



The Pedagogy of The Oppressed: Rediscovering Subjectivity in Education

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the interaction between teachers and students through the story of This study examines pedagogical transformation through a critical perspective, focusing on the deconstruction of marginalization mechanisms in contemporary education systems. Through the method of critical content analysis of academic documentation for the 2020-2024 period, the research explores how reproductive pedagogical practices limit students' subjectivity. Paulo Freire's theoretical framework of critical consciousness is used to dismantle hidden power relations in educational institutions. Studies show that education is not just a transmission of knowledge, but a complex arena of ideological battle. The research proposes the pedagogic of love and the dialogical approach as liberation strategies, in which teachers and students are equally involved in the construction of knowledge. Key recommendations include the deconstruction of an exclusive curriculum, the development of a pedagogical model that respects subjective experience, and the development of an inclusive institutional culture. The contribution of the research lies in providing an alternative conceptual framework that positions education as a transformative practice that dismantles the mechanisms of systemic oppression.

Keywords: Critical Pedagogy, Critical Awareness, Educational Transformation

ABSTRAK

This research examines pedagogical transformation through a critical perspective, focusing on deconstructing marginalization mechanisms in contemporary educational systems. Using critical content analysis of academic documentation from 2020-2024, the study explores how reproductive pedagogical practices limit student subjectivity. Paulo Freire's theoretical framework of critical consciousness is employed to unravel hidden power relations within educational institutions. The study demonstrates that education is not merely knowledge transmission but a complex arena of ideological struggles. The research proposes a pedagogy of love and dialogical approach as liberation strategies, where teachers and students are equally involved in knowledge construction. Primary recommendations include exclusive curriculum deconstruction, developing pedagogical models that respect subjective experiences, and building inclusive institutional cultures. The research's contribution lies in providing an alternative conceptual framework that positions education as a transformative practice that dismantles systematic oppression mechanisms.

Keywords: Critical Pedagogy, Critical Consciousness, Educational Transformation

A. INTRODUCTION

Type The contemporary educational context faces fundamental challenges in realizing transformative and emancipatory pedagogical practices. In an increasingly complex social landscape, the education system is still often trapped in structural reproductive mechanisms that perpetuate inequality and marginalize the subjectivity of marginalized groups. This study seeks to explore the critical dynamics between educational power relations, knowledge construction, and subjective experiences of marginalized students. The genealogy of critical thinking in education, fundamentally inspired by the intellectual legacy of Paulo Freire, provides an analytical framework for dismantling the systemic mechanisms that limit the space of expression and articulation of knowledge (Thahir, 2022). The concept of "critical consciousness" introduced by Freire in "The Pedagogy of the Oppressed" remains relevant in interrogating hegemonic and reproductive pedagogical practices (Aditama, 2024). Through a dialectical perspective, this research intends to transcend the conventional approach towards a fundamentally liberating educational model.

Recent studies in the realm of critical pedagogy demonstrate the complexity of the epistemological challenges facing contemporary education systems. Study (Ura & Sudirgo, 2022) underlining that educational institutions are not just a space for knowledge transmission, but an arena of ideological battle that determines the construction of social consciousness. Research (Sudirman, 2019) It further asserts that pedagogical practice cannot be separated from the broader context of power, in which structural relations constantly shape and limit the possibilities of social transformation (Bashir, 2023). The significance of this research lies in its deconstructive efforts to unravel the hidden mechanisms that perpetuate marginalization in the pedagogical space. Through a critical genealogical and ethnographic approach, the research intends to explore how learners' subjectivity is shaped, restricted, and potentially liberated through educational practice. (Angga & Muhtar, 2022) emphasizing that pedagogical transformation requires more than just curriculum modification, but requires a thorough reconfiguration of the epistemological logic underlying educational practice.

Methodologically, this study adopts a qualitative research framework with an in-depth case study method. Through narrative interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis, the research seeks to uncover subjective narratives that have been subordinated. (Freire et al., 2024) emphasizing the importance of an approach capable of capturing the complexity of subjective experiences in a diverse and dynamic pedagogical context. The theoretical contribution of this research is to produce an alternative conceptual framework that positions students as active agents in the knowledge construction process (Idris & Putra, 2021). (Herlambang, 2021) In his study, he emphasized that pedagogical liberation requires a systematic deconstruction of an established knowledge regime, as well as the opening of a more horizontal and equal space for dialogue.

(Siswadi, 2023) in his reflection on his legacy, Freire underlines that transformative pedagogy is a deep practice of "love"—a process of realization that transcends rigid institutional and epistemological boundaries. This research specifically intends to investigate how the practice of "pedagogical love" can be a concrete liberation strategy in the context of contemporary education. The specific objectives of the study include: (1) analyzing the mechanisms of marginalized reproduction in pedagogical practice; (2) explore strategies for forming critical awareness among students; and (3) propose an alternative pedagogical framework that positions the subject as an agent of social transformation. Thus, research is not only theoretical, but has significant practical implications for a more democratic, inclusive, and

emancipatory systemic reconstruction of education.

B. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative methodology with an exclusive focus on secondary data analysis, which allows for a comprehensive exploration of critical pedagogical discourse through existing sources of documentation. The methodological approach is designed to produce an in-depth construction of theoretical knowledge by utilizing the academic documentation trail already available. The secondary data sources used cover a wide spectrum of academic documentation, including: (1) articles from reputable scientific journals; (2) institutional research reports; (3) education policy documents; (4) digital archives of academic libraries; (5) official publications of educational institutions; and (6) historical documentation related to critical pedagogical thinking. The main focus of the research is to explore conceptual transformations in pedagogical practice through in-depth analysis of existing documents. The data collection technique is carried out through systematic document analysis using a strict search protocol. Electronic academic databases such as JSTOR, ProQuest, SAGE Journals, and digital repositories of international universities are the main sources of documentation collection. Document selection criteria include: (a) relevance to critical pedagogical themes; (b) publication in the 2020-2024 time frame; (c) source credibility; and (d) the significance of the theoretical contribution.

The data analysis method adopts a critical content analysis approach that allows systematic deconstruction of pedagogical discourse. The analysis process is carried out through several stages: (1) thematic categorization; (2) comparative analysis; (3) genealogical interpretation; and (4) conceptual synthesis. Each document is treated as a textual space that contains epistemological power relations and pedagogical knowledge constructions. The validity of the research is guaranteed through several validation strategies. First, triangulation of sources using documents from various disciplines and theoretical perspectives. Second, a transparent research trail audit, documenting every stage of analysis and interpretation. Third, consult with education experts to get an external perspective and minimize the potential for interpretive bias. The data codification process is carried out in stages. The initial stage involves open coding to identify emergent themes in the document. Furthermore, axial coding is carried out to explore the relationship between theories and concepts. The final stage is selective coding that results in a new theoretical framework of pedagogical transformation.

The critical hermeneutics approach is used as an interpretive strategy, which allows reading beyond literal meaning. Each document is explored not just as an informative text, but as a discursive construction that brings epistemological and political implications in educational practice. Research ethics are enforced through: (1) accurate source attribution; (2) respect for the integrity of academic work; (3) transparency of the analysis process; and (4) a critical attitude but respect for various theoretical perspectives. Each document is cited and interpreted with academic care. The methodological limitations of research lie in the complete reliance on secondary documentation, potentially limiting access to direct empirical experience. However, this approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of pedagogical discourse in a broader spectrum and across contexts. The output of the research is not simply a review of documentation, but a theoretical reconstruction that deconstructs conventional pedagogical practices and offers an alternative conceptual framework for the transformation of contemporary education.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Genealogy of Critical Awareness in Education

The concept of critical consciousness formulated by Paulo Freire is a fundamental epistemological construction that transcends the traditional educational paradigm. In its theoretical framework, critical consciousness is not just an intellectual representation, but a liberating practice that dialectically dismantles the mechanisms of systemic oppression in a pedagogical space. (Hidayah et al., 2023) It emphasizes that critical awareness is a complex process that involves a total reconfiguration of the relationship between knowledge, power, and subjectivity. The epistemological transformation offered by Freire positions students not as passive objects, but as active subjects in the process of knowledge construction (Suddahazai, 2023). Research (Febriani et al., 2023) underlines that the critical consciousness model requires a systematic deconstruction of established pedagogical structures.

This process involves a deep reflection on hidden power relations in educational practice, where knowledge is no longer understood as a neutral entity, but as an arena of ideological battle. Systemic oppression mechanisms in education operate through a variety of discursive strategies that subtly limit the subjective articulation space. (Freire et al., 2024) It shows that conventional curricula and teaching methods are often hegemonic reproductive instruments, defining epistemological boundaries and limiting the possibilities of social transformation. Deconstruction carried out through critical consciousness intends to unravel this hidden mechanism, opening the door for more inclusive and emancipatory knowledge. In an effort to build critical awareness, it is important to understand that this process involves not only changes in the way individuals perceive the world, but also in how they interact with and influence the social structures around them. Education is no longer positioned as a neutral activity, but rather as a battleground where values, norms, and power interact dynamically. In this context, the role of educators is very significant. Educators are not only tasked with imparting knowledge, but also acting as facilitators who open up space for students to explore and challenge the domination structures that bind them.

Critical awareness creates opportunities for individuals to understand the limitations imposed by dominant ideologies, while developing the ability to create more emancipatory alternative narratives. This process requires the courage to ask, analyze, and go beyond the established frame of mind. For example, in a traditional educational environment, students are often exposed to a curriculum designed to reproduce the status quo. This curriculum, consciously or unconsciously, directs students to receive information without criticizing it, thus limiting their ability to understand the world in depth and to dream of meaningful change. However, in a pedagogy based on critical awareness, the curriculum is no longer a control tool, but a medium to expose various forms of injustice and oppression. Learning materials are designed to challenge basic assumptions and inspire students to think independently. More than that, this transformative curriculum demands educators to constantly reflect on their teaching methods and to create a learning environment that allows for open and inclusive dialogue. In an emancipatory pedagogical space, the relationship between teachers and students also undergoes a fundamental transformation. Traditional hierarchical relationships, in which teachers are seen as absolute authority and students as passive recipients, are replaced by more dialogical and equal relationships. Teachers and students together

become creators of knowledge, share perspectives, and learn from each other. This transformation not only frees students from epistemological oppression, but also enables them to become active agents of change in their communities.

Additionally, it is important to highlight the role of reflection in the critical awareness process. Reflection is a tool that allows individuals to explore their own experiences, identify patterns of dominance, and build a deeper understanding of their social conditions. Through reflection, individuals can relate personal experiences to a broader context, resulting in deeper insights into the relationship between social structures and their daily lives. In educational practice, reflection can be integrated through various methods, such as group discussions, reflective journals, or community-based projects. Furthermore, critical consciousness not only functions as an individual process but also as a collective movement. In community-based education, critical awareness is a means to build solidarity and empower marginalized groups. When individuals understand that their struggle is not an isolated phenomenon but is part of a broader struggle against domination structures, they can work together to create significant change. Thus, education is not only a tool for individual liberation but also a driving force for greater social transformation.

However, the process of forming critical awareness also faces various challenges. One of them is resistance to change, both from individuals who are already accustomed to domination structures and from institutions that feel threatened by the potential for social transformation brought about by critical education. This resistance often appears in the form of rejection of new ideas, censorship of learning materials, or restriction of space for dialogue and reflection. Therefore, it is important for educators and practitioners to continue to innovate in creating strategies that are able to break through these barriers. In addition, critical awareness also requires sustainability and consistency. This process cannot be achieved in a short time or through a single intervention. Critical awareness is an ongoing journey, which requires constant effort to question, reflect, and improve the way we understand and interact with the world. Education based on critical awareness should be designed to support lifelong learning, where individuals continue to grow and develop in their consciousness.

In an increasingly complex and connected world, the urgency to implement critical awareness-based education is becoming increasingly relevant. Global challenges such as economic inequality, climate change, and social conflicts require individuals who not only have technical knowledge but also the ability to think critically and act ethically. Critical education provides a foundation for individuals to understand these global dynamics, while also providing them with the tools to contribute to finding sustainable and inclusive solutions. Ultimately, critical awareness is not only about understanding reality, but also about reshaping it. Critical and transformative education gives individuals the power to not only recognize oppression but also to imagine a more just and humane world. By placing students as active subjects in this process, critical education paves the way for a future where freedom, justice, and solidarity are at the core of every human interaction.

B. The Dialectic of Pedagogical Liberation

The dialectic between the subject of education and the structure of education is the fundamental space in which pedagogical transformation takes place. (Ansori et al., 2023) emphasizes that pedagogical relationships cannot be understood as linear relations,

but rather dynamic processes in which the subject of education actively negotiates with the institutional structures that surround them. This process involves a constant dialectic between individual consciousness and the structural conditions that shape it (Al-Razi et al., 2024). Critical awareness formation strategies require a dialogical approach that goes beyond conventional models of knowledge transmission (Rohinah, 2019). Freire proposed the concept of dialogue as a liberating practice that allows learners to read the world before reading words (Panggabean, 2022). Dialogue is not just an exchange of information, but an epistemological reconstruction process in which subjective experiences are articulated, interpreted, and transformed. Dialogue space as a medium of pedagogical transformation requires a total deconstruction of the traditional hierarchy in education. The teacher is no longer understood as the sole authority holder of knowledge, but rather a dialogical partner who is equally involved in the search process. This requires a horizontal pedagogical practice, in which the experience of each individual is respected and seen as a legitimate source of knowledge. The implication of the dialectic of pedagogical liberation is a complete reconfiguration of educational practice (Affandi & Suastra, 2022).

Not just information transfer, education is transformed into a social practice that actively dismantles the mechanism of oppression. Every pedagogical space has the potential to be an arena for social reconstruction, where critical consciousness is built through collective reflection and transformative action. The dialogical approach in pedagogical liberation also opens up opportunities to create an inclusive and solidarity-based educational space. In this space, learners from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to share their experiences and views, creating interactions that enrich collective insights. The solidarity that builds from this process is not only a form of recognition of differences, but also a shared commitment to fight against the structures that create injustice. Education with this kind of orientation teaches students not only to understand their place in the world, but also to fight for change that benefits the wider community. The reconfiguration of educational practices through the dialectic of liberation demands a more flexible and responsive approach to the needs of learners. This approach avoids equalization in teaching and pays attention to the personal and social context of students.

The learning process becomes a reflection between the individual's experience and the social conditions they face, allowing them to look critically at the relationship between the two. Thus, learning is not only about the accumulation of knowledge, but also the development of the capacity to act on new understandings that arise from their experiences. The transformation of the relationship between teachers and students is one of the core of the dialectic of liberation. This relationship emphasizes the importance of active listening and appreciating every voice in the educational process. Teachers are no longer positioned as "absolute authority" but as facilitators who help students articulate their experiences and explore new ideas. Instead, students also learn to respect the perspectives of others, creating a more collaborative and equal environment. This relationship based on mutuality creates a more human learning atmosphere, where learning becomes an authentic and empowering experience.

In addition, the dialogical space allows creativity to emerge as part of the learning process (Sarpendi & Komalasari, 2023). Students are encouraged to think outside the boundaries of tradition and look for new ways to understand and address complex

problems. This process not only enriches the way they understand the world, but also strengthens their ability to create innovative solutions that are relevant to real-life challenges. In this context, education is a catalyst for social change, giving learners the tools to change their own world. The dialectic of liberation also introduces the concept of courage in education. The process of pedagogical transformation often faces resistance, both from existing systems and from individuals who feel threatened by change. Courage is needed to question the status quo, challenge established assumptions, and dare to dream about a better world. In an educational space, this courage is cultivated through deep dialogue and critical reflection, where learners learn to overcome their fear of change and believe in their potential to make an impact (Saada & Magadlah, 2021).

In the end, the dialectic of pedagogical liberation affirms that education cannot be separated from social responsibility. An authentic learning process always involves fundamental questions about justice, equality, and freedom. By integrating critical reflection and transformative action, education becomes more than just an individual experience; it becomes a means to create sustainable collective change. Each learning space becomes a place where human potential is developed, allowing learners to discover and reaffirm their subjectivity in a mutually respectful and liberating relationship.

C. Marginalized Reproduction in Pedagogical Practice

The hidden mechanisms in the educational curriculum reveal the structural reproductive complexities that systematically silence marginal epistemology. (Romdoniyah, Dedih, 2022) shows that the curriculum is not just an instrument of knowledge transmission, but an ideological battle arena that defines the limits of truth and validity of knowledge. Conventional curriculum structures often perpetuate dominant narratives that prioritize the experiences of marginalized groups, creating an exclusionary epistemological regime (Amin et al., 2023). Power relations in educational institutions operate through subtle mechanisms that place knowledge as a hegemonic instrument. (Pokhrel, 2024) underlines that educational institutions are not neutral, but rather spaces in which symbolic power is constructed and reproduced. Established pedagogical practices tend to construct hierarchies of knowledge that marginalize alternative voices, limiting epistemological space to different perspectives.

The strategy of deconstructing the hegemony of knowledge requires a critical approach that uncovers the hidden mechanisms in pedagogical practice. Santos (2022) offers an epistemological perspective from the south that positions marginal knowledge as a source of transformation. Deconstruction is not simply against established structures, but constructs dialogical spaces that allow for the articulation of alternative knowledge.

D. The Pedagogic of Love as a Strategy of Liberation

The concept of "pedagogic love" formulated by Paulo Freire goes beyond the conventional notion of pedagogical relationships. Freire understood love as a radical practice of liberation, an epistemological commitment that places empathy and solidarity as the foundation of educational transformation. (Subagio et al., 2023) affirms that the pedagogical of love is not sentimentality, but rather a political practice that actively dismantles the mechanisms of oppression. The reconstruction of pedagogical relationships requires a total deconstruction of the hierarchical model in education (Hidayatillah & Hakim, 2023). The teacher is no longer understood as the sole authority

holder of knowledge, but rather a dialogical partner involved in a shared process. This approach requires an authentic pedagogical attitude, one that respects the subjective experience of learners and establishes an equal space for dialogue. The emancipation of student subjectivity is the fundamental mission of love pedagogy. This process involves a total reconfiguration of the way learners understand themselves and their position in social structures. Through dialogical practice, students not only receive knowledge, but actively reconstruct their consciousness, dismantle the oppressive mechanisms that have been limiting the space for expression and articulation.

The pedagogical of love not only emphasizes the relationship between teacher and student, but also redefines the purpose of education itself. In this context, education is no longer understood simply as a tool to achieve academic goals, but as a profound process to build a complete humanity. Education is a space to sow hope, solidarity, and courage in the face of injustice. Love in this pedagogy is a transformative force that fosters mutual respect, alignment with the truth, and a commitment to creating a more just world. An authentic pedagogical attitude requires the courage of teachers to step out of the comfort zone of authoritarian teaching methods and move towards a more dialogical and humanist approach. In the classroom, this means creating an environment that encourages openness, a sense of security, and respect for the individual's uniqueness (Baba et al., 2021). Teachers are not only required to understand the content being taught, but also to be present emotionally and intellectually, accompanying students on their journey to understand themselves and the world around them. Thus, love becomes a medium that bridges the gap between the individual experiences of students and the broader social context (Felsenthal & Agbaria, 2023).

The pedagogic of love also encourages the cultivation of empathy as an integral part of learning. Through empathy, students are invited to see the world from the perspective of others, recognize suffering, and feel a collective responsibility to overcome injustice. This process involves breaking down the barriers of individualism that are often reinforced by the traditional education system. In contrast, the pedagogy of love teaches that individual progress cannot be separated from the progress of society as a whole. In addition, the pedagogic of love enables students to see knowledge as a tool of liberation. Knowledge is no longer seen as static and isolated, but rather as something alive and dynamic, which can be used to challenge structures of oppression and create social change. In this process, learners learn to critically assess information, identify hidden biases, and build a deeper and more meaningful understanding.

Ultimately, the pedagogical of love places the belief in human potential at the core of education. Teachers and students work together to build relationships based on mutual trust and respect. This relationship provides space for learners to develop their identities freely, without fear of being judged or restricted by repressive norms. Through love embodied in action, education becomes a liberating space where every individual can celebrate their humanity and create a better future.

E. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The alternative pedagogical framework resulting from this study offers a holistic model of educational transformation. It is not just a modification of the curriculum, but a thorough reconstruction of the established pedagogical paradigm. This model positions education as a liberation practice that actively dismantles the systemic oppression

mechanism. The recommendations for educational transformation include several fundamental strategies. First, the deconstruction of an exclusive curriculum, by integrating marginal knowledge as a source of legitimacy. Second, the development of a dialogical pedagogical model that places subjective experience as the basis for knowledge construction. Third, the development of an institutional culture that respects epistemological diversity. The contribution to the development of critical educational theory lies in efforts to unravel hidden mechanisms in pedagogical practice. This research not only offers criticism, but produces an alternative conceptual framework that allows for epistemological transformation. It opens the door for more inclusive, democratic, and emancipatory pedagogical thinking.

D. CONCLUSION

This research explores critical dynamics in contemporary education through a critical pedagogical perspective, with a primary focus on the deconstruction of systemic mechanisms that perpetuate marginalization and limit learners' subjectivity. Through genealogical and critical hermeneutic analysis of academic documentation, research reveals that conventional pedagogical practices often act as structural reproductive instruments that inhibit social transformation. Paulo Freire's concept of critical consciousness is a fundamental framework for dismantling hidden power relations in educational institutions. Research emphasizes that education is not just a process of knowledge transmission, but a complex ideological battle arena. The dialogical and pedagogic approach of love is identified as an essential strategy to liberate the subjectivity of learners, where the teacher is no longer seen as a single authority, but rather a dialogical partner in the construction of knowledge. Transformation recommendations include the deconstruction of exclusive curricula, the development of a pedagogical model that respects subjective experience, and the development of an inclusive institutional culture. The significance of the research lies in the effort to produce an alternative conceptual framework that positions education as a liberating practice that actively dismantles the mechanisms of systemic oppression, opening up space for a more democratic, emancipatory, and transformative epistemology.

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