



The Historical Background of Critical Pedagogy*

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Abstract

This article aims to reveal the historical foundations of critical pedagogy. The advocacy of the critically oriented educational philosophy known as critical pedagogy is made by philosophers and thinkers working on education such as Antonio Gramsci, Henri Giroux, Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire, who were influenced by Marxism and critical theory. The main source of critical pedagogy is the critical theory that criticizes the enlightenment and positivism put forward by the philosophers of the Frankfurt School. The main interest of critical theory is the political, social and economic movements and struggles of its age, critical theory did not directly address education. However, since the problems and determinations they have put forward are also related to education, this situation has caused them to cross paths with critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy, which specifically points to the political dimension of education, has drawn attention to the relationship between knowledge and power, its reflection on education in general and school in particular, and its repercussions in society. Therefore, critical pedagogy finds its roots in critical theory and is inspired by it.

Keywords

Critical Pedagogy, Frankfurt School, Critical Theory.

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Eleştirel Pedagojinin Tarihsel Arka Planı

Öz

Bu makale eleştirel pedagojinin tarihsel dayanaklarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Eleştirel pedagoji olarak bilinen eleştirel yönelimli eğitim felsefesinin savunuculuğu Marksizim ve eleştirel teorinin etkisinde kalan Antonio Gramsci, Henri Giroux, Ivan Illich ve Paulo Freire gibi eğitim üzerine çalışan filozof ve düşünürler tarafından yapılmaktadır. Eleştirel pedagojinin temel kaynağını, Frankfurt Okulu filozoflarınca ortaya konulan Aydınlanmayı ve pozitivismi eleştiren, eleştirel teori oluşturmaktadır. Eleştirel teorinin başlıca ilgisi çağındaki siyasi, sosyal ve ekonomik hareketler ve mücadelelerdir, eleştirel teori doğrudan eğitime yönelmemiştir. Bununla birlikte onların ortaya koymuş olduğu problemler ve tespitler eğitim ile de ilgili olduğu için bu durum eleştirel pedagoji ile yollarının kesişmesine neden olmuştur. Özellikle eğitimin siyasal boyutuna işaret eden eleştirel pedagoji, bilgi ve iktidar arasındaki ilişkiye, bunun genelde eğitime ve özelde okula yansımalarına, toplumdaki yankılarına dikkat çekmiştir. Bu nedenle eleştirel pedagoji köklerini eleştirel teoride bulmakta ve ondan ilham almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Eleştirel Pedagoji, Frankfurt Okulu, Eleştirel Teori.

Introduction

The most distinctive feature of human is his being thinking and acting creature. The environment and family in which one is born first shape the mentality of a person. Even while being a baby, the name his family gave him, the religion he would choose, the life he would live were determined. This determination affects the child's lifestyle. If the family has a structure that accepts and implements democratic values, the child is promoted to take responsibility and gain self-confidence. The child brought up in this way grows up as a more liberal, self-confident and responsible individual in the future. If the parents are democratic in their attitudes and behaviors, their children grow up in a comfortable and free family environment, then children become aware of their own uniqueness, seek the possibilities of revealing their existing characteristics and of self-realization. Individuals growing up in this way become individuals who think and behave healthier at their future ages. Parents adopting democratic attitudes and behaviors consider the positive behaviors of the child, not the negative ones, and reinforce these behaviors of the child. Undoubtedly, there are families that do not accept democratic values in family life. Children are kept under constant surveillance in families wherein democratic attitudes and behaviors are not displayed, oppression is applied, strict rules are applied, and authoritarian behavior towards children is acted. Children who are not likely to have a constructive discussion with their parents, share their wishes with them, or whose wishes are not taken into account, even if they share, are obliged to follow the rules (Kavurgacı & Selvitopu, 2019: 106). Children growing up in this way appear as individuals who are introverted, constantly dependent on others, and do not give much importance for their freedom. Although children are framed according to their parents' upbringing, their learning behaviors are not limited to the family environment and their parents. Indeed, children are not only brought up in the family environment, they do not just learn from their parents. After a certain age, a child continues his education in schools. School has the greatest influence on shaping children and young individuals after a certain age. These schools raise individuals according to the education system and approach determined by countries, societies and the political thought that has authority in the country. On the other hand, there are many flows throughout history and countless educational understandings revealed by these movements, and education and philosophy are in a close relationship. The element that unites philosophy and education is the human element. Philosophy is

a product of human thought and man is a living being in need of education. Philosophy examines man as a whole; education examines man as a being in need of education. Philosophy determines the desired goals; education is to bring individuals to these determined goals. Philosophy creates a system of qualifications and values for education; education strives for a system and activities that aim how to reach these and let individuals gain them (Ekiz, 2013: 74). Education becomes more conscious and better in quality when people know what they are about to learn and why they are learning. A person who cannot benefit from the accumulation of philosophical thought cannot sufficiently benefit from transforming and improving feature of education (Özgen, 2012: 17). Understanding and gaining value of philosophy depends on a better understanding of education, and a better understanding of education depends on a better understanding of philosophy. According to Cevizci, it seems unlikely to carry out education without giving a philosophical answer to the question of why, how and what kind of a man we will raise in today's world. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important to understand and ground educational activities on a philosophical basis (Cevizci, 2019: 7). As can be understood, philosophy and education are unseparably linked. The absence of education makes philosophy, and the absence of philosophy makes education incomplete, so philosophy and education are two important fields that complement each other.

Critical Pedagogy in Terms of its Basic Characteristics

In the 17th and 18th centuries in Western societies, the effort to purge old and traditional thoughts and organize individual and social life with a new understanding based on the mind is described as Enlightenment. In the new world order created under the guidance of the mind with the Enlightenment, we can understand that emotions and desires remained in the background because of the world wars, the destruction brought by technological developments, the poverty and misery suffered by the exploited peoples or people exploited with industrialization. In addition, the concepts of religion, language and racial superiority that emerged after the transition to the nation-state structure, as well as similar situations such as the superiority of the white over the blacks or the superiority of the European civilization over all other civilizations, brought about a constant inner turmoil, unrest and brutality in the world. It is understood that the developing and changing world order under the guidance of the mind cannot create a good standard of living for everyone. It has been realized that in addition to being an intelligent being, man is also an emotional and desireful being. Critical theory emerged as a reaction or a challenge to this situation, and thus, critical pedagogy also carried the flag forward with the inspiration it received from critical theory. Critical pedagogy, which has its roots in the 19th century, emerged in the 20th century as a reaction to the classical educational philosophies as well as to the analytical philosophy of education. Critical pedagogy has set out to analyze the

problems posed by classical and analytical educational philosophies and to find solutions to these problems. With this aspect, critical pedagogy is almost entirely a critical and analytical activity (Cevizci, 2019: 201). Critical pedagogy seeks to construct a new interpretation of education. While doing this, it turns to different definitions by reviewing the existing definitions of education (Aksakallı et al., 2018: 962). Critical pedagogy, on the one hand, displays a destructive attitude towards education through the filter of criticism on its foundations of the traditional understanding of education; on the other hand, it follows a constructive role by putting forward thoughts on how the education to replace should be (Kaya & Altan, 2019: 68). Criticism of critical pedagogy, which takes its power, meaning and orientation primarily from criticism, is based on taking criticism as a revolutionary and transformative tool. For example, critical pedagogy aims to transform the student for goals outside the system. On the contrary, the fact that critical pedagogy is populist and revolutionary suggests that it is a versatile political pedagogical approach (İnal, 2020: 69,114). The purpose of criticizing in critical pedagogy is to pull individuals out of the grip of ideological pressures and to raise them as free and social individuals. This is why critical pedagogy, which is based on change and questioning and makes the dialectical method the focal point, is warm to the opinion that people can change their lives and existence with their own actions (Aslan & Kozikoğlu, 2015: 2). Educational activities and especially the location of the school are the issues mostly occupying the agenda of critical pedagogy. Education and schools are both areas where power relations are reproduced and areas where resistance is exhibited through various identities. Because, according to critical pedagogues, education provides opportunities in a more democratic world imagination against privileges (Taşgın & Küçüköğlü, 2017: 1190). As Giroux points out, critical pedagogy aims to develop and consolidate the awareness of democracy in order not to create representatives who will be complicit with the logic of national and international markets that turn people into money and objectify, by educating students who are aware of the commodification-oriented capital culture of the government (Demirtürk, 2017: 19). Individuals with critical thinking awareness do not fall into the traps of profit-oriented political thoughts and capital-owning institutions. Because they are aware of the purpose of these structures to approach the individual and how they do it, and they realize this with critical thinking and questioning. Educators proceed the minefield of educational contradictions in the contemporary pedagogical landscape. Teachers and students, on the one hand, discover that schools pursue education for democratic purposes; on the other hand, they see schools have authority and realize anti-democratic social control purposes on behalf of certain groups and individuals. Sometimes participants learn that schools are based on collaborative values, but others understand that a competitive ethics prevails in high-risk exam-oriented teaching programs (Kincheloe, 2018: 39). Since education is one of the ideological apparatus of the state, it provides the reproduction of

society in a way that will serve the policies of the sovereign power. With the help of schools, the state protects cultural and economic capital, creates forms of consciousness for the continuation of tradition and social control, and establishes a hierarchical society thanks to these. In addition, norms, values and ideologies in accordance with national policies are produced in schools and thus they restructure the society (Yakut Özek, 2019: 1537-1538). Teachers and students may not be aware that the education concepts adopted by the educational institutions they are emboldened in are not impartial. The education provided strives to create a good supporter for political ideology, a good worker for a capital establishment, or a good citizen in the nation-state structure. In such a situation, critical education and the critical awareness it will create is a very important antidote against the activities of standardization, suppression and alienation. Teachers have a great responsibility in critical education. Critical teachers should understand not only the vast literature on the subject, but also the political structure of the school. Besides, they should have a wide field of education within the culture. TV, radio, popular music, movies, the internet, youth subcultures, etc. The way power works in constructing identities and suppressing private groups; the mode of operation of social arrangements (*modus operandi*); complex processes of racism, gender bias, class bias, cultural bias, heterosexism, religious intolerance, etc.; cultural experiences of students; different teaching styles; forces shaping curricula; conflicting aims of education and so on. All these situations, which can be listed as (Kincheloe, 2018: 41), are the problems that critical education opposes and tries to eliminate. Since teachers are the protagonists of education, they must be aware of them and struggle against them. The most important trump in the hands of teachers in the struggle against them is love. Critical pedagogy is used to increase our capacity to love, to bring the power of love into our daily lives and social institutions, and to rethink the mind in a human and interrelated way. Knowledge, in this environment, takes a form relatively different from the accepted mainstream. Critical knowledge works at multiple levels, trying to relate to the bodily and emotional and to relieve human suffering (Kincheloe, 2018: 43). Love is a very important factor that holds people, folks and great societies together and against evil and negativity. No matter what or whom people approach with the slightest love inside, they always encounter a positive reaction. When the teacher approaches the student with love, this student becomes a more confident, more relaxed, freer and more successful one. If a gardener looks after the sapling with love and if the veterinarian touches the animal to be healed with love and compassion, both yield very positive results. Love is the lifeblood of the sapling and medicine to the animal. That's why, the teacher should approach the student with love in the way of creating critical awareness. The famous educator Paulo Freire calls this love "radical love". For Freire, love is primarily and strictly dialogical. It isn't an interest or emotion insulated from the everyday world, including its dark side, but is artificially born out of an act of daring, courage, and

critical contemplation. Love isn't only the honey that ignites the revolutionary, but also the creative act of a painter who paints the oil of study and action with a palette of muscle and soul (Freire, 2019a: 27). According to Freire, an educator who adopts a critical pedagogy is a libertarian educator. Although a person reflects what he is, and some try to hide his negative sides, it may not be possible to achieve this in emotional situations where he feels wrathfulness, sadness or surprise. Therefore, an oppressive individual tries to keep the other person under pressure, a violent person applies violence to the other; whereas a free individual reflects and imposes the requirements of freedom on the other person. Educator libertarian, on the other hand, focuses strictly on generalities similar as particular autonomy, tone- knowledge, tone-consummation, toneoperation and control, tone- confidence and the multifaceted development of personality (Aksakallı et al., 2018: 963). Because, the purpose of critical scientific thought is not to increase absolute knowledge, but to liberate the individual (Kavurgacı & Selvitopu, 2019: 105). An education in which the rough and hierarchical relationship between the preceptor and the educated is destroyed and the subjects who have come an object are delivered, adopts a pluralistic approach that moves from the individual and cares about their creative capabilities; therefore, a critical pedagogy can be realized (Kesik & Bayram, 2015: 902).

The main features of critical pedagogy can be listed as follows:

- a) Critical Pedagogy is Based on a Social and Educational View on Justice and Equality: Preceptors should be concerned not only with the problems of academy education, class and education policy, but also with openings that give social justice and mortal life (Kincheloe, 2018: 45). For critical revolutionary preceptors, the comprehensive struggle for republic requires working with scholars who'll make revolutionary knowledge and collaborative action as a means of defying our recrimination in the unattractive verity of capital designed to separate the worker from their labor (McLaren & Jaramillo, 2009: 84). Critical pedagogy does not only deal with education and training, but also makes great efforts to establish justice and equality.
- b) Critical Pedagogy is Grounded on the Belief that Education is Political: Education is a political exertion, whether one is tutoring in Bangladesh or Bensonhurst, Senegal or Shreveport, or East Timor or West New York (Kincheloe, 2018: 48). Numerous governments may change the class according to their own point of view so as to consolidate their authority, and may put educational understandings that won't harm their authority. For example, a conservative government imposes a religion-based education approach. The leftist, on the other hand, imposes a secular education approach in which religion remains in the background. Nationalist, on the other hand, imposes an understanding

of education centered on the homeland, nation and nation-state. Students suffer great harm in their understanding of education, which is constantly changing according to the pleasure and thought of the government. Numerous scholars may not be suitable to acclimatize to these educational understandings. Critical pedagogy and preceptors are trying to exclude this problem.

- c) **Critical Pedagogy Dedicated to Alleviating People's Suffering:** Critical pedagogy is devoted to vocalizing and embodying these affective, emotional, and living confines of everyday life in a way that connects students to people as individuals and in groups. In this case, supporters of critical pedagogy are particularly concerned with groups and individuals who suffer, whose lives are affected by discrimination and poverty. Critical Preceptors who take action on these issues probe the causes of similar suffering in their approaches to power, which has ideological, hegemonic, correctional, and nonsupervisory confines (Kincheloe, 2018: 54). The economic situation of people living in developed countries varies greatly. Some classes are extremely poor, and some classes do not know where and what to spend their money on. While people living in poverty and misery suffer, people living in wealth continue their lives unaware of the situation of other groups who suffer so much. As a matter of fact, Freire describes this situation he witnessed as follows:

A wealth of New York City, next to thousands and thousands of homeless people, including families with children, who spend the night in their cars or under bridges and in overcrowded shelters, allowing some people to flaunt their wealth by paying \$27,000 for a serving of chocolate ice cream in upscale restaurants (Freire, 2019b: 11).

- d) **Pedagogy that Prevents Students from Being Harmed:** Critical pedagogy cannot tolerate these mechanisms of social and educational stratification that harm students who are so badly marginalized socially, linguistically and economically. The cultural background of African Americans, poor Appalachians, and Latino students is deemed inferior to the background of the dominant culture by middle-class, white schools. Because of such perspectives, students from such backgrounds understand that success in school can only happen when they reject their ethnic and/or class background and accompanying cultural knowledge (Kincheloe, 2018: 58). Critical pedagogy seeks to protect and support students who are subject to discrimination and marginalization on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and gender.
- e) **The Importance of Generative Themes:** Critical pedagogy focuses on the use of generative themes so as to be likely to read the words, the world, and the problem-posing process. It invokes Paulo Freire's idea of generative themes that help students read words and the world.

This practice for reading words and the world assists students in decoding to understand the world around them through published texts. Thus, a synergetic relationship emerges between words and the world (Kincheloe, 2018: 59).

In terms of literacy, the clear ones are never as clear as they seem. A necessary but disturbing questioning is hidden in every word (Freire & Macedo, 1998: 8). Powers and communities in power add a hidden curriculum to the educational perspective they want to impose. It may not be possible to comprehend and realize this with a natural perspective and a natural questioning. Still, when anatomized with a critical reading-jotting and interpretation system, it'll be understood that the situation is much more different than it appears. According to Illich, the hidden curriculum affects not only the student's school life, but also his entire life. It educates scholars in line with the demands of society. No matter how the dominant culture defines effects, it strives to bring them in as they are. It hinders the libertarian goals of education. Since it's an administrator, it causes the educational purposes of the institution to be lost (Kantarıcı Bingöl & Aybar, 2021: 640).

It educates scholars in line with the demands of society. As the dominant culture defines effects, it strives to gain them as they are. It hinders the libertarian pretensions of education. Since it's a administrator, it causes the educational purposes of the academy to be lost (Kantarıcı Bingöl & Aybar, 2021: 640). It educates scholars in line with the demands of society. As the dominant culture defines effects, it strives to gain them as they are. It hinders the libertarian pretensions of education. Since it's a administrator, it causes the educational purposes of the academy to be lost (Kantarıcı Bingöl & Aybar, 2021: 640).

- f) Teachers as Researchers:** In the current educational system, knowledge is produced by high-ranking experts in a place away from school. If critical school education reform is to be carried out, this situation must change. Teachers should have more to say about educational culture; they should be treated with more respect. If the aim is to reach a new level of educational rigor and quality, teachers should join the researcher culture. In such a democratized culture, critical teachers are scholars who understand the power-related implications of various educational reforms. In this context, they appreciate the benefits of research, and they make connections between understanding and the forces that shape education falling outside of their own immediate experiences and perceptions. As these insights are built, teachers begin to understand what they know through their prior experience. By keeping this always in mind, they gain a gradually increasing mindfulness on how they can contribute to education via researches (Kincheloe, 2018: 62).

As the teachers are the cornerstones of basic education, they should be the free ones who read, search, fond to teach.

- g)** Teachers as Students' Investigators: Freire asserts that all teachers should engage in a constant dialogue with the students so that they inquire existent knowledge and problematize traditional power relations that serve to marginalize specific groups and individualities. In these research dialogues conducted with students, critical teachers listen carefully to what they have to say about their communities and the problems that surround them, and help students frame their problems within broad social, cultural, and political contexts so as to solve them (Kincheloe, 2018: 64). Students are like treasures waiting to be discovered. In order to discover this treasure, there is a must for free teachers, who are knowledgeable, inquisitive, and can touch the heart of the student. Critical pedagogy entrusts students to these teachers.
- h)** Marginalization and Critical Pedagogy: Critical pedagogy deals with the lives and requirements of individualities who are at the fringe of society and face oppression and marginalization. It isn't only concerned with the lives and requirements of students coming from the mythic centers of the social order. Therefore, critical teachers seek out students' voices, texts, and perspectives that were previously excluded from the system. Mainstream scientists and the education they support often exclude the marginalized ones in order to concentrate on the so-called typical ones. There are many excluded voices from the suburb today, particularly in US society and education. Poor, non-native English speakers, gay, lesbian and bisexual, physically barred, non-athletic, non-white, overweight, shy and short students frequently find themselves oppressed at schools in various ways (Kincheloe, 2018: 70-71). Those who are excluded because of such differences will never be subjected to violence and marginalized oppression in any way, thanks to critical pedagogy
- i)** The Importance of Resisting the Dominant Power: Critical pedagogy is committed to defying the dangerous effects of the dominant power. Defenders of critical pedagogy seek to expose oppressive forms of power and struggle against rough forms in socio-profitable class elitism, Eurocentric ways of looking at the world, patriarchal oppression, and worldwide imperialism (Kincheloe, 2018: 84). In numerous countries, it's seen that the political authorities take over the seats with the pledge of republic, after a certain period of time, and place their own testament on an authoritarian base by using full authority. In the same vein, they turn into an oppressive regime over time. Critical pedagogy teaches ways and means of resisting such oppressive regimes.
- j)** Avoiding Empire-Building: Critical pedagogy recognizes and opposes current worldwide efforts to build a new American Empire. The

emerging forms of United States colonialism and imperialism in our current era push critical pedagogues to examine how American power functions under the guise of democracies being established all over the world (Kincheloe, 2018: 92). United States of America blamed Osama Bin Laden and occupied Afghanistan after the attack of twin towers. In the following period, in 2003, he occupied Iraq by promising to bring democracy to Iraq by using weapons of mass destruction as an excuse to overthrow Saddam Hussein and invade Iraq. In addition to all these, there are examples of Vietnam, Venezuela, Syria, and Libya. Critical pedagogy strives to raise people who can stand up against such promising occupations with the critical consciousness it aims to create in people.

Historical Development of Critical Pedagogy

The period between the last quarter of the 17th century and the first quarter of the 19th century in Europe, in which the mind is guided and is always with the aphorism of progress, is called the Enlightenment period. In the enlightenment period, the mind is the main guide, all the work is done under the leadership of the mind. In the Enlightenment period, the functioning of nature doesn't operate with the laws of nature, but within the frame of the laws set by man. In human life shaped within this framework, religious beliefs have been set aside. Later, with the reforms realized under the guidance of the mind, the developed countries of the world reached a great growth rate by going further in assiduity and technology in the process that continued with the Industrial and the French Revolution. Great developments and advances in this industry and technology have created a great economic competition. In order to make economic profit, the need for more overtime and more labor has emerged. The economic competition that took place in this way also created a class distinction. On the one hand, the heads or the ruling class who expand their wealth, and on the other, the working class whose labor is exploited by the rich and which is in poor profitable condition. In Marx's words, the bourgeois class that owns the means of product and the exploited riffraff class surfaced. With the development of assiduity, the number of people migrating from pastoral to civic areas has also increased vastly. As a result of this migration, conditions such as unplanned urbanization, cheap labor and the exploitation of labor have led to more worker deaths and impoverishment.

As Cevizci stated, the reflection of science in the field of technology as a process in which it will create an unlimited development in material and physical conditions has led to urbanization in Europe and the rapid emergence of poor suburbs in cities. It has been determined that the workers living in these neighborhoods lag far behind the poor peasants of the feudal period in terms of living norms. Again, the belief that the French Revolution would start a

new era of reason and democratic freedom ended with the victory of terror, and then absolutist governments took the stage (Cevizci, 1999: 90). As can be seen, the sanguinity of the Enlightenment has led to the understanding that the idea of freedom and a good world order promised by the Enlightenment study is deceptive, leaving its place to the poverty and misery brought about by urbanization, profitable competition, and unjust income distribution.

After this period, which is called the collapse of the Enlightenment, the critical proposition or Frankfurt School, which surfaced as a response to the destruction caused by the enlightenment, aimed at extending a hand to find a result to the mournings of people and to save them from the swamp they fell into. The mindset of the Frankfurt School or critical theory constitutes the origin or basic infrastructure of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy, Latin American doctrines of emancipation, the pedagogy of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, the antiimperialist struggle of Che Guevara and other revolutionary movements, the sociology of knowledge are each deduced from the critics of the Frankfurt School (McLaren, 2007: 110).

In his book, *Critical Pedagogy*, Joe L. Kincheloe explains the points at which critical theory constitutes the basic infrastructure of critical pedagogy as follows (Kincheloe, 2018: 104-115):

Critical Enlightenment: Critical Theory analyzes contending power interests between groups and individuals in a society by revealing who wins and who loses in specific situations. Privileged groups have an interest in promoting the status quo in order to maintain their own advantage.

Critical Liberation: Liberation followers try to gain the power to control their own lives in solidarity with a justice-acquainted community.

Rejection of Economic Determinism: Tradition doesn't accept the orthodox Marxist idea that the base determines the superstructure, in the sense that profitable factors mandate the nature of all other aspects of mortal actuality.

Criticism of Instrumental or Technical Rationality: Critical Theory views necessary/ specialized rationality as one of the most cathartic features of contemporary society.

The Influence of Desire: Critical Theory rejects the traditional psychoanalysis' tendency to see the existent as a rational and independent being and gives new tools to reevaluate the inner commerce between the various axes of emotion.

The Concept of Immanence: Critical theory is always concerned with what could be, with what is inherent in various ways of thinking and perceiving.

Reconceptualized Theory of Power-Hegemony: It is intensively concerned with the need to understand the various and complex ways in which power works to dominate and shape knowledge.

Reconceptualized Critical Theory of Power-Ideology: According to critical theorists, the creation of hegemony cannot be separated from the production of ideology.

Reconceptualized Critical Theory of Power-Linguistic/Discursive Power: Critical theorists could understand that language isn't a glass of society. Language is an unstable social practice whose meaning changes according to the environment in which it's used.

Focusing on the Connections Among Culture, Power, and Domination: Critical theorists argue that culture, the product and transmission of knowledge, should always be viewed as a field of struggle as a process of contention. Popular culture, through its television, film, videotape games, computers, music, cotillion and other products, plays a decreasingly important part in critical studies of power and domination.

Centrality of Interpretation-Critical Interpretation: Learning from the hermeneutic tradition and postmodern review, critical theorists have redefined claims to textual authority. There's no pure, unchanging interpretation; in fact, no methodology, social or educational proposition, or digressive form can claim a privileged position that entitles it to knowledge product.

The part of Cultural Pedagogy in Critical Proposition: Artistic product is frequently thought as of a form of education, as artistic construction builds knowledge, shapes values, and constructs identity. Pedagogy is just a useful term used in the traditional context to refer to teaching and schooling. By using the term "artistic pedagogy", critical instructors specifically relate to the ways in which dominant artistic agents produce certain hegemonic ways of seeing.

In order to understand the basic thesis of critical pedagogy, it is important to examine the ideas that guided the formation of critical pedagogy. To do so, it is necessary to look at the historical course that critical pedagogy has taken. Critical pedagogy is rooted in critical theory and expands by embracing critical discourses. Critical theory or the Frankfurt School, which is a contemporary movement or movement, was founded in Frankfurt in 1923, but was exiled from Germany in 1933 and continued its studies in America, and then re-emerged in Frankfurt in the early 1950s (Cevizci, 1999: 364). At a time when the ravages of World War I, the economic depression represented by inflation and unemployment in postwar Germany, and the failure of strikes and demonstrations in Germany and Central Europe during the same period affected political sensibilities, there was an urgent need to reinterpret the world from the perspective of these critical theorists (Kincheloe, 2018: 98).

During World War I and the following process, many people were killed. With the development of technology, new weapon technology caused mass human massacres. Some of the survivors of the war died due to poverty, misery and epidemics. People who had to work in order to survive with poverty and misery were also exploited by the colonial powers and alienated from their own self and labor. Critical theorists emerged as a reaction against these facts and events. Critical theory seeks to heal the powerlessness of people who have been excluded and destroyed because of poverty, misery, religion, language, and race. In this sense, critical theory is a theory that hears the cries of those who have been killed, the poor communities colonized and enslaved by World War I and subsequent World War II, and challenges that order. This aspect of the theory gave rise to the critical pedagogy that emerged later.

The ideas of important thinkers such as Grünberg, Horkheimer, Habermas, Adorno, Fromm and Marcuse have guided the formation of critical theory. The Frankfurt School, which started with the administration of Grünberg, made important developments during the Horkheimer period. Horkheimer stated the necessity of establishing a new unity between philosophy and science, science and criticism, fact and value, analyzed traditional and critical theory in order to provide foresight in this regard, understood and evaluated Hegel, and turned him into a gain for critical theory (Cited in Yakut Özek, 2019: 1536). The Frankfurt School was interrupted by the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the outbreak of World War II. During this period the activities of the Frankfurt School ceased and many theorists, especially Horkheimer, were expelled from Germany. Theorists first migrated to Geneva, Switzerland, and later to the United States upon the invitation they received. These critical theorists who settled in California were shocked by American culture. Critical theorists, disturbed by the complete acceptance of the experimental practices put forward by American social science researchers, have reacted to the positivist social science tradition, which believes that such research can define and accurately measure any dimension of human behavior (Kincheloe, 2018: 99). Because, according to positivism, theory cannot be a study beyond description, it is based on perceptible things and only the description of the connection between them. It aims to reflect reality that is factual as it is. The accuracy of a theory can be judged by the extent to which it coincides with actual reality. The accuracy of a theory is related to the correct reflection of actual reality in the theory. In other words, positivism asserts actual reality as it is. It is enough that something exists and seems real; they need not be analyzed. They accept the facts as they are, as something that does not change and does not transform. Critical theory, on the other hand, argues that social facts are different from those of nature, i.e., they are not fixed but are historical products (Balkız, 2004: 139). According to critical theory, scientific knowledge can only be obtained through criticism and questioning. On the other hand, according to positivist theory, scientific knowledge can be derived

from actual reality. This is an understanding that critical theorists do not accept and reject. The Enlightenment, as most social scientists advocate, came together with science and art, as well as positivism based on experimental observations. According to critical theorists, instrumental reason and positivism do not take into account the social context that gave rise to them and do not question themselves. Instrumental reason presents itself as absolute reason and positivist science presents itself as the ultimate true knowledge type (Balkız, 2004: 141). However, the victory of reason over dogmatic ideas and science over metaphysics has overshadowed the development of social and human sciences. In this context, members of the Frankfurt School criticized the positivist view with an anti-positivist attitude. Adorno and Horkheimer neither fully accepted nor rejected positivism. Both thinkers have confirmed that positivism makes a positive contribution to autonomy from theology and metaphysics by replacing religious and abstract thoughts with sensory experiences (Kavurgacı & Selvitopu, 2019: 100). In addition, the Frankfurt School, criticized positivism, stating that the positivist method and reason deprived individuals of the critical mind necessary for their enlightenment and freedom (Begtimur, 2018: 51). The positivist, in the sense used by the Frankfurt School, accepts an empiricist description of the natural sciences. In addition, it adopts the view that the origin of all knowledge has the same informational structure as the natural sciences. If all theories in the natural sciences have an “objectifying” nature, then it is to argue that all knowledge is “objectifying” knowledge. Therefore, positivism can be seen as a “rejection of recursion,” that is, a denial that theory can be both recursive and informative. Critical theories are particularly susceptible to the philosophical error embodied in positivism (Geuss, 2018: 13).

According to the Frankfurt School, the main features of critical theory consist of three basic theses (Geuss, 2018: 12):

1. Critical theory is specifically designed to guide human behavior. One of these positions is to bring enlightenment to those who believe in these theories. It is to help them identify where their true interests lie. The other is that these theories have a liberating aspect. It frees the subject, at least in part from self-coercion, and self-frustration of conscious human behavior.
2. Critical theories have informative content; they are forms of information.
3. Critical theory is fundamentally different epistemologically from the natural sciences. In the natural sciences, theories are “objectifying”; critical theories are reflexive.

These characteristics suggest that critical theory is a reflexive theory that provides a kind of enlightenment and liberating information to its doers (Geuss, 2018: 13).

The main goal of critical theory is to create a new epistemological tradition and to discuss social problems on political, social, historical, philosophical and cultural grounds respectively. The purpose of this culture of debate is to reveal the will for a free society by transforming through theoretical guidance the relations of power, exploitation and domination organized within the framework of pressure and force that each member of society has established for himself, others, objects and nature (Cited by Odabaş, 2018: 214). Critical pedagogy strives to realize the afore-mentioned goals through educational tools.

Grünberg was an active figure for critical theory between 1923 and 1930. He is an Austrian Marxist historian with an international fame. He put forward the idea of Marxism as a social science. Grünberg emphasized that the materialist understanding is not really a philosophical system, nor does it aspire to be the one, and underlined that the object to which it is directed is not abstract, yet the concrete world that is evolving and changing data (Bottomore, 1994: 9).

Between the years of 1930 and 1933 is the Horkheimer era for critical theory. Critical theory owes very much to Horkheimer. Because it is Horkheimer who provided the orientation, unit of inquiry, focus of attention, development of critical theory and its place in the history of thought as a vital theory. Frankfurt School or critical theory is identified with his name (Kızılçelik, 2006: 52). Horkheimer transformed the goals that remained only in theory during the Grünberg era, both in theory and practice (Kavurgacı & Selvitopu, 2019: 101). In all of his works, including the *Eclipse of Reason* and the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, he leads criticism towards the dominant pragmatist philosophy in the United States and its positivism underlined on its bases. In his work entitled *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer elucidated what his goal was to try to understand why humanity does not reach a humanlike state rather than sink into a new swamp (Begtumur, 2018: 53).

Among his critiques is the ones related to the media of his day such as radio, film and cinema in the context of the cultural industry. According to him, these instruments constitute a system. Each coincides in itself and all together. Therefore, he dismisses these instruments on the grounds that they provide continuity to the existing system and protect and legitimize the dominant ideology of that system (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2010: 163; Begtimur, 2018: 53).

One of his work by Horkheimer's leadership is the adoption of an interdisciplinary approach. The adoption of his interdisciplinary approach also heralds another feature of this period. Under the umbrella of the Frankfurt School, economists, sociologists, philosophers, political scientists, psychologists, historians, musicologists, writers and lawyers find the opportunity to work together. This fact is clearly observed upon consideration the interest of those defenders who advocate a critical theory. For example, Horkheimer was

interested in philosophy and sociology; Adorno, music, cinema, philosophy and aesthetics; Pollock, economics and politics; Erich Fromm, psychology, social philosophy and sociology; Marcuse, philosophy and politics; Franz Neumann, law and politics; Walter Benjamin, literature and history (Güven, 2019: 24). During Horkheimer's directorship, the methodological orientation and research program of the Frankfurt School became quite evident. The school's research program focuses on searching culture and leisure, lifestyle, music, sports, entertainment, and so on, and trying to establish a relationship between disciplines, have an attempt to with a tendency to study and try to understand the individuals, and, to a certain extent, to have the identity of an "non-orthodox Marxist social theory". In this context, the methodological dialogue of critical theory can be determined as follows (Kızılçelik, 2006: 86-88):

1. Critical theory weakens the boundaries between competing disciplines /sciences / fields and opposes framing the lines.
2. Critical theory emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence between society and culture, economics, politics and philosophy.
3. Critical theory differs from traditional and contemporary social scientific theories with a multidisciplinary perspective and attempts to develop dialectical and materialist social theory. This project requires a joint transdisciplinary synthesis of sciences, politics and philosophy. In this framework, critical theory is not related to few disciplines, but transdisciplinary. At this point, critical theorists are thinkers/philosophers, who are knowledge-loaded beings who use various disciplines to develop theories on issues such as authority, family, fascism, and the transition to state capitalism. Thus, critical theorists are in an effort to construct a new interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary social theory by criticizing the consistency and validity of the arguments of heterogeneous scientific formations.
4. Critical theorists put forward that the economy plays a constitutive role in all social stages.
5. Critical theory seeks to abolish the established or realized boundaries between philosophy and social theory, and on the other hand, it seeks to eliminate the separations between theory and politics. At this level, critical theory sees itself both as a social theory of the contemporary era that constantly attempts to criticize and conceptualize new social conditions, and as a historical theory that separates the boundaries between various processes of history, following Marx and Hegel. Therefore, critical theory is a social theory that aims to describe and criticize the current forms of social structuring as well as taking place as a historical theory closely related to socio-historical transformation/change and development. In particular, critical theory as historical the-

ory can be embodied as an attempt to grasp the boundaries between prior and current stages of socioeconomic development by conceptualizing new socio-historical conditions and context that necessitate revision of previous radical theory and policy. In this period, in general terms, cultural and intellectual superstructure came to the fore instead of economic-based explanations. Frankfurt School theorists have worked on a wide spectrum, putting forward arguments on different but related issues. In short, the study subjects and areas of interest of critical theorists became prominent in the period of Max Horkheimer. It was not until the Max Horkheimer era that the Frankfurt School was able to become an independent school, and it was during this period that it was able to define both its methodological direction and its research and examination program, as well as to form its core staff (Olcay, 2012: 60-61).

Critical theory gained its true identity with Horkheimer. During this period, the main representatives of critical theory became clear. Theorists from different disciplines joined the staff of the school during the Horkheimer era and contributed to the knowledge of critical theory. With the contribution of theorists from different disciplines and the effort of Horkheimer, critical theory became known as an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary working method. Hereby, this collaboration among different disciplines shaped the methodological program and understanding of social theory at the Frankfurt School. The focus shifted from economics to philosophy. Critical theorists investigated the cultural, psychological, sociological and philosophical aspects of an event as well as its economic dimension. For example, critical theorists did not consider it sufficient to define fascism, one of the school's main areas of interest, as a natural consequence of capitalism's economic policies, but always analyzed the ideological, psychological, and cultural aspects of fascism. The field of research of members of the Frankfurt School expanded. For example, they have worked on different subjects such as fascism, Nazism, prejudice, labor movements, culture, positivism, culture industry, psychoanalysis, enlightenment, reason, authoritarian personality, society, anti-democratic propaganda and manipulation. A significant part of the works whose influence continues to this day were written during the Horkheimer period. In other words, most of the philosophical terminology of the school was formed in this period (Kızılcelik, 2006: 162-163).

The period from 1930 to 1950 was the era of the Frankfurt School in the United States. As known, fascism was on the rise in Germany in the early 1930s. The fact that the members of the Frankfurt School were being Jews- and Marxists-oriented at the same time created a negative situation for them, which put some pressure on them and forced them to leave the country where

they had studied (Kızılçelik, 2006: 89). They continued their research by correspondence in German. The fact that they published these works in English and French, in addition to those written in German, revealed that they did not recognize Americanization. Adorno and Horkheimer, in the preface to their work entitled *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, because of which could not be published during World War II until 1947, stated that their goal was nothing less than to understand why humanity had fallen into a new kind of barbarism rather than rising to a more human level, and they blamed it on barbarism. They aimed for the Enlightenment. According to Adorno and Horkheimer, the practical form of progress that the Enlightenment aimed for was regression. The thought defended in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is its self-destruction of enlightenment (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2010; 10-12; Kavurgacı & Selvitopu, 2019: 102). As the political climate in the United States changed, a process of disintegration began among members of the Frankfurt School (Olçay, 2012: 59). As a result, a return to Germany took place in the years 1950 and 1970. With the growing influence of the Frankfurt School in the United States after World War II, municipalities and official circles in Frankfurt insisted that members return to Frankfurt. Although the theorists of the Frankfurt School have different reasons for returning, the most important reason for their return is that they aim to raise a new generation of students in Germany (Kavurgacı & Selvitopu, 2019: 103).

During this period, Adorno was one of the most important representatives of critical theory. Adorno, like Horkheimer, deals with the mass media within the framework of the culture industry. Adorno's criticisms focused on films, radio and magazines, which were the most famous communication tools of his time. In the dialectic of the cultural industry and the Enlightenment, we can see much of his critique of the mass media (Begtumur, 2018: 56). Adorno says the following about the media in his most famous work, *The Culture Industry Cultural Management*:

Today, culture infects everything with similarity. Movies, radios and magazines form a system. Each of these areas is unanimity of thought in oneself and together. Even the aesthetic expressions of political oppositions converge in eagerly conforming to this steel rhythm. Cinema and radio do not have to present themselves as art nowadays. They use the fact that they are no different than any other company as ideology to justify the nonsense they intentionally create. They call themselves the industry, and doubts about the societal necessity of ready-to-eat products are dissipated when figures on the income of incumbent general managers are made public (Adorno, 2016: 48).

The 1970s are the Habermas era in critical theory. Habermas developed new criticisms away from the influence of Marxism. The philosopher dealt with critical theory with a language in which symbols are used, not with the complexities of realistic thinking of beings (Odabaş, 2018; 220; Kavurgacı &

Selvitopu, 2019: 104). With the deaths of Adorno and Horkheimer, the collapse of the radical student movement of the 1970s, and the global upheaval of Marxist theory, the era of the Frankfurt School ended. In a sense, the School's existence as a form of Marxist worldview ended, and its connection to Marxism gradually became less and less relevant and no relation is left to the political movement (Kızılcelik, 2006: 119).

Habermas criticized capitalism, modernism and instrumentalized reason. He claimed that the Enlightenment movement created an authoritarian order that scrutinizes the masses and that this enlightenment project can be saved by critical reasoning. Besides, he was also an early and persistent critic of positivism. Habermas accused positivism of serving the interests of the ruling class. According to him, true human emancipation is possible only through a critical mind. The enormously expanded communication potential is neutralized primarily through forms of organization that secure one-way, i.e., non-reversible means of transmission. Whether a mass culture adapted to the mass media opens up forces for a regressive integration of consciousness certainly depends not on whether market laws interfere more and more deeply with the production of culture, but on whether or not communication in the first place isolates people and makes them alike (Begtumur, 2018: 59).

One of Habermas's most important qualities is his critical attitude towards every issue. Although, on the one hand, this attitude is understood as a post-modern one, on the other, his criticism of the orientation towards science and technique as an ideology and his statement that he can give birth to a new humanist thought through student protests by clearly talking about the future of human nature leads to the formation of an ambiguous identity (Akyüz, 2004: 4; Yakut Özek, 2019: 1543). His critique of research close to science and technology does not mean that he is against development; on the contrary, he seeks to raise awareness of the existential problems that await people in the future (Yakut Özek, 2019: 1543).

According to Habermas, mass media such as radio, film and television gradually destroy this state of the reader who distances himself from the printed letters. This distance, as well as suggesting the condition that the appropriation of the writing is private, also makes possible an exchange-based publicity regarding the text being read. As the form of communication differs in these new media, these media have become more influential than the press has ever been (Steinberg, 1958: 122; Begtimur, 2018: 60). Media tools become in such interesting manner that they have penetrated both people's consciousness and the works they read. For Habermas, capitalism creates an order that completely examines societies and assumes that societies can get rid of this control system with critical reasoning. On the other hand, Habermas argues that the mass media actually creates a public world, whereas this world is actually an illusion. Because, according to him, reasoning in the public space created by the media for readers has been replaced by pleasure and joy (Begtumur, 2018: 60).

Some Prominent Names in Critical Pedagogy

In order to understand the basic tenets of critical pedagogy, it is important to examine the ideas and work of some figures in this tradition.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

Antonio Gramsci is a Sardinian who lived between 1891 and 1937. The island of Sardinia has an agriculture-based economy, poverty is rampant, illiteracy is high, magic and luck are believed to a large extent, and the Sardinian identity is strong (Mayo, 2011: 19). This situation is effective in the formation of Gramsci's thoughts. Indeed, Gramsci was a political activist who was actively involved in the Italian leftist and labor movements of the 1920s and 1930s. Despite being elected to the Italian Parliament, Gramsci was arrested by the new fascist regime in Italy and sentenced to twenty years in prison. He died at a very early age in prison in 1937. During his ten years in prison, Gramsci wrote continuously, producing works known as the *Prison Letters*. In these writings, Gramsci delved into Italian fascism and the strategies for defeating it. The *Prison Letters* were not published in Italy until the late 1940s, but were translated into English in the late 1950s. As a matter of fact, Gramsci's influence in North America was not experienced until the 1960s. The most important idea to emerge from the *Prison Letters* is Gramsci's concept of hegemony. As critical theoretical concepts have been discussed before, hegemony is a central concept of critical pedagogy in the effort to understand power. As Gramsci wrote from prison, hegemony referred to the process used by the dominant power holders to preserve and maintain their power. A key aspect of this process is the manipulation of public opinion to gain consensus. Hegemony works best when people begin to simply force themselves to see the world from the ruler's perspective (Kincheloe, 2018: 123).

Gramsci's main problematic is the question of how classes or social groups acquire and maintain dominance in a society. The aim of sociological thought, which focuses on understanding power, is the discovery of opposition possibilities and the path to a stable counter-power. According to Gramsci, "the successful overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in which it is in political struggle, depends on the satisfactory analysis of how this class holds power" (Okur, 2014: 137). Essentially, the logic inherent is that if the person knows how s/he is under pressure, s/he can eliminate this pressure in the next step. This is exactly what Gramsci wants to do and have done.

For Gramsci, any hegemonic relation is indeed relation of education. To him, the institutions involved in the educational process are those that constitute the cultural foundations of power and form the basis for the formation of civil society. These are ideological social institutions such as law, education, media, mass media, and religion. In Western societies, the state is surrounded by a network of these institutions, and these institutions are the supporters of the state. When the state is shaken, the net of these institutions emerges as

a strong position area or system for sense of national existence (Mayo, 2011: 53). Examining the concept of hegemony by associating it with education is considered valuable in terms of critical education approaches. According to him, the ruling class, which holds the power, uses education as a tool of domination and has control. School and education take on the form desired by the dominant ideology, however the dominant power wishes. Thus, the growing generation forms the cement of hegemony, and school and education provide the reconstruction of hegemony. Getting rid of this situation can only be possible thanks to a critical consciousness, and this is possible with a critical education. Gramsci's educational reforms, like Freire's understanding of education that would be later influential, are more humane and at the same time inclusive of the oppressed.

As an alternative to what Gramsci perceives as a bourgeois and clerical model of educational reform, he proposes a common basic education that would impart a general, humanistic and formative culture. According to Gramsci, such a curriculum would provide a comprehensive basis for possible specialization. Thus, students will reach one of the school education styles, productive study or specialized schools through repeated experience in the vocational orientation from a style of state school education. Public schools or schools of liberal arts or general culture education should introduce young men and women to social activities after they have reached a certain level of maturity or after they have acquired the capacity for intellectual and practical activity, independent orientation and initiative. In Gramsci's educational formula, working-class youth not only receive the same preparatory training as young people from other classes, but also acquire the power of basic thinking and the power to problematize traditional worldviews (Borg, et al., 2011: 27). Education is fundamental to the special meaning Gramsci gives to the word "hegemony". Here hegemony refers to the social situation that dominates all aspects of social reality or is the supporter of a single class (Mayo, 2013: 49). The existence and sustainability of hegemony depends on the existence of education. The more the educational style is suitable for establishing hegemony, the longer its sustainability will be.

In the United States, Ronald Reagan in 1980s and George W. Bush in the first decade of the 21st century used the concept of hegemony to get agreement on right-wing policies. In both cases, religion was used to gain the loyalty of individuals who were denied access to education and public services, which did not serve the economic interests of free market policies. Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush said, "We are Christians like you, and we are here to protect you from the myriad forces that try to remove America from its traditional values" (Kincheloe, 2018: 124). With the concept of hegemony, Gramsci actually tries to reveal how the governments hold power. In Italy, Benito Mussolini held power with the idea of dominating the Mediterranean and fascism. In Nazi Germany, Adolf Hitler established his hegemony with the

idea of glorifying the superior German race and dominating Europe. In the USSR, Vladimir Lenin established his hegemony with the idea of establishing socialism. A critical consciousness is required to analyze this concept of hegemony and sees the underlying thoughts and the problems that these thoughts cause, and this is possible with critical education.

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934)

Vygotsky, who comes from a Jewish family, was born in Russia. During his time in Moscow, he worked in the fields of linguistics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, and art. Vygotsky began his career as a psychologist in 1917 and began systematic research in psychology in 1924 before dying of tuberculosis ten years later, at age 38, in 1934. Vygotsky was not well known in the Western world at first, and his name began to be mentioned with the translation of *Thoughts and Language*. In our age, he is among the main names of developmental psychology, especially learning theories (Aliyeva, 2011: 18).

Vygotsky is a central figure in the development of critical psychology, a critical theory of learning that can be used in critical pedagogy. In psychology, scholars believe that there is a close relationship between the social context in which one lives and the psychological processes one experiences. Therefore, when psychometricians administer IQ tests, they measure not only a person's cognitive abilities, but also the cultural relationship between the student's social context and the social situation in which the test is being developed. In this case, the well-known term "developmental proximal domain" is used. The proximal developmental domain represents the social context in which learning takes place. This social context shapes the potential for learning that each student possesses. With this method, critical teachers can better understand why some students are more successful in the classroom while others fail (Kincheloe, 2018: 126).

Vygotsky handles the child from birth in a historical, social and cultural context. Children in context learn from adults or more skilled peers to use the psychological and technical tools of culture, in other words, to learn. Language, counting, writing, graphs, maps, and other conventional signs are psychological tools. Physical tools such as computers and calculators are also technical tools. Adult or more skilled peers guide children to the zone of proximal development (Atak, 2017: 170). This method actually reveals that the student's failures are not innate, but rather result from environmental effects. When the student is purified from these effects, he will also show what kind of success he will achieve. The problems of oppressed and marginalized students can be revealed in this way. Vygotsky states the social situation of development as a kind of specific relationship of a certain period with the child and those around him, especially the social ones (Aliyeva, 2011: 91). In the most fundamental aspect of Vygotsky's work, critical teachers learn that educators must understand the social, cultural, political, ideological, and economic forces that

influence cognitive development. Individuals who are aware of this complex process can begin to understand the way their consciousness is constructed and their relationship produced with school education (Kincheloe, 2018: 127).

According to Vygotsky, children cannot develop alone in an isolated environment. It is essential for children to be in a social framework, even a set of frameworks, for their development. This framework is established by bringing together two key elements that emerge from the social relationships and interactions between society as a whole and specific institutions of society, such as the family, school, and economic markets, in the form of social organizations or conceptual and symbolic systems developed in cooperation with the cultural heritage of society. The following are some of the most important elements of the framework (Nicolopoulou, 2004: 147). One of the most basic purposes of critical pedagogy is to help people who have finished their education or who have not been educated due to environmental factors. This stage of education should not be limited to schools. This is due to the fact that education can take place in any environment and in all spheres of life. Therefore, it is necessary to know the environmental factors that affect a person from childhood to adulthood, and to provide the level of education accordingly.

Henry Giroux (1943-)

The concept of critical pedagogy as we know it today was made possible by Giroux's work in the late 1970s and 1980s. Giroux used Freire's work, Pierre Bourdieu's cultural capital, Aronowitz's studies of radical democracy, and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School to create critical pedagogy as a research field and practice. Giroux sought to move away from determinism, revealing how schooling can be a driving force of both domination and liberation. In the spirit of democratic pedagogy, Giroux explored examples of how awareness could be raised in the classroom. In essence, critical pedagogy, as Giroux established, is a discourse of educational possibility (Kincheloe, 2018: 140).

Giroux uses education as broadly as possible and expresses it in a way that includes three basic features. The first essential feature is that education is political. Second, such an education has properties that go beyond the institution. Third, it contains all kinds of collectively produced experiences. Giroux concentrates on the types of oppression that are particularly effective in daily life within the collective experiences. It resolves the culture that causes bullying and discrimination and offers suggestions for the development of dynamic alternative forms of culture (Kaymak, 2016). Giroux's idea that education is political overlaps with Freire's. Freire says that education is not neutral, it always serves one side and therefore is political. In fact, he argues that it has to be kind of political and that impartial education is not possible. For example, if the educational concept serves the government or power, then the

entire curriculum will contain propaganda for power, and if it is something like critical pedagogy, then it must side with the oppressed, the excluded, and the marginalized.

For Giroux, critical pedagogy illuminates the relationship between power and authority. Critical learning is a field of struggle for rights and social justice. For education to become such a field today, especially in confronting neoliberalism, fundamentalism, and militarism, the relationship between knowledge and power must be clarified. Such education is a form of resistance against all forms of discrimination and inequality. It is impossible to mention about impartial and objective education outside of political power and values. Thus, education is a characteristic of politics in the broadest sense. Naturally, education encompasses all experiences that are produced collectively and have characteristics that transcend educational institutions. Ideally, learning and action should be directed toward the elimination of class, social, and gender oppression. This requires a focus on the political function of education and, as Gramsci states, on creating organic intellectuals and developing active citizenship, which is necessary for antihegemony (Kaymak, 2016).

According to Giroux, the U.S. is unable to adapt to changing world conditions. In his article published entitled *Why Teachers Matter in Dark Times?* in *Truthout Newspaper*, he argues that Americans now live in a historical period that destroys thought and ignorance determines social consciousness and identity. He exemplifies this claim as follows: "While the President of the Republican Party, Donald Trump, announces that he loves those who do not read, he implies that he prefers to remain ignorant rather than being engaged people with a critical mind, taking initiative, and boasts of not reading books." (Demirturk, 2017: 15-16). As seen in the last presidential election of the USA, ignorance and herd psychology are indispensable trump cards of fascist governments. The audience that entered the parliament building at the call of Donald Trump and looted many places is actually similar to the audience Giroux mentioned above while expressing his thoughts. This reveals that Giroux, one of the most important representatives of critical pedagogy, is a very good social analyst.

Ivan Illich (1926-2002)

Ivan Illich was born in Vienna in 1926. He studied theology and philosophy at the Gregorian University in Rome (Illich, 2012: 7). He held the position of vice-chancellor at a Catholic university in Puerto Rico until 1960. In his work, *Deschooling Society*, published in 1970, he criticized the schools by stating that they were monopolized by the industrial society. In this work, Illich said that the minds, not the society, should be deschooled. According to Illich's opinion; schools raise individuals who are loyal to the existing authority and adopt the established order. Thus, schools provide ideological education.

Illich, who asserts that schools always train workers with degrees, emphasizes that people have job opportunities according to their degrees so that they can work in the labor market. In this case, class and status differences arise in society. In the form of graduates and non-graduates, the school feeds the class society, grades individuals, and therefore intensifies social grouping. The school legalizes the social hierarchy and provides inequality instead of creating equality. Therefore, the increase in schools is as dangerous for societies as the increase in weapons (Toker Gökçe, 2012: 140). According to Illich, thanks to school, neither learning can advance nor equality because educators insist on documenting teaching in packages. Moreover, the curriculum has always been established to adopt the social hierarchy (Sönmez, 2019: 160).

Illich states that the best quality learning is outside of school. What kind of life style everyone will put forward is best learned outside of school. Because schools raise children as loyal individuals to authority and serve to protect the current order. For Illich, who states that schools are only institutions that give diplomas, school takes the child away from life, steals his dreams and kills his talents.

We all learn to speak, to think, to love, to feel, to play, to curse, to politics, to work, without the influence of an educator. Even children who are under the supervision of a teacher day and night are no exception to this rule. Orphans, idiots, and teachers' own children have acquired most of their knowledge outside of the educational process planned for them. Teachers do not actively seek to enhance the learning activities of the poor. Poor families who want to send their children to school have little interest in the information they learn, let them alone the certificates they receive or the money they earn (Illich, 2012: 45).

According to Illich, a person can learn outside of school, in the family, in the circle of friends, at work and in the environment in which he grew up. Saying that school spans a whole lifetime and is a waste of time, Illich states that people have the misconception that schools are the place where their knowledge and skills can be obtained. Illich disagrees with the idea that education and training can only take place at school. Because this idea means that schools are a tool that causes the institutionalization of values. For Illich, most learning happens spontaneously, by chance, and most deliberate learning is not the result of programmed instructions. In fact, people don't realize that they get a lot of information outside of school. Looking at children, it is seen that they learn most of what they learn not from school, but from their family, neighborhood, circle of friends, television, and media (Kantarıcı Bingöl & Aybar, 2021: 634).

Alexander Sutherland Neill (1883-1973)

Neill was born in Scotland in 1883 to a family of educators. Desiring to become an educator with the great contribution of his family, Neill graduated from Edinburgh University in 1912 and served as the principal at Gretna Green School in Scotland in 1914. The experiences he gained during his years as a director increased his dissatisfaction with the education system. For this reason, he founded a school called *Summerhill* in England in 1921, where he could put his ideas into practice (Toker Gökçe, 2012: 138). Neill tried to establish a social environment free of crime, hopelessness and unhappiness in his school of freedom, which he named *Summerhill*. According to him, *Summerhill* will be a tool in this regard (İnal, 1992: 812).

Neal believes that the deaths from world wars and subsequent epidemics and economic crises were caused by the moral education received in schools. As a matter of fact, Neill's thought of "I believe that it is moral education that makes the child bad. I understood that when I dismantle the moral education of a bad boy, he is automatically a good boy." (Spring, 2014: 96) is clearly understood from his statement. Children are good from birth, but if left alone, they are mischievous by nature, curious, easily confused, irresponsible, self-fish, and can make mistakes. However, he is sincere in every situation. Starting from this, Neill argues that there should be no authority, discipline and beating in school. According to him, the education system should be provided with self-management in a free environment (Sönmez, 2019: 222).

According to Neill, the child should be a happy street sweeper rather than an angry student. He advocates full democracy and self-government at school. To him, the child, who already comes from oppressive family conditions, suppresses his feelings and cannot express himself when he encounters pressure at school. As a result, they become unhappy, hopeless and aggressive. Moral education, which asks the child to restrain his feelings, therefore, makes the child worse. Yet, children should be recognized with all their aspects. Their tendencies, skills, feelings and thoughts should be revealed. For this to happen, the child must be educated freely. This can only be achieved through free education (Toker Gökçe, 2012: 138). Freedom can only happen when people have their own thoughts and beliefs or have the right to choose those thoughts and beliefs. The main function of the free school should be to provide the institutionalization required by this understanding. The ideal of freedom will be learned through research in school. Otherwise, liberation cannot be achieved by dictating one's ideal to the other (İnal, 1992: 812).

At *Summerhill School*, children take responsibility for their own education. Students are free to enter and exit classes at school. They attend classes whenever they want. However, when they enter the lesson, they have to follow the rules of that lesson. Children can play whenever they want. For this reason, *Summerhill School* is also called "do whatever you want". At this school,

children are provided with an environment that helps them define who they are and who they want to become. *Summerhill's* main goal is the well-being of the children. Children are given the opportunity to experience a full range of emotions, free from adult judgment and interference. Children are provided with a democratic environment in which they can assert themselves and change their rules whenever they wish. Students can participate in all decisions at school. Students and teachers have an equal say in the general assembly of the school. In particular, the general board of the preschool consists of children. With these features, Neill and his school reflect the *Summerhill* democratic school understanding (Toker Gökçe, 2012: 138). In short, Neill is in favor of a libertarian education that aims at the happiness of the child. He believes that the child should be responsible for his own education. Emphasizing that the child's interests, talents, feelings and thoughts should be discovered and recognized in all aspects, Neill emphasizes the existence of an educational environment where the child can show himself. Such an environment should give the child an opportunity to get to know himself and help him make a decision about what he will become in the future.

Paulo Freire (1921-1997)

What we understand today as critical pedagogical thought originated with Freire, who was born in Recife, Brazil, in 1921 and learned by observing the poverty and oppression in the lives of the poor farmers he lived with. This experience helped him build his work to improve the lives of marginalized people. Freire was one of the most famous educators in the world until the 1970s, beginning with his educational work in Recife. Peter McLaren has described Freire as "the opening philosopher of critical pedagogy". Indeed, all subsequent studies in critical pedagogy had to cite his work (Kincheloe, 2018: 129-130). Although Freire is known in educational circles as an outstanding educator, he has also managed to attract the interest of educators and readers with diverse philosophical and political views. This is because it encourages them to reconsider the philosophical and psychological foundations of education in general and adult education in particular, as well as to question their own learning and teaching practices (Ayhan, 1995: 193). Freire, who occupies a very important place in critical pedagogy, represents, according to Daniel Schugurensky, a turning point in Latin America. He says there is a before and after Freire. Carlos Alberto Torres says: we can be with or against Freire, but we cannot be without Freire (Mayo, 2012: 19). Freire argues that the goal of social life is the humanization of the world. To Freire, an inhuman world is a world that is unaware of itself and the social forces that determine its existence. He calls this situation a *culture of silence* (Spring, 2014: 59).

Freire argues that teaching is always political and that teachers are necessarily political agents. Teaching is a political act, and there is no other way. According to Freire, teachers must incorporate this dimension into their work

and place social, cultural, economic, political, and philosophical critiques of sovereign power at the center of their curriculum. His conception of cultural practice, characterized as informed action, requires the creation and use of curricula and teaching strategies that not only create a better learning environment, but also a better society. He developed coding to equip students with a broader conceptual lens through which they can look at their lives and social situations. These coding represent pictures and photographs as part of a research process that addresses students' social, cultural, political, and economic environments. The pictures in this coding process depict problems and contradictions in the students' lives. Freire uses these pictures to alert students to think about what they mean in their lives (Kincheloe, 2018: 130-131). Throughout his life, Freire has always been on the side of the oppressed and defended them. This advocacy is at the heart of his understanding of education. Freire referred to traditional methods of education as banking education. This understanding of the banker is based on the distinction between theory and practice and argues that the accumulation and storage of theoretical information in the human mind, detached from life, alienates us from the social world in particular (Cevizci, 2019: 221). Freire, who describes the traditional understanding of education as "banker education", constitutes a turning point in education criticism. The basis of his criticism is the deep gap that traditional education has opened between theory and practice. According to him, traditional educational understandings fill the minds with detached information from life, encourage adaptation and acceptance rather than being questioning, and encourage being competent rather than curious and creative. In this method of teaching, the teacher transmits knowledge to the student and the student remembers and receives information. Here, the teacher constructs the investment in the investor student. According to Freire, these educational understandings are based on alienating people. In this system, students are encouraged to adapt to the world rather than question it. The more students accept their assigned role, the more likely they are to accept the world. For this reason, the education process is a domestication process for him. The banking approach in education encourages necrophilia, not life-loving (Freire, 2019b: 94-95). It adopts the problemposing education model as opposed to the banker education model. The problem-posing training exercise rejects the handouts and brings the communication to life. This work reflects the special nature of consciousness. The emancipatory or problem-defining understanding of education consists of cognitions, not information transfers (Freire, 2019b: 98). In this educational approach, students think about problems related to the world. Freire considers education as a process of helping consciousness. In this system, students are active, curious and creative, not passive learners. Lessons are not in the form of teacher transferring information, they are a meeting place where teacher and student research together (Toker Gökçe, 2012: 138). In this educational model,

teachers and students are in constant dialogue, trying to understand and read the world through words and vocabulary. While doing this, the teacher should approach the student with love. For Freire, this love is radical love.

Conclusion

Critical pedagogy, which sprouted in the last century, is an education approach that still maintains its popularity. Critical pedagogy focuses on creating a more equitable and just world through people's awareness, liberation, and overcoming insurmountable conditions. For this, it has built its foundations from the political, ideological, cultural, philosophical and economic developments and their reflections. Therefore, it has a versatile and wide spectrum of criticism.

Critical theory proposed by thinkers of the Frankfurt School, who did not remain silent on the problems, confusions and distortions that arose with modernization, made a significant contribution to the development of critical pedagogy. Critical theory, with its great influence in elucidating social problems, aims to transform society and liberate people. For this reason, problems such as authority, domination, communication processes, and instrumentalization of reason constitute the agenda of critical theory. Although the Frankfurt School did not work directly on education, the results and determinations it reached while discussing the issues it dealt with were also very closely related to education. Therefore, critical theory is the main source of critical pedagogy. It would not be wrong to see critical pedagogy as the educational equivalent of critical theory since it deals with the ideas and criticisms that critical theory has put forward by establishing its connection with education. Even though critical pedagogy has a relevant and realistic critique, it is hardly said that has earned its place in practice. However, critical pedagogy has the potential to offer solutions for most of the problems we live in today's world. It would not be wrong to listen to the voice of critical pedagogy in dealing with problems such as students who cannot express themselves, individuals tamed by education, education as a colonial tool, the teacher's hegemony over the student, the exploitation of societies by the ruling classes, and oppression and violence. When considered that what we need most are individuals who think critically and act freely, it can be said that it would be appropriate to give more space to the ideas of critical pedagogy in education systems in order to raise such individuals.

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