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Concerns, Contributions, and Challenges of Critical Pedagogies in ELT: A Literature Review

Preocupaciones, Contribuciones, y Desafíos de las Pedagogías Críticas en la Enseñanza del Inglés: Una Revisión de la Literatura

* Review Article

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Abstract

Critical pedagogies have been researched in many knowledge areas, particularly in social sciences. However, in the field of English language teaching, pedagogical and didactic models that implement critical perspectives are scarce. This review attempts to characterize trends of discussion addressed in the scientific literature on critical pedagogies in the teaching of English from 2011 to February 2023. For this, 55 articles available in Scopus, Eric, and Scielo databases were analysed. Four categories were identified: 1) Critical pedagogical practices in ELT, 2) Analysis on the teacher role and education, 3) Principal concerns which yield the introduction of critical pedagogies to ELT field, and 4) Limitations and challenges for critical pedagogies in ELT. This paper stresses the need to deepen and expand research in the field of ELT around the category of critical pedagogies as a possibility to contribute to the English teaching practices, mainly when included in the teachers' education processes.

Keywords: English language teaching, critical pedagogy, literature review, teacher education, teacher role.

Resumen

Las pedagogías críticas se han investigado en muchas áreas del conocimiento, especialmente en las ciencias sociales. Sin embargo, en el campo de la enseñanza del inglés predominan modelos pedagógicos y didácticos en los que la perspectiva crítica es escasa. Esta revisión caracteriza las tendencias de discusión abordadas en la literatura científica sobre pedagogías críticas en la enseñanza del inglés desde 2011 hasta febrero de 2023. Se analizaron 55 artículos disponibles en las bases de datos Scopus, Eric y Scielo, y algunas revistas científicas. Se identificaron cuatro categorías: 1) Prácticas pedagógicas críticas en la enseñanza del inglés, 2) Análisis sobre el rol docente y la formación, 3) Principales preocupaciones que conducen a la introducción de las pedagogías críticas en el campo de la enseñanza del inglés, y 4) Limitaciones y desafíos de la pedagogía crítica en la enseñanza del inglés. Se concluye sobre la necesidad de profundizar y ampliar la investigación en el campo de ELT en torno a la categoría de pedagogías críticas, como una posibilidad de contribuir a las prácticas de enseñanza del inglés, principalmente al ser incluidas desde los procesos de formación de los docentes

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje, educación rural, enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, normalista superior.

Introduction

The reflection on teaching practices has given rise to a variety of discursive currents in the educational sector, whereby approaches, methodologies, and the role of the teacher are questioned. In the field of English language teaching practices, critical pedagogy is one of the currents that is gaining momentum in the last years. Initially, Freire (1968, 1982), McLaren, (1995; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007) and Giroux (1990; Giroux & Simon, 2006) set up the foundations for the discussion in the education sector regarding this category. These authors stressed the need of having a strong interlinkage between praxis and theory, a re-consideration of the role of ethics and politics in education, and a claim for emancipation through pedagogy, which aimed at showing the struggle for equity and dignity.

Later, in the field of ELT, authors such as Kumaravadivelu (2012, 2013), Canagaragah (2008, 2009, 2014, 2010), Blommaert (2008a, 2008b, 2011) and Pennycook (1990, 1999) started a discursive approach regarding critical pedagogies. They came to the questioning of the instrumentalization of teachers and considered that the field must be *situated* in a local context, based in homegrown matters of concern, attempting to transform the world. Based on this growing interest, it is important to delineate the academic production in this area to highlight the contributions of critical pedagogies to the ELT field. This paper aims to review the academic production in this area of concern to settle findings,

achievements, and show fields of inquiry. Findings from this research may encourage teachers to explore and introduce other perspectives to their practices, and of course, conducting new and broader research.

Previous literature reviews for ELT field topics in critical linguistics have discussed approaches for English Language teaching and teaching practices. Of particular interest to this study is the one conducted by Pennycook (2022), who analyses epistemological changes in linguistics and invites to critically revise new trends and work toward change. Similarly, Macías & Hernández – Varona (2021) conducted a literature review on teacher learning in language teaching from an international viewpoint. These scholars highlight the ecological perspective and conclude teacher education should be based on the interactions among social, cultural, and historical contexts. Moreover, Gounari (2020) in an introduction for the Special Issue in L2 Journal makes a historical review, an exploration about what is not critical pedagogy and how it has moulded language teaching. Overall, these recent literature reviews show the growing interest in critical pedagogies for language teaching. However, none of them emphasize the characteristics and elements they bring to the ELT, forming a gap in the literature and making it a pertinent and necessary issue to address. Therefore, this literature review stands as an important contribution to the field, as it is focused on providing a wider view about the latest currents with the English Language Teaching regarding critical pedagogies, as well as highlighting convergence points to elucidate topics emerging in this area.

Methodology

A narrative literature review was proposed. In the field of education, literature reviews enable us to consolidate research findings and identify knowledge gaps. But for that, it is important that the review presents a critical analysis of the identified literature (Guirao, 2015). In what follows, we explain the different stages of this research.

Identifying the Initial Research Question.

Taking into consideration that this review is part of the initial phase of the doctoral research project entitled *"Mixed methods study on the relationship between epistemological beliefs and critical pedagogies in ELT of teachers in the public sector of Bogotá",* our interest was to provide a comprehensive and general approach to the literature in order to identify the main fields of reflection associated with published research on critical pedagogies in English language teaching. This approach aimed to identify the central discussions in the literature on the topic, their contributions, and the possible gaps or difficulties highlighted by such research. Therefore, we formulated the following question to guide our review work:

- *What are the main reflection fields in relation to the use of critical pedagogies in English Language Teaching?*

Identifying Relevant Studies.

The first step to locate the literature was to conduct a search on the database SCOPUS with the keywords: "ELT" and "Critical Pedagogy", using the Boolean operator AND, without a date range. This search generated 42 results, 31 of them (Research articles) were included for the present review. Books and book chapters were not considered for this analysis. Finding just a few articles evidenced that in this database there is little research published on this specific topic regarding ELT. As such, we decided to extend the search to include the databases ERIC and SCIELO. The last database was chosen given its Ibero-American reach, recognizing the contributions of the epistemologies of the South to the critical discourses and movement. This was crucial to this study as we attempted to capture the work of teachers and researchers inspired in Paulo Freire, a pioneer in the critical pedagogy proposal from Brazil. Finally, the search was also conducted in the journals: ELT Journal, TESOL QUARTERLY, and Critical Inquiry in Language Studies. As a result, 55 articles were analysed in this literature review. All selected documents were published between 2011 and 2023, more specifically until February 2023, which is the date when the literature search process was completed.

Summarising and Reporting Findings.

The literature examined encompassed research on teaching experiences applying critical pedagogy such as post-memory, social justice, linguistic imperialism, mainstream textbooks, and discourses. Other studies were geared

towards teacher education. For the analysis of the research articles, a thorough review of the texts was conducted, which included a process of identifying recurring themes that were grouped and regrouped until the following general categories were constructed: Teachers' knowledge, teachers' professional development, teacher's pedagogical experiences, academic contexts and critical pedagogy's issues. Finally, four central fields of reflection were identified and labelled: 1) Critical pedagogical practices in ELT: What characterizes them?, 2) Analysis on teacher education, 3) Principal concerns that make necessary to introduce critical pedagogies to ELT field, and 4) Limitations and challenges for critical pedagogies in ELT. It is important to note that they are in no specific order.

Results

Critical pedagogical practices in ELT: What characterizes them?

This field of reflection showcases pedagogical practices where teachers introduce critical pedagogies into their teaching exercises. Scholarly works in this line systematized experiences and presented either case-studies, narratives, or ethnographies. The authors introduced their findings in relation to exploring critical pedagogies. The following aspects are pointed out: Reflections on the well-known relationship between language and culture (Cruz, 2018; López-Gopar, 2018; Wang et al., 2021); the incorporation of materials to the English language lessons (Barjesteh et al., 2015; Contreras & Chapetón, 2016); social, political and ethical concerns (Ahmed & Morgan, 2021; Akbari, 2008; Jeyaraj & Harland, 2014; Khatib

& Miri, 2016; López-Gopar, 2018), and teaching strategies (Contreras & Chapetón, 2016; Derince, 2011; Higareda et al., 2009; Khatib & Miri, 2016; Larson, 2014; López-Gopar, 2018; Miri et al., 2017; Valdez, 2012; Viana & Zyngier, 2017; Villacañas de Castro, 2017; Villacañas de Castro et al., 2018). In what follows, we explain each of the fields of reflection found in this review.

To begin with, there is an established relationship between language and culture, where the position of some authors (Porto, 2021; Raddawi & Troudi, 2018; Wang et al., 2021) is to realize the importance of moving beyond this established relationship. It is a recurrent claim to enhance students' Critical Intercultural Literacy (CIL). For instance, Wang et al. (2021) consider that it is important that stakeholders foresee complex and emergent situations that may require the use of English for intercultural communication encounters from a multilingual perspective. Hence, it is expected that language and culture are perceived from a multilingual perspective and move beyond the cultural content of textbooks to sense the critical moments of these encounters. Canagarajah, interviewed by Porto (2021), introduces the question of how students can develop practices to communicate across cultures, and remarks that knowledge is not enough. Thus, pedagogical practices are needed so that students can develop practices and negotiation strategies to deal with these differences. In this sense, Canagarajah proposes a model of language competence for cosmopolitan relationships or intercultural citizenship. This entails a model that is more practice-based.

Practices involving critical pedagogies are often focused in the comprehension of English as a global lingua franca rather than principally as an Anglophone language. In this way, Wang et al. (2021) argue that students can develop CIL by speculating and questioning throughout the learning and experiencing process and become critical learners. This, in turn, should increase the prominence of English as a global lingua franca. In a similar vein, Jeyaraj & Harland (2014) in their pedagogical practice attempted to humanize the English language, guided students to learn the language that truly mattered to them and not just language for a future career development. This allowed them to see English in a more authentic and humanistic manner instead of a commodity. In the Latin-American context, Siqueira & Gimenez (2021) reflected on the Brazilian curriculum considering Freire's contributions to the pedagogy that lead to considering English as a Lingua Franca in the official curriculum. They endorse this perspective and present implications and challenges for Brazilian teachers.

Regarding materials, pedagogical practices that incorporate critical pedagogies claim there is a need to give a central role to local knowledge. To raise the critical awareness of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students, new materials should be developed based on their experiences and on social issues in society, meaning that these topics should be adjusted to local contexts or needs (Barjesteh et al., 2015; Kohnke, 2019). Teachers incorporating critical pedagogies in ELT coincide in preferring their own prepared materials, texts, or resources on the internet rather than mainstream textbooks (Contreras & Chapetón, 2016; Cruz,

2018; Kohnke, 2019; Nuñez, 2020; Valdez, 2012; Viana & Zyngier, 2017). It is considered that if materials are situated within local contexts, students will understand their own identities and their own society in the language classrooms.

Connecting with the previous ideas about local knowledge centred materials, it is important to consider local contexts as the centre of the ELT practices. Bridging lessons with wider society allows students to experience their learning process and express their voice. This provides them the self-confidence to make their voices heard in future circumstances and take more risks in contributing their utterances (Khatib & Miri, 2016). Khan (2020) highlights that English teachers need to become involved in questioning how and what they teach because through their practice they are able to stimulate social changes in society. Besides, there is a recognition of the importance of situated practices to connect reality and open the learning experience from the classroom to the social life experiences (Contreras & Chapetón, 2016; Cruz, 2018; Jalalian & Abdul, 2020).

Social, political, and ethical concerns are deeply present in critical pedagogical practices in ELT. Through a post-memory lens, Ahmed & Morgan (2021) revealed multilingualism is a multifaceted dimension of identity negotiation across time and space. They remark ELT classrooms as a place where partiality of post-memory can be deconstructed supporting dialogue and reconciliation. Regarding issues such as gender-gaps and discourse, Valdez (2012) and Khan (2020) stand out. The first one with a pedagogical experience where multimodal

texts were used to illustrate the notion of women being both liberated and oppressed in Philippine society, allowing students to understand how society shapes texts, stereotypes, and power relationships. In a similar way, Khan (2020) introduced gender in her pedagogical experience as teacher educator to make future teachers conscious of the ethical and political implications of language learning. These studies show the importance of developing social consciousness as a foundation to foster critical pedagogies and language teaching (Contreras & Chapetón, 2016).

Lastly, it is important to address the considerations of researchers about strategies for fostering English language skills in students. A common characteristic here is that teachers decline following mainstream trends or textbooks and prefer to design their own strategies, programs, and materials (Cruz, 2018; Derince, 2011; Khan, 2020; Larson, 2014; López-Gopar, 2018; Valdez, 2012; Viana & Zyngier, 2017; Villacañas de Castro, 2017). Strategies such as the use of poster-essay, mobile phones, project groups, blogs, codes, and collaborative learning showed that horizontal communication is a useful platform for students to voice their opinions and interact in a dialogical approach of the English teaching. Likewise, scholars stress that allowing the use of L1 (first language) in the classroom can be favourable as a teaching strategy to generate confidence, consciousness, and recognize students' identities through a dialogical approach questioning the monolingual way of teaching English (Higareda et al., 2009; Miri et al., 2017; Mugford, 2008). Similarly, Larson (2014) remarks that

strategies can be adaptable, syllabi can be negotiated to promote equity, and harmonization of the power hierarchy within the student-teacher relationship, and content can be made more relevant for students. Additionally, scholars highlighted that information communication technologies (ICT) are also regarding key strategy promoted by English teachers to bridge the gap between content knowledge and innovation (Cruz, 2018). Hence in a context where ICT tools are disposable there is a potential of a variety of possibilities as the ones explored by the researchers in this review.

Along with strategies, scholars researched on the expertise of teachers and critical reflection concluding they raise teachers' awareness over their cognition and practices (Khatib & Miri, 2016). These processes are important in the way they allowed them to concrete a theoretical foundation in their pedagogical practice. However, it is not a must when exploring critical pedagogies.

To close this section, it is noteworthy that English proficiency was reported to be improved considerably by the authors, hence, debunking the fixed idea that allowing the use of the first language in the classroom may reduce the effectiveness of teaching practices.

Analysis on teacher role and education.

In this section, we present the fields of reflection reported by authors regarding English teacher role and education. These works emphasized the responsibilities,

challenges, context of pre-service and in-service teachers and their beliefs or ideas about their practice (Aguirre & Ramos, 2011; Basabe, 2019; Crookes, 2021; Cruz, 2018; Derince, 2011; Dewey, 2014; Echeverri-Sucerquia & Pérez, 2014; Fandiño-Parra, 2021; Granados-Beltrán, 2016; Kavenuke & Muthanna, 2021; Kaviani & Heidar, 2020; Khan, 2020; Khatib & Miri, 2016; Linares, 2016; Macías & Hernández - Varona, 2021; Mambu, 2022, Pagliarini & de Assis-Peterson, 1999; Pennycook, 1990; Pikhart & Habeb, 2022; Porto, 2021; Quintero, 2019; Raddawi & Troudi, 2018; Safari, 2017; Samacá Bohórquez, 2012; Sánchez, 2014; Shin, 2022; Siqueira, 2017).

A shift of focus from grammar and phonology to strategies of negotiation based on resourceful dispositions is claimed to language teachers and the ones involved in language education (Porto, 2021). Historically, the field of ELT has addressed the development of communicative skills in individuals, but modern cosmopolitan or intercultural agendas require collaborative dispositions (Pennycook, 1990; Porto, 2021). To achieve this shift of focus, a deep process invoking important aspects of the role of the teachers and their education is needed.

Canagarajah, interviewed in Porto (2021), notes aspects such as poor infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and scarce resources in schools as key factors associated with o teacher burnout. Similarly, the author indicates that too many teachers are forced to use predetermined textbooks, and administer standardized exams while very often have students who come from homes with basic unsatisfied needs. Siqueira (2017), regarding teacher educators, adds that

they are "somewhat confused, not to say, aloof, once they find themselves having to face a much more complex reality that is all the time testing their knowledge, beliefs, flexibility, and so forth". (p. 402) According to this difficult context, the challenges for English teachers are considerable.

In the framework of critical pedagogies, researchers point at some issues regarding the teachers' role. For example, educators have a responsibility to lead education to a more political focus behaving as "public intellectuals," so there is a need for critical consciousness amongst pre-service teachers (Granados-Beltrán, 2016; Khan, 2020). Aguirre & Ramos (2011) emphasize teachers' responsibility as decision making and integration of the social dimensions to the ELT process. Then, to criticize and change injustices and inequities in education and society is a must for teachers who adopt this critical role (Safari, 2017; West, 2021). Critical-consciousness gained through a dialogic reflection can liberate teachers to recognize their local context and stimulate social changes in society, which positions teachers as transformative intellectuals (Crookes, 2021; Echeverri-Sucerquia & Pérez, 2014; Kavenuke & Muthanna, 2021; Khan, 2020; Khatib & Miri, 2016; Raddawi & Troudi, 2018; Siqueira, 2017). In addition, Samacá Bohórquez (2012) highlights the relevance of creating spaces in undergraduate programs for the reflection on teaching and learning processes. She defines this reflection as an exercise of analysing an issue or situation to realize causes, to comprehend implications, to assume a position, and to take action. These reflection processes go

beyond thinking and lead to action, a fact that remains important for taking critical pedagogies to a dynamic vision of the teachers' role in society.

University courses, programmes, and curricula could begin to emphasize on the process of educating intercultural language professionals (Granados-Beltrán, 2016; Siqueira, 2017), involving a serious reconsideration of the purposes and content of language teaching (Porto, 2021). Nowadays, these programs have been set up to make professionals more competitive and effective within a globalized world (Kaviani & Heidar, 2020; Khan, 2020; Raddawi & Troudi, 2018; Sánchez, 2014). Unfortunately, English teachers are even seen as technicians who need to be given all the tools and instructions (Cruz, 2018), marginalizing them in discussions of the nature of professional knowledge and expertise. However, "recent developments have seen teachers becoming repositioned as 'knowing professionals' and as agents of pedagogic change in their own right" (Dewey, 2014, p.27).

In close connection with these findings, there is a concern about the discourses that frame the expertise of teachers. While mainstream discourses focus on language skills and how well teachers know or are familiarized with mainstream theories and methodologies (Cruz, 2018; Dewey, 2014); critical approaches claim that teachers must debunk stereotypes, foster empathy, shape their self-identity, make sense of English how well they can relate to their realities, with a social, political, and cultural context for their practice as future teachers of local lingua-

cultural repertoires, with their own identities focused on transforming the social futures and offering alternatives to traditional knowledge-transmission based teacher education (Barry, 2011; Cruz, 2018; Derince, 2011; Khan, 2020; López-Gopar, 2018; Quintero, 2019).

Finally, Siqueira (2017) targets the need of teachers strengthening an autochthonous epistemology, which requires a re-evaluation and re-structuring of assessment systems. This entails that teachers must engage themselves in behaviours of decolonization of minds, attitudes, and, in a more practical way, of instructional materials. Likewise, Basabe (2019) reflects on teachers' agency, he states criticality cannot be measure, so, teachers grow critically, and research is needed to inform how teachers exercise their agency and their capacity to become critical. Linked to this idea, there is also a call to research in-service teacher development regarding critical pedagogical practices. (Echeverri-Sucerquia et al., 2014)

Principal concerns which yield the introduction of critical pedagogies to the ELT field.

There are essential elements addressed by researchers over the convenience and benefits critical pedagogies brings to the field of ELT. In this section some of them are emphasized: Awareness of intercultural contexts, power relations and colonized practices (Cruz, 2018; Fandiño-Parra, 2021; Fang, 2018; López-Gopar, 2018; Pennycook, 1990, 1999; Porto, 2021; Wang et al., 2021),

need of recognition of local knowledge (Rao, 2018), disadvantages of imported and mainstream textbooks (Erfani, 2013; Jalalian & Abdul, 2020; Kohnke, 2019; Satienchayakorn & Grant, 2022), need of social transformation and peaceful societies (Ahmed & Morgan, 2021; Banegas & Villacañas de Castro, 2016).

There is a broad concern regarding the ELT field: There are colonized practices and mainstream discourses which do not recognize social contexts and local knowledge (Fandiño-Parra, 2021; López-Gopar, 2018; Pennycook, 1990, 1999; Porto, 2021). Scholars argue there is a need of switching from a conventional perspective of Intercultural Communication (IC) to an English as Lingua Franca (ELF), highlighting a translingual and transcultural perspective of intercultural encounters, giving a place to diversity (Fang, 2018; Wang et al., 2021). Satienchayakorn & Grant (2022) researched on raciolinguistics as an opportunity to develop a critical consciousness in students regarding global racial capitalism, discourses of whiteness, standard English, and native speakerism. Similarly, Ahmed & Morgan (2021) propose giving a place to an affective approach recognizing that emotions are socially constructed and deeply embedded in power relations and have been underscore in educational practices. These authors claim that "affect enables us to act, not react, in ethical and transformative ways" (Ahmed & Morgan, 2021, p. 495). Connected to this idea, Khan (2020) mentions that promoting inclusive classrooms ultimately cultivate a more peaceful society. Thus, including local, diverse experiences in the classroom delivers more agency to

teachers, which can assist them in 'decolonizing' English teaching practices to be more adaptive to local needs.

Local knowledge is a main concern addressed in the literature (Rao, 2018) stating that for authentic learning, teaching materials and pedagogy should be equivalent to the broader socio-political environment and the specific school environment. Canagarajah, in Porto, (2021) recognizes that there is extensive research in English-dominant countries, but we need more studies developed by scholars from Africa, South America, and East Asia which bring us a better comprehension of the professional and academic contexts where diverse local languages involve English teaching practices. In this sense, one of the most visible problems is the use of mainstream textbooks replacing locally developed textbooks and heavily emphasizing on Western ideas (Jalalian & Abdul, 2020; Kohnke, 2019). To increase the comprehension of this problem it is necessary to highlight that Western ideas are accompanied by economic interest and neoliberalism. As an example of how these ideas permeate textbooks, Jalalian & Abdul (2020) analysed mainstream textbooks introduced in Malaysian classrooms and, they showed within their findings that competitiveness, fame and celebrities, material wealth and, consumerism were the main topics present in those texts. Likewise, Erfani (2013) argues student's awareness can be sparked through materials developed by teachers over global issues such as poverty, child labour or armed trades, which are not present on mainstream textbooks.

Additionally, Valdez (2020) states that language is a vehicle for critical thinking and this pedagogical approach highlights the importance of learner agency. In this sense is a duty of critical teachers to transform educational conditions and social relations to emancipate themselves.

Limitations and challenges for critical pedagogies in ELT

It is important to close this section by recognizing the limitations and challenges addressed by some authors about critical pedagogies in ELT. (Davari et al., 2012; Echeverri-Sucerquia & Pérez, 2014; Fang, 2018; Jeyaraj & Harland, 2014, 2019; Porto, 2021; Samacá Bohórquez, 2012; Satienchayakorn & Grant, 2022; Toh, 2018).

As it is a concern of critical pedagogies to allow students to reflect about the reality, a bad way to do it, according to Canagarajah, is imposing our values to students, or making students feel that our values are a neutral approach or a superior approach (Porto, 2021). Also, it is necessary to avoid indoctrination ensuring students to be critical scholars and free thinkers (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016). In this way, it is important to remember that one prompt of critical pedagogies is to establish horizontal relationships, recognizing the knowledge and values of students. For example, Mambu (2016) and Puspita & Mambu (2020) introduce the idea of interfaith dialogues and states critical spiritual pedagogy as a place for promoting open-mindedness and respect for others. Moreover, reflection processes need to be carried out in undergraduate programs (Samacá, 2012). Although exploring the unknown (as critical pedagogy could be) could make

English teachers feel vulnerable and uncomfortable at different levels according to their experience and education, it is a valuable experience. Hence, learning with and from peers, improving reading habits, recognizing and understanding theory, using past experiences to give context to theory could be strategies to implement in order to make sense of critical pedagogies as a possibility for English language teaching (Echeverri-Sucerquia & Pérez, 2014).

Another point is that critical pedagogies could never be something prescribed by theorists as a method that could be carried out by following a series of steps (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2014). Therefore, cultural and political implications from one country to another are difficult to trace steps, Jeyaraj & Harland (2014) add that "transformation seemed to be dependent on the amount of freedom the teacher had in their respective institution and country, as well as the amount of risk they were willing to take" (p. 352). In this sense, critical pedagogies need more attention from those on position of leadership to promote changes in education politics regarding ELT (Aguirre & Ramos, 2011; Fang, 2018; Jeyaraj & Harland, 2019; Satienchayakorn & Grant, 2022).

In contrast, Toh (2018) notes a challenge when researchers attempt to publish. He argues that peer-review could be a site of oppression if left unchecked. In his research he analyses how four submitted manuscripts are rejected in the peer-review process due to the ideas of the reviewers and the engagement to the topic researched. In this sense, Toh (2018) shows manuscripts questioning

existing beliefs and practices in ELT framed drawn from critical pedagogies, critical thinking and critical literacies can become a target for disagreement and even antipathy because of the mainstream ideologies hold by some experts in this field.

Finally, it is important to address the research of Davari et al. (2012), who in an Iranian community applied a survey and found deeply rooted the ideas about English language teaching. Findings suggest that English should be taught only through the medium of English and Native speakers of English are the best teachers of English. This demonstrates there is still a long way to go to achieve a decolonization of these ideas related to viewing the English language as a static and dehumanized issue. In this sense, it is important to remember the invitation of Canagarajah to continue researching, particularly in the non-English dominant countries. (Porto, 2021).

Conclusions

This paper has shown important elements associated with the concerns, contributions, and challenges of critical pedagogies in ELT.

Starting with the category named teaching practices, there is an important trend pointing out the need to focus in communication across cultures. This entails a need to move beyond the cultural content of textbooks, making students aware through intercultural practices (Porto, 2021; Raddawi & Troudi, 2018; Wang et al.,

2021). English as a lingua franca is an axis in the discussion and the need to emphasise the curriculum on a wider view than the one promoted by the Anglophone language institutions, which opens the opportunity to regard local contexts and to have more meaningful communicative experiences in the classrooms (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2014; Siqueira & Gimenez 2021). Similarly, it is important to highlight, the discussion over teaching materials, which shows an increasing interest between teachers in giving a preference to their own teaching materials and methodologies beyond the mainstream ones. Situated practices, then, become a pillar in the critical pedagogies in ELT. In these practices, teachers promote the development of a critical consciousness among students, a comprehension of their realities through the language classes, and mainly, they lead transformative practices in their communities.

Regarding teacher role and teacher education, the introduction of critical perspectives in university courses, programmes, and curricula is claimed by multiple voices in the field. They state there is a need to shift focus from a teaching based on linguistics and communicative skills, to one opened to the intercultural encounter and the development of skills beyond language. Likewise, teachers' education and professional development is challenged to promote structural changes by giving teachers new perspectives on education and pedagogy. Such perspectives are opened not only to the needs of students, but also to the teachers' vision of education, one that encourages social change and humanism (Crookes, 2021; Echeverri-Sucerquia & Pérez, 2014; Kavenuke & Muthanna, 2021;

Khan, 2020; Khatib & Miri, 2016; Raddawi & Troudi, 2018; Siqueira, 2017). A main conclusion is that research and research in-service is needed to promote professional development, and as a tool to widen the field and nourish it with local perspectives as well.

In relation to the concerns which yield the introduction of critical pedagogies to ELT, awareness of intercultural contexts, power relations, and colonized practices are key inputs. As mentioned before, there is a claim for the recognition of local knowledge over mainstream proposals for the English language teaching. And lastly, an important concern highlighted in this study is the role of English classes in the promotion of social transformation and peaceful communities. As to the category of limitations and challenges, it is important to emphasize that even though critical pedagogies have been researched and discussed in the ELT field, there is still a need to expand research. In conclusion, this paper also offers an invitation to English teachers, pre-service teachers, teacher educators or all the ones interested in English language teaching to feel encouraged to explore theory, concepts, teachers' experiences, and the use of critical perspectives. Contributions from different actors can strengthen the field, so that theory, practice, and reflections can have a positive impact in the teaching and learning of English. There is still a wide range of aspects to be discussed. Society moves rapidly, AI (Artificial intelligence), globalization, social situations, and conflicts affect schools and universities in multiple ways. From a critical perspective, *how are we going to research, reflect and contribute from our field? And to our field?*

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