language, or sexual orientation group status, among other identifying factors. Consequently, critical pedagogy seeks to dismantle these oppressive structures by supporting culturally competent education that fosters equity, or fair opportunities for all students based on their diverse backgrounds and needs.

Characteristic of critical pedagogy

Much of the discourse of critical pedagogy revolves around a core of large, abstract ideas such as social justice, student empowerment, co-construction of knowledge, and critical thinking
Critical Pedagogy A method of teaching that-

- Facilitates the serious critique of social process.
- Views students as legitimate sources of knowledge.
- Creates a classroom community that disrupts the power dynamics of teachers over students.
- Is dedicated to the eradication of social inequalities including racism, sexism, poverty, heterosexism, and religious intolerance.
- Emphasizes civic action and transformation

Needs of critical pedagogy

Critical Pedagogy is a teaching philosophy that invites educators to encourage students to critique structures of power and oppression. It is rooted in critical theory, which involves becoming aware of and questioning the societal status quo. In critical pedagogy, a teacher uses his or her

enlightenment to encourage students to question and challenge inequalities that exist in families, schools, and societies.

- To empower Students and help them to grow.
- To Liberate students from oppression.
- To receive indigenous Knowledge and anti-colonial studies.
- To identify sources of power (gainers/losers) and political agenda.
- To bring Justice and Equality in education.
- For Rejection of Economic Determinism.
- To lessen Human Sufferings (as the goal of Schooling).
- To End of 'Banking System' of Education

Example

Critical pedagogy is about teaching students to think critically and question the information they are given. For example, if students read a dominant history narrative in a textbook, instead of just accepting the information, they should be encouraged to conduct their own research and read alternative narratives.

Impact of Critical Pedagogy on Social Change

Critical Pedagogy advocates empowerment of people through extension of knowledge, information and application of both knowledge and information are very much needed for nation building . Human empowerment must be based on constructive dialogue on human dignity with a learning group in which the so called teacher assumes the role of moderator who is actively involved in sharing his /her views just as other learners . It is through the active participation of individual learning and through the proper expression , the individual and collective needs can be achieved . In the Critical Pedagogy, the students are encouraged to adopt a curious, questioning outlook to explore educational issues. According to the theory , the responsibility of the teacher is to remain open to different ideas and values. When the teacher only considers the acquisition of facts without critically analyze the facts, they just encourage the students to become a narrow technical professions.

The critical pedagogy accommodate us with such type of pedagogy which enlarges our perception of the world, it nurtures our commitment to social transformation , grow our understanding about the causes and consequences of human suffering, and also it enliven the ethical and utopic pedagogy for social change.

Criticism of Critical Pedagogy

The Critical Pedagogy is very much beneficial for nurturing the ability to critically analyze facts, there are some critics who argue against its tenets , the various critiques are as follows : The Critical Pedagogy Theory is academic and elitist which excludes the vast portion of our society and in this way it prevents progress . The students are positioned against the traditional system and also against the hierarchy , which undermine parental control and respect for the elders.

Through Critical Pedagogy , the distrust is gained in the mind of the students against the government and also against the society . So they will form conspiracy theories.

Conclusion

Obviously, implementing critical pedagogy will look different in different subjects, and what works for one class may not work for another. For example, a history teacher may challenge an event that is traditionally seen as progressive, while a literature teacher may question a common cultural stereotype found in a book. A science teacher, on the other hand, may encourage students to look at the impact of scientific discoveries on marginalized groups. Often, this will involve finding common bonds between subjects as the critical approach is not confined to only one area of education and culture

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