Critical Pedagogy in the Language and Writing Classroom

Strategies, Examples, Activities from Teacher Scholars

Edited by **Gloria Park, Sarah Bogdan, Madeleine Rosa, and Joseph Mark Navarro**

Routledge

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This volume introduces theory-to-practice-based critical pedagogy grounded in Paulo Freire's scholarship to language and literacy learning settings. The chapters present authentic experiences of teacher-scholars, feature real-world examples and activities ready for implementation in the classroom, and provide nuanced guidance for future teachers. The examples and activities from teacher-scholars place critical pedagogy at the heart of classroom contexts and cover key topics, including place-based pedagogy, contemplative pedagogy, technology within the classroom, and translingual and multimodal paradigms. The chapters include further readings and discussion questions that challenge assumptions and promote deeper reflection, and can be modified for different teaching contexts. This practical volume is essential reading for students and scholars in TESOL and critical pedagogy.

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Foreword

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It is an absolute honor to have been chosen to provide a foreword for his very special volume, contributed to by a passionate, creative, and uniquely diverse array of teacher-scholars. Our love, appreciation, and respect go to editors and authors Gloria Park, Sarah Bogdan, Madeleine Rosa, and Joseph Mark Navarro!

We, Bedrettin and Nathanael, believe in the necessity and potential power of teachers and teacher educators listening to, learning from, and sharing with their students, and of drawing upon students' identities, knowledge, skills, and experiences, in order to attend to their negotiations of being, becoming, and belonging in their classrooms and the community(ies) in which they live, work, and study. Teachers, teacher educators, and students would engage in contextualized, sociohistorically situated interaction with each other and with, for example, transdisciplinary scholarship, voices (past and present) in their community(ies) and the material world, while practicing critical reflexivity, in order to interrogate what frames their (and others') seeing in terms of approaches to theorization, inquiry, and practice. And this would give shape to classroom contents and experiences. It would involve both problematizing and engaging in meaning-making, and the valuing of alternate forms of knowledge-building that would inform practice and learning within and beyond the classroom. Additionally, when working toward transforming

communal spaces and the classrooms they are situated in, we assert that a key goal is not to exclusively problematize and tear down, but to also innovate and build, while wrestling with the past, in the present, looking to "the future." We say these things, aligned with the spirit of Paulo Freire's life work, and the conceptual framework giving shape to this volume. Indeed, the contents of the current volume seek to put these ideas into practice!

We feel it is important to emphasize that criticality is not a homogeneous domain, though some strongly contend for and patrol the bounds of critical doing, being, and knowing. In saying this, we are referring to ontological, axiological, and epistemological variation, which in turn gives shape to diverse approaches to theory, inquiry, and practice; to what people problematize, and how and why. We also note that people very often conceptualize and approach criticality, and life in general, in seemingly contradictory ways, with and without reason and design. If we understand (and make peace with) this contradictory and conflictual nature of our identities when reflecting on the relationship between our experience and being, we can open spaces in which we feel comfortable critiquing our own criticality. Our classrooms and communities are also, of course, characterized by diversity and complexity. We teacher-scholars are therefore collectively challenged to reflect upon whether we are imposing frameworks for seeing, inscribed with assumptions regarding identity, life, purpose, experience and (in)equity upon communities, and telling students who they "are," and "can" and/or "should" be or become, both within and transcending the classroom, implicitly and/or explicitly. This does not mean that we are stripping ourselves and/or others of voice or forcing ourselves and others to condone and/or advocate for things that do not align with our critical sense of "(social) justice." Rather, it means we are prioritizing dialogue.

We, Bedrettin and Nathanael, have been friends and professional colleagues for several years. We hail from different linguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, ethnic, religious, and geographic backgrounds, and each possess our own unique lived experiences. We also share many things in common, including our identities as border crossers, our love for each other, and our heart for service in our communities and classrooms. Since studying together at the University of Maryland, College Park, our lives have followed divergent trajectories, with Bedrettin currently in Texas serving undergraduate and graduate students as a university-based language teacher educator and Nathanael living and working in western Japan as a university-level teacher-scholar with undergraduates and, at times, with graduate students. Yet we have maintained an iron-sharpening-iron relationship, both personally and professionally. We discuss our lived experiences negotiating translinguistic and transcultural identities within and transcending the communities in which we are based. We are fortunate to be able to share pieces of our

lives with each other, involving everything from the mundane to the sacred. Though we may not necessarily share the same worldview, and views of things such as the nature and purpose of life, our relationship is grounded in our desire to listen, dialogue, reflect, and grow. Professionally, we alternate between being mentors and mentees, discussing our professional spaces and corresponding communities. While these conversations can (and should) be contextually and sociohistorically situated, there is much to glean from such dialogue. We are prompted toward self-reflexivity and inspired to revisit our research and teaching. Gloria (Park) has also been an integral part of our professional journey, and we count her as a beloved friend. She has served as a shining example of humility, transparency, wisdom, and service to us and many of our contemporaries. This is inscribed in the present volume and its path coming to fruition. We feel the same influence and connection to editors and authors Sarah, Madeleine, and Joseph, and to the other contributors to the volume, both because they are part of Gloria's life trajectory and because we have engaged with and reflected upon the contents of this volume, as they have all hoped and intended.

Understanding learners' and teachers' agency and how it relates to identity is also key to actualizing critical pedagogy in the language classroom. As teacher-scholars better realize how they are concomitantly marginalized and privileged in complex and fluid ways at the porous layers of micro, meso, and macro dynamics in their context, they can feel more empowered to assert their agency to devise and innovate equitable teaching practices for all their learners. The editors and contributors in this volume capitalize, to varying extents, on that understanding to support teachers and learners in their efforts to claim ownership of their language use and problematize the ideologies that attempt to shape language use, teaching, and learning in their context. They aim to position teacher-scholars as critical ethnographers who are committed to affecting the social change in their communities and beyond in order to pursue a socially just society. In their research-based and pedagogical chapters, editors and contributors report on and imagine teacher-scholars approaching the relationship between research and practice critically. In addition to following the critical research literature, teacher-scholars are expected to engage in research to study their own teaching and students' learning to conduct micro-level theorization to further sharpen their criticality. The initial 12 chapters of the volume exemplify the ways in which teacher-scholars with diverse backgrounds and identities engage in studying their own use of critically oriented pedagogical practices in their classroom. Those studies are followed by 11 practice-focused chapters offering "Activities, strategies, examples from teacher-scholars," which also include further selected readings to accompany the activity. Organized in ways that classroom teachers and teacher educators can adapt to their own curricula and educational contexts, the

activities focus on learners' and teachers' self-reflexivity and co-construction of knowledge. As such, teachers can make the relationship between identities and surrounding ideologies a central point of discussion and open up cracks to subvert the oppressive discourses and practices that impact language use, learning, and teaching. Thereby, the volume responds to the clarion calls for making identity a principal component in language teaching and teacher education classes.

In this exemplary collection, diverse scholars, settings and worldviews, united by a common desire: The editors and authors seek to empower teacher-scholars (pre- and in-service; practicing) to reflect on their own identities, knowledge, skills, and lived experiences, and approaches to theorization, inquiry and practice, and to address "-isms" in communities and language teacher training and education therein, in the interest of serving students and other stakeholders in language education, and the community at large. Throughout the book, they powerfully illustrate how this empowerment can become actualized in the classroom, which, we believe, will resonate with the reader.

Introduction
How It All Began

Gloria Park

The seeds for this edited collection were planted when I was introduced to the work of Paulo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 2000 during my doctoral education at the University of Maryland, College Park. Throughout my doctoral education, I struggled to understand the theory to practice connection, specifically how praxis and conscientization can be part of the classroom practice. Part of this struggle was largely on the need to bring about more transparency and inclusivity as part of dialogic relationship between university researchers and classroom teachers. To this end, when I began my tenure-track position at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2008, I had two interconnected goals: (1) Mentor emerging teacher-scholars (pre-/in-service teachers who became graduate students) to connect theory to practice; and (2) Secure opportunities for emerging teacher-scholars to write for publication through engaging in professional development within and beyond the contexts of coursework. With this as a backdrop, I began to (re) conceptualize second language teaching and teacher education courses through a critical lens.

In 2013, I restructured an existing Second Language Teaching course for MA-/PhD-level students to focus on how critical perspectives can enhance the understanding and exploration of second language teaching. More specifically, my goal was to provide an array of readings focused on critical pedagogy discussed and implemented in educational contexts. As such, I used *The Critical Pedagogy Reader* (2008) as an initial course text and supplemented with readings focused on critical pedagogy in second language teaching contexts. Given the rapid development within the contexts of higher education research and K-20 classrooms, it was important to bring in current readings focused on critical pedagogy theory and practice, but also important to create assignments and activities that would help everyone understand the classroom possibilities that are at the core of critical pedagogy. Given this as one of the major learning outcomes of the course, a major group assignment was to design a classroom activity using one or more critical-pedagogy-related concepts from the readings assigned in the course. This assignment

was part of a small group work (2–3 worked together throughout the semester), which led to a compilation of activities, assignments, and further readings included in Chapters 13–23.

I was given the opportunity to teach this course a handful of times between 2013 and 2019, and starting in summer 2019 due to retirements and exits, the course was taught consistently by me. During the period spanning summer 2019 to fall 2021, the authored chapters as well as the classroom activities were designed by emerging teacher-scholars, who teach at institutions while working toward their degree program at another institution. Each time I taught the course, I had new insights gained from my course students (aka teacher-scholars), which allowed me to understand the complexities and contradictions that are at the core of our identities as teacher-scholars. And in fall 2020, I was able to bring together a group of graduate research assistants to work with me to bring this edited collection to fruition. I learned a great deal from working with Sarah Bogdan, Madeleine Rosa, and Joseph Mark Navarro. I learned to be open to being a human before I was allowed to be a professor. Their patience and collaborative engagement helped me to be more open to collaborative authorship and what that would entail. I came to better understand that the collaboration and co-editorial work takes a lot of patience and resilience because more often than not, collaborative writing project is challenging and success can only come with like-minded individuals working toward one goal. To this end, I am grateful to have met and be mentored by my emerging teacher-scholars, and this edited volume would not be possible without the dedication and commitment made by my co-editors—Bogdan, Rosa, and Navarro. In addition to the work of co-editors, chapter authors spent many hours making requested revisions and edits of their chapters. In what follows, I provide a brief summary of Chapters 1–12 followed by a discussion of emerging themes from the activities, assignments, and further readings included in Chapters 13–23.

Chapter 1, authored by Sarah Bogdan, explores the relationship between school and community. Bogdan argues that language instructors in the field of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) must account for "non-standard" uses of the English language and heritage languages. They must also consider context and build connections between the learner, learning institution, and the home community they're teaching in in order to meet the needs of their multilingual students. Using the work of scholars promoting translanguaging in school–community relationships, Bogdan argues that these approaches through the critical pedagogy lens can enhance empowerment and agency on the part of language learners. To this end, Bogdan's chapter explores the ways in which critical pedagogues in language education programs value community involvement and affirm their students' diverse language practices.

Chapters 2 (Kevin Lamkins), 3 (Joseph Mark Navarro), and 4 (Corinne Alice Nulton) illustrate the concept of critical pedagogy on the modern higher education landscape, specifically in both two-year (Lamkins) and four-year institutions (Navarro & Nulton) of higher learning. Lamkins' chapter examines an urban community college in Connecticut and its 12-college system. It demonstrates how negative effects of neoliberalism shown in the scholarship manifest themselves in this open-enrollment context. His chapter also demonstrates how critical pedagogy provides practices to resist the oppressive forces of neoliberal higher education. Navarro's chapter explores the definition of critical pedagogy in first-year writing in the form of a literacy narrative that explores the three readings of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* over the course of the ten-year period of the author's teacher-scholar training with an emphasis on several critical incidents that assisted with contextualizing the reading. His chapter concludes with a reflection on Freire's work in relation to the idea of conscientization as a foundation of critical pedagogy in first-year writing courses, and the issue of epistemological racism in post-secondary education. Nulton's chapter begins with a powerful discussion of the pervasive nature of racism in higher education and the racist history of remedial English classes. With this as a background, Nulton discusses policies that (1) prevent multilingual retention from being tracked, (2) expel students for needing more than two attempts to pass their first composition course, and (3) hold multilingual students to a native-speaker standard in order to pass remedial English, and finally, (4) force multilingual learners into academic probation, which costs them their federal financial aid. Finally, the author concludes with possible solutions focusing on an effort-based grading contract. Through the chapters authored by Lamkins, Navarro, and Nulton, we come to reframe an important idea of critical pedagogy, which is that the learner becomes the educator and the educator becomes the learner; this dialectical relationship is critical in understanding the core of critical pedagogical practice. This dialectical relationship is accomplished through the dismantling of the authoritarian method of direct instruction known as "banking." Banking is countered through the emphasis of personal inquiry developed through dialogue. The educator is a student of the community they instruct within. The educator looks to the students to understand their educational needs. Then, the educator and learner enter into dialogue about the need and the obstacles in the world that prevent the need. Once the dialogue has begun to investigate the stakeholders, issues, and fault lines, the educators and learners undertake self-reflexive investigative practices to map and document their process.

In fostering agency within the educator and learner paradigm, **Madeleine Rosa (Chapter 5)** and **Madison Price (Chapter 6)** explore the concept of contemplative pedagogy through the lens of critical pedagogy. Rosa states that the purpose of contemplative creative writing is to

allow students to create their own classroom practices that they can carry with them after being in a course that uses it, so that they can continue to use their curiosity to name the world for themselves. Through mindfulness practices, this pedagogical practice helps to reduce stress and anxiety in the classroom while exploring the students' language acquisition in real time. Rosa emphasizes a vital factor in critical pedagogy, which is guiding students to use reflective thinking and their education as part of their lived experiences. Connected to contemplative creative writing, in Chapter 6, Price proposes a pedagogy that argues for educators to incorporate creative writing into TESOL classrooms. Creative writing cannot be deposited onto students, encourages a relationship between language and student, is personal, and will enforce learning in a fun and individual way to the student. Both Rosa and Price privilege self-reflexive modality of writing, including the creative and narrative modes of exploring identity, which ultimately zooms in on fostering learner and teacher agency. Rosa and Price explore a variety of sites, with an emphasis on multilingual classrooms providing space to understand and explore contemplative ideas activate the critical consciousness of the learning community.

In **Chapter 7 (Jonelle Dongilla)**, the author implores classroom teachers to develop personalized learning practices in order to support multilingual students in primary and secondary education contexts. Dongilla argues that Personalized Learning (PL) is a powerful tool for fostering agency and autonomy in learners, which speaks back to the "banking model" of education. The relation between the tenets of PL and critical pedagogy are marked by learner-centeredness, community, dialogue, autonomy, and inquiry. The author reflects on her role as a rural middle and high school ESOL[1] teacher who uses PL in her classroom. She emphasizes that Differentiated Instruction is something the best-intentioned teacher *chooses* for her students, whereas PL fosters agency and autonomy, paving the way for lifelong learners. In **Chapter 8 (Marina Palenyy)**, the author zooms in on one charter school in New York City. Palenyy argues that charter schools often claim to operate as mechanisms toward social change, as they focus on failed schools, marginalized populations, and students coming from low socioeconomic levels; the mission for many charter schools is to provide an equitable education and to pave the way for students to enter the college of their choice. As such, many charter networks seek to zealously produce standardized test scores such as the SAT and the ACT resolving to achieve that mission. The author asks, can critical pedagogy live within the harsh constraints of the test-prep culture? The author argues that it must instead be rooted within a redefining of literacy as we know it, let alone the measurement of that literacy, and a praxis that puts the student at the center of learning.

Chapter 9 (Alan Chan) and Chapter 10 (Ramata Diallo) bring forth global perspectives, specifically Macau, China, and French West Africa, in promoting critical pedagogy in the classroom, respectively. In **Chapter 9**, Chan argues for a hybrid approach bringing together place-based and problem-posing education. His chapter explores the praxis of place-based education and problem-posing education in the context of Macau, China. At the center of this work is the argument that the merging of these two forms of praxis overlap with critical pedagogy by creating a student-centered learning environment where personal inquiry is fostered. In **Chapter 10**, Diallo explores critical pedagogy in the context of French West Africa. The section provides a number of interventions, including, but not limited to, the negotiated syllabus, problem-posing strategies, and micro-strategies to maximize learning opportunities. In both chapters, the level of analysis focuses on the imperialistic nature of English and its accompanying educational framework to look beyond the traditional borders of English instruction. This is a comfortable endeavor for critical pedagogy because it naturally occupies any space that might provide a critical-liberatory experience for involved classroom teachers.

In **Chapter 11 (Marcela Hebbard)**, the author explores the realities of COVID-19 pandemic–driven writing classroom. With the goal of assisting language instructors new to online settings in college programs, the author offers suggestions on how to use writing from a rhetorical perspective to make online classrooms more inclusive. To this end, Hebbard draws on Principles for Online Writing Instruction (OWI), critical language pedagogy, and the author's own experiences as a teacher of sociolinguistics and first-year college composition courses.

Finally, in **Chapter 12 (Megan E. Heise)**, the author shares her critical autoethnography as a symbol of hope, critical hope offering a praxis-oriented means of countering a climate of cynicism and transforming critical pedagogues' ways of being and relating with students. Heise considers the pedagogy of critical hope as an antidote for the darkness of the times, and, in particular, situated in the context of faculty retrenchments in one graduate degree program at a mid-sized US university. The author further argues that the pedagogical practices of radical mentorship and embodied emotionality among faculty and students at this university both led to and were further reinforced by collective action in solidarity with retrenched faculty members. More powerfully, Heise asserts that these enactments of the core tenets of critical hope prefigure transformation, both in the local struggle against retrenchment and in the broader struggle against neoliberal practices in US universities. In many ways, Heise's chapter is a powerful rendition of how critical pedagogy in general and critical hope in particular can come to fruition as an embodiment of critical transformation in the higher education landscape.

In these 12 chapters, we can see the realizations, insights, and struggles that come with working to champion our students from diverse educational spheres. As emerging teacher-scholars working to create a safe learning community to engage in inclusive and equitable pedagogical practices, the co-editors and I look to the work of Paulo Freire and his supporters to better understand how privilege and marginalization continue to coexist in our lives. Our commitment, resilience, and continuous fight against "-isms" pervasive in our society become our weapon in realizing the diversity, equity, and inclusion in our learning and teaching communities. The 12 chapters are followed by Chapters 13–23, which focus on activities, assignments, pre-activity readings, and further readings.

While the primary audience of this co-edited collection is individuals (emerging teacher-scholars) matriculated in TESOL/Applied Linguistics teacher preparation programs around the world, much of what is presented can be modified for other audiences in the global contexts. As such, Chapter 13–23 detail learning outcomes, rationale, selected pre-activity readings, outline of activities designed by teacher-scholars. There is also room for some reflections.

Overall, these activity chapters include selected readings that can be supplemented with other materials and/or related readings. It's important to be mindful about creating a space to discuss the readings, raising challenging questions about the concepts discussed in each reading, and probing deeper into concepts represented in each of the readings. Discussion of the readings and engaging in reflective writing about the readings, specifically how the contents of the readings intersect with the lived experiences of the audience, are crucial in promoting criticality in teacher-scholars' teacher identities. What is presented in each chapter are possible ways to prepare for the activities, which can be extended to longer assignments. While each chapter is a stand-alone activity and related readings and reflections, there are some emerging themes across Chapters 13–23. I discuss these briefly below:

One of the thematic areas is to focus on self-reflexivity, creativity, and mindfulness, which suggests teacher-scholars teaching in various educational spaces to use student-centered creativity in the pursuit of the co-construction of knowledge. With these activities as a guide and bringing others applicable for their own students and classroom, classroom teachers can open up conversations with students to identify their best learning practices, community engagement, and identity exploration. These activities seek to challenge the banking methods of education starting with the outside knowledge that students bring to the classroom and can teach them through raising their critical consciousness.

Another theme is understanding the concept of student-centered learning in the K-12 classroom through dialogic practice. We hope that with these activities in hand, the audience is able to distinguish how

dialogic practices do not simply focus on the words that the participants are saying; rather, they focus on the manner in which they say them, the silences that they use, and the impact of their words on their surroundings. These activities are constructive to the co-creation of knowledge within the K-12 setting as they reflect on cultural diversity and its visibility within the classroom. Through dialogic exploration, we urge students and instructors to practice self-reflexivity to see how inspiration for praxis might emerge from their day-to-day activities.

Another theme focuses on identifying and challenging the hegemonic identities of more traditional educational practices. A core feature of critical pedagogy is the dialogic relationships between the educator and learner as they continuously develop the learning community. We hope with these activities in hand, educators can take steps toward dismantling oppressive higher education policies and procedures at a grassroots level. The activities are designed to foster agency within the pedagogical practices of the educator as well as to foster agency through the emerging academic process of the learner. The activities work at a local level to dismantle monolingual practices that marginalize multilingual writers. Additionally, these activities seek to leverage both educator and learner identities in order to challenge traditional modes of instruction that are rooted in banking and other unidirectional instructional practices.

The next emerging theme is utilizing a self-reflexive modality to support both educator and learner agency. Instructors can equip their students with the resources available on their campuses to labor toward a student-centered classroom environment. In this environment, they will explore the role of identity by using the resources available to them to assist in developing an inclusive learning community where together they can practice self-reflexivity. With this tool in hand, students can investigate pedagogical theory and develop their own concept-to-practice understandings.

The final theme is learner and teacher awareness of linguistic variation to continue to challenge the native and non-native dichotomy. Promoting this awareness of linguistic variations in educational contexts breaks the mold of linguistic purism. Because English is a global language, there are variations that students will encounter both in and out of classroom settings. These activities guide students as they analyze and respond to various language scenarios, demonstrate language awareness used by teachers in practical scenarios, and discuss classroom discourse effects. Through this exploration, students will work collaboratively to construct a new understanding of global and cross-cultural awareness. We hope with these activities, teachers can incorporate lessons that raise awareness to the linguistic diversities and language variations throughout their communities.

While these are the themes we focused on, we are certain that once the audience dives into this edited collection, you will find additional themes and use your resources and creativity to build on additional activities and assignments for your educational contexts. We look forward to working on this endeavor with you in the years to come.

Note

1 ESOL—English to Speakers of Other Languages. This title has recently replaced "ESL Teacher" in P-12 schools in rural Pennsylvania.

1 Transforming Language Education

How Instructors Incorporate Translanguaging and Critical Pedagogy in Community Schools

Sarah Bogdan

Introduction

According to the Institute of International Education, the number of international students in the States reached a record high in 2019 (IIE, www.iie.org). *Open Doors 2019* attributes this to the growing interest in international exchange programs, coupled with the "continued competitiveness of the U.S. higher education sector as a destination of choice for international students" (IIE, 2019). Additionally, over a million people immigrate to the United States every year, which further affects the demographics of US classrooms (Budiman, 2020). With the demand for English as a global language and the increasing number of international students and children of immigrants studying English, classrooms in the United States are characterized by diversity and linguistic heterogeneity (Dennihy, 2017; IIE; 2019; Mahboob, 2017). Language instructors in the field of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) must account for "non-standard" uses of the English language and heritage languages. Many scholars are advocating for multilingual-friendly approaches to education, such as translanguaging pedagogy (Canagarajah, 2015; Horner et al., 2019; Vogel & García, 2017), which will be elaborated upon later. Furthermore, no student learns in a vacuum and no school exists outside of the influence of its community. Where resources permit, some language instructors employ pedagogy that both validates each student's voice and encourages the student's family and community to engage with the school. This is especially relevant in school neighborhoods with high populations of immigrant families, where students may act as language brokers and translators on a regular basis, so their actual language practices might not be consistent with the expectations placed on them by traditional classrooms. Critical pedagogy (Freire, 1998, 2017; Kubota & Miller, 2017) provides the impetus for validating students' diverse language practices and naming them as active agents within their community and society. This chapter

presents a review of the literature focused on critical pedagogy and translanguaging theory. The author will explore the interconnections between translanguaging and the critical pedagogy framework, and will discuss community schools or school programs that emphasize engagement with the community. The ensuing review of empirical studies provides insights for understanding the following questions:

- How do language instructors act as critical pedagogues in community schooling programs?
- How do instructors incorporate translanguaging in their pedagogy?
- What else can critical pedagogues do to encourage their students' translanguaging practices and to bridge the gaps between school and community?

Connecting the Core Concepts: Critical Pedagogy, Translanguaging, and Community Schooling

Critical Pedagogy

French essayist Joseph Joubert once said, "To teach is to learn twice." This concept of teachers as learners reflects a core tenet of critical pedagogy—that teachers and students are co-constructors of knowledge and that the classroom should model democracy, rather than emulating a one-way flow of information. This democratic approach to education questions traditional hierarchies and names students as active agents within their institutional contexts. There is some debate in the field about what constitutes criticality and critical pedagogy, but it is generally agreed that it includes recognizing and rectifying oppression, prioritizing social justice, raising awareness of power relations, transforming the hierarchical relationship between students and teachers, valuing students' voices and experiences, and praxis (Freire, 1998, 2017; Gitlin & Ingerski, 2018; Katz, 2014; Kaufmann, 2010; Kubota & Miller, 2017).

There are many different theorists who contribute to the origins and core beliefs in critical pedagogy, but this chapter relies mainly on Freirean critical pedagogy (as it relates to language education in context). Freirean critical pedagogy reflects the work of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian critical literacy educator, also known as the father of critical pedagogy. Freire criticizes the traditional model of education: "Narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the students to memorize mechanically the narrated content. Worse yet, it turns them into 'containers,' into 'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher" (2017, pp. 44–45). He describes this as the "banking" concept of education, in which students are merely recipients for the teacher's deposits of knowledge (p. 45). Combatting this model, he proposes "problem-posing education," a dialogical approach. Freire states:

> Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. (2017, p. 53)

According to Freire, then, critical pedagogy entails a growing process for both "students" and "teachers." It makes space for students to ask questions, reflect, discover, create, and enact social change. "Critical pedagogues" here refers to instructors whose views align with theorists like Freire and who wish to foster classroom environments that challenge the banking concept of education. There are critical pedagogues or aspiring critical pedagogues in all fields of education, but this chapter focuses on language instructors working with multilingual students, especially those who incorporate translanguaging pedagogy, and especially those who work in community schools, or who otherwise prioritize school–community relationships.

A Critical Take on Translanguaging

Translanguaging emerged as a theory that rejects the notion that languages are distinct, separate, or compartmentalized systems, proposing instead that the boundaries between "standard," named languages are blurred. Translanguaging also proposes that when speakers use a language or language variety, they are pulling different features from within their linguistic repertoire (Canagarajah, 2017; Vogel & García, 2017). This repertoire can be conceptualized as a toolkit for languages; according to Vogel and García, each speaker has a singular "unitary linguistic repertoire" with which they integrate various skills or multimodal features and "linguistic features in addition to social practices" (2017, pp. 4–5). Translanguaging (and translanguaging as a pedagogical approach) validates accents, dialects, and varieties of languages that may not be recognized or acceptable within traditional approaches to language education (Canagarajah, 2006; Horner et al., 2011). For example, translanguaging pedagogy questions the hierarchies between "standard," "proper" English and other Englishes or languages, including different regional dialects, vernaculars like Black English Vernacular (BEV), "academic" versus "non-academic" language, and variations between language used on the Internet versus face-to-face (Hornberger & Link, 2012). *Translanguaging* can also be used as a verb to refer to the act of communicating with diverse features from one's linguistic repertoire, often adjusting one's language for the sake of various contexts. This is also referred to as *code-meshing* (Canagarajah, 2011) and might manifest itself in writing; for example, a student might choose to use both Chinese and English in their work.

Translanguaging is situated within *translingualism* as a theory of language, or what is also referred to as the *translingual approach* (to writing or teaching, and so on). The translingual approach acknowledges that multilingual students are constantly translanguaging, even if it is subconscious or not recognized or encouraged by their instructors (García, 2011; Gort, 2017). Although the translingual approach is still an evolving theory, it is crucial for language instruction because it "grants students agency and responsibility for language as the emerging outcome of their writing practices, with language difference thus an inevitability rather than a choice" (Horner et al., 2019, p. 2). The translingual approach, and subsequently translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy, challenge traditional monolingual assumptions about language. This includes the assumption that languages are discrete systems that exist independently of one another in one's mind, and that languages should be taught separately (e.g., L2 should be learned in only L2). The concept of translanguaging combats monolingual ideology, linguistic purism, and the myth of Standard English because it validates language differences and language fluidity (Canagarajah, 2015; Horner et al., 2011; Horner et al., 2019). In this perspective, monolingual ideology and monolingual teaching strategies are similar to Freire's idea of the banking method of education because in monolingualism, students' individual experiences, lives, backgrounds, and language varieties are not valued; they are expected only to absorb the (Standard) English conventions that are conveyed to them by the instructor. Thus, a combination of critical pedagogy and translanguaging pedagogy can be employed in language education programs around the globe to combat the banking model of education as well as monolingual ideology. Additionally, language programs should foster school–community relationships, since (a) the goal of critical pedagogy is to enact change within society, which necessitates community connections, and (b) literacy practices such as translanguaging are now often viewed as sociocultural practices meant to help speakers thrive within their social spheres (Mills, 2016).

Why Community Schooling Programs?

Community schools consist of a partnership between a school and its community, including the community members and/or community resources (Little, n.d.). Generally, these schools emphasize real-world application for students' learning, rather than simply high-stakes testing or practices that are confined to the school as a physical institution. Community schools value the involvement of students' parents, sometimes through volunteer work or after-school programs; they can highlight locally valued cultures through after-school activities and arts-based services (Little, n.d.). These schools also integrate academics with health and social services to meet their students' needs. The United

States currently has over 5,000 community schools, and that the number is growing—in New York City, the number of community schools went from 100 in 2016 to 247 in 2019 (Teachers College, 2019). According to the New York City Department of Education, the number of community schools in the city stands at 317 as of 2022 (Figure 1.1) (NYC Community Schools 2022).

This increase in community schools suggests that the US educational landscape is shifting to prioritize making the institution work for its context, not the other way around. This is especially promising for underprivileged students and racial and linguistic minority students who may not receive the support they need in traditional school systems. However, instructors do not necessarily need to be working in a "community school" to draw connections between their students' learning and the students' home and community life. Language instructors can use materials that incorporate locally valued languages and cultures in the classroom (Baker-Bell, 2020; Bartolomé, 2010; Leeman et al., 2011; Nuske, 2017), and they can engage with parents or advocate for school-wide activities or after-school programs that may influence policy change in their institution.

For instance, Preston (2013) examines the importance of community involvement in school and finds that community partnership is beneficial for students' success. She finds that social relationships within a "bedroom community" (a commuter town or residential suburb where everyone commutes to local school or work) influence the community's involvement with school (Preston, p. 413). Preston defines "community involvement in school" as "any student-focused school–community connection that directly or indirectly supports the students' physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs" (p. 416). This includes parent involvement but also collaboration between student family members and any prominent community members: "field trips, parent or community volunteers and guest speakers in school," attending events, fundraisers, "service-learning activities, adult classes organized within the school," and other activities, like after-school programs (p. 416). In her Canada-based study, Preston found that the bonding of social capital/social networking increased community involvement in school (p. 413). For example, opportunities to volunteer led to stronger school–community and parent–teacher relationships, which led to more involvement; parents were also motivated to get involved in their school based off their children's interests (pp. 423–425). This implies that language instructors, like every instructor, must constantly bear in mind their pedagogical contexts and foster any blooming community–school relationships to meet the needs of their students, especially multilingual students and those living within marginalized communities.

Another example of school–community partnership is seen in Leeman et al.'s article, "Critical Pedagogy Beyond the Classroom Walls: Community Service-learning and Spanish Heritage Language Education,"

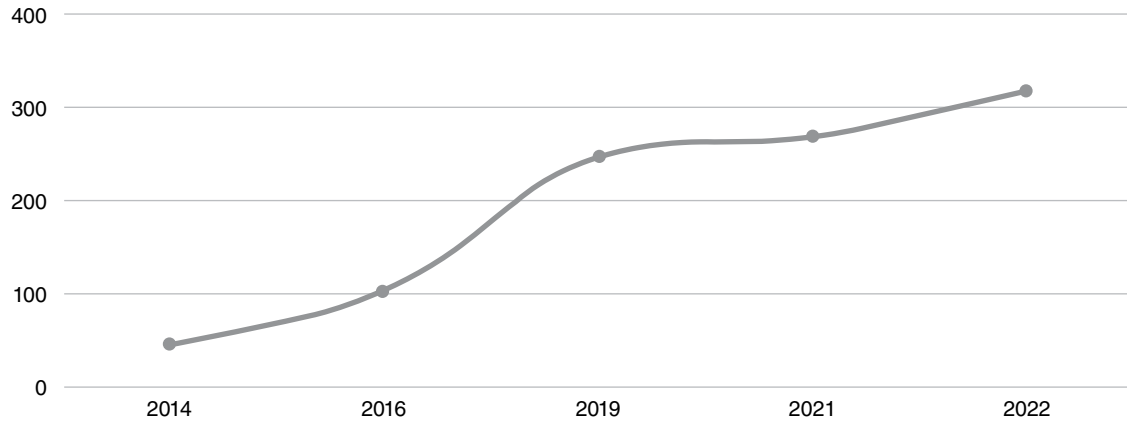# Community Schools in NYC

Figure 1.1 Community schools in New York City from 2014 to 2022.

which will be expanded upon in the following section. Leeman et al. (2011) describe their after-school program in Virginia in which college students taught Spanish to "young heritage language (HL) speakers" (p. 1). Their program combined critical pedagogy and anti-monolingual language pedagogy with a "community service-learning" approach to school, with the goal to "[structure] the program so that students would work actively with community partners and [ensure] that the project would become a collaborative effort in social activism" (p. 6). The program included Spanish "literary lunches" with collaboration between school staff and students, after-school language enrichment classes, and invitations for the parents to join class activities, give lectures on Spanish language and culture, and continue the students' lessons at home (pp. 8–10). This community service-learning is a prime example of a school program that blurs the perceived boundaries between the classroom and the community and between education and social activism.

So far, this review of the literature has situated the concepts of critical pedagogy, translanguaging theory, and community schools within the US educational landscape and language education programs today. In conjunction, these concepts prioritize meeting the students where they are and acknowledging that their personal lives and background knowledge play a role in their learning process. The remainder of this chapter focuses on specific ways in which language instructors incorporate these concepts in their classrooms.

Bridging Theory and Practice: Making It Work for the Students

Many real-world classroom scenarios portray the potential for combining critical pedagogy, translanguaging pedagogy, and community involvement. For example, Cervantes-Soon and Carrillo (2016) examine the ways their Latina students used translanguaging and engaged in critical discourse to deconstruct local political issues that were of personal interest to them. They describe their pedagogy as "border pedagogy," which focuses on the physical spaces of border regions as well as prominent linguistic and racial ideologies, and the critical approach students could take to become social activists in their community (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016). This approach gives students space to share and reflect on their lived experiences and also to strengthen their identities as multilingual speakers. Similarly, Alvarez (2014) focuses on language brokering as a community-based function of translanguaging practices. He studies ten Mexican immigrant families in New York City who are part of MANOS, a small grassroots education mentoring program, in which they offered after-school tutoring for free and promoted relationships between families and school (Alvarez, 2014, p. 328). Alvarez finds that because of the prevalence of bilingualism and emerging bilingualism in the local Mexican families, students were often tasked with

language brokering for their family members through acts of translation and translanguaging. This language and literacy brokering is often heavy emotional work (Mihut, 2014), but it is significant work within communities and families that can be supported by critical pedagogues and translanguaging pedagogy.

Other studies showcase how language instructors use community service and student-teacher pedagogy. In their article, Leeman et al. (2011) stress the critical aspect of their Spanish language program and how it aligned with Freirean critical pedagogy:

> …our reform sought to bring students' home and community knowledges and experiences in from the margins and to integrate the language, language practices and cultural production of U.S. Spanish speakers in an effort to "reclaim the local" (Canagarajah, 2005) and resist the language subordination of Spanish in relation to English.
>
> (Leeman et al., 2011, p. 3)

The program was localized, meaning it valued the immediate knowledge and experiences of the students within their local context, rather than blanketing lessons with general materials that may not always be relatable to students. By using this firsthand knowledge of local values, language instructors can more effectively connect with their students and avoid ethnocentric assumptions about what materials will be practical or of interest to the students (Alvarez, 2017; Nuske, 2017). From student reflections, these authors found that the local home languages and language varieties carried strong emotional weight for the student–teachers in the program:

> yo creo que todos los niños prefieren escribir y hablar de las leyendas y especialmente las leyendas que sus padres han compartido con ellos. Entonces, en [*nombre de la escuela]*, los niños también quieren que nosotros incorporemos las leyendas y las historias nacionales en las lecciones que enseñamos.
>   [I believe that all children prefer to write and speak about legends and especially those legends that their parents have shared with them. So, at [*school name*], the children also want us to incorporate legends and national stories into the lessons we teach.]
>
> (Leeman et al., p. 11)

Other reflections portrayed similar sentiments, implying that most of the students and student-teachers engaged more deeply with the class when the materials were connected to their culture and family experiences. Leeman et al. also describe the goals of the after-school program as to "foster students' development of identities as 'legitimate' (as opposed to deficient) speakers of Spanish, and build university-community