Critical Pedagogy Principles: Iranian EFL Teachers' Perceptions

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ABSTRACT

In a critical pedagogy context, class should not be seen as a closed capsule or as an isolated area which is separated from the outside environment. In other words, classes regardless of their outside environment may be just as places for reading and writing and memorizing school materials and textbooks, not as places for reading and writing the world. Thus, the teacher's value should not be depreciated to a scorer or evaluator controlling and monitoring the phase of passing one course to the next course by learners as a formal role for teachers. This study desired to investigate the difference between Iranian high school EFL teachers across their gender, age, and academic degree. To this aim, 200 EFL teachers teaching in English institutes in Qom city with different genders, ages, and academic degrees were selected non-randomly and purposefully. The instrument of this study was the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale questionnaire developed by Yilmaz (2009). This study used a mixed-method design. The participants of the current study were asked through a five-point Linkert Scale about their perception of critical pedagogy principles. Data analysis used descriptive statistics, t-test, and ANOVA. The results of the t-test and ANOVA indicated there was no difference between teachers' perception of critical pedagogy across their age and gender except for academic degree. The findings of this study might have implications for stakeholders, teachers, and students.
Keywords: Critical pedagogy; EFL teachers' perceptions; age; gender; academic degree

Introduction

McLaren (2015) argues the five modes of oppression, the first one is *exploitation* which is a shape of hegemony in which the working-class group is changed to profit the wealthy group, which leads to inequality. The second one is *marginalization* which relates to those constructing the increasing underclass of individuals confining to the lives of excluded groups. The third one is *powerlessness* which refers to those with little or no autonomy in different situations such as their works. The fourth one is *cultural imperialism*. It is related to the hegemony of special groups with special beliefs and cultural tendencies in the world, imposing these hegemony affairs on the underdog groups. The fifth one is *violence*, which is systematic violence focused on individuals in special groups belonging to those particular groups. For instance, standardized and systematic tests intend to realize the temporary learners' rank instead of learners' intelligence and critical thinking.

Kincheloe (2005) mentions the essence of the liberal option is damaged when schools try to match students to determined practice roles. Kincheloe (2011) asserts schools and structured test-constructors, believe in the superiority of standardized examinations, and concentrate their work on ranking and measuring students. Additionally, learners and teachers acting against these structured and formal school policies are excluded from the education systems.

Even teachers in their classes as the owner of those classes are under the pressure of school administrators to follow predetermined and fixed pattern curricula, they cannot have flexibility regarding the content of textbooks and their purposes, and they do not have freedom in their teaching process. In this context, teachers are always questioned by parents and instructors about the products of the learning process. But in a critical pedagogy context, class should not be seen as a closed capsule or as an isolated area which is separated from the outside environment. In other words, classes regardless of their outside environment may be just as places for reading and writing and memorizing school materials and textbooks, not as places for reading and writing **the world. Thus, the teacher's value should not be depreciated to a scorer or evaluator** controlling and monitoring the phase of passing one course to the next course by learners as a formal role for teachers. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993) mention the notion of post-formal teachers. Post-formal teachers do not admit the assertions of standardized or structured test and curriculum administrators without investigating the social environment in which their learners live and the ways those environments assist to **form learners' acting. He advocates that the post**-formal teacher simplifies this relation and motivates learners to make their own decisions in their lives to discover their talents as a result.

One of the criticisms related to critical pedagogy as Baladi (2007) mentions is that it is not more than a theory. Researchers should not be neutral about the importance of critical learning in the education system, they should examine and discover the ways and factors which help to apply the critical pedagogy themes to the teaching and learning process. English language teaching medium has not been ignorant of the significance of critical thinking, and EFL teachers can reach to this aim by motivating EFL learners to talk about their attitudes upon various issues all over the world freely and in a democratic situation. Kincheloe (2003) asserts critical and sophisticated teachers know that teaching, material development, and knowledge production are not worthless, and language cannot be neutral. There are not sufficient studies examining the existence of a democratic situation in Iranian high schools. We do not know too much about Iranian high school EFL teachers' perceptions regarding critical pedagogy, and these all may lead to accepting and applying traditional methods in teaching.

This study can have implications for EFL teachers. Not only should EFL teachers be aware of their roles to empower and train learners with critical attitudes, but they also should be aware of their own rights to conduct and manipulate material development during the teaching process because they have more interactions with their students. Consequently, teachers know learners' needs more than any others such as administrators or stakeholders in the education marketing.

To satisfy the purposes of the present study, the following research questions were formulated and examined:

RQ 1: Is there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their gender?

RQ 2: Is there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their age?

RQ 3: Is there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their academic degree?

The null hypothesises of this study are as follow:

H0 1. There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their gender.

H0 2. There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their age.

H0 3. There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their academic degree.

Review of Literature

Freire (1997) argues the pedagogy of the oppressed contains two phases first, the oppressed identifies the oppression and tries to change it. Second, the pedagogy of the oppressed is ceased and it has become a pedagogy that belongs to all humans in free and equal conditions. The dialogical connections of people with the world are separated from how these connections are considered, it is also considered that the mode of activity they admit is a work of how they realize themselves in the world. As far as, the teacher-learner and the learner-teacher react concurrently on themselves and the world, it indicates a natural mode of awareness and action. According to Freire (1985), there are two steps in a cycle of knowing, these two steps are separate and at the same time are related to one another. The first step of the cycle is the generation of new knowledge. The second step is, knowing the existence of this generated knowledge. Kincheloe (1991) argues the origination of the knowledge or how it was gained is not significant. Regardless of the context, knowledge is

considered in the positivist view which is learned from the environment. One of the most significant aims of teaching should be to train learners with critical thinking and to train insightful citizens for a democratic society. Curious learners never admit and never let others impose

their own beliefs, opinions, and ideas on them. It seems that predetermined and structured textbooks do not give the opportunity to the learners and even teachers to engage in the content of the textbooks and do not motivate the students' curiosity and self-reflection regarding the content and purposes of the texts. Since curious learners are always investigating and examining new phenomena as well as challenging old opinions in their lives; they question everything, and they are not neutral; their views regarding the world are skeptical, so it is significant that the education systems give this chance to learners and update their traditional and expired attitudes regarding teaching and learning processes.

Freire (1997) views both teachers and students in the education context as subjects, and he argues the relationship between teachers and students should be seen in a horizontal model. He is a critic of the opinion that the teacher is an absolute knower, he does not denigrate teachers' knowledge, but he asserts professional teachers know they have much to learn from and with their students. This horizontal relationship is rooted in dialogical manners. In such a context both teachers and students' points of view are valuable. Freire (1998) states humans have the potential of being trained if only they realize themselves as *unfinished*. In other words, education alone does not lead to training of educated people. It is our perception of being unfinished that leads to becoming educated people. This perception makes people eternally curious. he claims eternally curious for the sake of hope. Hope is another essential element in a critical pedagogy context. So, teachers, learners, and curriculum administrators should be aware of other models of knowledge which are not tangible in the curriculum guidelines. They should join in the process of life.

Background of Theories in Education
Newtonian vs Generative

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993) asserts in Cartesian-Newtonian science recedes the status of the social from the analysis, cognitive progress is fundamental. The social factors that affect paradigms and explanations of progress are underestimated. Kincheloe (2008) argues based on objective science, Newton believed in the *cause-and-effect* notion that indicated prediction of the future action of the phenomenon is possible even in detail if the appropriate tools of measurement were used. Shor (1992) views generative modes as stimulating modes unfolded in the community, pleasant for producing discussion in the class on the relevance of individual life to larger affairs. Generative themes are on the relationship of students' daily life and context. So, this is a positive point in critical pedagogy, as generative themes are learner-based and they are related to problem-posing conditions. Freire (1997) states generative themes may produce many other themes which are necessary to do new tasks, and necessary for reflection to be discovered.

Objective vs Subjective

Giroux (1997) states the objectification of knowledge leads to the objectification of learners. In other words, in the positivist platform, learners cannot construct their own meaning, or assess their own knowledge that they bring to the classroom. In the objectified form of communication, it is not possible for learners to consider the basement of classroom knowledge. He asserts the despotic partition between objective and subjective knowledge orients to stay hidden from students and teachers akin. He also mentions the norms and exercises of the classroom and the realization and manners of their students are consistent with the interest of dominant public school's pedagogy and with little attention to the learning and research patterns. These dominate public pedagogies especially at the level of middle and secondary schools, degrade learning to a set of skill exercises, and ignore the notion of critical thinking in the learning process.

Freire (1997) explains that subjectivity has a significant role in the process of alteration in the world and history because the world is not imaginable without human beings as well as human beings are not imaginable without the world as far as they are interrelated notions. Freire and Macedo (1987) argue schools do not generate subjectivity. Subjectivity acts within schools. Schools have this power to oppress the progress of subjectivity. For instance, in the case of creativity, it is not acceptable in critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy must motivate learners' creativity not only at school, but also in a social context.

Banking Model vs Problem Posing

As far as the banking mode of education impedes creativity, Freire (1997) states problem posing method engages a permanent unraveling of reality. The banking model tries to keep the overwhelming awareness, but the problem-posing method tries for the advent of awareness and critical thinking in reality.

In the problem-posing method, education is viewed as the work of freedom, but in the banking model education is viewed as the work of hegemony. The former attempts to indicate humans are not passive, independent, and apart from the world; it also sees the world connected with humans. In other words, passive humans and a world without humans are not considerable. In the problem-posing mode, individuals improve their power to realize critically the way they live in the world *with which* and *in which* they understand themselves, they see the world as a reality in process, in change. He also asserts the banking model of education tries to hide certain realities which state the way humans are in the world, and it denies the role of dialogue but the problem-posing model sees learners as objects and critical thinkers. Consequently, the banking model impedes creativity by separating awareness from the environment.

To Freire (1997), in the banking model of education, the ownership of knowledge is in the hands of those considering themselves knowledgeable and have a mission to transfer this knowledge to those who know nothing. He also mentions some of the features of banking education as follows:

- The teacher has a mission to transmit knowledge to the students' minds.
- The teacher is the only knower.
- The teacher determines the way of thought for the students.
- The teacher is the only person who has the right to talk, students should listen.
- The teacher organizes and the students are organized.
- The teacher imposes his/her choices on the students and the students have to accept them.
- The teacher acts and the students imitate.
- The teacher selects the content and the students adapt to it.
- The teacher disorders the domination of knowledge based on his/her own authority.
- The teacher is the subject and the students are considered as objects in the learning process.

Positivism vs Constructivism

Kincheloe (2004) states the positivist view made a cleft between unscientific and scientific knowledge, as they take away teachers from knowledge constructing. From a positivist perspective, teachers are viewed as constructors of knowledge (Britzman, 1991; Horn, 2000; Segall, 2002). Kincheloe (2004) asserts in positivist education hidden dimensions of normative knowledge, ethical, and moral assumptions will never be discussed. In the positivist view instructors consider education as a neutral matter and they deny taking into consideration political, cultural, and racial topics in the learning process. Attention to such topics makes politicization in education.

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993) state constructivism in education is based on the notion of critical theory and post-modernism in the direction of post-formal thinking looks for developmentalism as an essential sociohistorical framework rooted in a special collection of theories about the mind. Developmentalism is not the only place to consider the mind. Monchinski (2008) states dialogical constructivism is a learning theory. Dialogical constructivism does not reject dependent learning but it also welcomes approved learning, learning from an individual's activities and their outcomes. Dialogical constructivism asserts that knowledge origins from connections between individuals and their environments. The construction demonstrates the interconnected relationship between the world and cognition. He claims this is a dialogical procedure in which someone is teaching simultaneously while s/he is learning as well. For instance, according to mediated learning, a teacher can utilize manifold methods to teach a particular concept to learners and then s/he can revise the progress of learners and choose the most effective method to teach that particular concept based on that experience outcome. He asserts that Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a decontextualized idea. He argues Vygotsky explains ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level and the level of development potential which is activated by *scaffolding*. All learning dimensions contain a particular social essence and a procedure by which children develop into the logical life of individuals around them (Vygotsky, 1978).

Transmission, Transaction, and Transformation

According to Christensen and Aldridge (2012), there are some strengths in transmission teaching that make it more applicable for teachers and even parents, however, these strengths are mostly considered weaknesses in critical pedagogy. These strengths are as follows:

- Transmission method of teaching is more applicable to beginner teachers.
- Transmission method is more understandable for parents and families.
- Explaining the result is simple.
- Transmission is tangible, so the result is measurable.
- Transmission method is sufficient for rote learning.

The weaknesses of the transmission method are as follows:
- Transmission method does not motivate creativity.
- Transmission method is used in different contexts regardless of the different learning styles and needs.
- Transmission does not encourage oral language progress.
- Transmission method follows limited targets in a specific trajectory.
- In the transmission method there is no room for critical thinking.
- Transmission method does not encourage a tendency to change.
- Transmission method deskills teachers.
- Transmission method deskills students.

Another mode of teaching is named *transaction*, which is different from *transmission* in this notion that knowledge is viewed as generated and regenerated by individuals in the teaching-learning process (Jungck and Marshall, 1992). Christensen and Aldridge (2012) state in this mode teachers follow curriculum guidelines, but they have more options and a more noticeable decision-making task, than the transmission method. Students have interaction with each other in groups, they share their points of view and coordinate in open end activities that lead to a higher level of thinking. Transformation mode is another form of teaching, in this method the teacher tries to teach learners to pay attention to the world and make a change in the world (Aldridge, Manning, Christensen, and Strevy, 2007).

Christensen and Aldridge (2012) assert in the transformation method of teaching, students are the active parties in developing the transformational curricula. Students are asked how to make a difference in the school, environment, or community according to the topics provided through the traditional curricula. For instance, if students study a conversation about air pollution and its effect on daily life and humans' health, they will be asked to think about alternative energies to reduce air pollution and make a healthier life. In the transformation method, materials are used to examine ways to make a difference in the world.

Anti-dialogical vs Dialogical

Freire (1997) discusses *dialogical theory* and *anti-dialogical theory. Dialogical theory of action* is influenced by four factors: 1) Cooperation: The interaction among people as subjects are in cooperation to change the world. 2) Unity: In the *dialogical theory* the power parties should unite with oppressed parties to attain emancipation. 3) Organization: The power parties need unity in society to organize individuals, as far as all individuals are responsible to provide a condition for freedom. 4) Cultural synthesis: In *dialogical theory,* people and power parties do not follow predetermined plans, they mutually discover and make instructions for their actions as a result, they always experience new grasp and insight.

The features of the *anti-dialogical theory* are: 1) Conquest: in the anti-dialogical theory the aim of individuals or power parties is to win others and to impose their opinions on them. Freire calls it *paternalism.* 2) Divisive (divide and rule): To keep the power, the oppressor parties need to split people into two parts, oppressors as the majority population, and the oppressed as the minority group. 3) Manipulation: This feature as division is a way for conquest. By manipulation, the powers try to bring the rest of the people with them to fulfill their own interests. 4) Cultural invasion: It is the same as divisive and manipulation strategies for attaining conquest. The powers try to violate the cultural rules of other communities and impose their own cultural tendencies on the oppressed groups and prevent their creativity as a tenet of a democratic society.

Traditional Pedagogy vs Critical Pedagogy

Freire (1985) asserts in traditional schools, students are engaged in knowledge. The teacher is the only knower for transmitting knowledge. The teacher is only a specialist at transferring knowledge, s/he is not familiar with the *action, ethics, reflection, curiosity, questioning, uneasiness, and uncertainty.* In the cycle of knowing, reading is to unravel the relationship between the words and the context of the words, and how to link the context and words with the environment and society of the reader. He also states hidden curriculum is a way in which hegemony plays a role in schools. Unmentioned principles, values, and beliefs are imposed on learners through the hidden curriculum.

Freire (1998) argues those who believe in determinism live history as a force and not as a contingency. Determinists see themselves as powerless individuals who have no right to rising their attitudes. Such attitudes do not allow for the decision-making that is the basic right of humans. In the deterministic view there is no place for choice, as determinists do not challenge history, they believe that history is exactly what should be happened not more, in other words, it is something that has been done because it should be done. Freire does not believe in fatalism. He believes in rebelliousness because in this notion the position of humans

is never denigrated to a powerless position. In a fatalistic opinion learners and teachers do not have anything to share with each other. They cannot engage in science, make decisions, and produce knowledge.

In the traditional mode of teaching according to Hinchey (2004), there is a preplanned curriculum for instance, *here is the way to do xyz* in the classroom to reach a specific result, but in critical pedagogy, teachers use the notion of praxis which means activity based on reflection. The strategies and issues will be chosen under the control of the critical teacher according to his/her classroom.

Critical Teachers ' Features

A critical teacher considers it his/her right to interfere in the education process and tries to provide a safe and calm environment away from the planned demands of policymakers in education for him/herself and students so that they can gain a better understanding of the world. To Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993), post-formal teachers would no longer neutrally admit the preplanned methodologies and standardized tests and curricula without considering the social environment in which their learners live and the way that social environment helps make students' activities. According to Loveless and Griffith's quotation, this impressive learning should be followed by critical teachers. Critical teachers should see learners as humans who can understand the context, and the situation, and behave according to that specific situation, they realize the notion of sympathy as a great lesson of the world as much as adults realize.

Aliakbari and Allahmoradi (2012) study Iranian school teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy. In their study, they also considered teachers' age, gender, and the level they teach. The result of their studies indicated that Iranian teachers support critical pedagogy and its principles. They claim there was no difference between teachers' perspectives on the tenets of critical pedagogy and other variables except gender, as men have more freedom in Iran to express their opinions. They assert women are unable to relate school issues to society. They also mention the absence of critical pedagogy tenets despite its support by teachers at Iranian schools and they state it may be because of the policymakers' decisions in education.

In another study Aliakbari and Azimi Amoli (2014) found positive perceptions of EFL teachers regard to critical pedagogy. It is worth mentioning that in their study female EFL teachers showed a better understanding of critical pedagogy. Shabani and Khorsandi (2014) have investigated the role of Iranian EFL teachers' critical pedagogical views in their educational success. The result of their study showed a positive relationship between critical pedagogy and teachers' success. In a mixed-method study Ozaydinlik and Saglik (2021) examine teachers' approaches to the principles of critical pedagogy. Their findings in the quantitative phase of the study indicated a low agreement with principles of critical pedagogy among teachers and in the qualitative phase of the study based on a semi-structured interview, it was found female teachers were more familiar with tenets of critical pedagogy.

Method

Since the questionnaire survey is an appropriate way to analyze the collected information quantitatively, it was chosen for this study to identify teachers' perceptions about critical pedagogy themes according to their gender, age, and academic degree. The questionnaire was closed- a response type and the teachers had to select from the choices on the Likert Scale. According to Mackey and Gass (2016), the questionnaire is as one of the most popular ways of gathering data based on beliefs and ideas from participants. The questionnaire included diverse questions in a second language study.

Participants

Participants in the current study were selected purposefully and non-randomly according to their knowledge needed for the aim of this study. The respondents were 200 Iranian English language teachers teaching in English institutes (102 male/ 98 female) in the four districts of Qom, in April 2023. Forasmuch as, teachers' ages ranged from 24 to 60, they were categorized into 24-30, 30-40, 40-50, and 50-60 age group categories (M= 50, SD= 18.38). The educational degree ranged from Bachelor to PhD, including 84 BA, 96 MA, 20 PhD.

Instrument

The Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale Questionnaire designed and validated by Yilmaz (2009) was adopted to obtain an understanding of teachers' perception regarding critical pedagogy principles based on age and gender. Factor load values of the scale items ranged from .31 to .80. according to Bachman (1990), is one of the most powerful ways of measuring construct validity. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale turned out to be .75. This questionnaire has three dimensions: 15 items related to the *Education System Sub-dimensions*, 11 items related to *Function of Schools Sub- dimensions*, and 5 items related to *Emancipator*

School Sub-dimensions. The items were put into a standard questionnaire format and a five-point Linkert Scale ranging from 1 *certainly disagree*, 2 *disagree*, 3 *moderately agree*, 4 *agree*, and 5 *certainly agree*. Total scoring of the responses indicated the extent to which participants agreed with the principles of critical pedagogy. The validated questionnaire has been presented in Appendix A.

Data Collection and Procedure

Firstly, permission to use the questionnaire was obtained from Dr. Yilmaz (personal communication, March 8, 2023). Subsequently, the data collection process started in 23rd of April 2023 and lasted one month with 200 EFL teachers as respondents. The participants were English teachers in the four districts of Qom city. Before administering the questionnaire, the teachers were provided with oral instructions for responding the questionnaire. It should be mentioned that there was no time limit for completing the questionnaire. Since all participants were familiar with the English language and they were teaching English, the questionnaire was administered in the English language. The data obtained from the questionnaires were entered into SPSS Software and the final results were reported.

Data Analysis

To reach an understanding of the data obtained from the questionnaire, descriptive statistics was used to indicate the frequencies and means, t- test, and One- Way ANOVA were run according to the aim of the forth research question.

Results

Results of Descriptive Statistics of Teachers of Different Genders

Table 1 indicates the frequency and the percentage of respondents based on their gender. According to the result, 53.8% of participants were male and 46.2% of participants were female.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics Related to Participants of Different Genders

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	102	53.8	53.8	46.2
	female	98	46.2	46.2	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Results of Descriptive Statistics of Teachers of Different Ages

Table 2 reveals the frequency and the percentages of participants regarding their age. 28.8% of respondents indicated an age between 24 to 30, 38.5% aged between 30 to 40, 21.2% aged between 40 to 50, and 11.5% aged between 50 to 60.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics Related to Participants of Different Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	24-30	54	28.8	28.8	28.8
	30-40	56	38.5	38.5	32.7
	40-50	51	21.2	21.2	71.2
	50-60	19	11.5	1.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Results of Descriptive Statistics of Teachers of Different Academic Degree

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage of participants based on their academic degree. According to this Table, 42.3% of respondents had a BA degree, 48.1% had an MA degree, and 9.6% had a Ph.D. degree.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics Related to Participants of Different Academic Degree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	BA	84	42.3	42.3	42.3
	MA	96	48.1	48.1	90.4
Valid	PhD	20	9.6	9.6	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Analysis of Teachers' Views in Relation to Their Gender
Research Question 1:
Is there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their gender?
H0 1. There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their gender.
In order to check the differences between means statistically, the respondents' genders were coded as **1 and 2, 1 for male and 2 for female. Table 4 reveals participants' views regarding the principles of critical** pedagogy based on gender. According to the analysis of the descriptive data, the mean of the principles of critical pedagogy in men was higher than the women.

Table 4
Results of Descriptive Statistics Related to the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Based on Gender

	N	M	SD	SE	Min	Max
Male	102	2.77	50	09	2.06	3.90
Female	98	2.65	45	09	1.94	3.35
Total	200	2.72	48	06	1.94	3.90

Table 5 indicates the result of the t-**test regarding respondents' views on the principles of critical** pedagogy and its sub-dimensions according to gender. It is clearly discerning that the differences among the **teachers' views on the principles of critical pedagogy in general are not sta**tistically significant (t= -0.99, p<.31). So, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 5
*Results of t-**test for Differences between School Teachers' Views on the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Based on** Gender*

								Sig. (2- tailed)
Gender		N	M	SD	df			
Education	Male	102	47.6	77				0.34
System Sub-	Female	98	46.2	34	50	0.95		
dimension								

Functions of Schools Sub-dimension	Male	102	47.8	10			0.33
					50	0.97	
Emancipator School Sub-dimension	Female	98	49.05	31			
	Male	102	48.77	36			0.36
	Female	98	48.65	49	50	0.93	
Principles of Critical Pedagogy	Male	102	02.54	16			0.31
	Female	98	00.41	23	50	0.99	

Analysis of Teachers' Views in Relation to Their Age

Research Question 2:

Is there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their age?

H0 2. There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their age.

Table 6 reveals participants' views regarding the principles of critical pedagogy based on age. To check the differences between means statistically, the respondents' ages were coded as 1, 2,3, and 4 for 24 to 30, 30 to 40, 40 to 50, and 50 to 60 respectively. According to the analysis of the descriptive data, the mean of the principles of critical pedagogy in teachers of the age group of 24 to 30 was higher, in other words, this group showed better results.

Table 6

Results of Descriptive Statistics Related to the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Based on Age

	N	Mean	SD	SE	Min	Max
24-30	64	31.86	0.72	.16	2.03	3.87
30-40	66	32.47	1.23	.17	1.94	3.03
40-50	51	25.65	2.10	.07	2.16	3.35
50-60	19	15.80	1.32	.15	2.00	3.90
Total	200	26.44	2.42	.06	1.94	3.90

Table 7 indicates the result of One-**Way ANOVA regarding respondents' views on the principles of** critical pedagogy and its sub-dimensions according to age. It is clearly discerning that the differences among **teachers' views on the principles of critical pedagogy, i**n general, is not statistically significant (F= 1.14, p<.34) and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 7

Results of ANOVA for Differences between School Teachers' Views on the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Based on Age

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Education System Sub-dimension	Between Groups	1.68	3	56	.64	19
	Within Groups	16.44	18	34		
	Total	18.12	51			
	Between Groups	34	3	11	35	78
	Within Groups	15.51	18	32		

Functions of Schools Sub-dimension	Total	15.86	51				
Emancipator School Sub-dimension	Between Groups	99	3	33	65	58	
	Within Groups	24.31	48	50			
	Total	25.30	51				
Principles of Critical Pedagogy	Between Groups	78	3	26	.14	34	
	Within Groups	11.02	48	23			
	Total	11.80	51				

Analysis of **Teachers' Views in Relation to Their Academic Degree**
Research Question 3:

Is there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their academic degree?

H0 3. There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their academic degree.

Table 8 reveals respondents' views regarding the principles of critical pedagogy based on academic degree. To check the differences between means statistically, the respondents' academic degrees were coded as 1, 2, and 3 for BA, MA, and Ph.D. respectively. According to the analysis of the descriptive data, the mean of the principles of critical pedagogy in teachers having a BA degree was higher.

Table 8
Results of Descriptive Statistics Related to the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Based on Academic Degree

	N	M	SD	SE	Min	Max
BA	34	2.86	44	08	2.06	3.87
MA	96	2.66	47	10	2.00	3.90
PhD	20	2.23	31	14	1.94	2.68
Total	200	2.72	48	06	1.94	3.90

Table 9 displays the result of One-**Way ANOVA regarding respondents' views on the principles of critical** pedagogy and its sub-dimensions according to academic degree. It is taken from the result that the differences among **teachers' views on the principles**

of critical pedagogy, in general, is significant (F= 4.32, p<.01) as a result, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 9
Results of ANOVA for Differences between School Teachers' Views on the Principles of Critical *Pedagogy Based on Academic Degree*

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Education System Sub-dimension	Between Groups	2.48	2	1.24	3.88	.02
	Within Groups	15.64	49	.31		
	Total	18.12	51			
Functions of Schools Sub-dimension	Between Groups	1.59	2	.79	2.73	.07
	Within Groups	14.27	49	.29		
	Total	15.86	51			
	Between Groups	1.60	2	.80	1.65	.20

Emancipator School Sub-dimension	Within Groups	23.70	49	.48		
	Total	25.30	51			
Principles of Critical Pedagogy	Between Groups	1.77	2	.88	4.32	.01
	Within Groups	10.03	49	.20		
	Total	11.80	51			

It is worth mentioning that participants moderately agreed with the principles of critical pedagogy in general (see Table 10).

Table 10
Frequencies of Teachers' Answers to the Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale in General

Scales	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly Agree	0	0	0
Agree	20	7.7	7.7
Moderately Agree	116	55.8	55.8
Disagree	64	36.5	36.5
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0

Discussion and Conclusion

This study attempted to find out the perception of EFL teachers regarding the principles of critical pedagogy. 200 EFL teachers, male and female (102, 98), with different academic degrees (Bachelor, Master, and Ph.D. in English-related majors) with different ages (24 to 60) were asked to fill out Yilmaz (2009) questionnaire. The results related to the research questions are discussed as follows. The first research question was if there were any differences between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their gender. According to the result of the present study, the descriptive statistic in terms of the participants' genders indicated the higher mean for men, the reason might be related to the different sample size as the number of male participants was more, but the result of the t-test did not display any difference. On the other hand, the second research question was if there were any differences between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their age. There was no difference between teachers' age regarding the principles of critical pedagogy and the reason might be all individuals have somehow the same access to the world's current knowledge.

The third research question was if there were any differences between Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the principles of critical pedagogy across their academic degree. Iranian EFL teachers' views on the principles of critical pedagogy in terms of their academic degrees indicated a difference between their views on the principles of critical pedagogy and their academic degrees, as EFL teachers with BA degrees showed the highest perception of critical pedagogy principles. The findings according to EFL teachers' gender regarding the principles of critical pedagogy were in line with the study conducted by Soodmand Afshar and Donyaei (2018). They found there were no significant differences between teachers' perceptions and gender regarding the principles of critical pedagogy. on the other hand, the findings were against the study conducted by Aliakbari and Allahmoradi (2012), they claim male teachers showed a higher perception toward critical pedagogy principles and it is due to, men being free, and valiant in representing their ideas compared to women.

The findings of the present study based on EFL teachers' age regarding the principles of critical pedagogy were in line with the study by Aliakbari and Allahmoradi (2012), they state no meaningful difference was seen among teachers' perceptions for each sub-dimension regarding their age. The findings were against Pikhart et al. (2022) research. They found in their study that young teachers aged 31-40 applied the principles of critical pedagogy in the English online teaching context more than the other ages, the reason might be related to their ability and alacrity to utilize different activities.

Finally, the findings of the current study based on EFL teachers' academic degrees were in line with Soodmand Afshar and Donyaei (2018). They assert MA and BA EFL teachers were seen to have the highest perception of critical pedagogy. The results stand in contrast to those of Mahmoodarabi and Khodabakhsh (2015), in their study they found Ph.D. teachers had the highest perception of critical pedagogy. An explanation as to why the results of the present study were different from the results of the study of Mahmoodarabi and Khodabakhsh (2015) may be because the participants might have different background

knowledge, proficiency level, different personality, and it might also be related to the more conservative personality of individuals with a higher education degree.

Critical pedagogy principles may help not only students and teachers but also all individuals use their art and abilities to build a bridge for their own and their society's progress. Iran consists of a rainbow of races, ethnicities, religions, and dialects which should be paid attention to so that their voices are heard not only in their own country, but also in the world, and this is not possible without education and belief in the themes related to critical pedagogy. It is necessary for a teacher and a student to learn to be critical, although an educational system is forced to follow certain policies, the main responsibility is on the teachers, who according to the knowledge they have of their students, and according to the most and closest relationship they have with the students, teach them the principles of critical pedagogy and critical thinking and be role models themselves.

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Appendix A
Dear Teacher

Please read the items and show your level of agreement with each item by choosing one of the five choices given below. All responses will be confidential and used only for research purposes. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

The scale is answered as follows: 1- certainly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- moderately agree, 4- agree and 5- certainly agree.

Gender:
Age:
Academic degree:
1. Education is an important source of inequality.
2. Schools are places that the current situation can continue
3. Schools waste individuals and society
4. Schools reproduce poverty (social status).
5. Schools are means of social control
6. Schools are places that were transferred to the official ideology
7. Schools are places where training people like to state
8. Schools are places where inequality is reproduced
9. State schools are supported by the dominant social structure and in return, they work to support the structure
10. State school is supported by the dominant social structures and school works the support them
11. Conservative views are dominated in educational policy
12. The education system is becoming liberal day to day
13. Power relations in society are influential on education.
14. Large companies are trying to establish an impact on education
15. Results of central examinations in the education system are not indicators of student academic achievement
16. Schools must work to ensure social justice
17. Teachers must question themselves when they are criticized by students
18. Discipline is an indispensable part of schools
19. Teacher is the only authority in the classroom
20. A good student is the one who obeys rules
21. The information given at schools can be used in life
22. Existing training programs (curriculum) are sufficient

23. To take contribution is normal for students
24. At schools, teachers and knowledge must be the center
25. The school is an institution sine qua
26. The main goal of schools is to convey information
27. People must work hard to gain a solid footing in society
28. Education is a must to gain a solid footing in society
29. Teachers must share their authorities and responsibilities with students in the classroom
30. Schools must be places where students are emancipated
31. The function of schools is to prepare children for the future