

TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH THE PHILOSOPHY OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: A THEORETICAL-CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS AND PROPOSED RESEARCH DESIGN FOR THE FREIREAN APPROACH IN THE KAZAKHSTANI EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Freirean critical pedagogy, as theorized in Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, represents one of the most philosophically generative traditions in education — yet its implications for English language teaching in postcolonial and transitional contexts remain substantially underexplored in Kazakhstani scholarship and insufficiently implemented in Kazakhstani pedagogical practice. This article develops a theoretical-conceptual analysis of the significance of the Freirean framework for English language instruction across diverse faculty specializations at Kazakhstani higher education institutions, and proposes a quasi-experimental mixed-methods research design through which its transformative potential could be empirically examined.

Drawing on Freirean critical pedagogy, dialogic education theory, and critical applied linguistics, the article articulates four dimensions of critical communicative competence — critical text analysis, dialogic argumentation, problem-posing discourse production, and epistemic reflexivity in academic writing — that a Freirean instructional program would be expected to cultivate more effectively than conventional communicative language teaching. A detailed research design is proposed, comprising an eighteen-week intervention with eighty undergraduate students from four faculty specializations — political science, natural sciences, law, and economics — together with the sampling, allocation, ethical, instrumentation, and analysis procedures required for a methodologically rigorous empirical test of this proposal.

The article situates the proposed Kazakhstani design within a comparative review of critical-pedagogy-informed English programs in the United States, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Finland, drawn from published literature, and identifies the institutional adaptations that would be necessary for the Freirean approach to be implemented systematically in the post-Soviet Kazakhstani context. The article argues, on philosophical and theoretical grounds — pending the empirical validation that the proposed design is intended to provide — that integrating critical pedagogy philosophy into English language instruction has the potential to be more than a methodological innovation, reshaping the relationship between language, consciousness, and social agency among Kazakhstani university students.

Keywords: Critical Pedagogy, English Language Teaching, Dialogic Education, Problem-Posing, Emancipatory Learning, Higher Education.

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Сыни педагогика философиясы негізінде ағылшын тілін оқыту: Фрейре тәсілінің қазақстандық білім беру контекстіндегі маңызы

Аңдатпа. Паулу Фрейренің «Pedagogy of the Oppressed» еңбегінде теориялық тұрғыда негізделген сыни педагогика білім берудің ең терең әрі философиялық жағынан тиімді дәстүрлерінің бірін білдіреді — алайда оның постколониалдық және өтпелі кезең контекстіндегі ағылшын тілін оқытуға қатысты салдары қазақстандық ғылыми әдебиетте жеткілікті зерттелмеген және отандық педагогикалық практикада толыққанды іске асырылмаған. Бұл мақала Фрейре тәсілінің Қазақстан жоғары оқу орындарының әртүрлі факультет мамандықтарында ағылшын тілін оқытудағы маңыздылығына арналған теориялық-тұжырымдамалық талдау ұсынады және оның өзгертушілік әлеуетін эмпирикалық түрде тексеруге мүмкіндік беретін квазиэксперименттік аралас-әдістер зерттеу дизайнын ұсынады.

Фрейренің сыни педагогикасына, диалогтік білім беру теориясына және сыни қолданбалы лингвистикаға сүйене отырып, мақалада Фрейре тәсіліне негізделген оқыту бағдарламасы дәстүрлі коммуникативтік тіл оқытуға қарағанда тиімдірек дамытады деп болжанатын сыни коммуникативтік құзыреттіліктің төрт өлшемі

— мәтінді сыни талдау, диалогтік аргументация, проблема-қою дискурсын жасау және академиялық жазудағы эпистемикалық рефлексия — сипатталады. Он сегіз аптаға есептелген, төрт мамандықтан сексен студентті қамтитын араласу бағдарламасы бойынша егжей-тегжейлі зерттеу дизайны, соның ішінде іріктеу, топтарға бөлу, этикалық, аспаптық және талдау рәсімдері ұсынылады, олар осы тұжырымдаманы әдіснамалық тұрғыдан қатаң эмпирикалық тексеруге мүмкіндік береді.

Мақала ұсынылған қазақстандық дизайнды жарияланған әдебиеттерге сүйене отырып, АҚШ, Бразилия, Ұлыбритания және Финляндия университеттеріндегі сыни педагогика бағдарламаларымен салыстырмалы контексте қарастырады және Фрейре тәсілін постсоветтік Қазақстан контекстінде жүйелі түрде іске асыру үшін қажетті институттық бейімдеулерді анықтайды. Мақала — ұсынылған дизайн беруге тиіс эмпирикалық растауды күте отырып — философиялық және теориялық негіздерде сыни педагогика философиясын ағылшын тілін оқытуға кіріктірудің жай ғана әдістемелік жаңашылдықтан асып, қазақстандық студенттердің тіл, сана және әлеуметтік агенттілік арасындағы қатынасын өзгерту әлеуетіне ие екенін тұжырымдайды.

Түйін сөздер: сыни педагогика, ағылшын тілін оқыту, диалогтік білім беру, проблема-қою, азаттық бағытындағы оқыту, жоғары білім.

Обучение английскому языку через философию критической педагогики: значимость подхода Фрейре в казахстанском образовательном контексте

Аннотация. Критическая педагогика Паулу Фрейре, теоретически обоснованная в его фундаментальном труде «Pedagogy of the Oppressed», представляет одну из наиболее философски продуктивных традиций в истории педагогической мысли — однако её значение для обучения английскому языку в постколониальных и транзитивных образовательных контекстах остаётся в значительной мере неисследованным в казахстанской научной литературе и недостаточно реализованным в отечественной педагогической практике. Настоящая статья предлагает теоретико-концептуальный анализ значимости фрейровской концепции для обучения английскому языку на различных факультетах казахстанских вузов и предлагает квазиэкспериментальный дизайн исследования смешанных методов, позволяющий эмпирически проверить её трансформирующий потенциал.

Опираясь на критическую педагогику Фрейре, теорию диалогического образования и критическую прикладную лингвистику, статья формулирует четыре измерения критической коммуникативной компетентности — критический анализ текста, диалогическую аргументацию, производство проблематизирующего дискурса и эпистемическую рефлексивность в академическом письме, — развитие которых, как ожидается, программа обучения на основе принципов Фрейре будет стимулировать эффективнее, чем традиционная коммуникативная методика. Предлагается детальный дизайн исследования, охватывающий восемнадцатинедельную программу с участием восьмидесяти студентов четырёх специальностей, включая процедуры выборки, распределения по группам, этического сопровождения, инструментария и анализа данных, необходимые для методологически строгой эмпирической проверки данного предложения.

Статья помещает предлагаемый казахстанский дизайн в сравнительный контекст программ критической педагогики в университетах США, Бразилии, Великобритании и Финляндии, основываясь на опубликованной литературе, и определяет институциональные адаптации, необходимые для системного внедрения фрейровского подхода в постсоветском казахстанском контексте. Статья утверждает — на философских и теоретических основаниях, в ожидании эмпирического подтверждения, которое призван обеспечить предложенный дизайн, — что интеграция философии критической педагогики в обучение английскому языку потенциально способна выйти за рамки методологического новшества и преобразовать отношения между языком, сознанием и социальной субъектностью казахстанских студентов.

Ключевые слова: критическая педагогика, обучение английскому языку, диалогическое образование, проблематизация, эмансипирующее обучение, высшее образование.

Introduction

The question of why and how English is taught in non-Anglophone educational contexts is never merely a technical or methodological question. It is, at its philosophical core, a question about power — about whose knowledge counts as legitimate, whose ways of knowing are valued, whose voices are amplified and whose are silenced by the structures of language education. It is a question about consciousness — about whether the acquisition of a global language deepens learners' critical awareness of their own situatedness in historical, political, and cultural relations of domination and possibility, or whether it merely trains them in the linguistic codes

of compliance with existing arrangements of power. And it is a question about freedom — about whether education, including language education, serves the reproduction of existing social relations or the cultivation of the critical consciousness through which those relations might be understood, interrogated, and transformed [1; 2].

These are precisely the questions that Paulo Freire placed at the center of educational philosophy in his epochal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published in Portuguese in 1968 and subsequently translated into over thirty languages, becoming one of the most widely cited texts in the history of educational thought. Freire's fundamental philosophical diagnosis — that conventional education

functions as a «banking» system in which educators deposit pre-formed knowledge into passive student recipients, thereby reproducing the epistemic and social relations of domination rather than cultivating the critical consciousness necessary for emancipatory action — has proved to be not merely a critique of mid-twentieth-century Brazilian education but a diagnosis of structural features of educational systems across vastly different historical, cultural, and political contexts [1; 3].

Kazakhstan presents a context of exceptional significance for the application of Freirean critical pedagogy to English language instruction. As a nation navigating the complex intellectual and institutional legacies of Soviet education — characterized by centralized curriculum authority, transmission-oriented pedagogy, and the systematic suppression of critical inquiry — while simultaneously pursuing ambitious programs of educational internationalization and democratic reform, Kazakhstan stands at a philosophical crossroads whose resolution will profoundly shape the intellectual formation of its coming generations. The national commitment to trilingual education, the development of English as a medium of international scholarly communication, and the broader aspiration for the formation of critically thinking, globally engaged citizens articulated in successive state education programs all converge in generating both the imperative and the opportunity for a fundamentally transformed approach to English language pedagogy.

Yet the dominant approach to English language instruction at Kazakhstani universities remains firmly anchored in what Freire [1] would recognize as the banking model: students are positioned as recipients of pre-formed linguistic knowledge — grammatical rules, vocabulary lists, communicative formulas — transmitted by teacher-authorities whose role is to deposit this knowledge efficiently and to assess the accuracy of its reproduction. The critical consciousness, dialogic engagement, and emancipatory agency that Freire identified as the constitutive goals of genuine education are systematically absent from this model — and their absence is not a peripheral pedagogical deficiency but a philosophical failure of the first order, one that reproduces precisely the epistemic passivity and uncritical compliance that democratic educational reform is committed to overturning.

This study was designed to investigate four specific research questions generated by this philosophical and empirical situation. First: does the integration of Freirean critical pedagogy principles into English language instruction produce measurably superior outcomes across the four dimensions of critical communicative competence identified as constitutive of genuinely emancipatory language education? Second: what philosophical mechanisms — related to consciousness-raising, dialogic encounter, problem-posing, and epistemic reflexivity — mediate the relationship between critical pedagogy-informed instruction and competence development? Third: how does the Kazakhstani implementation of Freirean English pedagogy compare structurally and philosophically with analogous programs at universities in the United States, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Finland? Fourth: what institutional, curricular, and policy reforms are necessary to systematize the Freirean approach to English instruction within Kazakhstani higher education?

Methodology

The theoretical architecture of this study is constructed upon three philosophically interconnected intellectual traditions that together constitute the foundation of critical pedagogy-informed English language instruction: Freirean critical pedagogy as a philosophy of consciousness and emancipatory education; the philosophy of dialogic education as theorized by Freire, Bakhtin, and their intellectual successors; and critical applied linguistics as the disciplinary intersection through which these philosophical traditions are translated into language teaching theory and practice.

Freire's critical pedagogy, as elaborated across *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* [1], *Education for Critical Consciousness* [4], and *Pedagogy of Hope* [5], rests upon a fundamental ontological distinction between two modes of human being-in-the-world: the mode of naïve consciousness, in which human beings experience themselves as passive objects of historical forces and institutional arrangements they neither understand nor control; and the mode of critical consciousness — *conscientização* — in which human beings apprehend their situatedness within historically constituted relations of power and possibility, and thereby discover their capacity as subjects to name, analyze, and

transform the conditions of their existence. For Freire, education is the primary institutional site through which this ontological transformation — from passivity to agency, from naïve to critical consciousness — either occurs or is systematically prevented [1; 3].

The banking model of education, in Freire's analysis, is the institutional form through which the transformation to critical consciousness is prevented. By positioning students as passive receptacles for teacher-deposited knowledge — as objects to be filled rather than subjects to inquire — banking education reproduces the epistemic relations of domination that characterize oppressive social arrangements. The student who learns to receive, memorize, and reproduce teacher-authorized knowledge without critical interrogation is simultaneously learning the fundamental disposition of the oppressed: the disposition of objects rather than subjects, of those who accept rather than question, of those for whom the world as given is the world as necessary. Applied to language education, the banking model produces students who can reproduce grammatical rules and communicative formulas without ever deploying language as an instrument of critical inquiry, dialogic encounter, or transformative naming of their world [1; 6].

Against the banking model, Freire proposes problem-posing education as the dialogic alternative through which critical consciousness is cultivated. Problem-posing education begins not from teacher-authorized content but from generative themes — the existentially significant problems, contradictions, and possibilities embedded in learners' concrete life situations — which are named, analyzed, and transformed through a dialogic process in which teachers and students are co-investigators of their shared world. In the language classroom, this Freirean inversion means replacing linguistic exercises abstracted from learners' lived experience with problem-posing activities that engage students in critical analysis of the texts, discourses, and communicative situations that constitute their actual social reality — including the political rhetoric they encounter in public life, the professional discourses of their disciplinary fields, and the global linguistic power relations within which the English language itself is embedded [1; 7].

The philosophy of dialogic education, as theorized by Freire and independently developed by Bakhtin [8], provides a second phil-

osophical pillar for the theoretical framework. For Freire, genuine dialogue is not merely a pedagogical technique but an ontological necessity — the mode of human encounter through which consciousness is constituted, knowledge is constructed, and critical understanding is developed. Authentic dialogue requires what Freire terms 'love, humility, faith, hope, and critical thinking' — not the false dialogue of the banking classroom in which teacher-questions are disguised depositing operations, but the genuine encounter of two subjects each bringing their own knowledge, experience, and critical perspective to the collaborative investigation of their shared world. Bakhtin's parallel theorization of dialogism — the irreducible heteroglossia of language, the constitutively answerable nature of all utterance, the impossibility of meaning outside the dialogic encounter of voices — provides a linguistic-philosophical complement to Freire's educational philosophy that grounds dialogic English instruction in a sophisticated theory of language as inherently relational, contested, and meaning-making [1; 8].

Critical applied linguistics, as developed by Pennycook [6], Norton [9], and Canagarajah [10], provides the third theoretical pillar by situating the Freirean framework within the specific theoretical debates of language teaching scholarship. Critical applied linguistics holds that language teaching is never a politically neutral technical practice but always an intervention in the social relations of power, identity, and knowledge that shape learners' lives. The choice of what texts to read, what topics to discuss, what forms of language to value, and what communicative purposes to cultivate in the English classroom are never merely pedagogical choices but ideological ones — choices that either reproduce or challenge the existing arrangements of linguistic power that position certain speakers, certain discourses, and certain ways of knowing as legitimate and others as marginal. For English language teaching in postcolonial contexts such as Kazakhstan, where the global dominance of English is entangled with complex histories of Soviet language policy, post-independence national identity construction, and contemporary geopolitical positioning, these ideological dimensions of language teaching are of particular urgency and complexity. Closely related is the view of discourse as a site where social power is enacted, reproduced, and contest-

ed through control over text and talk, which makes the analysis of classroom discourse a political as well as a linguistic undertaking [11].

Together, these three theoretical traditions generate a coherent and philosophically rigorous framework for designing, implementing, and evaluating Freirean critical pedagogy-informed English instruction. The framework holds that genuinely emancipatory English language education must: begin from learners' existentially significant generative themes rather than from pre-formed linguistic content; cultivate critical consciousness through problem-posing rather than knowledge-banking; develop authentic dialogue rather than scripted communicative exchanges; engage critically with the ideological dimensions of the texts and discourses it employs; and position students as epistemic subjects — knowers and namers of their world — rather than as linguistic objects to be filled with teacher-authorized language [1; 2; 6].

Main part

Review of the Literature on Critical Pedagogy-Informed Language Teaching

The empirical and philosophical literature on Freirean critical pedagogy in language education spans five decades and multiple national contexts, generating a rich and theoretically sophisticated body of scholarship that simultaneously validates the philosophical premises of the Freirean framework and documents the considerable institutional, cultural, and pedagogical challenges associated with its implementation in diverse educational settings. This review synthesizes three bodies of literature: international theoretical and empirical scholarship on critical pedagogy-informed language teaching; comparative analysis of Freirean language programs in the United States, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Finland; and the emerging literature on critical pedagogy and English language instruction in Kazakhstan and post-Soviet higher education.

Foundational and Tertiary-Level Scholarship

The foundational empirical case for critical pedagogy-informed language teaching was established through a series of landmark studies conducted in adult literacy contexts in Brazil and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s. Freire's own literacy campaigns in northeast Brazil, documented in *Education*

for Critical Consciousness [4], demonstrated that problem-posing instruction organized around culturally significant generative themes produced dramatic accelerations in literacy acquisition compared to conventional phonics-based approaches — a finding that Freire explained not in terms of more efficient decoding instruction but in terms of the qualitatively different relationship to language cultivated when learners engage with words as instruments of naming and transforming their world rather than as technical symbols to be mechanically decoded. These findings were extended to English as a Second Language contexts in the United States by Auerbach and Wallerstein [12], whose influential curriculum framework for Freirean ESL instruction demonstrated that problem-posing approaches organized around learners' workplace experiences, community struggles, and immigration experiences produced superior engagement, retention, and critical communicative competence compared to conventional ESL curricula.

Subsequent scholarship has extended the Freirean framework to tertiary English language education across a wide range of national and disciplinary contexts. Canagarajah's landmark study [10] of English teaching in Sri Lanka — conducted against the backdrop of postcolonial language politics and civil conflict — documented the sophisticated ways in which both students and teachers navigated the tensions between the globally dominant discourses encoded in English textbooks and their own locally situated knowledge, values, and communicative purposes. Canagarajah's concept of 'safe houses' — the informal spaces within official classroom structures in which students developed critical perspectives on the dominant discourses they were being asked to acquire — provides a theoretically nuanced account of the micro-politics of critical pedagogy in contexts where institutional constraints prevent its explicit implementation. A related line of argument concerns the notion of authentic language itself: authenticity, on this view, is not a property inherent in a text but depends on the community in which the text functions and on the learners' relationship to that community, which is why the choice of classroom materials is never neutral [13].

Comparative Analysis: United States, Brazil, and Finland

Comparative analysis of critical pedagogy-informed English programs in the United

ed States reveals a distinctive institutional tradition shaped by the particular dynamics of American higher education and the long-standing influence of the critical pedagogy movement in American educational theory. At progressive institutions such as Hampshire College, Evergreen State College, and the City University of New York, Freirean approaches to English composition and academic literacy have been institutionalized through writing-across-the-curriculum programs that center student voice, critical text analysis, and dialogic inquiry as the organizing principles of academic literacy instruction [2; 3]. Research documenting outcomes from these programs consistently demonstrates superior gains in critical writing, argumentative sophistication, and epistemic engagement compared to conventional composition instruction — findings that parallel those reported in the present study.

In Brazil — the originary context of Freirean pedagogy — critical pedagogy has achieved the deepest institutional embedding of any national context, with Freirean principles formally incorporated into national education policy through the Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional (1996) and subsequently elaborated in municipal education programs in São Paulo and Porto Alegre [14]. Brazilian university English programs informed by Freirean principles have been extensively documented in the Applied Linguistics literature, with research demonstrating that students who engage critically with the global political economy of English — analyzing the colonial histories, contemporary power asymmetries, and national identity implications of English language use in Brazil — develop both superior critical communicative competence and more nuanced, agentic orientations toward English as a resource rather than a burden [6].

In Finland — the European national context with perhaps the most philosophically sophisticated tradition of critical education — Freirean influences have been integrated into a broader tradition of dialogic, student-centered pedagogy rooted in the work of Finnish educational philosophers and refined through decades of curriculum development. Finnish university English programs characteristically emphasize critical media literacy, dialogic discussion of socially significant issues, and the integration of English language development with broader civic and democratic education

goals — an approach whose philosophical kinship with Freirean problem-posing education is explicit in the theoretical writings of Finnish educational scholars [15].

Critical Pedagogy in Kazakhstani Higher Education

Research on critical pedagogy in Kazakhstani higher education remains sparse. Still, it carries real intellectual weight. A 2022 philosophical analysis published in Adam Alemi examined this gap directly. The study argued that the post-Soviet Kazakhstani educational system retains structural features of the banking model. These features are fundamentally incompatible with critical thinking. They also conflict with democratic participation and emancipatory agency. Yet these are exactly the qualities that contemporary Kazakhstani education policy aims to cultivate. The study concluded that critical pedagogy offers the most theoretically coherent response to this incompatibility.

A 2021 mixed-methods observational study, also published in Adam Alemi, took a different approach. It documented the systematic absence of dialogic and problem-posing pedagogies in Kazakhstani university English classrooms. Teacher-fronted transmission instruction dominated over 87% of observed classroom time. Student-initiated critical inquiry occurred in fewer than 3% of observed episodes. This gap between policy rhetoric and classroom practice is stark.

A 2023 theoretical contribution to Adam Alemi built on this foundation. It proposed a Freirean-informed framework for English language curriculum reform in Kazakhstani higher education. This framework stands as the immediate theoretical precursor to the intervention described in this study.

Research Design and Philosophical Orientation of the Instructional Program

This article proposes a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design as the basis for future empirical validation of the theoretical claims developed in the Methodology section and in Subsection 1. Under this design, eighty undergraduate students from four faculty specializations at two Kazakhstani universities — political science (n=20), natural sciences (n=20), law (n=20), and economics (n=20) — would be allocated to experimental and control conditions: forty in an experimental group receiving

Freirean critical pedagogy-informed English instruction and forty in a control group receiving conventional communicative language teaching. The intervention is designed to span eighteen weeks, with both groups receiving three 90-minute sessions per week. Pre-test equivalence across all four assessment dimensions would need to be statistically confirmed before post-test comparisons could be meaningfully interpreted; the procedures for this check are specified in Subsection 5.

The experimental instructional program is organized around six thematic cycles, each developed through the Freirean methodology of generative theme identification, codification, decodification, and dialogic problem-posing. The six generative themes — to be selected through pre-instruction interviews and a Freirean ‘thematic investigation’ process involving consultation with student participants — are: (1) Language, power, and identity in a globalizing world; (2) Academic knowledge and epistemic authority: whose knowledge counts?; (3) Democratic participation and the language of public life; (4) Professional ethics and critical responsibility in one’s field; (5) Environmental justice and the language of scientific and political accountability; and (6) Education itself: the philosophy and politics of learning. Each thematic cycle would employ a structured sequence of Freirean pedagogical moves: initial codification of the generative theme in a rich text or scenario; dialogic decodification through small-group critical discussion in English; problem-posing analysis identifying contradictions and possibilities within the theme; and creative-critical production in which students generate their own English-language texts — arguments, analyses, dialogues, position papers — through which they name and engage the problem from their own situated perspectives.

Ethical Considerations for the Proposed Study

Any implementation of the design described here would require prior review and approval by the relevant university research ethics committee(s) before recruitment or data collection begins; no data collection has taken place under this design, and the procedures below describe the safeguards that would need to be built into its implementation. Participation would be voluntary and based on written informed consent obtained from all

participants prior to enrollment, with an explicit statement of participants’ right to withdraw at any stage without academic penalty. Participants would be informed, in language accessible to first- and second-year undergraduates, of the study’s aims, procedures, expected duration, and the fact that the experimental and control conditions differ pedagogically. Confidentiality would be maintained by assigning each participant a coded identifier at the point of consent; only the coded dataset would be used in analysis and reporting, with the key linking codes to identities stored separately and accessible only to the principal investigators. Audio recordings of dialogic discussions and interview transcripts would be anonymized during transcription, and any illustrative quotations reported in publications would be stripped of identifying details. Because the design relies on intact class groups rather than individual randomization, particular attention would need to be paid to ensuring that control-group students are not disadvantaged relative to their institution’s standard curriculum, including offering control-group participants access to the experimental curriculum materials at the conclusion of the study.

Sample, Allocation, and Participant Characteristics

Allocation to condition is proposed at the level of intact class cohorts rather than individual students, since institutional timetabling at Kazakhstani universities does not permit individual-level randomization within a single obligatory English course; cohorts would instead be matched on pre-test scores across the four assessment dimensions and on faculty specialization before being assigned to the experimental or control condition, with the matching procedure and resulting equivalence statistics reported in full. Proposed inclusion criteria are: enrollment as a first-year student in the obligatory English course at one of the two participating universities; a placement-test proficiency level of at least B1; and provision of written informed consent. Proposed exclusion criteria are: documented prior systematic exposure to critical-pedagogy-informed instruction (which would confound the comparison with the control condition); and inability to commit to the full eighteen-week schedule of sessions. Instructors delivering the experimental condition would be required to hold at least a master’s degree in TESOL or Applied Linguistics.

tics and a minimum of three years of university teaching experience, and would complete a structured pre-intervention training workshop in Freirean pedagogical theory and the specific six-stage instructional sequence described in Subsection 2; the same instructors would not teach both conditions, to reduce the risk of cross-condition contamination. Intervention fidelity would be monitored through a fidelity checklist derived from the six-stage sequence, completed by an independent observer for a random sample of at least 20% of sessions in each thematic cycle, supplemented by audio or video recording of the same sample for later verification; fidelity scores would be reported descriptively and any systematic deviation from the intended sequence would be documented rather than treated as noise. Attrition would be tracked from enrollment to post-test, with reasons for withdrawal recorded where available, baseline characteristics of completers compared against those of participants lost to follow-up, participant flow reported in a CONSORT-style diagram, and both intention-to-treat and completer-only analyses planned and reported side by side so that the sensitivity of the results to attrition can be assessed.

Instrumentation: Validity and Reliability

The rubrics for the four assessed dimensions of critical communicative competence — critical text analysis, dialogic argumentation, problem-posing discourse production, and epistemic reflexivity in academic writing — would need to be developed through an iterative process: initial construction of rubric descriptors directly from the theoretical constructs defined in the Methodology section; review by an expert panel of applied linguists and critical-pedagogy specialists for content validity; and piloting with a cohort comparable to, but not part of, the study sample. Internal consistency of each rubric subscale would be assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a minimum acceptable threshold of .70 set in advance; subscales falling below this threshold would be revised and re-piloted rather than retained. Inter-rater reliability would be established by having two independent, trained raters — blind to condition and, where feasible, to time point — double-score at least 20% of all responses, with agreement quantified using intraclass correlation coefficients for continuous scores and weighted kappa for categorical

judgments; a pre-specified reconciliation procedure (discussion to consensus, with a third rater adjudicating any disagreement that discussion does not resolve) would govern the treatment of scoring discrepancies. Where inferential statistical tests are planned to compare conditions, the assumptions underlying those tests — normality of residuals, checked via the Shapiro-Wilk test, and homogeneity of variance, checked via Levene's test — would be verified before the tests are run, with non-parametric alternatives (e.g., the Mann-Whitney U test) specified in advance for use where these assumptions are violated. Effect sizes would be reported together with 95% confidence intervals rather than as point estimates alone, so that the precision, and not only the direction, of any observed differences can be assessed.

Qualitative Analysis Procedure

The qualitative strand — comprising critical reflection journals and semi-structured exit interviews with a subsample of experimental-group participants — would be analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis approach: familiarization with the data; generation of initial codes; searching for candidate themes; reviewing themes against the coded extracts and the full dataset; defining and naming themes; and producing the final analytic account. Two researchers would independently code a common subset of the material (at least 25% of journals and interview transcripts), compare their codes, and reconcile discrepancies through discussion; where consensus could not be reached, a third researcher familiar with the theoretical framework would adjudicate. A theme would be considered established for reporting purposes only where it recurred across a pre-specified minimum proportion of participants (at least half of those interviewed) and was judged, in discussion among the coding team, to be theoretically significant in relation to the Freirean framework set out in the Methodology section, rather than being retained on frequency grounds alone. An audit trail documenting coding decisions, disagreements, and their resolution would be maintained throughout to support the dependability of the analysis.

Anticipated Outcomes: Theoretical Predictions

This article does not report empirical results, since the design set out above has not

yet been implemented. Based on the theoretical mechanisms discussed in the Methodology section and the pattern of findings reported for comparable international programs reviewed in Subsection 1, several directional predictions can be formulated for the purpose of guiding the proposed empirical test: the experimental group is predicted to outperform the control group across all four assessed dimensions of critical communicative competence; the largest relative gain is predicted for problem-posing discourse production, since this dimension is most directly targeted by dialogic decodification and generative-theme pedagogy; and, qualitatively, participation in the experimental condition is expected to be associated with reports consistent with a shift from what Freire [1] terms naïve to critical consciousness. These are predictions to be tested, not findings already obtained, and their confirmation, partial confirmation, or disconfirmation is the empir-

ical task that implementation of the design described in Subsections 2–6 is intended to accomplish.

Comparative International Context: An Indicative, Not Benchmarked, Comparison

The following comparison draws on the literature reviewed in Subsection 1 to situate the proposed Kazakhstani design relative to established critical-pedagogy-informed English programs internationally. Because the underlying instruments, samples, and evaluation frameworks used to document outcomes in these programs are not comparable to one another, and none of them are directly comparable to the not-yet-implemented Kazakhstani design proposed here, the comparison below is limited to institutional and philosophical positioning rather than outcome magnitudes; it should be read as an indicative contextual comparison, not as a quantitative benchmark.

Table 1 - Institutional and Philosophical Positioning of Critical-Pedagogy-Informed English Programs.

Program / Context	Philosophical Basis	Institutional Embedding	Source(s)
United States (e.g., Hampshire College, Evergreen State College, CUNY)	Critical pedagogy integrated with writing-across-the-curriculum	Full institutional embedding via WAC programs	[2; 3]
Brazil	Freirean, nationally codified	Full — incorporated into national education law (LDB, 1996) and municipal programs	[6; 14]
Finland	Dialogic, student-centered, civic-integrated	Integrated into the national curriculum tradition	[15]
Kazakhstan (proposed)	Freirean pilot	Not yet institutionally embedded; single-course pilot proposed in this article	This proposal

Read this way, the comparison suggests that American and Brazilian programs are embedded within broader institutional commitments to critical pedagogy as an educational philosophy - commitments expressed in curriculum policy, faculty development, and assessment frameworks - that the Kazakhstani pilot proposed here, operating without such embedding, does not yet share. Whether the proposed Kazakhstani design would, if implemented, produce outcomes of a similar order of magnitude to those reported for these established programs is an empirical question that this comparison cannot answer and that the design in Subsections 2–6 is intended to investigate directly.

Anticipated Mechanisms of Change: a Theoretically Grounded Qualitative Agenda

The qualitative strand of the proposed design is intended to investigate a set of theo-

retically anticipated dimensions of change, grounded in the theoretical framework developed in the Methodology section and in patterns documented in comparable international qualitative studies of critical-pedagogy language classrooms [1; 7; 10]. These anticipated dimensions — to be treated as a coding framework to be tested against the data, not as findings already established — are: (1) epistemological awakening, a hypothesized shift in participants' understanding of knowledge from a body of facts to be received and reproduced toward a dialogic, historically situated, and contested construction in which the learner is implicated as agent; (2) discovery of voice, the hypothesized recognition that one's own perspective and critical judgment constitute legitimate epistemic contributions, including in English; (3) critical interrogation of English itself, a hypothesized movement from uncrit-

ical instrumentalism toward critical awareness of the global political economy of English and its implications for Kazakhstani linguistic identity; (4) solidarity and dialogic community, the hypothesized experience of the Freirean classroom as a qualitatively different social space characterized by mutual respect and collaborative inquiry; and (5) transformation and agency, a hypothesized enhanced sense of capacity for critical action expressed in English. Whether, and to what extent, these dimensions are actually observed in participants' journals and interviews — rather than assumed in advance — is precisely what the coding procedure specified in Subsection 6 is designed to establish.

Limitations of the Proposed Study

Several limitations qualify both the proposed design itself and the philosophical arguments advanced elsewhere in this article. First, because allocation to condition would occur at the level of intact class cohorts rather than individually randomized students, the quasi-experimental design cannot fully separate treatment effects from cohort-level confounds such as instructor effects or pre-existing group composition; a substantially larger number of independently allocated cohorts than is logistically feasible for a single pilot would be required to disentangle these statistically, and this constraint should be borne in mind when interpreting any future results. Second, a planned sample of eighty participants is adequate, on conventional power calculations, for detecting only large effect sizes; it is underpowered for detecting small-to-moderate effects, and any effects observed at this scale would require replication in a larger sample before they could be treated as robust. Third, the two-university, four-specialization setting limits the generalizability of any future findings to Kazakhstan's higher education system as a whole, which encompasses a substantially more heterogeneous range of institutional types, regional contexts, and student populations than this design captures; extension to regional universities, technical institutes, and other faculty specializations would be a necessary next step before broader claims could be supported. Fourth, and most fundamentally, this article presents a proposed design and a philosophical rationale rather than completed empirical findings: the directional predictions formulated in Subsection 7 remain to be test-

ed, and the philosophical arguments developed in the Introduction and the Methodology section concerning the ontological and ethical significance of the Freirean framework should be read as philosophical-normative claims, defended on theoretical and interpretive grounds, rather than as conclusions that have already been empirically established.

Conclusion

This article has developed a philosophical and theoretical case, grounded in Freirean critical pedagogy, dialogic education theory, and critical applied linguistics, for the significance of integrating critical pedagogy into English language instruction at Kazakhstani universities, and has proposed a detailed quasi-experimental mixed-methods design through which the transformative claims of that case could be empirically tested. It is important to be precise about the epistemic status of these claims: the arguments concerning the ontological and philosophical significance of the Freirean framework, developed in the Introduction and the Methodology section, are advanced as philosophical-normative claims, defended on theoretical and interpretive grounds; the four-dimension model of critical communicative competence and the directional predictions formulated in Subsection 7, by contrast, are empirical claims that the proposed design is intended to test, and that remain, at the time of writing, unconfirmed.

The comparative review in Subsection 8 situates the proposed Kazakhstani design within an international landscape of critical-pedagogy-informed English programs in the United States, Brazil, and Finland. As that section makes clear, the comparison is indicative of differing institutional and philosophical positioning rather than a benchmarked comparison of outcome magnitudes, since the instruments, samples, and evaluation frameworks used to document outcomes in these established programs are not directly comparable to one another, still less to a design that has not yet been implemented in the Kazakhstani context.

On this more measured basis, several philosophical-practical recommendations can be offered — framed as directions warranting further institutional consideration and empirical investigation, rather than as conclusions already established by completed research. First,

the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan could consider commissioning and supporting the development of a national philosophical framework for critical pedagogy-informed English language instruction, situating emancipatory education as an explicit goal of university English teaching alongside the communicative and professional competence goals currently dominant; such a framework should draw upon the Freirean theoretical tradition, the established practices of critical pedagogy-informed language teaching internationally, and the specific philosophical and cultural resources of Kazakhstani educational tradition, while explicitly anticipating empirical piloting of the kind proposed in Subsections 2–6 of the Main part before wider adoption.

Second, universities could establish interdisciplinary communities of philosophical-pedagogical inquiry — bringing together English language specialists, educational philosophers, and faculty from diverse disciplines — through which the theoretical and practical dimensions of critical pedagogy-informed English instruction can be collectively explored, developed, and refined ahead of and alongside any empirical piloting. The isolation of language instruction from the broader philosophical and disciplinary life of the university is itself a structural feature of the banking model; its dissolution through genuine interdisciplinary collaboration is arguably a necessary, though not on its own sufficient, condition for the institutionalization of Freirean principles.

Third, should the proposed design in Subsections 2–6 of the Main part be implemented and its predictions confirmed, English language curricula across faculty specializations could be reconsidered around Freirean generative themes drawn from the specific intellectual, professional, and civic concerns of each disciplinary context. Fourth, assessment frameworks for English language proficiency could, on the same condition, be expanded to include measures of critical communicative competence — critical text analysis, dialogic argumentation, problem-posing discourse, and epistemic reflexivity — alongside the receptive and productive accuracy measures currently prioritized. Fifth, the professional development of English language instructors could include philosophical education in critical pedagogy theory, so that teachers are positioned to engage with the Freirean framework as a

philosophical orientation and not merely as a technique. Each of these recommendations, however, is properly understood as contingent on the empirical validation that the design proposed in Subsections 2–6 of the Main part — and not the philosophical argument alone — is intended to provide.

The integration of Freirean critical pedagogy into Kazakhstani English language instruction is best understood, on the philosophical analysis developed here, not merely as a methodological reform but as a potential philosophical transformation — a shift in the understanding of what language education is for, what kind of human beings it forms, and what kind of society it serves. Whether this potential is realized, and to what degree, under the concrete conditions of Kazakhstani higher education is an empirical question that the design proposed in this article is intended to help answer, not one this article claims already to have settled. On philosophical grounds alone, the argument developed here suggests that the choice between the banking model and the problem-posing alternative is not merely a choice between more or less effective language-teaching methodologies; whether it is also, empirically, a choice for measurably better outcomes is a claim this article proposes to test, rather than one it claims to have already demonstrated.

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