

Critical Pedagogy in an EFL Context: Towards Solving the Definition Precision Problem

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Abstract

Some critics mention the definition variety problem, or a lack of definitional precision, as a major problem with Critical Pedagogy (CP). One who has just been familiar with CP may not have enough information regarding its roots and its multidisciplinary nature. S/he may not know about the historical development of CP and thus may not even be acquainted with the possibility of the existence of different definitions and versions for CP. Therefore, a newly-arrived researcher may get confused encountering the different definitions of CP. On the other hand, the literature on CP does not seem to be directed at the new researchers. By having five phases, the present mixed-methods study offered a simple definition of CP encompassing all the common grounds in the literature using an extensive literature review, the Grounded Theory approach, and Factor Analysis. Ten Iranian EFL professionals in CP, besides 306 Iranian EFL teachers, participated in the present work. The results of the present work may be helpful in developing CP-based curricula and courses which look into the real needs of the learners and teachers in order to have a more fruitful educational system.

Keywords: critical pedagogy; critical pedagogy definition; EFL; English language teaching

Introduction

“What is the best method for language teaching?” This question had obsessed all aspects of the complicated issue of language teaching before the initiation of a constructivist approach to education. In the so-called “methods era”, teachers and students were required to follow a set of fixed procedures in

order to solve all the teaching/learning problems, regardless of the existing differences. “No one could argue for the rejection of the “right” answers which had been cultivated by the proponents of the culture of “monologue” (Akbarpour, L. & Sahragard, 2016). However, this positivist approach to education was dissatisfied not only by learners but also by teachers who had been marginalized through an educational system, which did not allow to consider the differences between the individuals and the contexts.

The entrance of the constructivist approach into language education seemed to be an opportunity to give voice to the oppressed

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learners and teachers since it implied their right to get involved in all the decision-making aspects of the language teaching/learning issue. However, unfortunately, this movement almost remained as an introduction in many places of the world and, in fact, was located mainly in the prestigious universities that embraced Paulo Freire on his return to Brazil after having been imprisoned for his ideas Cox (Alastair Pennycook, 1999).

The Critical Pedagogy (CP) phenomenon, according to Freire (2000), known as the father of CP, "derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of "adhesion" to the oppressor" (p. 45). In such a condition, according to Freire (2000) the oppressed, "who have adapted to the structure of domination in which they are immersed, and have become resigned to it, are inhibited from waging the struggle for freedom so long as they feel incapable of running the risks it requires" (p. 47).

Criticism, in general, refers to the application of values and principles to make judgments whose outcome is to initiate a change. CP, which is obviously concerned with criticism, is rooted in the notion of the "critical theory" of the Frankfurt school, whose advocates believe that a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation, "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them Apple (2012). Since the critical theory is concerned with all the contexts in which human beings are somehow enslaved, many critical theories have been developed, an example of which is CP. On the other hand, CP itself has diverse roots, one of which is critical theory. As a result, at the moment, "CP as a

field encompasses a diverse set of approaches in education that have alternately been called emancipatory, empowering, transformative or transgressive education" (Yilmaz, 2009). Therefore, there is currently no single definition of CP, and this is expressed as one of its shortcomings in the literature. Some critics of CP believe that the reason behind its falling short of practice is in the way it is defined.

Having broad boundaries is the most frequently mentioned criticism regarding CP. On the other hand, a classification of the various definitions seems urgent as a guide for newcomers to CP. As a result, the present research tried to elaborate on CP's broad boundaries to solve the definition precision problem. More specifically, this work aimed at answering the following research question:

RQ1: What is an appropriate definition for Critical Pedagogy in an EFL context?

Traditional Pedagogy vs. CP

To understand the notion of CP, it is a good idea to compare it with traditional pedagogy. Traditional pedagogy favors the development and implementation of predefined syllabi through nonnegotiable textbooks. Not only the content but also the objectives of different programs and courses, the evaluation criteria, and the teaching methodology are all determined a priori by a few theoreticians and are supposed to be followed by all the teachers. Therefore, teachers are required to transfer the pre-specified content to learners in a prescribed fashion without questioning the legitimacy of either content or methodology and their relevance to students' lives Pennycook (1989).

However, proponents of CP try to stretch the boundaries of the classroom by establishing

strong links between whatever happens within the classroom and teachers' and students' real-life concerns. It helps ensure the social relevance of classroom practices Kumaravadivelu (2003). Kanpol (1999), to illustrate "what a CP might look like

conceptually and practically", makes a distinction between "the traditional" and "critical responses to the traditional" under the two umbrella terms of modernism and post-modernism in the following way (p. 31) :

Table 1
A comparison between modernism and post-modernism

TRADITIONAL (Modernism)	CRITICAL THEORY (Modernism and Postmodernism)
Hegemony as Cultural Reproduction	Counter Hegemony as Cultural Production (Resistance)
Deviancy	Resistance
Deskilling	Reskilling
Multiculturalism	Similarity within Difference
Individualism	Individuality
Negative Competition	Positive Competition
Authoritarianism	Authority
Control	Democracy
Traditional Empowerment	Critical Empowerment
Traditional Literacy	Critical Literacy

As it was previously mentioned, perhaps some of the most contemptuous critiques of CP, as Ross (2007) also contends, have emerged from within its "broad boundaries". CP's broad boundary has well been expressed in Ross (2007) terms: "CP is a label that includes educators and theorists working in traditions such as but not limited to, Marxism and neo-Marxism, M. W. Apple (1990), cultural studies (Henry A. Giroux, Pepi Leistyna) , feminism (Patty Lather, Elizabeth Ellsworth), critical literacy (Ira Shor), anarchism/social ecology (David Gabbard, Matt Hern, Ivan Illich), and ecology (C. A. Bowers)" (p. 160). Therefore, one encounters different "critical pedagogies" in the literature regarding the definitions of CP. As Thomson-Bunn, (2014) argues, there is a lack of definitional precision surrounding Critical

Pedagogy and its core terms (e.g., student empowerment).

Some CP stakeholders even seem to contradict each other's views regarding CP. Hooks (2003) and Lather (2001), for example, argue that frequent iterations of the primacy of Marxist Social Theory and the Frankfurt School ignore the feminist, anti-racist, and postcolonial educational projects that overlap with CP and discount the work of Ethnic Studies programs and Women's Studies. In Lather (2001) view, the overlapping "projects" of anti-racist education, feminist pedagogies, and post-structuralism and their intersections with CP will only reinforce the justice-oriented purpose of these pedagogies Breuing (2011). The point that critical pedagogues do not agree upon a

single definition for CP may also be indicated in Lather (2001), who asserts that CP is still a "boy thing":

This issue is due not so much to the dominance of male authors in the field as it is to the masculinist voice of abstraction, universalization, and the rhetorical position of 'the one who knows,' what Ellis (1997) calls "The One with the 'Right' Story Breuing (2011). The existence of broad boundaries for CP, in my mind, may even run the risk of what B (2004) calls a "simplistic binary opposition of Us versus Them, and a justification of the good versus the bad, which is "far too closely resembles a manipulation of ideology to constitute it as a radical, CP" (p. 6).

As previously mentioned, having broad boundaries is the most frequently mentioned criticism regarding CP. In addition, a classification of the various definitions seems urgent as a guide for newcomers to CP. Moreover, as Thomson-Bunn (2014) also maintains, defining CP terms more precisely may help instructors enact and communicate CP in a more open and purposeful way. As a result, the present work elaborated on the issue of CP's broad boundaries more than its other critiques in order to explore solutions for the definition variety problem. To achieve this aim, a brief history of CP and its roots accompanying some of its definitions are mentioned to provide more evidence for the existence of a variety of definitions for CP.

The historical development of CP

As it was also previously mentioned, CP is rooted in the notion of the "critical theory" of the Frankfurt school, whose advocates believe that a theory is critical to the extent that it

seeks human emancipation, "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them" M. Apple (2012). As Pishghadam, R. & Naji Meidani (2012) cite Usher, R. & Edwards (1994) , "embedded in the notion of critical thinking, CP is a broad field of theory and practice which originates from the modernist perspective of the later Frankfurt School, Freirean pedagogy, postcolonial discourse, as well as postmodernism." Therefore, there may not be a clear-cut boundary between the philosophical foundations of CP and those of the Critical Theory.

Method

Design

The present work was of a mixed-methods nature. Although it mostly used qualitative approaches such as grounded theory and content analysis, it made use of quantitative data collection and analysis approaches as well.

Participants

Participants of the present study participated in the second and fourth phases of the study. Participants of the second phase were ten Iranian EFL CP professionals who had been selected based on a non-probability sampling procedure of criterion-based type. The criteria for their selection were as follows: a) holding a Ph.D. in TEFL, and b) having published on CP-related issues. They were of a wide age range, and their teaching experience was between 10 to 24 years.

Participants of the fourth phase were a sample of 306 Iranian EFL teachers whose teaching experience ranged between 2 to 26 years. The sample included teachers from different educational contexts, including high

schools, language institutes, and universities all around Iran. A convenience sampling procedure was employed since a large sample was needed for this phase of the study. The sample included 208 female and 98 male teachers whose ages ranged from 24 to 61.

Instruments

The main instrument for the present work was a collection of nearly three hundred articles and book chapters regarding different aspects of CP, which led me to extract hundreds of paragraphs and then phrases, which later made my collection of CP components and principles. These CP ingredients were found to present a full account of premises expressing CP as no other different components emerged from the literature reviewed.

Another instrument was a questionnaire which was developed based on the outcomes of the beginning phases of the study and the ingredients of CP found in the literature and was further employed in the endorsement phase in order to test the hypothesis regarding the three main components of CP. Prior to its use in the endorsement phase, this scale was validated in a pilot study by means of Cronbach's Alpha and expert check. The Cronbach's coefficient Alpha is indicated to be 0.82, which is assumed to be a satisfactory indicator. The questionnaire's items were on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, and its results for the endorsement phase were analyzed through Factor Analysis.

Data collection procedures

The present study included five main phases: (1) exploring the key ingredients of CP, (2) conducting in-depth interviews, (3)

developing a questionnaire based on the findings of the second phase, (4) the endorsement phase, and (5) proposing a definition for CP.

In order to fulfill the purposes of the first phase, which was considered the most important phase of the study, over three hundred papers and book chapters, were examined to find what the literature offered regarding the ingredients of CP. The relevant paragraphs from among thousands in the literature were selected, and the prerequisite for such a choice was to study a vast literature, which took me about a year to review. It may be worth mentioning that nearly two-thirds of the reviewed articles and book chapters never mentioned any principles of CP in spite of the fact that CP was their core theme. Out of the remaining one-third, most studies seemed to have based their practice on what I would like to call *their* principles of CP, for none reported to have had an appropriate literature review on the history of CP and its proposed principles before their practice and to have checked the appropriateness of such principles for their context, or set appropriate principles for their practices beforehand. In fact, these studies never mentioned the source from which they had extracted what they called principles of CP. As a result, such studies were excluded from my analysis. The results of the first phase were a list of CP ingredients, from which three were hypothesized as being the most important ones. These ingredients will be presented in the findings section.

In order to find the appropriate ingredients of CP from among the results of the first phase to further establish a precise definition for CP. The results of the second phase were used in

the third phase to develop a questionnaire on the ingredients of CP for the context of Iran. In fact, those ingredients which were recognized by the participants of the second phase as appropriate were built upon to develop a questionnaire for the third phase. The ingredients were in the form of a Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This questionnaire was mainly intended to examine whether the three hypothesized main ingredients come true. In the endorsement phase, 306 EFL teachers were consulted on the appropriateness of the CP components and tested the three hypothesized main ingredients for having a precise definition. Finally, in the final phase of the study, two criteria for offering a definition of CP were set, and the results were reported in terms of a definition meeting these criteria.

Data analysis procedures

Both Grounded Theory and Factor Analysis (both exploratory and confirmatory) were employed in order to analyze the data at different phases. The data analysis for the first and second phases was Grounded Theory which is a more humanistic alternative to grand theories Glaser as cited in Abednia (2010), which according to Suddaby (2006), Mjoset (2005), and Canagarajah & Press (1999) are characterized by extreme positivism and somewhat absolute regularities and highly abstract nature. Grounded Theory, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), consists of three main stages of open, axial, and selective coding (as cited Abednia (2010)). For analyzing the results of the endorsement phase of the study, Factor Analysis and its three main steps were employed: (1) assessment of the suitability of the data for factor analysis, (2) factor

extraction, and (3) factor rotation and interpretation (Pallant, 2013).

Findings and Discussion

Findings

Results of The first four phases

The different phases of the present study aimed at answering a research question, which was after finding an appropriate definition for Critical Pedagogy in an EFL context. As it was mentioned before, the results of the first phase paved the way to hypothesize three important ingredients as the common grounds of the various definitions in the literature and the building blocks for a precise definition of CP, which were then validated through the endorsement phase of the study. Besides, the results of this phase helped find the criteria for a better definition of CP, which will be elaborated on later.

Studying vast literature on the definition variety regarding CP revealed that CP has taken the same path since its birth. Therefore, what was inferred from the historical roots of CP and its various definitions was the consistency of three major elements which were implied in all versions of CP: 1. hegemony identification, 2. awareness raising, and 3. change. As a result, these three ingredients were hypothesized as the main components of CP. Results of the second phase also emphasized the importance of these three ingredients. As a result, the questionnaire, which was the outcome of the third phase, was developed in order to be used in the endorsement phase and test the hypothesized ingredients.

In the fourth phase, the items of the questionnaire, which was the result of the third

phase, were subjected to Principle Component Analysis (PCA) using SPSS version 22. Before performing PCA, as Pallant (2013) suggested, the suitability of the data for Factor Analysis (FA) was assessed by inspecting the correlation matrix in order to make sure that the majority of correlations are above 0.3. The Kaiser-

Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was found to be 0.677, and the results of Bartlett's sphericity test proved to be significant. As a result, it was concluded that the data was ready for Factor Analysis. Table 2 indicates the results of KMO and Bartlett's sphericity test.

Table 2
Results of KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.677
Bartlett's Test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	41393.009
	df	2346
	Sig.	.000

As illustrated in Table 2, Bartlett's test of sphericity proved to be significant at .01 level, and the KMO, indicated an index of .677, which is considered to be appropriate for satisfactory factor analysis. Moreover, as it is indicated in Table 3, the results of using the Keiser's criterion, or the eigenvalue technique and PCA, revealed the presence of three components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 26.77%, 11.86%, and 7.70% of the total variance, respectively. The results of the three-component solution explained 41.22% of the variance, with the first component contributing

26.80%, the second component contributing 11.62%, and the third component contributing 7.51%. For the purpose of the present study, the oblique approach and, among its different techniques, Direct Oblimin was implemented. The rotated solution revealed several strong loadings on the components, which further indicated the retention of the three hypothesized CP ingredients. Table 3 indicates the eigenvalues and variances explained by the first three elements in the three-component solution analysis.

Table 3
Results of the Kaiser's criterion technique for the fourth phase

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	18.477	26.801	26.779	18.477	26.801	26.779
2	8.187	11.622	38.643	8.187	11.622	38.643
3	5.314	7.510	46.345	5.314	7.510	46.345

As illustrated in the table, the first three components recorded eigenvalues above 1. These three factors explained 41.22 percent of the variance, which was quite desirable. These three factors were, in fact, the three hypothesized ingredients of CP, namely, hegemony identification, awareness raising, and change, which had been put into analysis

by means of EFA and CFA. By this means, these three elements were set as the main ingredients of CP, and the study entered its final phase to provide a definition of CP. The following table shows the position of the items in the final draft of the questionnaire regarding each of the three factors.

Table 4

The position of the items regarding “hegemony identification”, “awareness raising”, and “change” factors

Subscales	Item No.
hegemony identification	1-27
awareness raising	28-57
change	57-69

Results of the final phase

After confirming the hypothesis regarding the three main ingredients of CP, i.e., 1. hegemony identification, 2. awareness raising, and 3. change, results of the beginning phases of the study were again employed to propose an appropriate definition for Critical Pedagogy in an EFL context. As a result of employing the results of the initial phases of the study and also considering the three mentioned ingredients, the researcher defined CP in the following way:

CP is a framework for learning and teaching which strives to identify the hegemony, the oppressive cultural and sociopolitical conditions in education and the related contexts, and the way the ideology behind the oppressive powers interacts with the involved people's beliefs. Also, it encourages educators, including

teachers and students, to be aware of the oppressive cultural and sociopolitical conditions and the ideology behind them, emancipated through critical awareness and to able to have a voice and initiate a positive change for the better.

Although some works mention some of the commonalities in the diverse definitions of CP in the literature (See, for example, (Mary Breuing (2011b); Glenn (2002); Gur-Ze’ev, (1998); Kanpol (1999); Kessing-Styles (1989); Kincheloe (2004); Lather (2001); Pennycook (1995); Pishghadam, R. & Naji Meidan (2012); Thomson-Bunn,(2014), none of them seem to portrait a complete account of all the commonalities, besides the fact that the majority of them suffer from the elitist language which has been reported as a problem with CP.

Discussion

CP's philosophical foundations

Regarding the literature on CP, it can be argued that CP has deep historical origins and is rooted in Plato's and Aristotle's critical ideologies regarding the world Bahrami (2014). The sparks of critical philosophy started blame in the 18th century when Kant, known as the founder of Critical Philosophy, criticized the ideas of the founder of modern philosophy, Rene Descartes. Perhaps Engels and Marx, whom Hegel influenced, can be called the first founders of CP since the theorists of the Frankfurt School were greatly influenced by Marxism. As Shabani, M. B. & Khorsandi (2014) maintain, Marx's ideas regarding labor influenced the Frankfurt School and developed the critical theoretical tradition. For Marx, socioeconomic inequality was an important societal problem. According to Marx, working toward a socialized economy is necessary for all people Breuing (2011), and he argued that economic conditions are essential for social justice. The "Critical Theorists of the Frankfurt School" that was established in 1923, adopted a less unified social criticism than one by Marxism; however, it embraced some of Marx's ideas related to schools and education. At first, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and most prominently, Herbert Marcuse argued that the procedures of schooling obstacle the opportunities for learners to make their own aims and goals and, most importantly, serve to de-skill the learners M. Apple (2012) Kincheloe (2004) Shabani, M. B. & Khorsandi (2014). According to Messner et al (2016), in Marxism, a critique of society is necessary to achieve the last goal of revolution, ending to have equal society and economy based on socialism.

As Hollstein (2006) cites Marx,

In the social production, which men carry on, they enter into definitive relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation in which rises the legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political, and intellectual life in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness (p. 365).

Paulo Freire was a key figure in the Latin American liberation movement, commonly regarded as the inaugural philosopher of CP McLaren (2003) as cited Breuing (2011). His experiences forced him to develop educational ideas and practices that would improve the lives of marginalized people and lessen their oppression. Freire understood that schools were obstacles to the education of the poor; therefore, he sought to find strategies for students to intervene in what he considered to be a dehumanizing process (Kincheloe (2004), as cited in Breuing, (2011)). P Freire (1970) referred to this educative process as praxis or

liberatory action. He argued that people need to engage in a praxis that integrates theory, action, and reflection to work toward social change and justice, and he devised a literacy program based on this ideal and the practical needs of his students Mary Breuing (2011b).

In North America, the “New Left Scholars” such as Henry Giroux began to focus their attention on CP. In the late 1970s and 1980s, Giroux (1988) started to formulate a CP that synthesized the critical theory of the Frankfurt School and the more progressive elements of John Dewey’s philosophy. Giroux, along with Roger Simon, Michael Apple, and Peter McLaren, focused their efforts on scrutinizing the role that schools play in transmitting particular messages about political, social, and economic life, believing that a revolutionary CP will allow educators to realize the possibilities of democratic social values within their classroom Kincheloe (2004), as cited in M. Breuing (2011).

It may be a good idea to conclude this section through what Usher, R. & Edwards (1994) mention regarding the history of CP: Embedded in the notion of critical thinking, CP is a broad field of theory and practice which originates from the modernist perspective of the later Frankfurt School, Freirean pedagogy, postcolonial discourse, as well as postmodernism as cited in (Pishghadam, R. & Naji Meidani (2012)

CP’s definition variety in the literature

Since different ideologies have contributed to the development of the notion of CP, it is possible that the notion was born as not clear from the very beginning. In a paper regarding problematizing CP, M. Breuing (2011) explains

that since there is no single definition of CP, there exist various critical pedagogies in the mind of the people who are searching for a meaning for it. Therefore, the overlapping and sometimes contradictory definitions of CP may cause an obstacle for those who want to apply it to education. Stating a relatively brief history and some definitions of CP, M. Breuing (2011) claims that “within this “history,” there is a contradiction, overlap, and resistance to the attempts of some critical theorists and pedagogues to identify the “one perfect” definition or a narrow set of prescriptive practices that constitute the field of CP” (p. 5).

Besides Paulo Freire (2000), known as the father of CP, though he never used the term, various critical pedagogues have provided different definitions for CP. From among them, one may refer to Dewey (1916), Shrewsbury (1987), Giroux (1988), M. Apple (1990), Lather (1991), Ngugi (1993), (E. Eisner (2002), Hooks (1994), Oakes (1995), Shor (1996), Kellner (2000), Pennycook (1999), Kanpol (1999), Canagarajah & Press (1999), Mezirow, J (2000), Kellner (2000), Pillow (2000), Weiler (2001), McLaren (2003), Thelin (2006), Greene (2007), and Mayes (2010).

The definition variety problem, or a lack of definitional precision, as it was stated previously, is mentioned by some critics as a major problem with CP. There are, however, some points worth mentioning regarding this seemingly major problem of CP. Firstly, it is possible to look at the definition of variety phenomenon differently to understand that this concept is not a problem by nature. As it was also previously mentioned, the notion of definition variety can be attributed to the different historical roots of CP, which were

elaborated on in the previous paragraphs. Various ideologies have contributed to the development of the notion of CP. This definition variety, in my mind, may have arisen from the very fact that the concept of CP had emerged before giving it a name. In other words, before Giroux coined the term CP, different critical types of pedagogy had been initiated by different brains in the field. In this way, Giroux (1988) gave a name to his ideas rooted in different traditions of thought. Later, the name was used by some other theorists who worked on similar grounds as that of Giroux, and had some commonalities in their approaches, but their approaches were not the same. All these phenomena resulted in a newly-born concept with seemingly different definitions.

Secondly, in the definition of CP, variety is not considered a problem by nature. On the contrary, one of the merits of variety is that each person can use the concept in a way s/he needs it, which is one of the premises of a critical stance. According to Smith (2013), "these differences highlight the interdisciplinary nature of CP and its ability to be used as a helpful tool in transforming education from multiple perspectives and in multiple ways Kincheloe (2004). More importantly, they emphasize the need for students and teachers to identify their own orientation to, and understanding of, (Mary Breuing, (2011a)" (p. 132). Smith (2013), therefore, uses the phrase "a CP" in order to emphasize that she did not seek to identify "a founding source or universal ideal" or a CP template (p. 132) .

Therefore, the definition variety, according to what went in the previous paragraphs, is not a problem by nature. In attempting a critical approach, therefore, one ought to look for

his/her appropriate version first and then try to apply it to the context it has been defined for. This issue is the point where some newcomers to the field may get confused, and thus the definition variety may seem to be a hindering problem. One who has just got familiar with CP may not have enough information regarding its roots and multidisciplinary nature. S/he may not know about the historical development of CP and thus may not even be acquainted with the possibility of the existence of different definitions and, therefore, different versions of CP. Therefore, a newly arrived researcher may get confused encountering the different definitions of CP, or should s/he not get familiar with the various definitions, s/he may consider the first definition s/he encounters as the only definition for CP without knowing about the existence of other definitions.

On the other hand, the literature on CP does not seem to be directed at the new researchers. Works regarding the CP's history introduce different figures with differing definitions. Other works concerning the application of CP or other related issues either follow their own definition of CP or, if they have selected a definition from the literature, they have not explained the rationale behind their choice to lead the readers towards a way to choose an appropriate definition. Therefore, in my mind, the existing literature is yet an inappropriate starting point for newcomers to the field. This literature seems to be suitable only for those who are already acquainted with CP and its premises. Consider, for instance, the following definition by Stinson, D.W., Bidwell, C.R. & Powell (2012): "CP motivates both critique and agency—for teachers and students alike—through a language of skepticism and

possibility and a culture of openness, debate, and engagement” (p. 78)

This and many other definitions provided in the literature section of the existing research papers are only suitable for those who are already familiar with CP and its premises and major concepts. They not only do not provide a thinking base for those who have just started researching CP, but also they may even make the newcomers to the field more puzzled. Although one can certainly identify significant commonalities among the different critical pedagogues' viewpoints, some points are worth mentioning. Firstly, not all those commonalities are observed in all definitions. In other words, rarely does one get all the ideas behind different versions of CP by reading just one or two of the definitions. Secondly, less often than not does a newcomer to the field have all the definitions of CP together, in just one piece of material, to read and analyze and identify their commonalities. Thirdly, the definitions in the literature are not classified, and thus one who accesses them for the first time has no option but to read them randomly. These three points seem to be more significant when one considers the elitist language used by most critical pedagogues, which may not be understandable for one who encounters it for the first time.

In summary, although the definition variety is not a problem by nature, a lack of research papers directing the new CP researchers towards what they want from CP makes the definition variety appear as a dilemma. Therefore, there seems to be a need for a model or a classification of the various definitions existing in the literature to be used as a springboard for those who have just

entered the field of CP. In my mind, it may be worth considering different versions for CP and including these versions in the proposed model or classification of definitions to avoid what some critics have mentioned as the "black and white" or the simplistic picture of CP.

Conclusion

The present study was an endeavor to implement CP's tenets and go through the five stages of this journey. The researcher realized that CP could be a viable option to solve at least some of the educational problems in her context. Therefore, the outcome of the present work may be helpful in developing CP-based curricula and courses which look into the real needs of the learners and perhaps even the teachers, leading to a more fruitful educational system.

Results of the present work may contribute to the present literature on CP, especially its definition variety problem, which is considered to be a major weak point of CP. The literature on CP does not offer a precise definition for CP, and this makes hindering problems for newcomers to the field. The definition offered for CP in the present work can be a guiding device, especially for beginners, and at the same time, a solution to the definition variety problem in the literature on CP.

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