p-ISSN 2301-7554, e-ISSN 2541-3643
*Volume 14, Issue 1, February 2026*

ENGLISH REVIEW
Journal of English Education
Published by
English Language Study Program, Faculty of Teachers Training & Education, Universitas Kuningan, Indonesia in collaboration with AISEE (The Association of Indonesian Scholars of English Education)
AISEE

# CRITICAL PEDAGOGY PRINCIPLES FOR DEMOCRATIC INDONESIAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL EFL CLASSROOMS

**Slamet Wahyudi Yulianto[1], Muhammad Anjar Nugraha[2], Anggiana Yulyanti[3], Diki Rosadi[4], Noni Trisna Putri[5], Abdillah Mubarrok Lathief[6]**
[1,2,3,4,5,6]*English Education Study Program, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Subang, Indonesia*

**Corresponding author's email**: slamet.wahyudi.y@unsub.ac.id

APA Citation: Yulianto, S. W., Nugraha, M. A., Yulyanti, A., Rosadi, D., Putri, N. T., & Lathief, A. M. (2026). Critical pedagogy principles for democratic Indonesian senior high school EFL classrooms. *English Review: Journal of English Education, 14*(1), 123-132. https://doi.org/10.25134/englishreview.v14i1.139

Received: 08-08-2025 Accepted: 24-11-2025 Published: 28-02-2026

**Abstract:** There are two primary objectives of this study. First, investigating how the four Critical Pedagogy (CP) principles, consisting of dialog, problem-posing, praxis, and conscientization, are integrated in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) for the purpose of establishing the more Democratic Classroom (DC) and assisting students' Critical Thinking (CT) development. Second, uncovering the students' responses toward the integration and what impact they perceive as a result of it. Participants included 213 eleventh-graders from a public senior high school in Subang, West Java, Indonesia. The data were obtained through questionnaire, interviews, and classroom observations from May until October 2025 and were then analyzed through transcribing, coding, categorizing, interpreting, comparing, and concluding. Findings indicate that CP principles are incorporated through ten specific activities designed to foster a DC atmosphere and enhance CT skills. These activities include involving students in classroom decision-making, presenting relevant learning materials, helping students distinguish facts from opinions, and discussing solutions for controversial social issues. Toward the ten activities, the students respond positively and claim that, they are motivated to participate in co-creating classroom decisions and are facilitated in developing their CT skills, including analysis, open-mindedness, and decision-making. The study suggests that EFL teachers should integrate these ten CP-based activities into their daily pedagogical practices. Additionally, it is recommended for policy-makers to promote and support the incorporation of CP principles in TEFL.
**Keywords:** *critical pedagogy; critical thinking; democratic classroom; English as a Foreign Language.*

## INTRODUCTION

English as a Foreign Language (EFL), a compulsory subject in Indonesian senior high schools, is expected not only to enhance students' linguistic proficiency but also to cultivate critical thinking (CT) and foster democratic classroom (DC) practices (Kasimi, 2020; Prahani et al., 2020; Nafis, 2025). Nevertheless, many EFL teachers continue to rely on decontextualized materials that marginalize students' lived experiences, thereby limiting meaningful engagement (Crookes, 2020; Yulianto et al., 2024b). Such practices often result in reduced student motivation, which may subsequently affect their academic achievement. This issue has also been reported in Subang, a district near Bandung, as documented by Nugraha and Yulianto (2020) and Yulianto et al. (2024b).

This study proposes a teaching approach that integrates DC and CT skills, namely Critical Pedagogy (CP) (Jeyaraj, 2019; Kasimi, 2020; Crookes & Abednia, 2022). For the past two decades, the implementation of CP within Indonesian EFL instruction has been widely advocated, as it offers a holistic approach encompassing not only educational but also social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of language (Larson, 2014; Prahani, 2020; Askari & Baumgartner, 2024). The application of CP in TEFL is expected to encourage students to improve their CT skills and to actively engage during the classroom learning process so that, in turn, they can help their teachers in creating DC (Yulianto, 2017;

Ordem & Ulum, 2019; Nkealah & Simango, 2023).

CP, in the context of TEFL in Indonesia, can be defined as a teaching theory and practice aimed at creating a more prosperous, just, and democratic community by connecting English grammar with social issues, classroom with wider society, and education with economic, cultural, and political factors (McLaren, 2003; Yulianto, 2020; Askari & Baumgartner, 2024; Yulianto et al., 2024a). In pursuing the purpose, CP has a set of principles that can be applied and adapted considering the context of learning, namely dialog, problem-posing, praxis, and conscientization (Freire, 2005; Herrera-Molina & Portilla-Quintero, 2021; Mambu, 2023; Yulianto et al., 2024b).

Learning, within the principle of dialog, is a socially-mediated process that emerges through interaction rather than the passive transmission of knowledge characteristic of the banking model of education (Freire, 2005; Giroux, 2011). The problem-posing principle can be operationalized by encouraging learners to critically interrogate their lived experiences and to engage with authentic, often contentious, real-world issues (Freire, 2005; Herrera-Molina & Portilla-Quintero, 2021). Praxis refers to the dynamic and cyclical integration of theory, action, reflection, and subsequent theoretical reconstruction (Raddawi & Troudi, 2018). Meanwhile, conscientization is defined as the development of critical awareness concerning structures of privilege, power, and oppression in relation to broader social issues (Sharma & Phyak, 2017). It involves cultivating learners' capacity to critically interrogate sociopolitical realities rather than merely adapting to them.

Implementing the four CP principles in TEFL practice is expected to create a democratic classroom characterized by humanization, personalization, socialization, and reflection (Tristan, 2018; Collins et al., 2019). The democratic atmosphere of classroom facilitates students' CT development including their analysis and evaluation skills, open-mindedness, and well-informed decision-making (Cottrell, 2017; Chaffee, 2018; Mardiah, 2022; Abdullah & Hanan, 2025). DC, as the realization of dialog principle of CP in teaching EFL, according to Crosby (2018) and Gatty et al. (2018), is established when freedom of speech exists and teacher along with students participate in the process of classroom decision co-creation.

Numerous studies examining the integration of CP in diverse TEFL contexts in Indonesia have been conducted by Sulistyowardani et al. (2020), Santoso & Christianti (2021), Mambu (2022), Qoyyimah et al. (2022), Waliyadin et al. (2023), and Yulianto et al. (2024b) at different school levels for various purposes. Recent scholarship on CP in Indonesian English language education suggests that EFL classrooms can function as dialogic spaces where learners' voices, identities, and local knowledge are incorporated into classroom interaction (Fauzan & ZA, 2026). In addition, dialogic learning traditions in Indonesian educational contexts demonstrate how collaborative dialogue can cultivate critical awareness, communication skills, and collective problem solving (Radino & Mubarok, 2025; Putri et al., 2026). The implementation of such approaches is often constrained by institutional structures, examination-oriented curricula, and teacher-centered traditions within the broader education system (Widodo, 2024; Yulianto et al., 2024a).

However, a significant research gap remains in the implementation of CP in the Indonesian senior high school EFL context. Specifically, there is a paucity of research examining the simultaneous integration of all four CP principles within the Indonesian senior high school context in order to create DC as well as to facilitate students' CT development. Additionally, research documenting students' responses to the implementation of CP principles in teaching EFL for the context of Indonesian senior high school and how they perceive the impacts of it on them is rarely found.

Therefore, this study was conducted to fulfil the identified research gap and to generate empirical evidence on how CP-oriented EFL instruction fosters students' CT development, promotes the formation of a DC, and enhances English proficiency. The novelty of this study is that it emphasizes the application of dialog, problem-posing, praxis, and critical consciousness as the four CP principles in the EFL classroom for eleventh-graders at one public senior high school in Subang, West Java, by organizing the eight-meeting teaching program.

There are two specific purposes of this study that have not been addressed by previous researchers. Firstly, it was carried out mainly to uncover how the four CP principles are integrated in the EFL teaching process for the purpose of creating DC and assisting students in improving their CT skills. Secondly, to document the participating students' responses upon the implementation as well as to uncover the impacts they perceive after attending the teaching program. The findings of this study are expected to serve as

p-ISSN 2301-7554, e-ISSN 2541-3643
*Volume 14, Issue 1, February 2026*

the theoretical enrichment and the pedagogical guidelines for critical EFL researchers and pedagogues.

## METHOD

This research employed a case study design consisting of three stages including defining and designing; preparing, collecting, and analyzing; and analyzing and concluding (Yin, 2018). The research was conducted in one of public senior high schools in Subang with the total number of 213 eleventh-graders involved as participants. The data were collected using close-ended questionnaire, classroom observation sheets, and interview guidelines from May to October 2025. As a case study, the findings of this study are not intended to be generalized to different contexts.

The questionnaire uses Likert-scale consisting of thirty items about DC, CT, and CP to be answered with the alternative ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The first ten items demand the participants' responses regarding their perceptions and experience of DC. The next ten items are about CT skills. Meanwhile the last ten items require the participants to report their experience with CP-oriented classroom activities. Table 1 presents the samples of questionnaire items for each aspect.

Table 1 *Questionnaire item samples*

| Item | Aspect |
|---|---|
| I am appreciated when expressing opinion in the English class. | DC |
| I feel that classroom rules are made collaboratively and agreed by all students. | DC |
| I tend to search for alternatives before making decision. | CT |
| I can evaluate quality of evidence given in one information. | CT |
| English teacher encourages us to relate learning materials with our daily problems. | CP |
| English classroom activities are performed to raise our social awareness and responsibilities. | CP |

Before being used to collect the data, the construct validity and reliability of questionnaire were tested. Construct validity was subsequently examined through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.82, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($p < .001$), indicating that the data were suitable for factor analysis. All items yielded factor loadings above 0.50, demonstrating satisfactory alignment with their underlying constructs. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha resulted in a coefficient of 0.847, indicating good internal consistency of the instrument for use in language learning research contexts.

The classroom observation instrument, comprising a structured checklist and field note format, guided the non-participant observer in systematically documenting the implementation of CP principles, students' CT skills, and DC practices across the eight-session teaching program. Additionally, semi-structured interview guidelines were employed in both the first and second interview phases to triangulate the data derived from the questionnaire and classroom observations.

The data collection phase began with the distribution of questionnaires to eleven classes of eleventh-grade students, comprising a total of 418 students. Employing voluntary purposive sampling method, 213 students submitted responses. The phase was followed by conducting first interview with nine students. It was then continued with performing classroom observations with one group of eleventh-graders consisting of 34 students during the eight-meeting teaching program period. The data collection stage was closed with organizing second round of interview in the form of FGD with the same nine students as interviewees.

Meanwhile, data analysis was executed by adapting thematic analysis proposed by Miles et al. (2014) consisting of transcribing, tabulating, coding, categorizing, triangulating, interpreting, comparing, and drawing conclusion. The manual deductive coding approach was performed using numbers to represent each category referring to research questions along with major theoretical frameworks. The raw data in the form interview and classroom observation transcripts were coded, selected, and grouped based on themes generated from (1) CP principles, (2) DC aspects, and (3) CT skills. The quantitative data from questionnaire and the qualitative data from classroom observation along with interviews are intentionally employed for the purpose of gaining more comprehensive understanding regarding the case studied.

To address ethical considerations, two primary measures were undertaken. First, informed consent was obtained from all participants, including the teacher and students, prior to data collection. Second, to ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for both individuals and the institution. To enhance the trustworthiness and rigor of the study, several validation strategies were employed, including data triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, and reflective journaling

(Ahmed, 2024). Furthermore, to mitigate potential researcher bias, two external experts were involved at each of the three research stages to provide critical review and oversight.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and the discussions of this research are categorized into three major themes. Those are (1) CP-based EFL classroom, (2) democratic EFL classroom, and (3) students' CT development.

### *CP-based EFL classroom*

Questionnaire data revealed that common EFL classroom practices at the participating school already accommodated core CP principles, specifically dialog, problem-posing, and conscientization. This initial finding is in accordance with the Yulianto et al. (2024a) who uncovered that numerous Indonesian EFL teachers already integrate CP principles in their daily teaching practices even though they are not familiar with the terms. This is most likely because there are universal tenets of CP that are commonly performed in classroom such as dialog and praxis (Raddawi and Troudi, 2018; Khan, 2019; Kasimi, 2020).

However, it is crucial for critical pedagogues, to align CP principles with their identified unique contexts and formulated instructional purposes (Freire, 2005). The alignment performed for the context of this research is realized in the form of ten CP-based EFL classroom activities. The following Table 2 lists the ten classroom activities and CP principles.

Table 2 *CP-based EFL classroom activities*

| Activities | CP Principles |
|---|---|
| Involving students in taking classroom decisions | Dialog |
| Connecting lesson to students' previous experience and knowledge | Problem-posing |
| Discussing relevant-to-student learning materials and topics | Problem-posing |
| Motivating students to participate in discussion | Dialog |
| Respecting every stated student opinion | Dialog |
| Cultivating presented English texts to assist students practice CT perspectives | Conscientization |
| Facilitating students to distinguish facts from opinions | Conscientization |
| Discussing alternative solutions for controversial relevant social issues | Praxis |
| Teaching students to be open-minded and consider various | Dialog |
| Using mother tongue as teaching aid | Conscientization |

It is evident in the classroom observation data that the ten activities were performed during the eight meetings. The lesson taught from the first until the fourth was *Asking and Giving Opinion* using *Cyberbullying* as the discussed topic. Meanwhile, for the fifth to the eighth meetings, *Hoax* was selected as the topic to be highlighted in teaching *Analytical Exposition Text*. The integration of conscientization through activities such as distinguishing facts from opinions and critically analyzing English texts indicates movement beyond classroom discussion toward CT development. By foregrounding analytical exposition texts through the theme of *Hoax*, the teacher positioned language as a tool for interrogating misinformation. This pedagogical move reframes linguistic competence as inseparable from socio-critical competence, thereby expanding the scope of EFL learning objectives.

It can be seen from the Table 2 that dialog is the most applied principle of CP in the EFL subject. Consistent with earlier studies, dialog appears to be the most readily adaptable CP principle within EFL contexts, likely because it aligns with communicative competence goals while simultaneously nurturing critical awareness (Kasimi, 2020; Yulianto et al., 2024a). Dialog functioned not merely as classroom interaction but as a mechanism for decentralizing authority, legitimizing student voice, and fostering DC.

Another evidence of the recursive occurrence of CP-oriented activities during the observed meetings is represented in the following classroom talk transcript taken from the second meeting, August 6, 2025.

Teacher : What does the video talk about?
Students : Cyberbullying
Teacher : What is cyberbullying?
Students : Mocking people in social media.
Teacher : Have you ever experienced?
Alya : Yes…

The transcript provides the evidence of the teacher practicing CP principles particularly dialog and problem-posing. Both principles were executed with presenting the controversial issue (cyberbullying), asking critical questions, and trying to relate the issue with students' prior experience. The previous transcript excerpt illustrates how questioning around cyberbullying prompted students to connect abstract concepts

p-ISSN 2301-7554, e-ISSN 2541-3643
*Volume 14, Issue 1, February 2026*

with lived experiences. Such exchanges demonstrate the co-construction of meaning rather than unidirectional knowledge transmission.

Regarding the implementation of the four CP principles, it is discovered that most of the participants responded positively. The following excerpts expressed by the interviewed students at 17th of September 2025 when being questioned how they felt and thought after attending the teaching program indicate it.

> I'm so happy for it was interactive. For me it's something new. (Rian's excerpt about Students' Responses)

> The way the teacher teaches is different from others. She tells something straight to the point so that we can directly understand. (Vina's excerpt about Students' Responses)

The similar supporting students' responses toward the implementation of CP principles in EFL classroom has also been discovered by Kircali (2021) and Sibbett (2022) in their research. Students' positive perceptions suggest that CP-based activities enhanced engagement and clarity, possibly because dialogic structures reduced hierarchical distance and increased comprehensibility. These reactions echo findings from prior research indicating that CP implementation can foster heightened participation and learner motivation.

However, there is one student who perceived the integration as time consuming and took a huge amount of their learning duration as indicated in the following excerpt:

> Because when our attendance being checked, we were requested to mention one English word, or to play games, it took time and decreased out learning duration. (Zahra's excerpt about Students' Responses)

Zahra viewed what the teacher did before the lessons started as time consuming and made her feel that the duration to learn the English language materials decreased. In other words, Zahra's critique is relevant to the research findings of Puspita and Mambu (2020), Herrera-Molina and Portilla-Quintero (2021), and Nkealah and Simango (2023) that uncovered, the crowded EFL curriculum is one of the main constraints for teachers to practice CP principles in their classrooms. Analytically, this tension underscores that successful CP integration depends not only on teacher commitment but also on institutional flexibility. Without structural support, dialogic and reflective practices may be perceived as competing with, rather than enriching, language learning objectives.

To sum up, it is evident that the participating teacher performed ten CP-based activities constituted a coherent pedagogical approach rather than isolated strategies. Additionally, it is uncovered that regarding the practices, the majority of students responded positively.

*Democratic EFL classroom*

One observable outcome of the implementation of the ten CP-based EFL teaching activities is the emergence of a Democratic Classroom (DC), as discussed in prior studies (Jiang, 2016; Tristan, 2018; Ordem & Ulum, 2019; Kasimi, 2020; Sibbett, 2022; Mardiah, 2022; Abdullah & Hanan, 2025). In the present study, democratic classroom practices were operationalized into two core aspects: (1) equal right to participate and (2) classroom decision co-creation.

Findings from the questionnaire data indicate a generally positive perception of democratic practices. More than half of the respondents (131 out of 213) reported feeling safe and having sufficient freedom to express their ideas or opinions in class. Furthermore, a majority of the eleventh-grade participants (175 out of 213) stated that classroom rules were co-created and agreed upon collectively. Regarding the specific aspect of classroom decision co-creation, 56.3% of the total respondents indicated that they actively participated in collaboratively making classroom decisions.

These initial findings are supported by interview data collected on 3 August 2025. Concerning equal right to participate, one student, Jaka, explained:

> "The teacher would check students' attendance with asking different questions. For example, questions for today are about history, but have to answered using English."

This excerpt suggests that the teacher created inclusive opportunities for all students to contribute, thereby fostering equitable participation. The reported increase in students' active participation signals the development of student agency. Agency refers to learners' capacity to act intentionally, make choices, and influence their learning environment (Giroux, 2011).

With respect to classroom decision co-creation, another interviewee, Alya, noted:

> "We often expressed opinion. For example, 'Miss we don't want this and that.' She usually switched." (Excerpt on Classroom Decision Co-creation)

> "Students become more active in asking and expressing their opinions. This is the strong indication that the democratic classroom has been created."

This statement illustrates that students were not merely passive recipients of instruction but were able to influence classroom decisions. The excerpts collectively indicate that students had already experienced elements of democratic practice in their previous EFL classrooms. This finding aligns with Kasimi (2020), who argues that democracy constitutes a crucial condition for effective EFL instruction. The two identified aspects of DC reflect a shift from traditional teacher-dominated authority toward shared power structures. In conventional EFL classrooms, instructional authority often rests primarily with the teacher, who determines rules, materials, and interactional patterns. However, the co-creation of classroom rules and the inclusion of students in decision-making processes indicate a redistribution of power.

To realize the two aspects of DC, four key prerequisites were identified from classroom observations and teacher practices, consistent with previous scholarship. First, a strong sense of community was intentionally cultivated among classroom members, as suggested by Crosby (2018). Second, a semi-negotiated syllabus was implemented to enhance students' sense of ownership over their learning process (Askari & Baumgartner, 2024). Third, the teacher frequently employed Socratic questioning techniques to stimulate deeper participation during classroom discussions (Gatty et al., 2018; Gibbs, 2018). Finally, controversial social and political issues were introduced as discussion topics to foster interdependence and critical engagement among students, echoing the argument of Sibbett (2022).

The implementation of CP-based activities reflects the principles of participatory pedagogy, which emphasizes dialog, collaboration, and shared knowledge construction. Rather than relying solely on transmission-based instruction, the teacher fostered interaction through questioning strategies and the exploration of socially relevant issues.

As the impact of the implementation, it is evident in the field note data from the eighth meeting that the DC was somewhat established. The upcoming field note data from the 17th of September 2025 demonstrates outcome of the integration.

This outcome is consistent with the claims of Tristan (2018), Ordem and Ulum (2019), Palbusa (2021), and Abdullah and Hanna (2025), who contend that the integration of CP principles in EFL contexts can enhance student participation by fostering a sense of belonging and shared authority. The data showing that students feel safe to express opinions (131/213 respondents) and perceive themselves as responsible for maintaining classroom democracy (61% agreement) indicate not only participation but ownership. This resonates with Giroux's (2011) argument that democratic classrooms should cultivate students as active social subjects capable of critical reflection.

*Students' CT development*

Another consequence of the application of the four CP principles performed by the participating EFL teacher is the students' CT development (Yang, 2020). In this study, CT is not treated as a vague cognitive construct but is operationally defined through three measurable dimensions referring to Yulianto (2015), Yulianto (2017), Cottrell (2017), and Chaffee (2018). Analysis and evaluation skills is defined as the ability to distinguish fact from opinion, assess strengths and weaknesses of arguments, verify information, and construct reasoned claims. Open-mindedness is the willingness to reconsider one's position when confronted with credible counter-evidence and to seriously engage with alternative viewpoints. Meanwhile fully informed decision-making is the capacity to gather relevant criteria or evidence before making a judgment or taking action.

Questionnaire findings indicate that a substantial proportion of the 213 respondents had already demonstrated foundational CT competencies. First, regarding analysis and evaluation skills, only 2.2% of respondents reported being unable to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a proposed solution to a problem. Moreover, 85% indicated that they could distinguish between opinions and facts. Second, in relation to open-mindedness, 71.3% of respondents stated that they were willing to reconsider or shift their perspectives when presented with convincing counter-evidence. Third, concerning fully informed decision-making, 56.8% of respondents reported being able to draw conclusions based on available information.

p-ISSN 2301-7554, e-ISSN 2541-3643
*Volume 14, Issue 1, February 2026*

These findings were corroborated by the first interview data. For instance, Nara, one of the participants, explained her approach to verifying information:

Reread the information. Then search it in internet to find the truth. So, I search before I share.

This excerpt illustrates an evaluative stance toward information consumption, reflecting the practice of verification before dissemination. Such behavior aligns with Mardiah (2022), who argues that seeking alternative sources before accepting information constitutes a fundamental CT skill.

Although students demonstrated baseline CT competencies, classroom observation and second interview data suggest moderate improvement across the three aspects. The degree of development, however, varied. Open-mindedness receives the highest development, analysis and evaluation skills is fairly improved, and the fully-considered decision making skills is the least improved one.

The strongest development was observed in students' open-mindedness. In the second interview, one student, Rian, stated:

> But I like to ask others' opinion. And I am obviously a type of person who likes to listen others' opinions." (Rian's excerpt about Open-mindedness)

This excerpt demonstrates not only willingness but also habitual engagement with alternative viewpoints. The data further reveal that this disposition was nurtured through repeated engagement in critical dialogue about debatable and socially relevant issues during classroom sessions. This finding resonates with Schroeder (2024), who asserts that exchanging perspectives within a democratic atmosphere can enhance students' capacity to accommodate differing or even contradictory arguments. The dialogic and problem-posing nature of CP-based instruction appears to have fostered an environment where intellectual flexibility became normalized.

The second most improved aspect concerns analysis and evaluation skills. These improvements were likely stimulated by the CP principles of dialog, problem-posing, and conscientization, concepts closely associated with Freire's (2005) CP. A classroom interaction recorded during the third meeting (13 August 2025) illustrates this development:

| | |
|---|---|
| Sandi | : In my opinion video game have good (impacts) because you can find friend, partner and even good experience, that my opinion what about video game. |
| Teacher | : Good, good. Thank you for being so excited in sharing your opinion. |

This exchange shows Sandi constructing and articulating a reasoned argument, linking claims with supporting reasons. According to Silva et al. (2025), constructing and clearly communicating arguments constitutes a central component of analysis and evaluation in CT.

The least developed CT aspect was fully informed decision-making. Evidence of this skill appeared less frequently during classroom observations. One illustrative example occurred during the eighth meeting (17 September 2025):

| | |
|---|---|
| Zahra | : Miss, what are the assessment criteria? |
| Teacher | : The assessment? I'll look at the structure first to see whether it is appropriate or not, then your pronunciation, and move to other aspects such as the existence of artistic element. |
| Zahra | : Should I remake the video assignment? |
| Teacher | : It's your call, you still have time until tomorrow. You are allowed to re-record. |

In this exchange, Zahra sought clarification regarding evaluation criteria before deciding whether to revise her work. Such an approach embodies fully informed decision-making as conceptualized in this study. However, instances of this skill were relatively rare across observed meetings. This observation supports Schroeder (2024), who notes that many studies on CT tend to emphasize analysis and evaluation while overlooking the decision-making dimension.

It can be concluded that the implementation of CP principles contributed to measurable qualitative development in students' CT. While foundational skills were already present, classroom practices appear to have strengthened students' intellectual openness toward differing viewpoints, capacity to analyze and evaluate arguments, and emerging practice of fully informed decision-making. These findings suggest that CP-oriented EFL instruction not only enhances linguistic competence but also fosters higher-order thinking processes. The integration of dialogic and democratic practices situates CT development as both a cognitive and sociocultural process, shaped through interaction,

reflection, and shared inquiry.

## CONCLUSION

Considering the findings displayed previously, three conclusions can be drawn. First, it was found that ten classroom activities can be implemented to integrate the four CP principles in order to establish DC along with to assist student CT development. Second, it is evident that in responding to the teaching program, the majority of the participants responded positively while several of them thought it was time consuming. Lastly, regarding the impact, the students perceived that it was effective in establishing DC consisting of equal right to participate and decision co-creation along with assisting them improve their CT skills particularly analysis and evaluation, open-mindedness, as well as well-informed decision making.

Two recommendations are proposed for Indonesian EFL teachers teaching in senior high schools. Firstly, it is suggested for them to expand students' participation in classroom decision-making. Moreover, it is recommended for them to design assignment that directly link English learning students' real-life social issues. Meanwhile, for educational decision makers, it is recommended for them promote CP, democracy, and CT for more inclusive EFL classrooms and curriculum.

Furthermore, being aware of the methodological and contextual limitations of this research, two recommendations are proposed for further researchers. Firstly, it is suggested for them to involve more participants, settings, and data. Secondly, further researchers are demanded to study CP related to the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) advancement to fully comprehend the practice of CP principles in the context of EFL classrooms in Indonesia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research is financially supported by Indonesian Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology with 2025 BIMA Research Grant Program.

## REFERENCES

Ahmed, S. K. ES (2024). The pillars of trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health*, *2*, 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glmedi.2024.100051

Askari, M., & Baumgartner, L. (2024). The applicability of critical pedagogy in adult English language teaching (ELT). *International Journal of Linguistics*, *16*(5), 189–199. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v16i5.22236

Chaffee, J. (2018). *Thinking critically* (10th ed.). Wadsworth.

Collins, J., Hess, M. E., & Lowery, C. L. (2019). Democratic spaces: How teachers establish and sustain democracy and education in their classrooms. *Democracy & Education*, *27*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.65214/2164-7992.1432

Cottrell, S. (2017). *Critical thinking skills: Developing effective analysis, argument, and reflection*. Macmillan.

Crookes, G. (2022). Critical language pedagogy. *Language Teaching*, *55*, 46–63. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444820000609

Crookes, G. V., & Abednia, A. (2022). *Starting points in critical pedagogy*. Information Age Publishing.

Crosby, K. D. (2018). Fostering civil discourse within the democratic classroom. *AILACTE*, *15*, 1–15.

Fauzan, & ZA, M. (2026). Critical pedagogy in EFL classrooms: An interactional study of student voice and agency in Aceh. *Almufi Journal of Language and Education*, *5*(1), 1–11. http://almufi.com/index.php/AJLE

Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.

Gatty, L., Masterson, J., Brooke, R., Shah, R. W., & Thomas, S. (2018). English education as democratic armor: Responding programmatically to our political work. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, *17*(2), 116–131. https://doi.org/10.1108/ETPC-05-2017-0079

Gibbs, B. (2018). *The complicated pursuit of democratic teaching*. Kappan Online. https://kappanonline.org/gibbs-high-school-democracy-teaching/

Giroux, H. A. (2011). *On critical pedagogy*. Continuum.

Herrera-Molina, J., & Portilla-Quintero, B. (2021). Critical pedagogy trends in English language teaching. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *23*(2), 155–165. https://doi.org/10.14483/22487085.16732

Jeyaraj, J. J. (2019). Possibilities for critical pedagogy engagement in higher education: Exploring students' openness and acceptance. *Asia Pacific Education Review*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-019-09605-0

Jiang, S. (2016). Building a negotiation mechanism in EFL classroom in Chinese context: Concepts and strategies. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(11), 29–38. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n11p29

Kasimi, Y. (2020). Democracy in EFL classroom. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *16*(1), 126–136. https://doi.org/10.17263/jlls.712666

Khan, C. (2019). Fostering a critical consciousness in ELT: Incorporating a woman, gender and sexuality course in a bilingual education university program in Bogota, Colombia. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*.

p-ISSN 2301-7554, e-ISSN 2541-3643
*Volume 14, Issue 1, February 2026*

https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2019.1649713

Kircali, M. (2021). Turkish EFL teachers' awareness of critical pedagogy implementation. *International Research of ELT*, *2*(1), 21–30. https://doi.org/10.29329/irelt.2020.347.3

Larson, K. R. (2014). Critical pedagogy(ies) for ELT in Indonesia. *TEFLIN Journal*, *25*(1), 122–138. https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v25i1/122-138

Mambu, J. E. (2022). Co-constructing a critical ELT curriculum: A case study in an Indonesian-based English language teacher education program. *TESOL Journal*, *13*, Article e667. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tesj.667

Mambu, J. E. (2023). Pengintegrasian critical spiritual pedagogy dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris: Penyuluhan melalui webinar yang diselenggarakan oleh UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. *Magistrorum Et Scholarium: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, *3*(3), 384–394. https://doi.org/10.24246/jms.v3i32023p384-394

Mardiah, H. (2022). Students' perceptions on democratic classroom management in tertiary education context. *Vision*, *18*(2), 120–129. http://dx.doi.org/10.30829/vis.v18i2.2254

McLaren, P. (2003). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*. Allyn and Bacon.

Miles, B. M., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Nafis, M. (2025, March 28). *Berpikir kritis di negara demokrasi*. Malang Posco Media. https://malangposcomedia.id/berpikir-kritis-di-negara-demokrasi/

Nkealah, N., & Simango, J. (2023). Using critical pedagogy in English education: Disjunctures between pre-service teachers' preparation and opportunities for implementation. *Journal of Education*, *90*, 69–86. https://doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i90a04

Nugraha, M. A., & Yulianto, S. W. (2020). Investigating the implementation of 2013 revised curriculum and school-based curriculum from postmethod pedagogy principle: Teachers' perspective. *Biormatika: Jurnal Ilmiah Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, *6*(1), 116–125. https://doi.org/10.35569/biormatika.v6i1.700

Ordem, E., & Ulum, O. G. (2019). Critical pedagogy and participatory approach in Turkey: Views of pre-service ELT teachers. *Turkish Studies*, *14*(2), 679–693. http://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.14655

Palbusa, M. Y. (2021). Senior high school as critical pedagogy. *Asian Journal of Contemporary Education*, *5*(1), 34–44. https://doi.org/10.18488/journal.137.2021.51.34.44

Prahani, B. K., Deta, U. A., Yasri, M., Astutik, S., Pandiangan, P., Mahtari, S., & Mubarok, H. (2020). The concept of "Kampus Merdeka" in accordance with Freire's critical pedagogy. *Studies in Philosophy of Science and Education (SiPoSe)*, *1*(1), 21–37. https://doi.org/10.46627/sipose.v1i1.8

Puspita, A. M. H., & Mambu, J. E. (2020). Traces of critical spiritual pedagogy in Indonesian EFL teachers' Christian-based classes. *TEFLIN Journal*, *31*(2), 256–275. https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v31i2/259-276

Putri, N. T., Yulianto, S. W., & Nugraha, M. A. (2026). Exploring high school students' understanding of critical pedagogy in interpreting English-language digital content on social media. *Biormatika: Jurnal Ilmiah Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, *12*(1), 18–28. https://doi.org/10.35569/dwmhgs73

Qoyyimah, U., Agustiawan, Y., Phan, T. T., Maisarah, & Fanani, A. (2022). Critical pedagogy through genre-based pedagogy for developing students' writing skills: Strategies and challenges. *Journal of Literature and Language Teaching*, *13*(1), 98–116. https://doi.org/10.15642/NOBEL.2022.13.1.98-116

Raddawi, R., & Troudi, S. (2018). Critical pedagogy in EFL teacher education in the United Arab Emirates: Possibilities and challenges. *TESOL International Journal*, *13*(1), 79–99.

Radino, & Mubarok, M. H. (2025). Critical pedagogy and dialogic learning in classical Islamic boarding schools: An analysis of discussion practices in Madrasah Diniyyah Al-Munawwir Krapyak. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, *22*(1), 255–274. https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v22i1.10801

Santoso, W., & Christianti, J. (2021). Exploring critical pedagogy in an Indonesian higher education: Possibilities and challenges. *ELTICS (English Language Teaching and English Linguistics) Journal*, *6*(2), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.31316/eltics.v6i2.1551

Schroeder, D. (2024). Critical thinking in a collaborative learning environment. *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, *16*(Suppl. 1), 1–6.

Sharma, B. K., & Phyak, P. (2017). Criticality as ideological becoming: Developing English teachers for critical pedagogy in Nepal. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *14*(2-3), 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2017.1285204

Sibbett, L. (2022). Critical democratic education in practice: Evidence from an experienced teacher's classroom. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, *46*(1), 35–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2021.11.004

Silva, J., Edmond, J., & Jauregui, C. (2025). Critical thinking in the classroom: Faculty perspectives and practice. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *14*(3), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v14n3p1

Sulistyowardani, M., Mambu, J. E., & Pattiwel, A. S. (2020). Indonesian EFL teachers' cognition and practices related to social justice. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *10*(2), 420–433. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v10i2.28614

Tristan, T. L. (2018). Principles of critical language pedagogy: A literature review. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, *7*(2), 103–109. https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrsll.2017.1752

Waliyadin, Anasy, Z., & Nahartini, D. (2023). Exploring teacher educators' understanding of critical pedagogy and its implementation in the English reading class. *Indonesian Journal of English Education (IJEE)*, *10*(1), 182–206. https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v10i1.31894

Widodo, S. A. (2024). Analysis of the implementation of education democracy in Indonesia (regulations, models, problems, and future prospects). *South African Journal of Education*, *44*(2), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v44n2a2324

Yang, S. (2020). Critical pedagogy for foreign-language writing. *L2 Journal*, *12*(2), 110–127. http://repositories.cdlib.org/uccllt/l2/vol12/iss2/art7

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study and application: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

Yulianto, S. W. (2015). Critical pedagogy principles in teaching EFL reading. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, *4*(1), 25–38. https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v4i1.305

Yulianto, S. W. (2017). Perbedaan dan persinggungan pedagogi kritis dengan berpikir kritis. *Biormatika: Jurnal Ilmiah Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, *3*(2), 1–7.

Yulianto, S. W. (2020). The use of critical pedagogy principles in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) for senior high school students in Subang. *Biormatika: Jurnal Ilmiah Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, *6*(1), 98–106. https://doi.org/10.35569/biormatika.v6i1.698

Yulianto, S. W., Musthafa, B., & Gustine, G. G. (2024a). Practicing critical pedagogy for higher education in EFL context: Benefits and challenges. *ELTIN Journal: Journal of English Language Teaching in Indonesia*, *12*(2), 189–204.

Yulianto, S. W., Musthafa, B., & Gustine, G. G. (2024b). Exploring critical pedagogy principles in EFL classrooms: Beliefs and practices of Indonesian teachers. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, *12*(2), 475–482. https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v12i2.9258