

## ENSINO, SAÚDE E AMBIENTE

### Reading Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed: Why did it feel empowering to me?

*Lendo a Pedagogia do Oprimido de Paulo Freire: Por que ela me pareceu empoderadora?*

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**ABSTRACT:** Celebrating the work of Paulo Freire for his healing influence, this paper gives an auto-ethnographic account of the author's personal, pedagogical and political liberation process reading Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Raised in a conservative patriarchal middle-class atmosphere in central Turkey, the author analyzes her own story of liberation as a woman, as a young scholar, as non-native English-speaking language educator and a citizen of a democratic republic. The author describes how she realized her own subjugation by reading Freire (2005) at a time of personal and political crisis and how she tried hard to find her personal voice. She also depicts the impact of the book on her pedagogy, on her relationships with students and on her liberatory praxis. Finally, the author tells how she transformed her understanding of the dynamics of social transformation reading Freire's dialogic, problem-posing pedagogy of the oppressed.

**Palavras-Chave:**  
libertação; opressão;  
autoetnografia;  
pedagogia do oprimido;  
empoderamento

**RESUMO:** Celebrando a obra de Paulo Freire por sua influência curativa, este artigo oferece um relato autoetnográfico do processo de libertação pessoal, pedagógico e político da autora lendo a Pedagogia do Oprimido de Paulo Freire. Tendo sido criada em uma atmosfera patriarcal conservadora de classe média no centro da Turquia, a autora analisa sua própria história de libertação como mulher, como uma jovem acadêmica, como educadora não-nativa de língua inglesa e cidadã de uma república democrática. A autora descreve como que, ao ler Freire (2005), percebeu sua própria subjugação, em um momento de crise pessoal e política e como se esforçou para encontrar sua voz pessoal. Ela também retrata o impacto do livro em sua pedagogia, em suas relações com os alunos e em sua práxis libertadora. Por fim, a autora conta como transformou sua compreensão acerca da dinâmica da transformação social ao ler a pedagogia dialógica e problematizadora de Freire.

I came across the name and work of Paulo Freire in an article on critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 1990) when I was a doctoral student. I was in my early 30s back then (2010-2012) and I was having a hard time on several grounds in my personal and professional

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life. I was working full time as an instructor and doing graduate studies at an English language teacher education program in Ankara, Turkey. I was grappling with my conflicting roles as a faculty member and a graduate student in the same department. I felt insecure as a novice non-native English-speaking teacher educator in a program with faculty and students with native-like English accents. As a newly married woman, I was trying to mediate my busy work life with my home life refiguring out myself in my new role as a wife. I was often crashing into those gender roles some of which I had long challenged and some of which I never realized I had internalized in the conservative patriarchal family atmosphere I was brought up. Meanwhile, Turkey was going through hard times. As a middle-class woman embracing liberal and secular ideas, I felt desperate and threatened under the repressive neo-liberal and neo-conservative regime. Furthermore, I had difficulty understanding how at least half of Turkey's population, including family members, gave consent to the ongoing corrupt and anti-democratic practices in the country.

Reading *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2005) at such a time of personal and political crisis at the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East was such an eye-opening experience to me it shattered my heart into pieces. It was devastating to see I was also being oppressed and I clearly saw how and why. The more I read, the more I started to name the intersections of oppression I had faced in my personal, educational and political life – as a middle-class woman, as a young scholar, as a non-native teacher/teacher educator of English, and as a citizen of a democratic republic. Unveiling some of the buried layers of the objective and subjective reality I was surrounded by was as agonizing as it was refreshing. Freire (2005) had not specified different forms of oppression in his text, but I (re)interpreted his ideas in the light of my own experience and saw how my social class, gender, passport, first language and political stance were intersecting factors in my subjugation. Although my new revelations hurt initially, they put things in perspective in time. I understood how our personal, pedagogical, and political lives intersected. I began to find my own voice and saw the way out of our gloomy political situation.

Now I am writing this paper as a woman educator and a recent mother in her early 40s. There is no doubt my story of liberation is *unfinished*, but I can at least say that I have matured into a life allowing room for the joy and challenge of raising a baby. Although I discover new phases of (self)subjugation and struggle with my mothering experience, I enjoy this adventure. I am a full-time faculty member in the same English language teacher

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education program. I include critical pedagogy in every course I teach and offer a critical pedagogy graduate course. I am more at peace with my identity as a non-native English-language speaking teacher educator. But I still get confused in dealing with the demands of academic capitalism as a scholar, who received her PhD at a prestigious university in a subaltern context. I live in Ankara, Turkey in the midst of serious political, economic, and social turbulations, details and effects of which I will self-censor here.

This paper tells my auto-ethnographic account of awakening and empowerment as a person, as a critical educator and as an emerging public intellectual reading Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. As a genre, auto-ethnography gives authors-researchers the chance to turn themselves into research sites and investigate sociocultural issues from a personal landscape (Canagarajah, 2012; Yazan, 2019). In that regard, here I intend to analyze my own story of liberation both to confront the culture of silence I had to live through and to direct attention to the personal, pedagogical and political dimensions of suppression and emancipation I experienced in my specific context. I expect this article will showcase how dynamics of oppression play out from the lens of a woman scholar in Turkey and demonstrate how the book itself is embraced by a woman educator living in this region. Narration of my personal experience from a subaltern context will hopefully serve as data for further research and theory for the pedagogy of liberation (Yazan, Canagarajah & Jain, 2021). Following Yazan (2019), I acknowledge narrating my liberatory process runs the risk of making my own vulnerabilities public. Though that is a fact, to depict a relatively more authentic version of your story, I assume it is necessary to risk being visible with your weaknesses, mistakes and conflicts. In spite of those concerns, the experience of writing this piece has itself been empowering allowing me to speak out. I hope my account will help readers from various contexts to (re)consider their own stories from a new perspective and to understand they are not alone (Eldemir & Yılmaz, 2021).

#### PERSONAL LIBERATION

My first-time reading *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was like a slap in my face. I felt like I was waking up from a long sleep realizing how oppressed I was on different grounds as a middle-class young woman educator living in a partly democratic and liberal and partly conservative and patriarchal society. Reading Freire's (2005) words took me into such a deep journey in my world that I was lost in text discovering different layers of oppression I was exposed to. I remember having lumps in my throat and clouds in my mind. I could not see the

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forest for a long time sinking into the shades of trees. Seeing the links between different parts of the book and grasping the larger meaning came only in my second or third reading over time when some of my bruises started to heal with the help of personal therapy.

Raised as a perfectionist afraid of making mistakes, I had no tolerance for failure both in my personal and professional life, which entrapped me in a cycle of overwork, fatigue and dissatisfaction. Allowing myself to make mistakes, forgiving myself for my weaknesses, embracing a growth-oriented mindset and leaving my obsession to be “omnipotent” took a long time. Reading Freire (2005), I discovered the roots of this mindset. Because I was engaged in constant “self-depreciation” (p. 63) I was pushing myself too much “to do” and “to be” more. No matter how I looked confident and strong outside, I felt weak and indecisive inside. Being exposed to the deficit discourse in many realms of my life, unconsciously I got convinced of my own second-class position as a woman, as a young academic, as a non-native English-speaking teacher (educator) of English. Without realizing, I was trying hard not to feel “inferior.” I had internalized the oppressor’s voice implying I was not enough, and I was in a rush to convince my inner voice that I was. Reading Freire (2005), I was able to name my internalized view of the oppressor and started to confront it.

The oppressor in my mind was most often a male authority figure in the micro, meso or macro scale. I had learnt to adhere to paternal authority first at home and then at school, which would be reproduced at the work context. “Adopting their guidelines” (Freire, 2005, p.47), I would easily lose trust in my own ability and competence. Probably, I was “fearful of freedom”, as Freire (2005, p. 47) noted. I must have sensed freedom meant responsibility and owning your mistakes. No matter how I wanted to lead an authentic life being wholly myself, I had a hard time speaking out. As a woman, I had learnt to prioritize people-pleasing rather than focusing on my needs. Self-sacrifice and attempting “to rescue” those in need was a big virtue in my family. I was used to sacrificing my own self for my beloved ones – family, friends, students, career. I did not know I was taking part in my own exploitation and dehumanization. I had not learnt to take care of myself. I had not noticed I was the one who needs to liberate herself in the first place. I was engaged in a “necrophilic behavior” – destructing my own life, as Freire (2005, p. 65) warned. This process of self-abuse had to stumble on some rough surface some time in my life. After I got married, I could not take on more and I started to feel burnt-out. This is when I encountered Freire (2005), who helped me confront my inauthentic way of life and the domination I suffered from.

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Freire (2005) warned “Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift” (p. 47). I came to understand domination in my small world or repression in the world at large would not disappear by itself - me waiting patiently and submissively. Yet, getting out of my comfort zone was not easy at all. I experienced how painful liberation was in my bones: “Liberation is a childbirth” (Freire, 2005, p. 49). Yet, as a mother of a toddler now, I will claim emancipation is even more difficult than childbirth. Delivering a baby is a one-time event full of agony and amazement while daring to unlearn years of internalized suppression is a never-ending process requiring a colossal amount of effort, discovery, patience, and tolerance.

Freire (2005) exposed my long-buried repression and my therapist accompanied me in this journey. Yet, my story of *conscientização* was not either a self-achievement or a gift, as Freire (2005, p. 47) himself noted. It was a mutual process. It was my own decision to humanize myself that led to my ongoing liberation in solidarity with others. Mere reflection would not be enough for emancipation, though. Action was also needed. To achieve praxis in my own liberatory process, I came to the realization that I was entitled to speak out and demand my rights. As Freire maintained, “To exist, humanly, is to *name* the world, to change it ... Those who have been denied their primordial right to speak their word must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggression.” (p. 88). Yet, my own self was so repressed that I first needed to find out who I was, what I needed and what I wanted. Slowly, I started to reveal my authentic self. In time, I learnt to say “no” and to assert myself in the way I wanted. Thereafter, the way I carried myself changed. The way I talked to myself got better. My interaction with the people changed. My personal struggle still continues. I am still a work in progress and an “uncompleted being” (p. 161). I fall back to my older ways of being in challenging times. I still lose my voice at times. But I am learning to get up and continue my journey.

### PEDAGOGICAL LIBERATION

“Education suffers from narration sickness” (Freire, p. 71). I was hit by this sentence because it summarizes the years of banking of education I was exposed to. Even at the college level, we had a public speaking professor, who dictated us how to give a good public speech for two semesters reading from her hand-written papers, which turned yellow. In a speaking course, we were just sitting and writing the rules for giving a good talk! We all knew what the professor was doing was a farce at a translation & interpreting program, but we could not say

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anything. Culturally, we were not supposed to argue against authority figures, or we would be in trouble. This was what we had experienced formerly in family, at schools and in society at large as middle-class citizens of Turkey. Now we were at the best university of the country, and we were the best-scoring students in the university exam. But it did not matter. We had internalized the culture of silence (Freire, 2005, p. 88) and we were reproducing it in our new context at our public university. We probably felt more comfortable not having to speak with our limited English fluency, which was often being scolded by most of our professors. Not taking into account where we were coming from, those privileged professors of ours would look down on us and our Englishes – not attempting to support or encourage us do better. They killed the remaining crumbs of courage we had for speaking English. Not having access to many resources in English, we had had a limited chance to hear or speak English before college. Internet had just come to Turkey and I was trying to learn how to use a computer and internet when I started university (1997-1998). What is worse, that professor of public-speaking was a chain-smoker. Believe it or not, she used to smoke during the class time in our small classroom for almost three hours! No matter how surreal it sounds now, this happened, and we could not open our mouths to say anything. It was clearly unacceptable. But we did not dare to speak! We did not see ourselves entitled to ask for our basic right for a non-smoking classroom atmosphere, nor demand a quality education for speaking as prospective translators and interpreters. Looking back, this anecdote tells me how suppressed, silenced and domesticated we were and breaks my heart.

I remember when we were K-12 students, my friends and I had a tendency to resist our teachers' attempts to fill us with lifeless trivia and complained about having to memorize what year such and such war took place. We did not want to learn the names of rivers and mountains we had never seen. We did not get excited having to deposit the names of novels we had never read in our memory. Still, we followed the orders to survive and thrive in the system: "The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are." (Freire, 2005, p. 72). There was not much space for inquiry, invention or questioning in most of the classes. We had to accept the passive role assigned to us and had to adapt to the world we took for granted: "When their efforts to act responsibly are frustrated, when they find themselves unable to use their faculties, people suffer" (Freire, 2005, p. 78). We were suffering, but we could not quite understand what was happening to us. We could not imagine an alternative way of being. Neither could we realize all this was happening to kill our creativity and curiosity.

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Luckily, our schooling was not all about those teachers who treated us as objects. There were those exceptional humanist teachers who did not narrate but engaged in dialogue with us. They related content to our lives. They respected us. They learnt with us. They read with us. They discussed ideas with us. They challenged us with new perspectives. They helped us see the world from a wider angle. We loved them, respected them and took them as role models. They were the ones letting in some light in the repressive system. Although they had a big impact on many of us, it would take longer for us to learn to ask for more light.

I was not educated to be a teacher, but when I became one, intuitively I followed the model of those transformative intellectual teachers I had. I tried to build relationships with my students and to help them think critically. Yet, my attempts were not enough to sort out the tons of issues I was bothered by in the institutional structure of the schooling system. I could not diagnose the source or the cure for the intrinsic problems in the educational institutions. I checked many education books to find an answer to the questions in my mind, but those were not resolved until I encountered *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as a doctoral student in the ninth year of my teaching career. I had already become a teacher educator by then. Freire's pedagogy confirmed some of the teaching practices I had developed instinctively: being open to learning with your students, having sincere relationships with your students and dialoguing with them. Now I would understand why I had adopted such a teaching style and why it was good for us. Unknowingly, I had challenged the teacher-student contradiction set by the banking of education and I had discovered the joy of learning from and with my students. When I became an instructor at an English department, I initially felt a bit uneasy with my teaching style, though. I sensed I was supposed to act cooler and more distant with my undergraduate teacher candidates as a university professor. However, I could not play the roles I prescribed for myself long, and decided to be myself. That way my students and I developed an authentic relationship.

Even though I had developed a dialogic teaching style following the example of my role models, I had not reflected on it much until I read Freire (2005). With Freire's problem-posing education, I became more confident in my teaching style and began to discuss it with my students, who were English language teacher candidates. Most of them were struck by Freire's ideas. The more we read, the more we shared our stories of internalized oppression. We revealed our schooling traumas and saw how most of us had suffered from similar wounds. We all realized we had taken some things for granted in the schooling system and it

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was enlightening for us to reconsider those ugly moments in our schooling histories from a new angle. Those conversations helped me clarify some of the mystified parts in my memory and better perceive the reality I had not discovered earlier.

Because most students enrolled in graduate classes are practicing teachers, we do not only go back to our schooling years, but also think about which roles we play as teachers with my students. Confronting reality, realizing how entrapped in the system we are, and noticing how we have played the imposed roles on us hurt even more. We question which side we are on – reproducing the system as it is or challenging it opening counter-hegemonic spaces in our specific contexts. Many of us understand for the first time that we have a choice. We often feel guilty having acted as depositors of knowledge serving the interests of the oppressors unknowingly. We talk about how hegemonic powers surround us and limit our space. We share stories of submission. We tell stories of resistance and struggle. We think about how to enlarge spaces for liberation. We consider the risks: which ones are easy to take, and which ones should be avoided? When is it worth to take the big risks? How do we decide?

As English language educators, we face other dilemmas and sources of injustice exercising our profession. As teachers of a world language, are we contributing to the linguistic imperialism from the metropolitan countries to the dependent ones or are we serving to spread languages of freedom in multiple languages in our repertoires? How are we positioned and how do we position ourselves in relation to a global language considering our location and linguistic backgrounds? How do we place ourselves and our Englishes in the linguistic hierarchies? Do we consider ourselves as legitimate English language teachers? Before reading Freire, I had already become familiar with the idea of native-speakerism (Holliday, 2005), Global Englishes (Rose & Galloway, 2019), and NNEST (Non-native English-Speaking Teachers) Movement (Braine, 2010). Yet, it was not until *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, I got to understand my mixed feelings about my role as a non-native English-speaking teacher. Freire's discussion about the double consciousness of the oppressor explained my position – I was both myself and the consciousness of the oppressor I had internalized. I felt I was entitled to keep my intelligible speech, but I also downgraded my own accent in my own judgment. By thinking, analyzing, and writing about these feelings, I overcame my internalized native-speakerism (Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2018, 2019a).

In addition to reflecting on schooling, teacher roles and linguistic hierarchies during class discussions, I also ask both undergraduate and graduate students to engage in creative



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and critical research projects. They critically analyze themselves and English language teaching materials and they come up with critical auto-ethnographies, and critical language teaching materials. What is more, my students and I have also co-constructed critical reading and discussion circles at our university open to all those interested. Once we set up a critical reading circle and met almost every week to read and discuss a critical pedagogy work. We also built a cultural-educational student group called *Maske* to build community in our department with another group of students (for the details about my critical English language teacher education practices and these cultural circles, see Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2019b). Nowadays we are building a non-hierarchical trans-feminist pedagogy circle to exchange ideas, to hold on to our voices and to build solidarity under an extremely violent social climate towards women and LGTB+ individuals.

*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has not only been my source of wisdom as an individual and as a pedagogue, but it has also provided me with my theoretical framework for my scholarship. I conduct research from a Freireian lens in teacher education and in critical applied linguistics. I intend to contribute to change in our lives, institutions and the world through research, as well. I joined national and international circles of critical educators by attending *International Conference on Critical Education* for several years. Our national circle publishes a political-educational journal titled *Eleştirel Pedagoji* in Turkey, providing a meeting space for those engaged in critical pedagogy in Turkey. Our international circle of critical educators - “One Big Union” as we call it - has been working together in educational action and research projects since 2014 (for more on that, see Alica & Tezgiden-Cakcak, forthcoming). We have co-taught, organized seminars and workshops, published (see Mızıkacı, Senese, Tezgiden-Cakcak & Gorman, 2017) and supported one another at times of crises.

### POLITICAL LIBERATION

As a secular woman embracing democratic values, I have felt threatened and depressed under the increasingly restraining political-economic and religious climate of Turkey. I knew I had to do something other than complaining to reverse the situation, but I felt helpless. I did not know where to start. I partly used social media to share critical ideas and to raise question marks in people, but soon we were strangled in that area, too. People were taken into custody, sued, or imprisoned because of peaceful messages shared on their twitter or facebook accounts. I felt desperate, paralyzed and enraged. Meanwhile, people,

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including family members, continued to support the oppressors without realizing. They were clearly manipulated, deceived and exploited by the myths deposited through media. But it was not possible to help them see the reality. They would not listen. They would not dare change their ideas. We were polarized. We could not talk. We could not discuss. There was no room for communication, which made all of us upset. I was sorry because I could not make myself heard and share “my informed knowledge” with my beloved ones. On top of all the political unease, not being able to reach my family touched me even more. I felt like my attempts for transformation were futile when I could not even “change” my own family.

I would discover later in Freire (2005) that discourse about “enlightenment” that I invested in for many years along with my comrades on the left is not a serum to be injected to someone else. Without one’s deliberate effort, it would not be possible to liberate anyone: “We cannot say that ... someone liberates someone else, nor yet that someone liberates himself, but rather that human beings in communion liberate each other” (p. 133). For Freire, imposing yourself or your knowledge was not the solution, it was necessary to dialogue with the people synthesizing your knowledge with theirs. The methods of oppressors in depositing knowledge and treating people as objects would not help in liberatory education. Only by posing problems, you could invite them into conversation - not to give or teach them anything but to learn with them. Otherwise, “they may become frightened by a ‘word’ which threatens the oppressor housed within them” (p. 135). In our case, that was the case – my family members did not want to face the ugly truth. They were “fearful of freedom” (p. 166). If the reality became unveiled, as Freire (2005) indicated, that would mean a collapse in their entire world. They would not stand the fact that all those principles they believed in – equality, justice, democracy - were only being paid lip service.

The idea of the oppressed fearing freedom made very much sense explaining my own situation to me and teaching me what not to do in the name of liberation, as it would not work. For Freire (2005), liberatory transformation had an educational quality and required cultural action. If it were not liberatory, it would not be an authentic transformation and lead to an oppressive bureaucratic and static entity in the name of emancipation. Therefore, for a real transformation, it had to be dialogic and educational. It should not depend on domination or transmission of knowledge. For dialogue to become an “encounter among men [*sic*] to ‘name’ the world” (Freire, 2005, p. 137), educational and political leaders should have love for the world, trust people’s ability to reason and possess humility. Otherwise, there would be

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no dialogue for people to exchange ideas. If one does not believe in people's potential to transform themselves, there would be no reason for them to converse.

Unfortunately, there is an elitist discourse among Turkey's democrats insulting those people who blindly support the oppressors and I was heavily influenced by that until I met Freire (2005). While they see themselves as the sages, they project ignorance to the masses. They think that they can "win the masses over" (Freire, 2005, p. 95) through manipulation just like the oppressors do. While some groups see them as their enemies, others call them "the sheep" for following the orders. Although their objective is ultimate liberation, equality and justice for all, they also engage in suppressive acts to achieve their purposes. While this attitude does not help anyone, it worsens the situation for all. Those supporting oppressors take part in their own domination without realizing and become even more attached to those in power.

Freire (2005) thought this "divide and rule" technique works efficiently to turn the oppressed each other and to further alienate them. This polarization among the oppressed, conquering their consciousness and anti-dialogic action are necessary conditions for the oppressive system to be maintained. Populist manipulation techniques such as providing welfare programs and aids for the oppressed and promising individual success usually pay off well because they cater for their needs at least for a short time. Although they do not end exploitation of the oppressed at all, they are good distractors (Freire, 2005). I observe all those strategies Freire (2005) mentioned are used in Turkey effectively.

The cure Freire (2005) suggested for liberation, however, is the dialogic encounter of women and men to transform the world without any party dominating the other. Cooperation and communication are intrinsic to dialogical action. Bothering issues in the world should be posed as problems and people should try to find solutions in interaction with each other. For Freire (2005), unity and organization among the oppressed were indispensable for liberation. However, he knew this was not easy task due to the divisive acts of the oppressors. For one thing, Freire (2005) argued, the oppressed are divided beings. They cannot see the objective reality as their perception is masked by the oppressor housed within them. They are hopeless, as they perceive the world as static. They feel so paralyzed they cannot see they have the power to intervene in the world if they act together. The only way for them to unveil reality is through dialogic reflection and action. Only after that may they realize their potential as transformers of reality. By developing a humanistic unity and organizing, they may build a strong bloc to struggle collectively against tyranny.

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I drew many political lessons from Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed. First of all, I learnt that I cannot change anyone or liberate anyone. That is not only impossible, but it is also dehumanizing treating people as objects (Freire, 2005). I stopped being judgmental about people's ideas, feelings and beliefs. Instead, I started to get into conversation with them to understand their viewpoints. I now know that I can learn something from every single person and we could reach a more developed and diverse understanding together. I do my best to be inclusive in conversation and not to make anyone feel excluded or discriminated. I believe in the possibility of change. Although our conversation may seem to be leading nowhere and people become more attached to their views, I assume our dialogue might raise a question mark in their minds, as it does in mine. From my own experience, I know that I resisted some ideas strongly when I heard them for the first time. But my mind changed many years later.

When it comes to organization and unity, I now pay extra attention that they should not be dehumanizing, limiting people's freedoms and turning them into things. Having experienced some of the anti-dialogical practices in the name of liberation, I stay away from those alienating organizations. Instead, I join and co-construct those communities of practice that have humane relationships and help us work in solidarity. Along with like-minded people, I do my best to take small steps to create change in our world.

### CONCLUSION

In this paper, I narrated my ongoing process of developing critical consciousness and taking critical personal, pedagogic and political action with the help of Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Although my story is unique to my person and to my specific context, it might resonate with the readers. It is my hope that this paper might join others in the literature for expanding our space and enlarging our solidarity for liberatory action. I wrote this paper to celebrate the work of Paulo Freire and to show that its area of influence is still wide and his legacy is alive. Even though some might claim such critical pedagogy work did not feel empowering in their Western context for various reasons at a certain time in history (Ellsworth, 1989), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, along with other writings of Freire (2001; Freire & Macedo, 2005; Freire, Macedo, Koike, Oliveira, Freire, 2018), has been liberating for me on several grounds. Writing this piece for the memory of Freire, who has been a dear educator and healer to me, on his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday is an honor. *İyi ki doğdun/Glad you were born dear hocam/teacher Paulo Freire!*

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