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Exploring How Lecturers Comprehend and Apply Critical Pedagogy in English Listening Class

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ABSTRACT

Grounded in Freire's (1971) critical pedagogy premise revealing that the act of listening should be active, critical, and transformative, rather than passive or merely receptive, this research explored the experience of English language lecturers who taught English listening classes with a critical pedagogy approach. This study employed a qualitative method through a case study design to explore lecturers' understanding in depth and their practices of critical pedagogy. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with four lecturers and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. The analysis identified key themes in lecturers' understanding, including their awareness of the transformative potential of listening activities, the importance of fostering student autonomy, and their understanding of listening as a dialogic process. The findings also indicate that while lecturers did not explicitly define or describe critical pedagogy, certain stages and elements were evident in their teaching. In practice, lecturers applied the principles of critical pedagogy by providing authentic materials, building horizontal relationships, developing critical consciousness, encouraging critical, democratic, and participatory assessment to support transformative learning while contending with challenges like low student engagement, language proficiency, and diverse accents. This suggests that, to some extent, they incorporated aspects of critical pedagogy in their listening classes. Research's practical implications recommend that lecturers receive targeted training in critical pedagogy to better align their teaching practices with its principles. At the same time, institutions should provide resources and support to address the challenges.

Keywords: Lecturers' perceptions, lecturers' practice, critical pedagogy, critical listening, reproductive skills

1. Introduction

Implementing Critical Pedagogy in Indonesian higher education should be prioritized. Indonesia's long history under an authoritarian regime, followed by a regressive democracy in the post-reformation period, highlights this need (Bangsa et al., 2023). These historical factors may have led to a diminished capacity for critique and a reduced sensitivity to social issues within the educational system. In education, the persistence of the banking system, where students are seen as depositories and teachers as the depositors of knowledge, is evident. This system continues partly due to students' low interest and motivation in learning (Front, 2019; Ha, 2021). Additionally, while information and communication technology development has

positive effects, it also has drawbacks and consequences, such as spreading fake news. Therefore, fostering critical thinking abilities should be a top focus in Indonesian education at all levels.

In English language teaching (ELT), critical pedagogy has been introduced with the aim not only to improve English language skills but also to cultivate a critical awareness of injustice (Zhang et al., 2023). Rooted in in Freire (2020), crucial pedagogy in language teaching seeks to transform classrooms by incorporating students' local culture, using their first language as a resource, addressing real-life concerns, and raising awareness of issues faced by marginalized groups. This approach aligns with critical language pedagogy introduced by Crookes (2021), who outlines three main concepts. Firstly, "critical pedagogy is democratic," aiming to foster greater democracy in society and within the classroom. Secondly, a critical pedagogy classroom is "dialogical," emphasizing exploratory and discussion-oriented learning. Lastly, although challenging to implement, "critical pedagogy is action-oriented".

Efforts to incorporate critical language pedagogy in ELT and language teacher education programs have been documented worldwide. Rezai et al., (2023) lay the groundwork for critical pedagogy in ELT by outlining essential principles of pedagogy and suggesting areas for practitioners. In Indonesia, Bangsa et al. (2023) critical pedagogy in an ELT classroom can be applied by using codes to teach English, enhancing both language skills and students' critical thinking. Agbo et al., (2023) introduce critical pedagogy in higher education institutions through participatory research with a graduate teacher student in a professional learning program. This program has successfully designed and implemented critical pedagogy in ELT, helping students become more critical, tolerant, and socially aware.

Prior studies demonstrate the potential benefits of implementing critical pedagogy in ELT. However, implementing critical pedagogy in language teaching and learning is challenging. Several empirical studies have investigated these challenges in various contexts (Chen, 2023). While students respond positively to critical pedagogy in language development and critical thinking through the dialogic approach to teaching critical language, issues arise related to students' perspectives and academic voices and the conception of language as social practice. Additionally, Nawas et al., (2023) discuss the challenges of practicing critical pedagogy in EFL teaching in South Asia, including tensions between local and international geopolitical tendencies. He suggests the need to critically evaluate both traditional and modern approaches to education to be effective. In summary, previous studies indicate the potential for introducing or integrating critical pedagogy in ELT classrooms and English education programs while also highlighting implementation challenges. These findings suggest the need for further investigation, particularly into how lecturers comprehend critical pedagogy and apply it in teaching English listening.

Critical Pedagogy is particularly relevant now given that the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture has introduced a new curriculum named *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom to Learn). This curriculum aims to align education with current demands, changes, and the needs of the business and industrial sectors, preparing students for the workforce (Maghfiroh et al., 2022). However, instead of prioritizing social justice, this program reflects a neoliberal ideology disguised as "freedom" (Sari et al., 2024). This neoliberal orientation, focusing on market-driven competencies,

conflicts with the principles of critical pedagogy, emphasizing empowerment, social justice, and critical thinking. *Merdeka Belajar's* curriculum positively impacts critical pedagogy implementation by offering flexibility, such as letting students choose interdisciplinary courses promoting critical thinking and self-empowerment (Andriana & Evans, 2020). In Islamic-based universities, this approach enriches integrating religious values with modern scientific knowledge in English language class discussions. However, *Merdeka Belajar's* focus on industry and market-driven needs often conflicts with critical pedagogy principles, concerning social justice and critical awareness. This pragmatic focus limits the exploration of critical issues such as equality or globalization, especially in settings that prioritize the integration of morality and spirituality. Thus, critical pedagogy is significant in balancing the neoliberal influence of *Merdeka Belajar*, ensuring that education remains empowering and not solely driven by economic needs.

This research uses critical pedagogy as the theoretical framework to analyze how English lecturers implement its principles, such as empowering students and fostering critical thinking, in listening comprehension classes. Thematic analysis (Braun, 2006) has been employed to identify patterns in the data, focusing on participants' understanding of critical pedagogy and its application in their teaching practices. Indicators include lecturers' perspectives, specific teaching strategies, and evidence of critical pedagogy integration derived from semi-structured interviews and thematic coding. The aims of this research are twofold: firstly, to examine lecturers' comprehension of critical pedagogy, and secondly, to explore its application in the listening classroom. This research seeks to address two main questions: 1) How do English lecturers comprehend the principles of critical pedagogy?; and 2) How do they apply these principles in listening comprehension classes?

The study contributes theoretically by deepening critical pedagogy understanding within English language teaching, particularly in listening instruction, and practically by offering some strategies and examples that lecturers can employ to foster critical thinking and learner engagement in the classrooms.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Design

To answer the research questions, this study used a case study design. A case study involves an in-depth analysis of a particular, bounded system such as an activity, event, process, or individuals defined by certain temporal, spatial, or physical (Wales, 2019). A case study aims to shed light on a particular issue, problem, or theory. As a qualitative research method, data collection and analysis in a case study occur concurrently and continuously (Roseli et al., 2020). The case study design can be flexible, with research questions becoming more refined following the initial analysis of interviews, diary entries, or observations (Al et al., 2023; Wales, 2019). Case studies can focus on single individuals, multiple individuals, programs, events, or activities (Maag et al., 2021). In essence, a case study is a qualitative research method involving an in-depth analysis of a specific, bounded system, such as an activity, event, or individual. It aims to provide a deeper understanding of a particular issue with concurrent data collection and analysis. The design is flexible, allowing research questions to evolve as the study progresses. In this research, the cases involved some lecturers. Specifically, this study employed a case study approach, aiming to offer

insights into a broader case while the specific issue was of secondary importance, helping to enhance understanding of something else. An instrumental case study was chosen as the research sought to explore a broader issue concerning the implementation of critical pedagogy in listening comprehension classes. As an exploratory study, it focused on how lecturers articulate their understanding of CP perspectives, and they incorporated this understanding into their teaching practices, particularly in teaching English listening skills.

2.2. Participants

This research involved four English lecturers from four different universities and regions. Three participants have over ten years of experience teaching English, as confirmed by their curriculum vitae and accounts during the interviews, and one confessed to be a new lecturer. Informal conversations before the interviews revealed that all participants also had experience teaching listening comprehension for several years. The selection of participants was initially based on data from higher education sources (PDDIKTI) to verify their teaching experience in listening comprehension. The researchers then contacted the participants via email or WhatsApp, with contact information provided by colleagues familiar with the potential participants. Every participant willingly signed consent forms for the study and agreed to supply the required data. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for all participants.

Table. Demographic information of the participants

No	Name	Gender	Teaching Experience	Qualification	Teaching Expertise
1	Siska	Female	16 years	Doctor of English Education	Listening for Informal Communication, Listening for Academic Communication, TEFL
2	Anna	Female	13 years	Master of Education	Listening I, Listening II, English Morphology, Critical Reading
3	Ariz	Male	11 years	Doctor of English Education	Listening for Social Interaction, Listening in Professional Context, Research Methodology in Linguistics and Literature
4	Eka	Female	5 years	Master of Education	Reading comprehension, Intensive Listening, Extensive Listening

2.3. Data Collection

This research used semi-structured interviews to collect data, asking participants about their experiences incorporating a critical pedagogy approach into their English listening classes. Before the first interview, this study had the interview guidelines reviewed by an expert to obtain feedback. The interview questions were then tested on a person with research publications and experience in critical pedagogy. After revising the guidelines based on this feedback, this research involved four different interviews with the participants. Mrs. Siska was interviewed for the first time

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in the second week of January 2024. Mrs. Anna was interviewed in the third week of January 2024. The third interview, with Mr. Ariz, took place in the second week of February 2024. Finally, we interviewed Mrs. Eka in mid-March 2024. All interviews were conducted online via Zoom. To avoid language barriers and based on participants' preferences, the interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. The researchers then translated the transcripts into English.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data in this study were analyzed using the six stages of thematic analysis, including familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming the themes, and writing the report (Braun, 2006). The theory of critical pedagogy, as outlined by Crookes (2021), was implemented to analyze how these concepts emerged in teaching listening. Crookes' critical pedagogy theory emphasizes active student engagement through critical awareness, dialogue, and social analysis to empower students to become agents of change by developing critical thinking skills in a participatory and reflective learning context. This research utilized this theory to examine how essential principles of pedagogy were integrated into the teaching of listening.

3. Findings

The findings examine how the participating lecturers understood critical pedagogy, how it was implemented in English listening classes, and what challenges they faced. The research questions and emerging themes organized the results.

3.1. Lecturers' Understanding of Critical Pedagogy

The lecturers were generally unfamiliar with critical pedagogy. One participant's comment, when asked about critical pedagogy, made this clear: "Not yet, but if it is feasible to provide critical education in general, for instance, although I can't recall everything precisely, I know from educational liberation" (Siska/Interview). This suggests that participants did not always understand the idea of critical pedagogy. Nevertheless, the participants did grasp the theoretical underpinnings of critical pedagogy. She also recognized well-known figures in critical pedagogy, like Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux. This indicates her basic comprehension of the critical perspective in language teaching.

The interview with Mr. Ariz further demonstrated the lack of familiarity with critical pedagogy in English language instruction. He was unable to explain what critical pedagogy was clearly. However, he provided examples of how he saw critical pedagogy principles employed in listening classes. The excerpt below illustrates this as narrated by Mr. Ariz:

> *In my listening classes, I incorporate strategies that encourage students to analyze and reflect on the content they hear critically. For instance, I use audio materials on social issues, like speeches or news reports discussing human rights. After listening, we had a class discussion where I asked students to share their thoughts and feelings about the issue and what insights they gained from the material. (Mr. Ariz/Interview)*

The result of the above interview reveals that incorporating audio resources on social issues, such as speeches or news reports about human rights subjects, encouraged students to analyze the information and understand it critically. Students were allowed to voice their opinions during the ensuing class discussions, assisting

them to develop a greater understanding and empathy for other points of view. Moreover, the lecturer's comprehension of critical pedagogy is further elucidated in another excerpt

> *We encourage them to embrace their role. Their role extends beyond being mere students to becoming agents of change. This realization emphasizes that their responsibility doesn't end with learning alone. Students must positively influence on their surroundings, demonstrating their ability to analyze and confront issues. By sharing insights and new information, they can help others develop a more informed perspective, thereby addressing any misunderstandings that may arise. (Siska/Interview)*

From the passage, Mrs. Siska recognized that critical pedagogy involved students critically analyzing issues and sharing their understanding with others, particularly those seeking insights from scholars. She also emphasized that students acted as social change agents, advocating for a positive impact on society during and beyond their university education. Moreover, another lecturer, Mrs. Anna, possessed a more profound knowledge of critical literacy than critical pedagogy. Her research focused on critical literacy, and she was also familiar with critical literacy pedagogy. Anna viewed critical pedagogy as a broader concept or an extension of critical literacy pedagogy; she utilized literary works to teach listening skills in her classroom.

> *I am familiar with critical literacy through my research projects, where I actively incorporate its principles. As for critical pedagogy, my focus lies specifically on critical listening pedagogy. (Anna/Interview).*

> *Mrs. Eka acknowledged that she recently learned about critical pedagogy, despite teaching courses like critical listening and reading comprehension at the university. As one of the youngest lecturers with less teaching experience than colleagues, she recognized the interconnectedness of language, culture, and ideology. She noted that "a person's culture can be expressed through their language and reflects the ideologies they uphold. (Eka/interview).*

In summary, although the lecturers' explicit understanding of critical pedagogy was not directly stated, they demonstrated familiarity with certain perspectives and principles of critical pedagogy during the interviews. Based on the analysis of their understanding and endorsement of essential principles of pedagogy to some degree, lecturers in this study could be categorized as 'critical pedagogy, defined by (Zhiwei & Wang, 2024) as ELT lecturers who utilized the fundamental values and theories of critical pedagogy. The subsequent findings related to the teachers' experiences in applying critical pedagogy in the listening classroom.

3.2. How Is Critical Pedagogy Employed in the English Listening Class?
Listening as a Practice of Reproductive Skill

Listening as a reproductive skill refers to the idea that listening is not just a passive activity but an active process where listeners mentally reproduce or reconstruct the information they hear. This involves comprehending, processing, and potentially using the information in response or further communication. In this sense, listening requires cognitive engagement and the ability to understand and recall spoken language accurately, making it an integral part of effective communication and language acquisition. A study has shown that active listening practices merely

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enhance students' ability to comprehend, analyze, and replicate spoken information in various communicative contexts (Crookes, 2021). Moreover, incorporating authentic listening materials and real-life scenarios can prepare students to deal with the challenges of language use in multiple contexts (Ebadi et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). Regular practice, reflection, and analysis of content are essential to deepen understanding. Likewise, interactive activities requiring responses, learning effective listening strategies, exposure to diverse contexts, and receiving constructive feedback all contribute to skill enhancement.

A partial comprehension of critical pedagogy among lecturers limits their ability to incorporate its principles effectively into English listening classes. It results in teaching approaches focusing more on passive learning rather than promoting critical thinking, active involvement, and deeper understanding, affecting students' ability to interpret spoken language effectively. Nevertheless, lecturers who successfully integrate critical pedagogy principles into their classes foster democratic discussions, encourage peer collaboration, and incorporate real-world topics to stimulate critical thinking. Additionally, they encourage open discussions for students to share opinions, offer peer learning through group activities, and integrate real-world issues to encourage critical thinking. Interactive tasks are used to stimulate analysis, reflection, and active participation, making learning more meaningful. Constructive feedback is also vital to support democratic and dialogic learning.

According to interview data, Mrs. Anna assumed that listening was insufficient to grasp the ideas. Instead, it should involve reproducing or reconstructing the information the students listen to.

> *Listening to ideas isn't enough. Instead, my students should actively work with the information they hear. They should understand it deeply and use it to create their own ideas or responses. For example, they might summarize what they heard, talk about it with others, or use it in new situations. Good listening involves more than just hearing, it's about actively engaging with and using the information. (Anna/Interview)*

It was also noteworthy that, as the following excerpt narrates, Mr. Ariz stressed the significance of providing opportunities for students to interpret the information while listening.

> *Students have different interpretations as this happens because each listener brings their background, experiences, and perspectives to what they hear. These personal factors can influence how they understand and interpret the information. For instance, one person might focus on the emotional tone of a speaker, while another might concentrate on the factual content. This diversity in interpretation is natural and can lead to rich discussions and more profound understanding when listeners share and compare their viewpoints (Ariz/Interview).*

3.3. Connecting Listening with Real-Life Issues

Mrs. Anna emphasized that effective listening required sustained concentration, which could be challenging to maintain, particularly during lengthy or complex discussions and presentations. She introduced global topics and issues relevant to the students' lives to make her listening class more engaging. This approach involved having the students discuss these topics in class. She also encouraged them

to share their opinions on what they listened to. This approach is illustrated in the following excerpt.

> *In critical listening, after listening to the audio, the class becomes more interactive, resembling a discussion. Students are encouraged to share their opinions consistently ensuring the class is lively and filled with discussions among the students.*

Mrs. Anna highlighted that teaching listening should go beyond fostering critical thinking; it ought to benefit others, as she clarified in the following excerpt.

> *Teaching listening skills should not be limited to developing students' ability to think critically. It should also aim to influence others positively. This can involve encouraging students to use their listening skills to contribute to discussions, support their peers, and engage constructively with the world around them. By doing so, the impact of effective listening extends beyond the classroom, fostering a more collaborative and empathetic community. (Anna/interview)*

She encouraged her students to link their listening activities to real-world issues, explaining that she welcomed any topics to be discussed in the classroom.

> *I motivate my students to relate what they listen to, such as podcasts, news, interviews, or any form of audio content, to real-world problems and situations. I invite students to bring any relevant topics or issues they find important or absorbing into the classroom discussions. This approach is intended to make the listening activities more meaningful and appropriate to the students' lives, fostering an environment where diverse and significant real-life issues can be explored and discussed openly. (Anna/interview)*

In sum, lecturers in this study understood how to teach listening more critically make listening classrooms more engaging, and relate teaching listening to real-life issues. This teaching practice was relevant to the principle of critical thinking, which empathized with engaging students critically with social issues, as suggested by Freire.

3.4. Developing Horizontal Relationships to Be Active Listeners

A horizontal learning pattern involved recognizing everyone's knowledge and backgrounds, where learners' contributions and perspectives were valued equally to the teacher's. Mrs. Dynar revealed that the power of relation matters was significant in teaching listening. She argued that students should have more agency and influence in the classroom than the teacher, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

> *My teaching style is centers on power relationships; I empower my students and express my appreciation when they can effectively argue verbally. (Dynar/interview)*

> *Giving students the ability to choose the listening materials they engage with, whether through selecting topics or formats that interest them, you empower them within the learning process. This autonomy fosters a sense of investment and responsibility in their learning, thereby establishing a more balanced power relationship between teacher and students. (Eka/interview)*

The interview with Mrs. Dynar revealed his commitment to fostering a horizontal relationship between lecturer and student. She often referred to her students as friends in class to build an egalitarian atmosphere. Initially, students found this approach awkward, but they gradually accepted it. Mrs. Dynar believed that creating an equal

relationship enhanced student engagement in onsite discussions, although she acknowledged that student motivation also played a role. Similarly, Mrs. Eka, the youngest lecturer in this study, tended to develop close relationships with her students and frequently participated in student-organized activities. Overall, the participants in this study prioritize establishing horizontal relationships between lecturers and students.

3.5. Developing Students' Critical Consciousness to Engage with What They Hear.

Based on the component of critical pedagogy, Freire (2000) suggested the principles of critical pedagogy, emphasizing the importance of dialogue, critical consciousness, and transformative education. Mrs. Siska argued that critical consciousness could be employed by engaging students in discussions that critically analyze the content. This process required students to go beyond merely understanding the content by considering the context, purpose, and perspective of the speaker. Understanding the context, such as the time, place, and situation surrounding the message, helped students grasp why and how the information was being communicated, influencing its meaning and relevance. Similarly, recognizing the purpose helped students evaluate the speaker's intentions, and understanding perspective allowed students to consider how the speaker's personal context and worldview influenced the content and how it was delivered.

Mrs. Dynar also suggested that engaging in dialogue after students understood the listening material was pivotal in developing critical consciousness. Through dialogue, students shared diverse experiences and perspectives related to the content, fostering empathy and deepening understanding of societal issues. It encouraged students to challenge assumptions, critically analyze multiple viewpoints, and collaboratively construct knowledge. For example, students were studying a podcast about climate change. After listening to the podcast individually, Mrs. Dynar divided the class into small groups. Each group discussed different aspects of the podcast, such as the causes of climate change, its impact on communities, and possible solutions. During these discussions, students shared their insights and raised questions about how societal norms contributed to environmental issues. They used reflective journaling to note their thoughts on what they learned and how they felt about the topic. This process empowered them to reflect on environmental issues critically and consider actions they could take to address them, fostering a learning environment that encouraged transformative thinking and social responsibility.

3.6. Establishing Critical, Democratic, and Participatory Assessment

According to Crookes (2021), assessment in education should embody critical, democratic, and participatory principles. Interviews with participants revealed a preference for assessments emphasizing practical outcomes over mere comprehension testing. They advocated for assessments requiring students to apply their understanding and critical thinking abilities to generate novel knowledge. For instance, Mr. Ariz asked students to listen to a news podcast episode talking about "social media impact on mental health among teenagers". Listening to it, they worked in pairs to identify key arguments in the podcast. Each pair then prepared a brief oral presentation where they critically analyzed how the podcast portrayed the relationship between social media use and mental health issues. This assessment

promoted critical listening skills, evidence-based analysis, and the ability to engage thoughtfully with current issues in the media.

Similarly, Mrs. Eka requested students to listen to a recorded short speech by a community leader addressing the issue of homelessness in their city. After listening, students worked individually to analyze the speech critically. They identified the strengths, such as compelling personal stories, statistical evidence, or motivational language resonating with the audience. They also identified weaknesses, such as potential biases in the presentation of information or logical inconsistencies. Students then wrote a reflective essay summarizing their analysis, discussing how effective the speech conveyed its message, and proposing additional considerations or actions enhancing the impact of addressing homelessness in their community. She also conveyed that this assessment encouraged students to apply critical listening and analytical skills and to reflect on the complexities of addressing social issues through persuasive speech.

4.   Discussion

The findings reveal that while lecturers lack formal awareness of critical pedagogy, particularly its theoretical definition, their teaching practices prove elements of this approach. This aligns with Freire (2020) philosophy that the essence of education lies in fostering critical thinking by addressing real-life problems. The lecturers aim at cultivating students' critical thinking skills in listening classes, even though their understanding of the term 'critical pedagogy' remains limited. This is consistent with Abdolrezapour & Ghanbari's (2021) research, which reveals that critical pedagogy indicators often manifest in classroom practices without explicit acknowledgment of the concept by educators. Wiley's observation that "they just don't know what they know" aptly represents this phenomenon. The lecturers' implicit adoption of critical pedagogy likely stems from the inherent need to address students' struggles with listening skills, as the subject is perceived to be particularly challenging. Incorporating real-life contexts and encouraging critical engagement, they align with Freire principles. This highlights a practical implication: professional development programs should bridge the gap between practice and theory, enabling lecturers to employ critical pedagogy and maximize its transformative potential consciously.

The research reports that lecturers integrate critical pedagogy by emphasizing active knowledge creation rather than passive knowledge acquisition. This approach reflects Freire (2020) the notion of education as a process of reinventing and recreating knowledge. Similarly, Rezai et al. (2023) and Rocha et al. (2022)argue that learning should involve active engagement with materials, letting students to construct their realities through social interactions rather than rote memorization. The study suggests that listening to material connected to real-life issues improves students' engagement and motivation. This corroborates the findings of Zhang et al. (2023), revealing that relating educational content to authentic contexts fosters deeper learning. However, challenges persist due to students' varying expectations; for example, some students' view language learning primarily to improve test scores. This disconnect underscores the need for a pedagogical shift toward fostering critical thinking and social transformation, as suggested by (Ipek, 2020; Jia & Hew, 2021; Kabir & Zealand, 2024). Theoretically, these findings validate the importance of Freire's principles, such as dialogue and critical consciousness. Conceptually, they highlight the need to redefine

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listening pedagogy to include critical and reflective dimensions. Integrating authentic materials and participatory assessments address students' misconceptions about language learning, enhancing the significance and transformation of lessons (Ngo, 2019; Ozcelik et al., 2020).

One major challenge is the passive nature of students, often attributes to cultural factors. Lecturers declare that hierarchical classroom dynamics, prevalent in East Asian educational contexts, hinder open dialogue and critical engagement. This observation aligns with Baturay (2020) and Wang & Chen (2024) researches, critiquing rigid classroom hierarchies as barriers to applying critical pedagogy. Nevertheless, Ha (2021) challenges the generalization that East Asian students are submissive, suggesting that educators' own practices play an essential role to establish classroom dynamics. Notably, lecturers in this research actively challenge traditional hierarchies by fostering horizontal relationships with students.

Another obstacle lies in students' difficulties with accents and pronunciation during listening activities. These issues hinder their ability to engage with materials, particularly those featuring different linguistic backgrounds. This is relevant to a research held by Fajriyah et al. (2021), Rohaniyah (2021), and Saed et al., (2021) who highlight the evolving nature of critical thinking as an ongoing challenge, emphasizing the need for continuous exploration of pedagogical strategies, such as critical discourse analysis. Theoretical implications of these challenges include the necessity of adapting critical pedagogy to diverse cultural contexts. Conceptually, they underscore the importance of redefining classroom roles to empower students. Practically, professional training for lecturers should address strategies to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers, ensuring that critical pedagogy can be effectively implemented.

5. Conclusion

Critical pedagogy is implemented in the English listening class through various strategies that enhance students' engagement and critical thinking. Firstly, it transforms listening from a reproductive skill into an active process where students comprehend, reconstruct, and apply information in diverse contexts. This approach fosters more profound understanding and encourages students to connect listening activities with real-life issues, making learning relevant and meaningful. Additionally, a more egalitarian learning environment is created by developing horizontal relationships between lecturers and students, where student agency and contributions are valued. Moreover, critical pedagogy promotes students' critical consciousness by encouraging dialogue that analyzes content contextually, purposefully, and from multiple perspectives. Assessments are designed to be critical, democratic, and participatory, emphasizing practical outcomes and applying critical thinking skills. However, challenges in implementing critical pedagogy include cultural norms affecting student participation, language barriers impacting comprehension, and the evolving nature of critical thinking itself, requiring ongoing lecturers' reflection and adaptation. Addressing these challenges ensures that critical pedagogy in the English listening class remains effective and inclusive, fostering linguistic proficiency and critical awareness among students. The research faces challenges such as low student engagement due to cultural norms, language barriers to understanding materials, and the need for lecturers to adapt to students' evolving critical thinking skills. These issues limit the applicability of the findings to other contexts. Future research should explore

strategies to solve cultural and linguistic barriers, examine the long-term effect of critical pedagogy on students' critical thinking, and create professional training programs to support lecturers effectively employing critical pedagogy.

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