

การศึกษาเชิงวิพากษ์กับการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาเชิงวิพากษ์เกิดจากแนวความคิดของ Paulo Freire ถือเป็นการสอนที่กระตุ้นให้ผู้เรียนได้มีความตระหนักเกี่ยวกับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ โดยพิจารณาบทบาทของภาษาอังกฤษในบริบททางการเมือง เพื่อให้เกิดความเท่าเทียมกันทางสังคม ผู้เรียนที่ได้รับการศึกษาตามแนวทางนี้จะเปลี่ยนแปลงวิถีคิดและพฤติกรรมที่ทำให้ตนเองเสียผลประโยชน์ ส่วนผู้สอนนอกจากการสะท้อนความคิดจากการสอนแล้วยังสามารถประยุกต์การศึกษาเชิงวิพากษ์ในการสอนได้หลากหลายตามความเหมาะสมในแต่ละห้องเรียน ดังนั้น ผู้สอนจึงควรที่จะทำทุกวิถีทางที่จะทำได้ในประเด็นที่เกี่ยวกับอำนาจและการเมือง

คำสำคัญ: การศึกษาเชิงวิพากษ์, การนำแนวความคิดมาประยุกต์ในการสอน, การสอนภาษาอังกฤษ

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Critical Pedagogy in English Language Teaching (ELT)

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Abstract

Paulo Freire's work is particularly associated with critical pedagogy. It is a method of teaching that encourages students to develop a critical understanding of the relationship between why and how English is learned in a political context, as well as to challenge and address social injustice. Moreover, critical pedagogy empowers students to consider and alter attitudes and practices that disadvantage them as English language learners. In addition to reflective practices, the implications of critical pedagogy for teachers differ from classroom to classroom. Teachers must therefore think about what they can do in the area of ELT that is inextricably linked to politics and power.

Keywords: critical pedagogy, teaching implications, ELT

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Introduction

It was believed that teaching English had nothing to do with politics and that English belonged to the English-speaking world, specifically the United States and the United Kingdom. Thus, native English speakers were the most effective language teachers. Now that English is taught everywhere, the situation has drastically changed. In the case of English as a global language, teachers can instill in students the self-assurance necessary to assert control over English. According to McKay (2002), English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade, tourism, the media, and popular culture; as a result, various reasons exist for acquiring it. What is more, English is no longer considered the property of the English-speaking world but rather a global commodity, sometimes referred to as the international language. Teachers are no longer required to be experts in British and American culture and literature. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2017) argue that learning English is a political act. Those who are fluent in a language have an advantage over those who are not. In addition, McKay (2012) asserts that teachers and students must develop critical language awareness in order to challenge unequal power relations that manifest not only in language and culture but also in race, gender, class, and other social categories. With this awareness, the connections between the power structures between groups would be empirically analyzed.

Fundamentally, critical pedagogy is closely related to the philosophy of Paolo Freire. He (1970, as cited in Orem, 2012) objects to the traditional conceptions of education in which teachers view their job as filling students with what they consider to be true knowledge — deposits that are divorced from reality. He argues instead that students should be permitted to negotiate learning outcomes, collaborate with teachers and other students in a process of discovery, and relate everything they do in school to their lives outside the classroom. For teachers, it is thus necessary to assist students in engaging with this real-world reality. Teachers must emphasize teaching students to think critically. To that end, critical pedagogy is a method of teaching and learning based on the importance of social justice. Due to the significance of English as a global language, this academic article seeks to translate critical pedagogy into ELT.

Implications for ELT

Undoubtedly, learning English requires the acquisition of more than just knowledge and skills. It is a sociocultural engagement that changes students' lives. Moreover, through the learning process, students construct and reproduce beliefs, values, behaviors, and roles. These factors affect the usefulness and worth of English. The significance of English as a global language inevitably has an effect on how students learn in the classroom.

According to Rose and Galloway (2019), education is viewed as a political act. Knowledge is not viewed as a neutral concept, and education has the potential to enhance social justice by developing active citizens. Critical pedagogy acknowledges positionality in terms of class, race, gender, and ethnicity and teaches students to oppose and reorganize social forms that are exploitative and harmful, in contrast to traditional teaching, which tends to strive for neutrality. According to Hall and Wichksano (2017), critical pedagogy requires careful consideration of the connections between the reasons for learning a language and its social, economic, and political contexts of use. Importantly, critical teachers do not simply consider these unequal relationships. They encourage their students to consider and act to alter attitudes and practices that disadvantage them as language learners and users of English.

To implement critical pedagogy in English teaching, Pennycook (1999, as cited in Wintergerst and McVeigh, 2012) emphasizes the issue of power, specifically the subjugating power of English, and warns against attempting to divorce teaching from a political stance—a fundamental concept of critical pedagogy. In addition, he argues that the force of critical teaching lies in its ability to transform individuals, both teachers and students. The initial step in this direction should be to raise awareness, not only of oneself but also of language and, in particular, of issues that require modification. The next phase involves transformative pedagogy—giving students control over the curriculum. To genuinely achieve transformation, one must engage with the investment of individuals in particular discourses, i.e., questions of desire. This results in what could be termed a pedagogy of engagement: an approach that considers gender, sex, race, class, sexuality, and postcolonialism to be so fundamental to identity and language that they must serve as the foundation for curricular organization and pedagogy. He concludes by stating that critical teachers must always be willing to challenge their own ideas and must avoid allowing their own personal convictions to stagnate. He even recommends that teachers be skeptical of their own teaching positions.

My analysis

Based on my experiences integrating critical methods into my own teaching, I have made a number of observations. Critical pedagogy encompasses social justice education that supports the growth of engaged, active students. In other words, it is a type of critical ELT that emphasizes bringing about social change through the study of English. Once, I encouraged my students to develop a critical awareness of textbooks. With this backdrop, it is crucial for my students to battle against the ways that these corporatized ELT materials present them with particular ways of thinking, talking, and being in English language classrooms. Addressing these issues while constantly

keeping power at the forefront, rather than offering a simple solution to the complicated relationships between classrooms, language, and power, my students were given critical approaches to ELT, not as a given to be accepted but as a given that they must constantly fight against.

Nevertheless, to teach English critically is to push one's viewpoint on students, since there has been tremendous resistance to such critical approaches to ELT in Thailand. Such a viewpoint both ignores the larger political environment of the classroom and underestimates the students' ability to resist and critically analyze what is being presented to them. Finally, I came to the conclusion that the demand that teachers act as agents of change and think critically is not novel. It is a plea for classroom practices that guide students to become critical thinkers and, ultimately, activists in the face of injustices.

Conclusion

Since English is a global language, it is currently regarded as the language of authority. Teachers must understand the political issues that arise when students learn English. Language is not taught in a neutral manner by teachers. Critical pedagogy is a method of education that incorporates teaching on social injustice into the curriculum in an effort to make society more equitable. As Thornbury (2006) comments, English teaching is neither value-free nor ideologically neutral. First and foremost, critical pedagogy assumes that education can never be completely disinterested or neutral. Instead, it either serves the power structures in a society by maintaining the status quo or it works to alter the status quo by challenging, criticizing, resisting, or subverting those power structures. The domain of critical pedagogy is this latter set of functions. Wright (2012) acknowledges that the concept of critical pedagogy has permeated practice and theory in English language teaching and is having an ever-increasing impact on classroom practice and teacher preparation.

In essence, critical pedagogy can assist teachers in going beyond meaningful communication to discuss what has the most significant impact on students' lives. By doing so, students are able to engage in critical thinking, research, and analysis. Teachers are responsible for preparing students to become informed citizens and agents of change. Students must be considered the most valuable resource for promoting and defending democracy, and they must be encouraged to question textbooks, teachers, and even curricula. Teachers who understand critical pedagogy can become more effective teachers. It has to do with the reflective essence of teaching. It also necessitates taking a step back and analyzing the current teaching methods. "As ELT practitioners, therefore, we cannot simply bury our heads in our classrooms and assume none of

this has anything to do with us," says Pennycook succinctly (2020, p. 27). These claims support my assertion that critical thinking development for students is crucial.

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