



CRITICAL PEDAGOGY THROUGH GENRE-BASED PEDAGOGY FOR DEVELOPING STUDENTS WRITING SKILLS: STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

This current study discusses critical pedagogy, a concept that supports the paradigm of education for cultural transformation. This concept has been considered an essential approach for developing students' critical thinking and awareness of social issues. Despite its popularity, the implementation of critical pedagogy in classes remains unclear. This paper suggests that critical pedagogy can be concurrent with genre-based pedagogy (GBP), the dominant approach to teaching writing in Indonesia's English language classes. This study argues that language teachers can use GBP to introduce critical pedagogy. This research used the descriptive qualitative method, allowing researchers to collect the data from classroom observation in vignettes. The data were taken from four classes where the participant teacher trained students to write argumentative texts. It captured the teaching and learning process in the Context Building and Text Modelling phases. The researchers interpreted and analyzed the data based on the themes identified from the critical pedagogy and GBP literature. It is found that the principles of critical pedagogy such as historicity, problem-posing, emancipation, and dialogic are evident in this study. This study has implications for EFL teachers in Indonesia, especially when they must adapt to "Merdeka Belajar," which promotes critical thinking.

INTRODUCTION

Education can be regarded as a systematic effort made by the government to present quality teaching and learning for the younger generation. It aims to build a better future for a nation, empower students to transform the community, and train youth to be creative and innovative. Literature has outlined the paradigm that focuses on education for cultural transformation (Mirabella & Nguyen, 2019; Qoyyimah et al., 2020). This current study discusses critical pedagogy, a concept that supports the paradigm of education for cultural transformation. With this paradigm, education develops students' awareness of their identities, including who they are and what they want to achieve (Wallowitz, 2008). More importantly, education must liberate students from fear and oppression (Shih, 2018). Further, critical pedagogy aims to equip students with the capacities to counter the imbalance in power and justice and empower students to fight for justice and equality for community development (Freire, 2000).

Despite transforming culture, the paradigm is somehow challenging to implement in classes. Questions regarding its practicality remain, such as how to implement the progressive paradigm in the conservative community? Is there any specific method to introduce critical pedagogy in particular classes? What teaching material should teachers prepare? However, research addressing the questions is lacking.

When incorporating critical pedagogy in EFL classes, published studies that examined critical pedagogy and EFL teaching are mostly limited to research about teachers' reflections and teachers' difficulties (Mambu, 2018; Chandrasoma & Ananda, 2018). Regarding skills to improve, research in this field has proven that critical pedagogy improves reading skills (Kurniawati et al., 2020) and speaking skills (Chandrasoma & Ananda, 2018). Despite the contribution, none of these studies focused on developing students' writing skills. Therefore, this current study fills this research gap because it presents strategies for teachers to introduce critical pedagogy in teaching how to write argumentative texts. It contributes to teaching writing practice, given that students' criticality is needed to write argumentative texts.

Rather than composing a specific method of teaching critical pedagogy, this study embeds the paradigm in the more fixed method such as genre-based pedagogy (GBP). GBP has been widely used to teach literacy in many countries, including Indonesia, for more than two decades. It has been officially implemented and intensively promoted in Indonesia through the change in national curricula: the 2006 and the 2013 national curricula (Retnaningdyah, 2019). The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) recently carried out systemic programs such as Trainer of Teacher (ToT) to develop teachers' competence in implementing

the GBP in language classes. Interestingly, genre pedagogy is applied not limited to teaching English but also introduced to Bahasa Indonesia classes (see Mahyudi et al., 2020). Language teachers introduce different text genres to students when teaching reading and writing. So that they can identify the function of the texts they are reading and be aware of the function of the text they are going to write.

With genre pedagogy, teachers make students understand that text is made for communication purposes, such as describing, explaining phenomena, advertising things, convincing, and arguing opinions. From this stance, it can be inferred that a text is never ideologically free as it conveys the authors' purposes. Any text conveys the authors' ideology while the readers/viewers will respond to it with their perspective (Tehseem et al., 2020). Both text producers and the receivers use texts to negotiate their voices in some ways. For example, with argumentative texts, text producers attempted to leverage the specific language features to voice their ideology while critically criticizing the ones they were questioning. Hence, since teaching language trains students to create texts conveying opinion, this study assumes that language teachers can use their language class activities to promote criticality.

To explore how critical pedagogy can be embedded in GBP, this study outlines research questions: (1) What strategies did the EFL teacher use to apply critical pedagogy in GBP in writing classes? And (2) What problems did the language teacher encounter when implementing the two approaches and how to solve the problems?

The exploration of the research questions made this paper contributes to presenting the effective strategies to teach critical pedagogy while identifying the problems and solutions the language teachers have when implementing it in GBP. More importantly, this study is crucial to help Indonesian teachers adapt to the new educational policy of 'Merdeka Belajar' that promotes critical thinking and critical literacy (Yuhastina et al., 2020).

The following section presents critical pedagogy and genre pedagogy to understand how the two concepts can be two-fold pedagogies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Critical pedagogy outlines that education must empower and liberate students from oppression (Shih, 2018). It aims to develop student awareness of their environment and society as well as equip students with the capacities to counter the imbalance in power and justice (Wallowitz, 2008). Critical pedagogy promotes the two key concepts in education: critical thinking and critical literacy. Critical thinking is a set of competencies to identify a problem

and its assumptions, make inferences, use logic, and judge the validity and reliability of assumptions, sources of data, or information (Varenina et al., 2021; Ariantini et al., 2021). Critical thinking is a skill that can be taught through any subject, such as social science (Nusantari et al., 2021), citizenship education (Sibbett, 2016), entrepreneurship (Kakouris, 2015), and language teaching (Kubota & Miller, 2017). In language teaching, *language* should be considered a tool for communication and “a practice that constructs and is constructed by the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future” (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Learning an indigenous language or foreign language affects learners' awareness of themselves, their environment, identity, and what they want to achieve in the future (Qoyyimah, Singh, Doherty, et al., 2020; Qoyyimah, Singh, Exley, et al., 2020).

Another important layer of critical pedagogy is critical literacy. Critical literacy is a practical approach to empowering students to become aware of and responsive to what happens in their society. With critical literacy, teachers support students to be agents of change, not becoming “unwitting agents of the status quo with all of its faults and injustice” (White, 2009, p.55). Critical literacy equips students to engage in dialogue with texts and society instead of passively consuming other people's ideas (Weng, 2021). With critical literacy, Morrell (2003), in *Writing the word and the world*, argues the importance of “change in focus from consumption to production” or Critical Textual Production (p.6). Drawing from the work of Freire (2000), Morrell (2003) proposes several core tenets of critical pedagogy: Historicity, Problem-posing, Dialogic, Emancipatory, and Praxis (Manojan, 2019). With problem-posing and historicity principles, teachers must embrace real-world problems and begin with students' experiences as a member of the community as well as citizens of the world. Dialogic means that the approach must entail authentic humanizing interactions among the people (see Shih, 2018). Meanwhile, the emancipatory principle focuses on critical composition pedagogy must confront social injustice and liberate students from oppressive realities. Lastly, praxis suggests critical pedagogy be about feasible action. In addition to these principles, Giroux (2018) suggests critical pedagogy regards the value of democracy.

Learning from these tenets, it may be concluded that the main goal of critical pedagogy is student empowerment. Through a specific teaching method, the philosophical thinking of critical pedagogy can be disseminated effectively. The following section presents the method of genre pedagogy that can be used as a medium for introducing critical pedagogy.

Genre Pedagogy for Teaching Writing

The term genre pedagogy (GBP) is interchangeably termed as SFL-genre pedagogy. It was initiated by Sydney scholars who worked with literacy teachers across Australia for decades until this approach gained popularity (see also Troyan et al., 2021). Further, research regarding this approach has garnered language educators' interest in EFL contexts like Indonesia, China, and Japan (see Emilia & Hamied, 2015; Huang & Jun Zhang, 2020). Since then, there has been growing research exploring how GBP is suitable for EFL writing classes and examining its effectiveness.

GBP is the result of combining two theories of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) introduced by Halliday (1995) and communicative language teaching (CLT). SFL is the concept that explains how language functions in a particular context. Likewise, CLT suggests functional, that is, text must have communicative purposes. By functional, it suggests language is doing some job in a particular context (Halliday, 1995). The text refers to a unit of discourse with a specific structure and purpose. Within the text, related meanings are woven to make a unified whole.

Phases in Genre Pedagogy

GBP is a teaching cycle for developing students writing that comprises four major phases: Building Field/context, Modelling, Joint Construction, and Independent Construction of Text (see Mauludin, 2020; Feez, 1999). Ideally, teachers commence the GBP in that sequence. As a cycle, however, teachers can start from any phase in accordance with students' development in learning and literacy (Feez, 1999). Language teachers have more choices to start depending on students' language competence and background. Hence, the cycle is considered suitable for ELT in Indonesia since it considers and gives thought to non-native English students (Emilia & Hamied, 2015).

In the first phase of Context Building, the teachers elicit students' knowledge of the target genre (exposition, narrative, explanation) and familiarise students with the topic being discussed. The second phase is Modelling and Deconstruction to let students know about the characteristics of the taught genre. In this phase, teachers introduce the text model's metalanguage, including its language features, rhetorical convention (thesis statement, refutations, and claims), and generic structure. Rather than explicitly explaining the target genre, Huang & Jun Zhang (2020) suggested that teachers lead the deconstruction process by asking students to analyze the text model. Teachers in this phase invoke students' critical thinking by asking students questions to address, such as Does the introduction of the essay

appeal to you? Does the author provide his/her thesis statement? How many claims does the author make to support his/her overarching thesis statement? Does he/she provide any explanation and evidence? What types of evidence does the author provide? Does the author consider the opposing opinion? Why does the author discuss the opposite opinion? Did the author restate his/her thesis statement and claims? And What kind of sentences make the elaboration more objective? Why? (Huang & Jun Zhang, 2020, p.362). These questions are helpful as they inevitably develop students' critical thinking because they can guide teachers to let students read, understand, infer, and conclude the text models. Without reading it critically, students might not be able to address these questions.

Then, the third phase is Joint Construction which promotes teacher-students and student-student collaboration to develop the draft. In this phase, there is a move from the instruction of genre to the process level in which teachers guide students through the writing process, as well as assist learners in developing writing strategies of how to set writing goals, generate ideas, and organize ideas in the form of notes, mind maps, and spider grams (Huang & Jun Zhang, 2020, p.343). Finally, the fourth phase is Individual Construction. In this phase, students are given room to complete the text.

This paper suggests that all the phases are crucial for enabling students to write argumentative texts. Despite the claim, it highlights the importance of the first two phases of Context Building and Text Modelling. In these two phases, teachers encourage students to be more aware of what they are going to write and how to develop an argument. The two phases are critical for introducing critical pedagogy concepts. This paper reports the participant teachers' experience when commencing the two phases of Context Building and Modelling. It presents her strategies for introducing critical pedagogy in the two phases.

METHOD

This study is designed as descriptive qualitative research. The data were taken from class observation of the Essay Writing course for students at a private university in East Java. The main goal of this writing class is that students can write argumentative texts. The class took place in one semester, with 14 meetings. Each weekly meeting is 90 minutes. So, this topic took 21 hours, with outlined four writing tasks; students were required to write two discussion texts and two exposition texts. The moments captured and presented in this paper are taken from the specific occasion of Genre pedagogy phases: Context Building and Text Modelling.

Research Participant

The study participants involved one teacher and ten university students in the third semester. All their names presented in this study are pseudonyms to maintain students' confidentiality. This study involves students who gained scores below 450 in the English TOEFL equivalent test. Rather than name them students with lower performance because of the lower score (below 450), the researchers use students with different learning experiences. The term different experience is based on a belief that everyone counts, while any problem regarding education performance is systemic. This argument can be explained as follow. The students participating in this research come from different schools, and some come from different cities. Despite working within the same national curriculum, the secondary schools the students went into might have different resources in terms of facilities and teacher professionalism. Different resources affect different learning experiences and therefore learning outcomes. Students who gain higher education performance might receive more privilege/better treatment than their counterparts who have lower performance. Hence, the researchers need to code them with the fairer attribute. More importantly, the current study did not blame their previous secondary education for their lower performance. Instead, this study tends to find the most suitable teaching method that could empower students to become reflective individuals, both as language learners and as future language teachers.

The data presented in this study was collected from class observation to capture moments from the class during the Context Building and Text Modelling phases. The observation form was developed in advance based on the researcher's inquiries. Then, the filled form was described and refined in more detail in the form of fieldnotes. After that, the obtained data were analyzed based on thematic analysis. The researcher coded the data whenever they found it aligned with the themes related to critical pedagogy. More specifically, the data were analyzed based on themes regarding teaching strategies and challenges in teaching critical pedagogy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the interpretation and analysis of the data to address the research questions: teachers' strategies and challenges in incorporating critical pedagogy in GBP. The first subsection displays the captured moments in which Context Building and Modelling occurred. Meanwhile, the second subsection comprises the discussion by which the researcher links the data with the existing literature related to strategies to teach writing and develop student critical literacy skills.

The data were analyzed based on the themes outlined in the research questions, i.e., strategies of critical pedagogy, including critical literacy and critical thinking. In doing so, the researcher identified teaching activities that correspond to the concepts, including the principles of critical pedagogy.

Teacher`s Strategies to Incorporate Critical Pedagogy within GBP

In incorporating the critical pedagogy in GBP, this study identified three ways performed by the teacher in classes. These include presenting additional activities prior to the cycle for her to know the students' learning background, offering a bottom-up strategy in deciding what topic to discuss, and asking students several questions to invoke their critical thinking.

Additional activity prior to the cycle for the teacher to know her students' learning background

It is evident in this study that the teacher stated the cycle conventionally. In this case, she applied Building Context/field and Text Modelling as the first and the second phases, respectively (Mauludin, 2020; Emilia & Hamied, 2015). However, before the first phase of the GBP cycle, she arranged a class that enabled students to introduce themselves in front of the class. The vignette below is the first activity conducted in Meeting 1:

Vignette 1

In the first meeting, the teacher attempted to understand their students. Firstly, she invited her students to introduce themselves, their origins, and their previous secondary schools. Secondly, the teacher described the goals of the topic in advance to the students. Thirdly, the teacher asked the students to share their experiences with the whole class regarding learning writing in their secondary schools. In this case, the teacher let her students recall what students knew about the argumentative texts. She asked them to share if they had learned the different texts in their previous education.

(Taken from Meeting 1)

As can be seen in the vignette, besides describing the objective of the course, the teacher's introduction allows teachers to understand the students' educational background. The teacher allows students to introduce who they are as learners. In this case, she introduced elements of critical pedagogy, particularly the principle of *historicity* (Morrell, 2003), as she attempted to understand students learning backgrounds. Before presenting the teaching materials and selecting the teaching methods, teachers consider what students have known and have not known before presenting the teaching materials and selecting the teaching methods. Such a teacher's strategy in initiating historicity benefits teachers and students (Manojan, 2019). By acknowledging students and their learning experience, teachers could identify the teaching materials and methods suitable for students.

Bottom-up strategy in deciding what topic to discuss

After everyone has introduced themselves and their learning experience, teachers move on to the first phase of GBP

Vignette 2

In Context Building for teaching exposition, the teacher has two aspects of introducing in this phase: information about the genre and the learning materials the students must be familiar with. After giving a lecture on the exposition genre, its generic structure, and its language feature, the teacher introduced a topic related to the students' lives. In her lesson plan, she outlined translation machines as the topic for her class. She invited her students to share their experiences if they had ever dealt with translation machines. She presented questions such as,

“Did you know what a translation machine is?”

“How often do you access the translation machine?”

As expected, the students all agreed that they were familiar with the machine. The translation machine was considered helpful for them to understand the meaning of words in foreign languages. They mentioned Google translate as one of their favorite machines and told her that they could use the translation machine whenever needed. Further, she asked them to share their experience of how they could operate the translation machine on their mobile device.

Noting that they are familiar with the translation machine, this teacher introduced resources related to the translation machine for learning a foreign language. She asked the students to read the resources at home.

(Taken from Meeting 1)

In the vignette above, the teacher started the activities that meet the function of Context Building. She began the class by introducing the taught genre and then attempted to find the learning material related to students' lives. As she worked with students in the English teacher education department, she offered the topic the students were familiar with: translation machines. As seen in the vignette, this teacher successfully aligned the learning materials with the students' experience. Students' familiarity with the translation machine was expected to engage them with the topic they were going to explore and write. The critical pedagogy principle that is evident in this vignette is democratic. Although she did not specifically give students homework, she asked students to access the resources at home.

Asking students several questions to invoke their critical thinking

In the second meeting, the teacher started to commence the second phase of Text Modelling, as seen below

Vignette 3

The teacher started to introduce the text model of the Exposition genre. This text is about the importance of learning a foreign language despite the emergence of the advanced translation machine. The author of the text argues that a more advanced translation machine is needed to understand different cultures and knowledge. The teacher invited

the class to respond if they agreed or disagreed with the statement and share their response with the class. Additionally, the teacher wrote a list of questions on the whiteboard, such as Does the author provide his/her thesis statement? How many claims does the author make to support his/her overarching thesis statement? Does he/she provide any explanation and evidence? What types of evidence does the author provide? Does the author consider the opposing opinion?.

(Taken from Meeting 2)

The teacher presented questions for students to read the text critically. With these questions, she invoked students' critical thinking about how the text was to be composed. In this case, teachers asked students to find out the thesis statement and how the author elaborated arguments. Additionally, the teachers required students to figure out the content of the text, including the authors' proposing and opposing opinions. In this case, the teachers attempted to assure that the students could understand the text and respond to it critically.

Challenges in Applying GBP

The teacher in this study also found difficulties when implementing critical pedagogy. This sub-section presents the teacher's two challenges: difficulty understanding the text, students' low motivation, and students' lack of awareness of community issues.

The text model is too difficult for students.

The text modelling phase of the GBP cycle allows a teacher to introduce the text to analyze. Then, students are expected to read and learn from this text regarding the generic structure and the language feature of the targeted genre. This Vignette 4 below shows students' attitudes toward the text model. It can be seen from this vignette the challenge the teacher encountered in the Text Modelling phase.

Vignette 4

While she walked around the class to see if her students could deal well with the text, she found the students got difficulties reading the text and addressing the questions. In this case, her students accessed the translation machine very frequently and copied the whole sentences to the translation machine. To assure students could understand the text, she then asked the students to find out the verb phrase of each sentence.

After she knew that most students could not figure out the verb phrases of each sentence, the teacher concluded that the student hardly understood the text. she said the class

“I think, if you could not find the subject and the verb phrase of each sentence, you get difficulty understanding the sentences. Here I will show you each verb sentence.”

As a consequence, the teacher taught English basic sentence structure to students. After that, the teacher then worked helping to figure out the thesis, the arguments, their elaboration, and the type of evidence.

(Taken from Meeting 2)

Despite the familiar topic, the teacher found the reading text so tricky for the students that the students were busy figuring out the meaning of each word. Rather than asking students to

address the above critical questions, the teacher changed her mind and showed students a strategy to understand text, that is, by figuring out the subject and verb phrase of every sentence. Another problem, however, arose as she recognized that the students could not identify the subjects and verbs. She notified and concluded that her students did not understand the basic structure of English since the students did not know how the English language works. Consequently, the teacher taught the class about basic sentence structure. After giving this specific instruction, she handled the activity by providing students full assistance in understanding the text model, including helping identify its generic structure and language features.

Students have low motivation to participate in learning

After making subsequent efforts in teaching and guiding students to understand the text, teachers wondered why the students got difficulties. The vignette below shows how the teachers tried to understand the phenomenon.

Vignette 5

*The teacher asked students, “did you think the text was too difficult for you?”
Yes, Ma’am,” students replied
“I gave the text a week ago and let you read the text at home. Did you read the resources at home?”
“Nooo...”
“Please tell me why you did not read the resources I gave to you?”
“I am not interested to read,” one of the students replied
The teacher seemed shocked, and then she asked no more questions.
(Taken from Meeting 3)*

From the above vignette, the teacher could not start the class since the students did not perform the homework. The students did not engage well with the resources, so they read the texts at home. The students were less keen to read about translation machines. Thus, they had no idea what to write about translation machines despite the familiar topic. Consequently, the teacher could not continue to the next phase, Join Construction. Then the teacher tried to find an alternative topic that attracted the students' interest more and made them more enthusiastic to respond so that they would commence writing.

Students' awareness of community issues is lacking

Learning that students were not keen to read the text, the teacher returned to the first phase, Building Knowledge. In this phase, she attempted to incorporate the principle of emancipation by introducing the topic related to society's problem, as seen in the fieldnote below,

Vignette 6

After commencing deconstructing the text model, the teacher decided to change the topic after a subsequent amount of time spent reading the text.

In this phase, the teacher negotiated with her students in selecting the topic. The teacher kept proposing topics and learned from students' reactions and responses.

“Did you know about the news that the rivers in our town have been polluted by a food company?”

Students shook their heads, alarming the teacher that they had not known about the week's headline in local newspapers. But she kept asking, “do you think the local government should close the company?”

Still, the students had no idea about it.

Learning that her students were not really informed about the local's problem, the teacher decided to find any other topic. She asked her students what drove them to go to university even though many of their peers (secondary students) in this town prefer to leave education. That is, most of their peers halt their higher education. Students then started to speak and smile at each other, and for her, it was a good sign. Then she asked them further questions,

“Do you think going to university is important for you?”

“Yes, Ma'am.” Students replied.

“Anyone tell me why going to university is important?” the teacher asked.

“To get a good job,” Badriyah replied.

“To please my parents,” Said Azizah.

“Oh really??” the teacher replied, shocked, then laughed.

“To have knowledge,” said Chantique,

“To prepare better future,” Sofia replied too.

“Good! you have many reasons for this,” the teacher exclaimed. “Now, please think about what you would say to your friends that they have to follow your path, that is, going to uni!”

(Taken from Meeting 3)

The vignette shows that it is not easy for the teacher to decide what topic to write as there was prolonged negotiation between the teacher and her students. She could not decide what topic to elaborate on without asking for students' agreement. In this vignette, she offered more than two topics. At first, she proposed the issue of the polluted river in the town to respond. With this topic, the teacher implied the students to ask the local government to act to solve the pollution. Such a topic reflects **emancipatory** because it requires students' awareness of their surroundings or local issues (Kubota & Miller, 2017). Students are expected to present arguments on how to solve the real problem. Since students were not informed well about this issue, she attempted to find another topic to discuss. The topic, unfortunately, is less emancipative. Following her students' demands, she decided to choose why we should go to university.

Discussion

Identifying Teacher's Strategy to Introduce Critical Pedagogy in GBP

Learning from the observational notes, the teacher in this study attempted to implement the genre pedagogy conventionally while at the same time introducing critical pedagogy. *Conventionally* means that she started the GBP cycle with Context Building. She presented a one-way lecture to introduce the definition, functions, and characteristics of the exposition genre and propose the expected topic the students were going to write. From Context Building, the students then move into the Text modeling phase. From the captured moments in these two phases, the teachers' strategies and challenges in introducing critical pedagogy in these phases were identified.

This study confirms that critical pedagogy and GBP are concurrent in the observed writing classes. Teachers can initiate critical pedagogy in their classes no matter how the students will respond. The principles of critical pedagogy in GBP can be identified as follows:

Democratic: Focus on student

Like other teachers in the study conducted in Indonesia (such as Emilia & Hamied, 2015), the teacher in this study could not directly start with the first phase of the GBP cycle. Before jumping into the first phase of Building context/field, the teacher uses the opportunity to understand more about her students. In this study, she gave the students more room to express themselves.

As seen in Vignettes 1 and 2, the teacher put students at the center of learning as she allowed students to express their prior knowledge and related the topic of writing to students' own lives. Putting the students as the subject of their learning is the precedence of critical pedagogy. It is evident in this study that students' preferences and voice in learning are prioritized over teachers' choices (see also Larson, 2014). Further, the teacher gave students more freedom to choose their explored topic. This action reflects democracy aligns with the critical pedagogy principle (see Giroux, 2018).

In introducing the topic, the teacher in this study gave alternatives to students rather than using their power to decide what to explore. For example, she made sure if students were concerned about the polluted river by asking, 'do you know ...?' Then, when she found no student aware of the issue, she preferred to find any other topic to explore. In this way, although implying the students must be aware of the environmental issue, she did not force them to write about it. In this language teaching context, teachers adopted the principle that text should be

considered a practice to prioritize how students understand themselves, their social surroundings, and their histories for a better future (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Critical literacy and critical thinking

The data of this study shows that the teacher gave students a reading text to analyze in the Text Modelling phase (See Vignette 3). In this activity, she trained the students to figure out the thesis the author would develop. She also asked students some questions to invoke their awareness of what the author wanted to argue and convince. In this way, the teacher improves students' critical thinking since such activities help students become aware that text is never ideologically free, and some have attempted to influence the readers. She allowed her students to respond to the arguments, no matter how their arguments agreed or disagreed with the author. Such activity, to some extent, corresponds to Huang & Jun Zhang's (2020) study that suggested that teachers ask critical questions for building text. However, compared to Huang and Zhang's (2020) study, the teacher in this current study applied fewer questions.

This teacher's effort in 'raising questions' resonates with the concept of critical pedagogy since it endorses critical literacy. Abednia & Crookes (2019) suggest critical literacy as the ability to engage critically and analytically by which knowledge and ways of thinking are constructed in and through written text. Within the field of education, the central aspect of critical literacy is the ability to read resistantly and write critically. Additionally, Hammond & Macken-Horarik (1999), who analyzed how ESL learners cope with critical pedagogy in the mainstream subject at schools, found that teachers need to treat English-speaking students differently from EFL students. Critical pedagogy is more challenging to implement because English language teachers need considerable efforts to bring their students more critical while considering their language competencies in the EFL context.

Emancipatory: Invoke students' awareness of local issues

In vignette 6, the teacher proposed the topic related to the environmental issue: polluted rivers, which people in the town were concerned about. It aligns with the principle of Problem-posing. This principle suggests that teachers must embrace real-world problems (Kubota & Miller, 2017). Although the students were not informed about the proposed issue, the teacher in this study invoked students' awareness of their society's problems.

Dialogic: Fluent teacher-student power relation.

The principle of Dialogic is evident in this study. Drawing from Shih (2018) and Morrell (2003), dialogic in this study entails teacher-student authentic humanizing interactions. The data shows that the teacher-student interaction seemed to be fluent and democratic since the

teacher offered dialogue before moving on to another phase. Similarly, non-verbal actions also proved the closeness between teacher and student since the teacher walked approaching students to check if students could complete the work and speak to them whenever students needed assistance. The data also shows the teacher's consideration of understanding her students. She accommodated students' interests, willingness, and choices regarding learning materials. For example, although the teacher found the learning material that students were familiar with, she withdrew it as she saw the text hard to read.

Historicity

In Text Modelling and Joint Construction, the teacher preferred to alter the teaching materials that sound too academic to the more mundane topics. In this case, she explored students' experiences when enrolling in the university and recognized how her students dealt with writing assignments in their secondary schools. Hence, the teacher implied the principle of Historicity as the students start writing by considering their learning background.

Problems Arise and Teacher's Solutions

Learning from the data, it can be concluded that introducing critical pedagogy in GBP is, to a certain extent, challenging for teachers, especially in the class where the students are not amenable. As seen in the data, it is evident that the teacher found difficulties in introducing critical pedagogy since the students have such low motivation in learning and lack awareness of the community's issues. The points below are her strategies and decision to solve the problem:

Topic alterations

As seen in the vignette, alterations in what to write are evident in this study. However, the teacher must alter the topic into one with which the student is familiar. The teacher had three alternative topics: translation machine, polluted river, and further education. The teacher aimed to introduce the use of a translation machine and polluted river to respond and write. Hence, teachers need to prepare different plans and learning materials to meet the students' interests when working with lower motivated students.

Decreasing the difficulty level of the text model

The students still had limited English vocabulary, while at the same time, they did not have the self-efficacy to express an opinion in English. It is the most problem encountered by students in writing argumentative texts. Likewise, the text model seemed too difficult for students, making the teacher in this study attempt to find the more readable texts for them.

Hence, the class spent a long time reading the text model and could not continue to the following phase of Joint Construction within one meeting.

Back and forward

Despite the cycle by which teachers can start from any phase, Context Building and Text Modelling are mostly considered the first and second phases. As seen in the vignettes, the teacher could not commence the regular cycle. She must redo the Context Building after commencing Text Modelling since she must familiarize their students with other topics. Text Modelling also requires the teacher's efforts to assist students in understanding the text's composition and content. Hence the way this teacher used the phase of the GBP cycle is less strict; that is, she prefers to consider her students' needs and characteristics. It corresponds with Fees' (2002) that teachers can apply the cycle according to students' learning and literacy development.

This study suggests that teachers use the existing GBP to introduce critical pedagogy principles. Different from previous studies in critical pedagogy and language teaching that mainly focus on incorporating critical pedagogy (see Mambu, 2018; Yulianto, 2020; Kurniawati et al., 2020; Chandrasoma & Ananda, 2018), this current study successfully intersected the two teaching approaches of critical pedagogy and genre pedagogy. Hence, rather than composing a specific method of teaching critical pedagogy, this study embeds the paradigm in the more 'fixed method' of genre pedagogy. As discussed previously, GBP has been widely used to teach literacy in many countries, including Indonesia, for more than two decades. Hence, this study benefits teachers in Indonesia as it inspires them to develop their genre pedagogy more eclectically, to adapt to 'Merdeka Belajar' that promotes critical thinking.

CONCLUSION

This study found that GBP and critical pedagogy approaches can be concurrent in language classes. Teachers can use GBP to introduce critical pedagogy since GBP supports critical pedagogy principles. In this study, historicity is evident in the Context Building phase. Teachers began with students' experiences as citizens of the world by offering topics related to students' learning backgrounds. Then the principle of problem-posing was practiced in this study since the teacher embraced the real-world problems, in this case, the polluted river in their area. Then the principle of dialogic is also promoted in GBP. This principle and emancipatory are evident in teacher-student negotiation to invoke students' awareness of the text's function and purpose to compose texts voicing their arguments for solving society's

problems. In the Text Modelling phase, teachers encouraged students to critically deconstruct the text model, which inevitably requires students to read and write purposively and critically.

This study has implications for EFL teaching practice in Indonesia. With the strengthening of critical thinking and critical literacy in the current policy of 'Merdeka Belajar,' language teachers in Indonesia can focus on developing students' critical thinking while implementing the existing method of GBP. However, since unexpected problems might arise in critical pedagogy and GBP implementation, it is recommended that teachers prepare many alternatives of what topics to write and different activities reflecting critical pedagogy. In doing so, teachers can introduce the principles of critical pedagogy in many ways by following the students' characteristics.

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