Critical pedagogy in the ELT industry:
Can a socially responsible curriculum find its place in a corporate culture?

by:
Nadine Baladi

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Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Faculty of Education
McGill University
Montreal, Canada

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Abstract

This study qualitatively evaluated the adoption of critical approaches to teaching English as a second or foreign language (ESL) in the particular context of the private language school industry. The research questions focused on the flexibility of the curriculum, on the room it affords for critical pedagogy and on the challenges of implementing critical lesson plans in the ESL classroom. With the help of four teachers, I explored the practical implications of implementing critical lessons in multicultural ESL classrooms at a Canadian private language school. While the general conclusion of the teachers' experiences provides an encouraging and a positive outlook on a more generalized integration of critical pedagogy in the ELT curriculum, some of the challenges encountered included preparation time for lesson planning, addressing students' linguistic needs, and the tension between the business culture of the ELT industry and the principles of critical pedagogy.

Sommaire

Cette thèse explore l'impact d'une approche critique (traduite *pédagogie critique*) dans l'enseignement de l'anglais langue seconde ou langue étrangère, dans le cadre de l'industrie des écoles de langues privées. Je cherchais a évaluer la flexibilité du curriculum de l'école, dans quelle mesure ce curriculum facilitait l'adoption d'une méthodologie critique, et les défis que présentait l'adoption de cette méthodologie dans une classe d'anglais langue seconde. Bien que de façon générale, l'expérience des quatre enseignants ayant participé à cette étude ait été positive, certains défis associés à cette méthodologie se sont présentés: le temps demandé pour la planification des cours, l'exigence de répondre aux besoins linguistiques des étudiants, et les antagonismes potentiels entre la culture corporative de l'industrie de la didactique de l'anglais langue seconde et les principes de la pédagogie critique.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

1. English as a world commodity

As a consequence of historical events, English was elevated to its current status of *common language* (Graddol, 1997) or *world commodity* (Phillipson, 1992) and is today spoken by some of the most privileged or powerful actors in our global economy. In an already disparate economy where social inequalities between the privileged and the under-privileged are deep and wide, proficiency in English may soon become one of the mechanisms for dividing those who have access to wealth and information from those who don't. As Phillipson (2001) points out, referring to English as a 'global' language has less to do with demography or geography than with decision-making in the contemporary global political and economic system. He says, "in our contemporary world, 10–20% of the population are getting obscenely richer, the English speaking haves who consume 80% of the available resources, whereas the remainder are being systematically impoverished, the non-English-speaking have-nots" (2001, p. 189). And even though the majority of the world's population does not speak English, many decisions that affect the entire world's population are made in English. The British Council, *Language Travel Magazine*, and the *ELT Gazette*, whose interests lie in the world's demand for English, scrutinize and report on the status of the English language. Their reports all continue to confirm that worldwide demand for high-quality English teaching is quickly expanding because it has inarguably become the necessary tool to gain access to the global economy and to negotiate the direction of global trends. It is this need for English communication skills that has given birth to a thriving, global, private English Language Teaching (ELT) industry.

2. The English Language Teaching Industry

The English Language Teaching (ELT) industry has, in the past several years, become a major cross-cultural and worldwide enterprise. This industry involves language schools, publishing, university degrees connected to English teaching, and a host of subsidiary services. "The English teaching industry was reported as being worth £6 billion to the British economy in the 1980s, and has expanded significantly since" and, Phillipson (2001) claims, it "continues to experience unequalled growth, year after year" (p. 191). The global ELT industry is a colossal and lucrative enterprise. In the 1990s, Manners (1998) estimated that about one billion people per year are learning English as a second language and that the industry turns over $26 billion USD annually. More recent numbers produced by *English Australia*, which is the representative body for public and private English language colleges in Australia**,** indicate that in 2005, the estimated value of the global market for English Language instruction was $9.2 billion USD, up from $8.3 billion USD in 2004, with over 1,271,000 students (http://www.englishaustralia.com.au/stats.html).

The need for English has given rise to numerous private English language schools that function as corporations. An important portion of these 'school-businesses' are located in countries where English is spoken as a mother tongue, and are attended by young adults who travel abroad to improve their English skills (Baker, 2005; Singh, Kell & Pandian, 2002). To possess the means to travel to an English-speaking country, the average students must stem from the upper-middle or upper class in their country of origin. Private ESL schools recruit students through a network of agencies located in international urban centres, and prices are fixed regionally in order to ensure that the program is accessible to the upper-middle and upper classes (P. Zysman, personal communication, October 2005), and consequently, most likely not accessible to the lower-middle and lower classes. In this sense, the private ELT industry reinforces the status quo of social inequities.

In the countries of origin of these students, English is not widely spoken but English is perceived as a valuable commodity. The privileged students who attend a private language school in a country where English is the main language, do so in order to improve their English language skills. This allows the students to gain more marketability on the international business scene without them necessarily realizing that they are reinforcing existing social inequalities.

Because the private sector of ELT has developed on the periphery of mainstream education, and because it remains to this day sheltered from academic scrutiny, the ELT industry has ignored certain pedagogical developments taking place in public education such as critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is generally understood to be a philosophical and educational practice seeking to resist and transform societal inequalities. And while some school boards or educational ministries are increasingly integrating elements of critical pedagogy into their curricula, such as the school reform currently being implemented across the Province of Quebec by the Ministère de l'Education, private language schools can easily ignore this movement and can continue to operate as traditional businesses where the dollar value remains the bottom line.

3. Rationale for the study

As the success of a business is increasingly measured by standards of social responsibility and sustainability (Elkington, 1998; Hopkins, 2003; Laszlo, 2003), it follows that ELT schools that are run as private businesses need to become more socially responsible by adopting critical approaches to ELT. Although it would be easy to dismiss this type of corporate-run and private education as a marginal phenomenon and as a product of our capitalist culture, I consider that the growing number of international students who select these

private language schools should benefit from the same critically aware environment as the one that administrators and educators strive to create in the public system.

Public, government-run schools are increasingly adopting critical approaches to teaching and are addressing issues of sustainability in their curriculum. Internationally, UNESCO mandates educators to provide "quality education", which it defined for the 2006 World Teachers' Day News Release as "education that includes an emphasis on learner development, learning conditions and the role of education in promoting responsible citizenship" (http://www.unesco.ca, News Release section, October 2, 2006). Since 1991, Quebec has had an interministerial committee on sustainable development to ensure that government policy and practice are consistent with the principles of sustainable development and that the initiatives of the various departments, including those of education, are complementary. This focus on citizenship and sustainable development has guided the development of the Quebec education reform of the early twenty first century. The Ministère de l'Education, du Loisir et du Sport (2005) published an online document explaining that schools should prepare students to help build a society that is more democratic, just and egalitarian. This same document explains that the mandate of schools is to teach students to get along better with others, to be open to the world and its diversity and to counter violence.

This study is inspired by my belief that private ESL school pedagogies should be shaped by educational discourses that are more socially and ideologically responsible such as the educational reform of Quebec as described above, and this for the greater good of all, the privileged and the under-privileged equally. Because students acquiring English in an ESL context are already advantaged global citizens, they are poised to become leaders in the global economy, a global economy in which social justice, environmental sustainability and economic stability have recently become valued elements of the bottom line (Elkington, 1998; Hopkins, 2003; Laszlo, 2003). It is therefore advantageous for students to gain an awareness of these

concepts, which may be addressed in a curriculum that is based on principles of critical pedagogy.

4. Reflections on personal motivations

With a liberal arts degree and no teaching experience ten years ago, I was hired to teach English as a Foreign Language to all levels of the Finnish Public School system in a small city called Harjavalta. This is where I discovered my love for teaching and developed a curiosity for cultures foreign to me. Upon my return to Canada and without a Bachelor's degree in Education, my only option to continue along this path was to join the private language school industry.

In the year 2000, one of Canada's most established private language schools, attended yearly by over one thousand students in Vancouver, opened a branch in Montreal and I jumped at the opportunity to teach its particularly diverse international clientele. The student population rapidly grew to reflect the typical profile of students attending other well-established Canadian private language schools. The following data is drawn from the annual Student Profile Survey (2007) which is conducted by the Canadian Association of Private Language Schools (CAPLS): 69% of the students attending private ESL schools are between the ages of twenty to twenty-nine years of age (p. 1), very well educated with several years of post secondary education and some professional employment experience (p. 4). According to the report, this career-oriented population is usually looking to upgrade their language skills in order to "enhance their advanced education or increase their employment opportunities" (p. 5).

As a teacher in a multicultural classroom setting, I became initially interested in using the cultural differences of the student population as classroom topics in order to create exchanges and to encourage dialogue around these differences. By doing this, I hoped the resulting oral communicative opportunities would help students acquire and practice the

English language. The students responded well to this, seeming motivated to introduce their own cultures to others and to explore other students' cultures in return. I realized, however, that multicultural education could potentially go further than merely expose traditions and culture. It could educate against racism and intolerance, towards equality, towards peace and towards human rights if the lessons were created and implemented in a certain way.

At the same time as I began to develop ESL lesson plans that attempted to address peace and human rights issues, two key events occurred: I was accepted into a Master's in Education program, which introduced me to various pedagogical approaches such as Critical Pedagogy, and I was promoted to the position of Academic Coordinator at the school. Both my university courses and my position fuelled a greater need to explore the social responsibilities of the language teacher, particularly within the private language school sector where, it seemed, financial pressures often dictated educational practices. One of my biggest questions was whether the students' (paying consumers) expectations of the curriculum could be compatible with my vision of a more critical and socially responsible curriculum.

In my role as academic coordinator, I realized through teacher observations how much influence a teacher can have on the students. It seemed that the teachers most enthusiastic and confident about their lesson plans were the ones garnering the most enthusiastic student response. These observations led me to believe that the teachers' adaptation and implementation of the curriculum plays an integral part in the students' reaction to it. This is why, in my design of this research project, I chose to explore the potential of critical pedagogy from the teachers' perspective, not from the students' perspective, basing my evaluation of the success of a critical curriculum on the teachers' experiences with it. Their feelings and reactions to the implementation of critical lesson plans are invaluable to me because I believe teachers are such a central element to the lesson's success.

Now, as the director of the school, having carried forward with me many of the educational principles that define critical pedagogy, I am in a privileged position where I can bring change to the school curriculum. If, as a result of this study, I can establish that the participating teachers' experiences with critical pedagogy are positive, I would feel encouraged to eventually support this implementation at a more generalized level.

My dual status as director and researcher within the school afforded certain advantages and certain disadvantages for the purposes of this study. On the one hand, I gained access to the school, its curriculum and textbooks without difficulty. In addition, having recently taught among the ranks of many current teachers, I also gained access to a number of teachers' trust without being significantly challenged. On the other hand, I must recognize that I am in a position of power and that I must remain aware of the constant potential conflict of interest that may arise out of this dual status.

5. Objectives of the study

The first question that I wish to answer in this study is whether the curriculum of the private language school where I work already supports critical approaches to ELT by way of its curriculum, textbooks and school philosophy. I will attempt to establish this in the first phase of this study, by ascertaining whether the elements in the curriculum and teaching methods of this ELT school provides its students with an increased awareness of social responsibility. Subsequently, in the second phase of this study, I hope to gain a better appreciation of English teachers' understanding of and experience with critical approaches to ELT. Whether teachers are familiar with critical practices or not, I wish to explore how it may be possible to create a socially responsible space in the corporate culture of the ELT industry by inviting teachers to incorporate elements of critical pedagogy into their lesson plans, or to adopt ready-made lesson plans, which were created upon principles of critical pedagogy. With the feedback of these

teachers, I wish to determine how teachers of ESL respond to teaching some elements of critical pedagogy. I also hope to gain insight into teachers' perceptions of their students and how they feel their students respond to these elements. Ultimately, I hope to determine if it is possible to implement a critical pedagogy lesson plan in an ESL class taught at a private language school, within the corporate culture of the ELT industry.

6. Significance of the study

Although small in scope, this study is important for a number of reasons. First, after doing extensive research, I discovered that very few studies exist which evaluate the effect of critical approaches to teaching specifically in the context of private language schools. Research has tended to focus more on the implementation of such approaches in the context of public education, and often in underprivileged classrooms. This study will add to the limited body of information that deals with critical approaches to education and how these approaches may initiate a change in the attitudes of privileged international youth. Exposing students to critical issues may inspire them to create social change.

In addition, there is very little in the TESOL literature (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) on the educational approaches of private ESL schools. Based on my personal observations over the last 10 years working in the ELT industry, it seems as though the ELT industry is not influenced by academia, and the quality of its education is barely standardized. Regardless of these two factors, its student enrolment is continuously growing. Thus the impact of the ELT industry grows relative to its increasing numbers. Therefore, this study will add to the small branch of knowledge that is available on TESOL in the specific context of the growing private language school.

7. Limitations of the Study

As mentioned earlier, the ELT industry is massive, and while it would be useful to measure the scope of critical approaches to TESOL in the global landscape of the industry, this study will only focus on one private language school. The study is, undoubtedly, limited due to the sample size. Considering this, and considering that the study is conducted within a qualitative framework, the results cannot be generalized to represent the experience of all teachers at this school, let alone of the industry as a whole. Instead, this study could be considered a pilot project eventually leading to an inquiry in which a larger, more representative sample could be considered in order to make results generalisable.

Chapter II:

Literature Review

1. Introduction

Private language schools are frequently associated with a corporate culture in the sense that they values financial rather than educational growth, prioritizing dollars over intellectual, social and emotional development. However, I believe the amalgamation of both the corporate and the socially responsible cultures is not impossible. Private language schools can and must contribute to social justice by adopting critical approaches to teaching. According to Norton and Toohey (2004), critical approaches to second language teaching allow an exploration of the relationship between language learning and social change. For businesses such as these private language schools, this requires the adoption of a new corporate agenda prioritizing social responsibility. In fact, in the last decade, the movement for social responsibility has reached the corporate culture and has changed the standards by which a corporation's overall success is measured. Corporate social responsibility (CSR), a broad philosophical concept, deals with the role of business in society. Its basic premise is that corporate managers have an ethical obligation to consider and address the needs of society. The central components of a socially responsible agenda are economic stability, environmental sustainability, and social justice (Elkington, 1998; Hollender & Fenichell, 2004; Hopkins, 2003; Laszlo, 2003; Southwick & Benioff, 2004; Zadek, 2001). For any single industry including the ELT industry, these three outcomes, also known as the triple bottom-line, become desirable across many groups of stakeholders on a local, national and international level (Elkington, 1998; Laszlo, 2003).

In this chapter I will explore the ideas reflected in the literature on Corporate Social Responsibility and on Critical Pedagogy. I will discuss how the theory behind Critical

Pedagogy can be applied to Second Language Teaching. Additionally, I will focus on the literature supporting the research methodology behind this qualitative study: participatory action research.

2. Corporate Social Responsibility

    a. Sustainability

One often held critique of modern Western education contends that education functions largely and solely as pre-occupational training, concerned mostly with teaching the students a specific skill set immediately applicable and required by "the emerging model of capitalism'' (Shea, cited in Tilbury, Stevenson, Fien & Schreuder, 2002, p. 190). This educational model can certainly be observed in the private English language school where I work and which is the subject of this study. Some of the best-attended classes are those of Business English in which students learn to produce attractive cover letters, to negotiate or to read statistics, as well as Exam Preparation classes for exams such as the high-stakes TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) exam. The phenomenon is explained by Stevenson (2002)*:* "The central purpose of education is viewed as enabling individuals to pursue their own economic self-interests which, it is assumed in turn, will produce the most economically productive society'' (in Tilbury et al., p. 190).

In the last decade, an increasing number of people around the world are recognizing that the "most economically productive society'' (Tilbury et al, 2002, p. 190) does not necessarily lead to an environmentally healthy or a successful just society but that these two components are indeed as vital to the creation of a productive society as is economic productivity. Current economic trends are not sustainable because they encourage the exploitation of non-renewable resources, the exploitation of cheap labour to the point of human-rights violation, and the over-exploitation of renewable resources to the point of

environmental depletion. In the *Ecology of Commerce*, Hawkens (1993) maintains that advocates of sustainability are "proceeding from a set of convictions […] that the world's natural systems are in a state of serious decline, that we cannot continue to extract and wastefully consume our limited, non-renewable resources […] without incurring dire consequences" (Hollender & Fenichell, 2004, pp. 81-82). Whereas the original 'sustainability advocates' largely used the term of sustainability to refer to the natural environment, over the last few years, the term has evolved to increasingly incorporate a social component. Activists have understood that a socially unbalanced system that "mercilessly exploits underprivileged and underdeveloped countries, or exploits the rights of individuals in places with deficient labour laws and human rights statutes, is as inherently unsustainable as an environmentally unbalanced ecosystem" (Hollender & Fenichell, 2004, p. 88).

From a realization that current economic practices are not sustainable is born the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which aims to marry financial sustainability with social and environmental sustainability. While language schools do not directly exploit natural resources or create policies on human rights issues, they service an educated and privileged clientele who, upon returning to their homeland and joining the work force, may be in a position to influence the progress of ethical corporate behaviour. In learning about CSR in ESL schools, students are given the ability to better evaluate, from a socially responsible perspective, the business practices of their work environment. Conversely, if ESL schools do not make CSR and sustainability a part of their curriculum, they are perpetuating the status quo of the modern capitalist and exploitative model.

b. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR is a concept that frequently overlaps with similar approaches such as corporate sustainability, corporate sustainable development, corporate responsibility and corporate

citizenship. While an official or a universal definition for CSR is non-existent, and while the concept is continuously being debated, and the term constantly evolving (Elkington, 1998; Hollender & Fenichel, 2004), many interpret CSR as the private sector's way of integrating the economic, social, and environmental imperatives of their activities. This "triple bottom line", coined by John Elkington (1998), has formed the conceptual basis for much modern-day CSR reporting. As reported in Hollender and Fenichell (2004), Elkington proposes the foundation of sustainability as "a three-legged stool, comprising economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility" (p. 88).

CSR suggests that commercial corporations have a responsibility towards all of their stakeholders in all aspects of their business operations. A company's stakeholders are all those who are influenced by, or can influence, a business's decisions and actions. In *The Planetary Bargain: Corporate Social Responsibility Matters,* Hopkins (2003) explains, "Stakeholders exist both within a firm and outside – for example, the natural environment is a stakeholder. The wider aim of social responsibility is to create higher and higher standards of living, while preserving the profitability of the corporation, for peoples both within and outside the corporation" (p. 10). This includes not only its owners, employees, and customers, but even members of a community where the organisation may affect the local economy or environment. In the context of "overseas" private language schools, the international students attending classes are not the only stakeholders. Stakeholders in the ELT industry are threefold: the owners and employees of the corporation (which I group here together as a set of individuals who work directly in the ELT industry), the students who have travelled to develop their English skills, and the members of the communities to which some of the students will eventually return.

Students developing their language skills must be given the opportunity to reach beyond the sole objective of securing economic self-interests (i.e. guaranteeing better

employment opportunities for themselves upon their return to their community of origin). Rather, they must be given the chance to learn about the "triple bottom line" so that they may explore the notion of *business* beyond its narrow traditional framework of financial sustainability, and bring the more complex and balanced idea of the "triple bottom line" home with them. Ultimately, equipped with this new notion, students can concretely act upon its principles and contribute not only to the economic productivity of their community, but also to its environmental sustainability and to social equality.

CSR is not only important from an ethical perspective, but also more and more from an economically competitive perspective. On a global scale, the most successful individuals, companies and communities are increasingly those who prove that they can concurrently be profitable and fuel social change. Some of the most financially successful companies, and some of the brands in highest demand, demonstrate the uppermost level of ethical practice, according to a survey lead by the Business Ethic Magazine in which it studied and rated the "100 Best Corporate Citizens of 2007." These companies include Patagonia Inc., Nike Inc, Timberland Inc, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Inc, and The Gap, to name a few of the more popular brands.

If a business' success is measured by standards of social responsibility, it follows that ELT schools, run as private businesses, must adopt a curriculum that answers to these same standards. By adopting critical approaches to ELT, these schools can become more socially responsible businesses and their graduates, more socially responsible global citizens. The question then becomes: how can ESL schools continue to focus on their primary mandate of teaching the subject of English and still incorporate elements of CSR? The answer lies in the adoption of critical approaches to ELT.

3. Critical Pedagogy

Critical theory focuses specifically on pedagogy that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s when educators started to wonder how societal power structures were perpetuated within classrooms. Freire initially (1970), followed chronologically by Apple (1982), McLaren (1989), Shor (1992), Giroux (1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997), Kincheloe (1993, 2005) and many others have brought issues of power and social inequality in schooling to the forefront of educational debates, and have offered critical pedagogy as an approach to confront these issues. They argue that schooling always involves the privileging of certain forms of knowledge and that these forms of knowledge serve to reproduce social inequalities. Critical pedagogy entails recognizing how the curriculum and the approaches to teaching put forward a perspective on the world that serves to silence certain voices and marginalize certain ways of life.

Freire (1970) conceptualized the notion of pedagogy from a critical standpoint, explaining that literacy is "an act of knowing, through which a person is able to look critically at the culture which has shaped him [or her], and to move toward reflection and positive action upon his [or her] world" (p. 205). In this sense, critical pedagogy encourages the teachers and students to look at themselves first, to comprehend their own reality, context, and daily relations of power. Only from this position of understanding may change occur, as is reaffirmed by Shor (1987) when he writes, "to surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so through transforming action they can create a new situation" (p. 47).

Eisner (1992) describes critical theorists as scholars who often regard themselves as revealing the hidden assumptions and values of the social text. He explains that critical theorists attempt to raise the consciousness of the educator and of the students so that they may detect the insidious ways in which an unequal and often unjust social order reproduces itself

through schools. The social order is unjust because it empowers only the dominant culture of the white western middle or upper class male rather than the various minority cultures of a pluralistic society (Apple, 1999; Giroux, 1992, 1997; Kincheloe, 2005). This dominant culture has organized schools, established the basic ground-rules for teaching and learning, and developed the curriculum, which perpetuates its own power by ignoring and silencing the realities of other cultures. Kincheloe (2005) describes this schooling context which uniquely promotes the dominant culture as having been shaped by "decisions made previously by people operating with different values and shaped by ideological and cultural assumptions of their own historical contexts" (p. 2).

In response to this bias, critical theorists aim to uncover the suppressed histories and silenced voices of subordinate groups, the goal being to restore the legacy and unrealized potential and experiences of such groups (Giroux, 1996). The critical theory discourse (also aided by postcolonial and feminist discourses, notes Giroux, 1993) points to the ways in which the dominant texts, experiences and representations have oppressed other identities. A typical example of this is the telling of Indigenous peoples' stories by the voice of the European white male in which they are represented as violent and cunning savages in Canadian history books (Cook-Lynn, 1997).

How does this intention to uncover silenced voices translate itself into a genuine and concrete effort in the classroom? As Apple (1982) has suggested and as Giroux (1992, 1994, 1996, 1997) has also argued, the choice of classroom subject matter cannot be neutral; inclusions and omissions of subject matter both point to a political agenda. Shor (1992) illustrates this point by asking

> Whose history and literature is taught and whose is ignored? Which groups are included and which left out of the reading list or text? From

> whose point of view is the past and present examined? Which themes are emphasized and which not? Is the curriculum balanced and multicultural, giving equal attention to men, women, minorities, and nonelite groups, or is it traditionally male-orientated and Eurocentric? (p. 14)

Educators have the responsibility to recognize that the curriculum is biased and then he or she must strive to create a concrete space for every student's reality to be represented in the curriculum. Following this, students also have a responsibility to step into a dialogue with other ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, physical or mental abilities, and learn about their reality.

a. The teacher's role in Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is centred on the students, aiming to empower them by training them to read the world more critically and to engage in the world around them and ultimately, to change it. However, the teacher plays a fundamental role in the critical classroom (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Giroux, 1997; Kincheloe, 2005) and it is through the experiences of teachers that this study will explore the place of social responsibility in the ESL classroom. Giroux (1997) affirms that, at all levels of schooling, teachers "represent a potential powerful force for social change" (p. 28). He explains that in the classroom, teachers should not merely encourage self-reflection and understanding, but that they must link self-reflection and understanding with "a commitment to change the nature of the larger society" (p. 28). Practitioners of critical pedagogy are "decision makers" and "activists" (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p. 280) who must change the curriculum in order to develop a new one that relates topics and academic skills to students' needs. It is through the real-life applicability of the topics included by the teacher that students can develop an understanding of the world around them, a desire to engage in this

world, and ultimately "to exercise the kind of courage needed to change the wider social reality when necessary" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 107).

Critical pedagogy is observable through the teachers' refusal to play the traditional role of "information deliverer" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 108) through the teachers' attitude towards their students, which is one of equality and respect, and through their approach to teaching. It is up to the teacher to resist not only conventional teaching roles and practices, but to also "see beyond and through the conventional labels and practices that sustain the status quo by raising unanswerable and often uncomfortable questions" (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p. 285). Critical pedagogues must teach students how to identify and how to critically appropriate the codes of different cultural, social, and collective histories and traditions by including, in the curriculum, the various voices of marginalized groups. In this way, teachers help students to become aware of the diversity that exists around them. The hope is that this awareness will lead to a valuing of the richness that stems from multiple perspectives (Kincheloe, 1998).

If educators do not teach in opposition to the existing inequalities in races, classes, and sexes, then they are teaching to support such inequalities (Shor, 1992). Critical pedagogy must amount to more than reflection: it must be pursued in concrete transformative action, according to Shor (1992), who argues that all "[…] human activity consists of action and reflection: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world" (p. 125). Shor goes on to assert that when teachers do not teach critically against injustice in society, then they are actively allowing injustice to reign, both in school and out.

b. Critical pedagogy in the multicultural classroom

What has been brought to our attention by critical theorists is the heterogeneous nature of our communities in which every individual holds unique stories, experiences and principles. This heterogeneous reality is particularly recognizable in the ESL classroom of

the school at the centre of this study. Critical pedagogy must then embrace multiculturalism by focusing on the "subtle workings of racism, sexism, class bias, cultural oppression, and homophobia" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 9). Pennycook (1999) describes criticality as work that concretely focuses on issues of class, race, sexuality, or gender, in which relations of power and inequality are often at their most obvious in terms of both social or structural inequity (such as pay, job access, education) and the cultural or ideological frameworks that support such inequity such as discrimination, prejudice, beliefs about what is normal, right, or proper. In addition to exposing multiple perspectives, practitioners of critical pedagogy will attempt, with their students, to make explicit the socially constructed character of knowledge, and ask whose interests that particular knowledge serves.

Diversity must be acknowledged and explored. According to Welch (1991), it is this very diversity that can contribute to the cultivation of critical thinking. He states that a homogeneous community often is unable to criticize the injustices and exclusionary practices that afflict a social system. Difference is valued as strength in a true democracy where the community benefits from the various perspectives that compose it. This understanding and valuing of difference can be seen in a classroom with the adoption of a curriculum that encourages student questioning and where "the teacher avoids a unilateral transfer of knowledge" (Shor, 1992, p. 12). Rather, she or he helps students develop their own voice in order to help them to examine their everyday experience from their own perspective.

c. Critique of critical pedagogy

There has been a critique of critical pedagogy (led by Buckingham, 1996, 1998; Ellsworth, 1989; Gore, 1993), which partly argues that critical pedagogy still exists more as a theory of pedagogy than as a practical specification, and ultimately fails when put into practice in the real classroom. Gore (1993) is concerned about the inclination of some critical

pedagogues to create abstracted theories that lack applicability. As a result, a plea is made for greater collaboration between critical scholars and schoolteachers for the creation of a contextualized guidance for teachers. Otherwise, argue the critics, critical pedagogies may not be able to be actualized as conceived. Buckingham (1998) considers that:

> Despite their apparent address to teachers, the critical pedagogues have consistently refused to consider the ways in which their theoretical perspectives might be implemented, or to clarify their notoriously opaque style of writing … (p. 7)

Freire himself challenged every teacher to focus on the realities of students' lives and to construct learning experiences that address these realities. This critique rings especially true in the ESL context where students originate from a variety of cultures. In this particular learning environment, there is clearly a responsibility on the teacher's part to create, adapt and determine the strategies appropriate for the students' particular contexts.

Ellsworth (1989), writing from a feminist perspective, articulates similar concerns. She suggests that even the term *critical* is too critical and perpetuates relations of domination while diluting critical pedagogy's concrete political intentions such as *anti*racism, *anti*sexism, *anti*-elitism, *anti*-heterosexism, etc. Teaching students to develop critical thinking skills is essential in combating racism or sexism. However the argument here is that applicable critical pedagogy should be less theoretically critical and should more clearly and directly formulate its objectives as being the fight against specific social inequalities and injustices.

4. Critical approaches to ELT

    a. Theoretical works

The teaching of English and the English language itself have, for a long time, been seen as clean and safe exports, as a practical means of communication carrying few ethical implications. Today, however, there is a realisation that the teaching and the spread of English involve complex moral implications. "[O]ne of the problems facing the proponents of an ethical approach to English teaching is that no one is sure where the moral high ground lies when it comes to the export of ELT goods and services" (Graddol, 2001, pp. 35-36). Indeed, in the past, the ELT industry was portrayed as one that benefits producers and consumers, and both exporting and importing countries. Phillipson (1988, 1992) was one of the first to point to the ethical problems of the spread of the English language, examining the language policies "that third world countries inherited from colonial times" (1992, p. 1). In *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992), he explores the significance of English as an international language, exposing the connection between linguistic imperialism and the hegemony of the English language with the practice of English Language Teaching (ELT). He criticises the training of ELT professionals, which he claims, only "concentrates on linguistics, psychology and education in a restricted sense. It pays little attention to international relations, development studies, theories of culture or intercultural contact, or the politics or sociology of language or education" (p. 348).

Canagarajah's (1999) perspective is similar when he describes that language learning cannot be considered an entirely innocent activity, since it raises the possibility of ideological domination and social conflict. To oppose this ideological domination in ELT, Canagarajah encourages teachers to "critically interrogate the hidden curricula of their courses, relate learning to the larger socio-political realities, and encourage students to make pedagogical choices that offer sounder alternatives to their learning conditions" (p. 14).

Critical approaches to second language teaching are interested in relationships between language learning and change in social, cultural and political domains. From this perspective, language is not simply a means of expression or communication; rather, it is "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, 2004, p. 1).

Given the cultural politics of English teaching in the world, Pennycook (1999) states that critical approaches to teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) may help us deal with some of the "most significant issues of our time" (p. 329). According to Pennycook, the first and foremost *raison d'être* for a critical pedagogy approach in the TESOL classroom is to locate the field within a broader framework of social, cultural and political relations. For example, particular ways of teaching English may lead either to the reproduction or to the transformation of class-biased inequality. Pennycook (1999) states therefore that it is insufficient to simply connect TESOL to the practical world in which it occurs; rather, "this connection must focus on questions of power, inequality, discrimination, resistance, and struggle" (p. 332). With this new focus, the English classroom will not reproduce social inequalities and injustices, but rather seek to transform them.

b. Empirical studies

In a recent collection of action-research based essays, Norton and Toohey (2004) explore the possibilities of ELT as a more positive contributor to social justice via social change. They consider language as much more than a utilitarian tool for self-expression. Rather, language is a practice that constructs and is constructed by its social surrounding. As Norton and Toohey (2004) suggest, "politically engaged critiques of power in everyday life,

communities, and institutions are precisely what are needed to develop critical pedagogies in language education" (p. 1).

There exist a number of studies on the practical implications of critical pedagogy that provide examples of how teachers have attempted to use critical pedagogical approaches in their ESL high school, college, university or community-based classrooms (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987; Brito, Lima & Auerbach, 2004; Canagarajah, 1993; Frye, 1999; Garcia-Gonzalez, 2002; Morgan, 2004; Pagliarini-Cox & De Assis-Peterson, 1999; McCaskell & Russell, 2000; Rivera, 1999). In two similar case studies illustrating the use of critical literacy in the classroom, Frye (1999) and Rivera (1999) report on programs that seek, in their educational practice, to raise awareness through collaborative projects in local contexts. With these projects, the programs attempt to work with students in developing their understanding of the wider environment in which they are learning English. These programs are based on a participatory approach to education in which the curriculum is put in the hands of the students themselves and according to Pennycook, this constitutes "a crucial element in any transformative pedagogy" (p. 336).

In light of Freire's teachings, Garcia-Gonzalez (2002) closely studied the efforts of teachers from two California Bay area schools who had been exposed to Freire's writings. Garcia-Gonzalez begins her study by questioning why critical pedagogy remains outside of mainstream teacher education. She states that an important obstacle in the implementation of critical pedagogy is the lack of clear, specific guidelines for practitioners. Due to this lack of application directives, the teachers participating in the study implemented a critical pedagogy based on their own understanding of the theory. Their intentions and objectives reflect the principles of critical pedagogy in that they seek to create respect for the students' families and language, teach to embrace difference, and provide a curriculum inclusive of the students' life experiences. Garcia-Gonzalez (2002) observes that these teachers also included elements of

"dialogue and critical reflection, problem-posing as means to encourage critical analysis, democratic formats for decision making, [and] social action as a response to inequity" (p. 7).

Garcia-Gonzalez explains that, as a result of the lack of applicable guidelines for critical pedagogy, an atmosphere of criticality was developed differently in each classroom. At one school, the teachers planned part of the curriculum with their students while at another school, the teachers constantly encouraged students' feedback by making sure that all ethnicities, genders and personality types were included. Student reflection and lesson evaluation were also included in this second school in the higher grades. The four teacher-participants mentioned that they were motivated to practice critical pedagogy because they claimed to feel personally satisfied and empowered by this type of teaching. The hindrances, however, came mainly from a lack of direction, of resources and material designed for a critical type of pedagogy. The teachers all agreed upon the difficulties "of building a democratic classroom community within a school system based on the perpetuation of social inequalities" but at the same time they agreed upon the importance of making the classroom a starting point for social action (2002, p. 12).

In another example, teachers McCaskell and Russell also adopted a form of critical pedagogy within their respective high school classes in Toronto. Their intention was to create an anti-bias curriculum by raising an awareness of diversity and mostly by exploring the nature of oppression of minority groups. They describe their approach as follows,

> We find it useful to go over basic definitions and to draw links among different forms of oppression [..] Often, we ask the students to give examples of common stereotypes they hear at school […] The lists are long and contradictory and can provoke interesting discussion. We may then ask the students to identify the stereotypes they have learned about a dominant group. (McCaskell and Russell, 2000, p. 34-35)

The successful outcome of their approach indicates that an effective pedagogy must start from the students' realities and histories and subsequently must examine systems of power and take students beyond their own experiences.

All of the studies that report on the implications of critical pedagogy portray its implementation at all levels of education but are limited to the public sector of English Language Teaching (ELT). Would the adoption of critical pedagogy in the private ELT sector present similar challenges and similar successes as those found in the studies mentioned above?

5. Criticality in the private language industry

The literature addressing the specific concerns of the growing private sector of the TESOL industry remains scarce. Singh, Kell and Pandian (2002) published *Appropriating English: Innovation in the Global Business of English Language Teaching* in which they explore different facets of the ELT industry, including the sector of private ESL schools, and argue for a new paradigm that no longer silences nor marginalizes any voices. Singh et al. (2002) draw out a three-dimensional view of teaching that takes the practical aspect of language learning into account. They suggest that one of the important dimensions of ELT is "the transmission of the knowledge and skills students need for doing many different kinds of procedural tasks […for engaging] in real-world, work-related tasks" (p. 246). This dimension is the first step in a logical progression towards acquiring the English language. Still, it is imperative to understand that an insistence on *mastery* of generic forms of the English language can be never-ending and will tend to continually put off the critical moment. That is to say that striving for mastery of the language, for flawless grammatical usage, for a highly complex lexis, should not stand in the way of transforming the social order.

The second dimension takes into account the social and cultural impact of globalization locally. Learners of English must acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to recognize first and subsequently to "contribute to the development and maintenance of a civil global society" (p. 247). The skills they will develop in questioning these texts in the ESL classroom can be transferred to the third important dimension of ELT which is to challenge the negative effects of globalization on their own communities. Singh et al. suggest that this third dimension engages students in learning to assess and question the political, economic, socio-cultural aspects of the texts presented to them in order to transform existing practices.

Despite the promising beginnings of Singh et al.'s findings and suggestions, there remains a dearth of studies in the practical application of critical pedagogy in the private ELT industry. Action research is becoming more and more popular in ELT research, but it remains difficult to find research that specifically addresses the investment of the corporate in the educational realm, as is the case in the private ELT industry.

6. Participatory Action Research

As mentioned earlier, the number of theoretical works supporting critical pedagogy far exceeds the number of empirical studies in the practice of the pedagogy itself although the action research movement has made significant inroads in altering the nature of the activities that comprise teachers' training in second language education programs. This, in itself, has helped challenge many of the unfair hierarchies that exist in the ELT profession. Using the intellectual tools of inquiry to investigate their professional worlds, ESL teachers have come to understand "the ideological principles that inform the social practices that constitute them, their students, and their teaching practices" (Johnson, 2006, p. 250).

The objective of Participatory Action Research (PAR) is to improve social justice through positive change and by learning from the consequences of these changes (McTaggart,

1991; Wadsworth, 1998; Winter, 1987, 1989, 1996). Like critical pedagogy, PAR uses the process of critical thinking to inform action and to develop an idea into a critically informed social action. Because PAR involves people in making changes that will affect others, it is also a political process, similar to critical pedagogy.

Through PAR, participants are allowed, and in fact, required to reflect upon their own experiences by using the evidence they have gathered throughout the process at hand. The principle of reflective critique ensures that people reflect on issues and make explicit the interpretations, biases, concerns upon which their judgments are made. Wadsworth (1998) explains, "Rather than seeing this holding-of-values as subjective and potentially a source of bias, the strengths of the values we hold will determine the power and direction of our research efforts" (para. 7, "What Participatory Action Research is—and is not!"). Self-reflecting participants, aware of their values and biases, become researchers and are directly involved in the research process of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and improving the research methodology and objectives. This collaboration makes possible insights stemming from the potential contradictions between many viewpoints. In fact, the more active the participation, the greater the chances of "maximizing both the accuracy and meaningfulness of all contributions, and also the sharing of perceptions and of emerging understandings about the value of what new actions should next be taken" (Wadsworth, 1998, para. 20, "The Participation Element").

In the same way that critical pedagogy engages students in learning, in this study I wanted to find a research methodology that would allow the participants to engage in the process rather than consider them as mere subjects. As such, participants of this study were requested to contribute their personal perspectives on their experience with the implementation of the curriculum translated. These individual experiences translated into unique concerns that were discussed collaboratively in a focus group. Collaboratively, the research participants

voiced their concerns with the implemented curriculum and addressed these concerns by suggesting concrete solutions.

7. Summary of literature review

In brief, I have reviewed the literatures associated both with private corporate business and with education because the subject of my study, the role of social responsibility in private language schools, straddles both sectors. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), closely linked with sustainability, argues that enterprises should make decisions based not only on financial factors but also based on the immediate and long-term social and environmental consequences of their activities. Including some topics reflecting CSR fundamental values in the ESL curriculum would allow students not only to learn about environmental sustainability and social justice but it would also provide them with a practical look at modern standards in measuring a business' success.

Thus, introducing CSR to ESL students would allow schools to become socially responsible corporate citizens while conveniently teaching and sensitizing its students to the most current, responsible and trendy business practices. Finally, by encouraging students to think about their position in society and in relation to the knowledge they gain, critical pedagogy allows them to take this knowledge and develop their own sense of agency to act in a socially responsible manner toward a more just and democratic world.

Chapter III:

Initial Phase of study:
Inquiry into the criticality of a curriculum

1. Introduction

While traditional schooling has privileged certain forms of knowledge that serve to reproduce social inequalities, critical pedagogy challenges these social inequalities. Shor (1992), however, warns that it is nonsensical to discuss the development and implementation of a progressive pedagogy "unless teachers have both the authority and the power to organize and shape the conditions of their work so they can teach collectively, create alternative curricula, and engage in a form of emancipatory politics" (p. 107). In light of this, I wish to explore the school at the center of this study: does it offer a work environment that is favourable to allowing, and flexible enough to allow teachers to include elements of critical pedagogy into its set curriculum? I will also explore which curricular tools, if any, support teachers and their students to challenge social inequalities in the classroom. Finally, I aim to establish whether the school in question adopts critical approaches for its ESL curriculum design, and to describe the manner in which it does so or fails to do so.

The material made available for ELT often serves to reproduce many dominant ideologies while marginalizing alternative lifestyles and values. By ELT material, I am referring to the textbooks, audio CDs and DVDs produced by the publishing industry of which the leaders are Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Macmillan and Pearson Education. Through their dialogues and images, these materials most often depict young, white, educated and healthy heterosexual couples, indirectly silencing nearly all other voices that do not correspond to this mould. It is through this hidden curriculum that schooling serves to maintain the status quo, and may make the dominant ideologies appear natural and legitimate. Such a perspective, alerts Canagarajah (1999), should lead us to "interrogate all

aspects of the learning process—curriculum, pedagogy, classroom interactions, school regulations, and educational policies—with a critical eye" (pp. 24-25). Ultimately, the objective of critical approaches to ELT is for teachers and students to question the legitimacy of their beliefs and assumptions, and to question the legitimacy of the assumptions presented to them through the curriculum.

2. Defining the critical nature of a curriculum

In order to identify elements in the curriculum and in the teaching tools of one private Canadian ELT school that could provide its students with an increased awareness of social responsibility, I first established a framework outlining the various elements that support a critically constructed curriculum. That is to say, how does a teacher go about teaching English as a second or foreign language critically? Pennycook (1999) warns, "a critical approach to TESOL is more than arranging the chairs in a circle and discussing social issues"(p. 338). There exist no ready-made lists or guidelines to concretely steer teachers towards critical approaches to TESOL, partly because critical pedagogues and academics criticize the notion of an "educational theory [that] produces generalizations about a narrowly defined teaching practice that can be mass produced as curriculum guides" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 111). Nonetheless, it remains essential to develop a conceptual framework to help implement critical teaching or, in this particular case, to help detect the presence of critical approaches in the curriculum. Based on Freire (1970), Shor (1992), Canagarajah (1993, 1999), Pennycook (1999, 2001), and Kincheloe (2005), I have outlined the following framework that will direct my investigation into the ESL curriculum at hand. This framework also influenced the design of lesson plans for the second phase of this research, the implementation of critical lesson plans.

Critical language teaching:

- allows students to resist and change the discourses that construct their lives by encouraging them to question the legitimacy of the ideology presented in the curriculum and textbook
- encourages students to question the classroom structure and the curriculum and promotes a democratic approach to curriculum building by involving students in pedagogical decisions and making the process of creating the curriculum a transparent process.
- values students' skills, knowledge, and cultural expertise and makes students' knowledge, attitudes, and experiences the starting point for the course
- promotes a movement from classroom critical reflection to more concrete positive action upon the students' and teachers' world

It is in light of these elements that I will explore the syllabus objectives for two different ESL courses, English Communication – Intermediate 1 and Business English – level 3, and the materials used to support these syllabi. Each syllabus describes the linguistic objectives that must be met by the students over the course of 4 weeks and they also include suggested materials that can assist the teacher and students in meeting these linguistic objectives. Exploring the objectives, and pedagogical materials, I will determine whether students studying under this particular curriculum can become more socially aware and more responsible global citizens.

3. Exposing the critical nature of a private language school's curriculum

There has been much debate surrounding the definition of the word curriculum. It is clear that the curriculum consists of more than the outlined learning objectives listed on each levels' syllabus. Curriculum is a combination of many classroom-level and school-level elements such as the courses' learning objectives, the content used to meet these objectives, the

organization of this content**,** the selection of learning experiences, the classroom environment and student interactions, the organization of learning experiences, and the methods of evaluation (Pinar, 1998). In their mission statement, schools often explicitly state their values and the educational priorities by which the preceding elements are shaped. The same is true for private, profit-making language schools. In order to delve into curricular issues, I will look at the following three elements of curriculum for the school that is the subject of this study: the school's mission statement, the outlined syllabus for 2 courses, and the suggested textbooks for these courses.

a. The mission statement

The teaching and learning philosophy of the private ESL school (see Appendix 1) is explicitly posted on the school's website and is framed and exposed in the reception area of the school. It is also reproduced in the Policies and Procedures manual, given to all staff, and in the Teachers' Handbook, handed to all teachers. The ideology supporting this philosophy is one that respects individual differences and one that encourages students' active participation in decision-making. The three principles enumerated in the philosophical statement of the school reflect certain fundamentals of critical pedagogy such as promoting a democratic approach to curriculum building by involving students in pedagogical decisions. Although the school's mission statement was not intentionally framed with critical pedagogy in mind, it was explicitly constructed within a humanistic framework (see Appendix 1) that emphasizes the building of a more just and democratic society in which all people are equal. Humanism, much like critical pedagogy, discourages the blind acceptance of universal truths and encourages free inquiry through critical thinking. The school's philosophy also reflects values consistent with critical pedagogy such as centring the course on students' knowledge, attitudes, interests, goals and experiences. The school philosophy also encourages learning English experientially, via

complete immersion in genuine, real world experiences, a concept often associated with critical pedagogy.

There is an important distinction to be made between stating a philosophy and applying its principles concretely. Although teachers are expected to adhere to the general gist of the philosophy, the teachers' attitudes towards it and their application of its principles are not part of their regular evaluations. Prodromou (1988) points out that "what we teach and particularly the way we teach reflects our attitudes to society in general and the individual's place in society, and that our educational practice is an implicit statement of power relationships, of how we see authority in the classroom and by extension in society outside the classroom" (pp. 74-75). Indeed, each teacher will adopt the principles listed in the school's mission statement in their own fashion, based on their past teaching experience, on their experience as learners, on their teacher-training, on their personal values and beliefs. Realistically, the school can only encourage the application of the philosophy to a superficial degree, and must accept that each classroom, facilitated by a particular teacher, can only reflect these principles to the degree to which the teacher adheres to these principles.

Prodromou (1988) believes that recognizing the values that are upheld in the way we teach "is the first step towards making the teaching of English more a process of developing self-awareness and awareness of the world outside the classroom" (p. 75). It is key for teachers and students to self-reflect and understand how their values were formed. In the school's mission statement, is there space for self-reflection of individual values? By acquainting themselves with the school philosophy, students will realize that although their individual values, objectives, "dreams" and "special interests" (see Appendix 1) can be included in the flexible elaboration of the curriculum, the structure of the curriculum is pre-determined (appendix 1), based on a set of Canadian national standards created by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks.

Two components central to critical pedagogy are absent from the school's philosophical principles: a critical questioning and possible resistance of the discourses that construct the students' lives, and a call for positive transformative action. In a classroom context, this means that students and teachers are not overtly encouraged to reflect on the assumptions presented in the classroom structure, such as the teacher's evaluative function or the representation of ethnicities and class in the textbooks. Although students and teachers are invited to exit the traditional classroom environment and enter the realm of the real world, they are only invited to do so in order to practice their English speaking skills in real and practical life situations which often perpetuate dominant ideologies such as consumerism. For example, students learning the vocabulary related to colours, body parts, and clothing items might go on a field trip to the shopping mall to test out their knowledge in context. This type of action only reproduces an ideology of consumerism. While shopping for clothing may seem an innocuous activity, it is a luxury afforded by a minority of the planet's population. This type of action does not reflect critical pedagogy's call for transformative action upon the teachers' and students' world.

b. The syllabus: objectives

At this particular ESL school, the syllabi describe the communicative and grammatical functions that must be met by the students over the course of 4 weeks. They also include suggested materials that can assist the teacher and students in meeting these linguistic objectives. The Communication—Intermediate 1 course syllabus (see Appendix 2) is organized on a sheet with a blank section entitled Themes, which is adjacent to the "Communicative functions" section. The teacher must fill in this blank section to indicate which conversational themes will be used in the classroom to illustrate and meet the "Communicative Function" and "Grammar Focus objectives". At the bottom of the curriculum outline, there are other blank

spaces to be filled out in order to justify the learning purpose of field trips, and to specify the title of the video that will be viewed, and its attached learning objectives. The final portion of the form is left open for the teacher to designate the methods of evaluation for this class.

The fact that the curriculum outline does not mandate specific themes of discussion demonstrates openness to exploring various subjects that may divert from the norm. In this given space, there exists a potentiality for critical reflection. Selected topics aiding the learning of English could represent alternative voices that are not traditionally included in mainstream curriculum. A valuable separate project would be to explore and understand if and how students and teachers use this space to that effect.

Evidently, this outline leaves some freedom for curricular elaboration and decision-making to the teacher of the course who is asked to co-create the curriculum "according to students needs and interests" (see Appendix 2). Many teachers will spend the first few days of the session discussing conversational-theme preferences and field-trip preferences with students, while observing their communication skills in order to better establish their specific linguistic needs. Because students between the ages of 18 and 35, and from 4 different continents, on average, may be attending the same course, it is imperative for the teacher of a student-centred classroom to understand which topics interest the majority of students, which are appropriate for all age groups and which are culturally sensitive. For example, the communicative function of "Discussing personal history" (see Appendix 2) may be illustrated via the conversational theme of getting to know someone romantically. This theme may be of great interest and practicality to the 20-something aged Colombian, Brazilian, and German students, but it may not be comfortable for a married female Saudi student in her 30s. Gray (2000) agrees that "certain topics will be taboo in some educational contexts, and remain inappropriate for classroom discussion in the language classroom" (p. 280). However, an approach for resolving this potential topical conflict is that of critical engagement with the

issue of finding appropriate themes of discussion. The reality that some students feel comfortable and motivated by the dating theme, while others do not, can be explored as a cultural phenomenon in itself.

In the multicultural classroom, ESL teachers must be, and often are, particularly aware of cultural sensitivities. This awareness often results in an avoidance of certain topics of discussion in the classroom, or a partial censorship of these topics. In his survey of teachers' impressions of the ELT curriculum they had to teach, Gray concludes that "at least half the teachers […] dealt with what they considered to be inappropriate cultural material by censorship, by which I mean complete abandonment of the material" (2000, p. 278). This demonstrates teachers' desire to remain neutral facilitators of the English language.

In the case of the teachers at this specific private language school, the majority of ESL teachers are native-speakers and it can be observed that, as such, their intent is most often to remain impartial resources to students interested in improving their English for practical purposes. However, they frequently end up becoming inadvertent ambassadors of the Western world, mostly unknowingly, by adopting the ELT materials put to their disposal, which draw a clichéd portrait of Anglo-American culture. Consequently, even when school policy encourages a democratic construction of the curriculum, even when the teacher and each student's voices come together to build a participatory curriculum, a dominant capitalist ideology representing Western values persists time and again. When this occurs, the status quo is maintained. As Canagarajah (1999) observes, "while the intention may not have been to propagate a particular set of values, the effect is to project ideologies taken for granted by centre communities as natural and legitimate" (p. 87). For example, in Cambridge University Press' textbook *New Interchange–-Level One* (Richards, Hull & Proctor, 2000), the seventh chapter explores the vocabulary and expressions related to free time and leisure such as "watch TV", "exercise", "drive around in a car", and "being bored" (pp. 40-42). The set-up of chapter,

based on the dialogues, illustrations and charts, is built on the assumption that all English speakers and learners of English have free time.

The Business—Level Three course outline (see Appendix 3) is designed in a more traditional fashion, with clear linguistic objectives and pre-selected course topics to be covered. As opposed to the Communication course, where themes were selected in order to use the language elements in context, the Business course is organized around thematic groupings of vocabulary, through which language usage can be reviewed and practiced.

It may be fair to say that because the Business English course is a content based-course, it must be built upon a series of pre-determined topics. Though the curriculum design team may have deemed it necessary to structure the business course with less flexibility than the Communication course, its pre-determined structure stands in the way of both the school's philosophy and critical pedagogy's principle of participatory education in which there is a democratic and transparent elaboration of the curriculum.

c. The textbooks

Both curriculum outlines list a number of course materials that are available in class sets, for use in the classroom. Again, on the Communication outline, aside from the two main textbooks, teachers are encouraged "to use teacher-created materials" while the Business English outline does not offer this same motivation to its teachers. Instead, it offers six titles, some of which focus strictly on business terminology, others on communicative practice through role-plays. I have chosen to focus specifically on *Insights into Business*, a textbook that integrates all linguistic skills around various business related themes such as company structures, recruitment, retailing, franchising, banking, the stock market, or import and export. The communication textbook, *New Interchange—Level 2*, also integrates all skills and offers themes such as childhood, transportation, lifestyles, travel, holidays, or entertainment. It is

important to note that although the Communication curriculum outline does not suggest any themes, which are to be determined by the teacher and students, it is easier and more practical for a teacher to include the themes already present in the prescribed textbook. Again, the likelihood of this occurring depends on many factors such as a teacher's experience, classroom dynamics, and teacher and student values and beliefs.

Although the *New Interchange* and *New Insights into Business* textbooks target a particular group of learners, differentiated from each other by interest and linguistic competence, the textbooks resemble each other in many ways. Their pages are glossy and organized in an inviting manner, presenting a variety of activities such as "fill-in-the blanks", "complete the crossword", "match the expressions", "underline" and "discuss" to appeal to various learning styles. The text encourages interaction and communication, always indicating whether these activities should be completed individually, in pairs or in groups. Colourful photographs or cartoons illustrate the articles, dialogues, explanations and exercises.

While *New Insights into Business* presents its characters in suits and ties, and *New Interchange* presents them in casual wear, the ethics and ideals observed through the material are of the Western affluent, "neoconservative," "capitalist" kind (Pennycook, 1994). Specifically relating to the Sri Lankan EFL classroom, Canagarajah shows how textbooks convey values from the west, observing that "the values that emerge through the situations are not hard to decipher, such as upward mobility and consumerism" (1993, p. 214). Indeed, the situations represented in the textbooks such as commuting by plane, cooking with a microwave, communicating via email, or shopping in department stores, assume an urbanized, affluent culture that is not only "largely alien to rural students, and likely to clash with their traditional values" (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 86), but does not accurately represent the complexity of the Western world, where unglamorous jobs and poverty are a daily reality. The context for dialogues and exercises assumes a materialistic set of values in which international travel, not

being bored, having leisure, and above all, spending money casually in the pursuit of these ends, are the norm. Canagarajah continues on to recognize that "even the patterns of conversation and genres of talk represented in these situations are influenced by discourse conventions of the West" (1999, p. 86). Again, while I agree with Canagarajah that the patterns of conversation and genres observable in the textbook dialogues are meant to exclusively represent Western conventions of talk, the patterns in fact do not represent genuine Western attitudes but rather a false cliché of Western conventions and values.

London, New York, San Francisco, and Vancouver, capitals of the ESL industry both in production of textbooks and in private ESL schools, are all diverse cities; however, within both textbooks, lesbian and gay, indigenous, physically and mentally challenged, single parents and elderly characters remain excluded. Along with the noticeable absence of representation of these minorities in illustration or in dialogue, comes a silencing of their struggles as marginalized members of the Western society. Prodomou (1988) remarks that even with an increased awareness of diversity,

> globally designed textbooks have continued to be stubbornly Anglo-centric: […the textbooks] have not gone very far in recognizing English as an international language […] They were mostly about situations which were not only imaginary, […] but vacuous, empty of life. Even when the textbooks went technicolour, they were still marketing a black-and-white cardboard cut-out world. (p.76)

This is the case in *New Insights into Business*' section on Entrepreneurship in which it lays out 4 photographs of successful entrepreneurs: Bill Gates, Yvon Chouinard, Steve Jobs and Scott McNealy: all men, all white. This is a far cry from education toward equal representation! Still, precisely by using the biased representation of entrepreneurship put forth in this textbook, teachers could engage their students in a discussion about the perpetuation of social

inequalities through stereotypes, for example. Classroom practices can always be adapted to respond critically to classroom materials.

On the other hand, the *New Interchange* textbook includes an equal number of men and women sharing similar responsibilities and positions of authority. Gray observes, "in many coursebooks a shift to international settings reflects, no doubt, a growing sense on the part of the publishers of English as an increasingly global language" (1997, p. 157). This may be true of general communication textbooks such as the New Interchange, but has yet to influence business-English curriculum.

Although the New Interchange also includes a number of visible minorities in its illustrations, they are all dressed in stereotypical Western fashions, from mini-skirts to twin-set tops, all speaking "native-like" English. Indeed, another notable absence is that of any ethnically traditional dress or religious symbols: no character wears a sari, a turban, or a hijab. According to Gray (1997), ESL textbook writers are encouraged to include minority women and men as characters in their dialogues and activities. However, he raises the issue of a trend that counter-balances the inclusivity effort. Gray states that there is a set of topics which "coursebook writers are usually advised to avoid. Some publishers provide lists of proscribed topics while others rely informally on the acronym PARSNIP (politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, isms and pork) as a rule of thumb" (1997, p. 159).

The result is that textbooks only superficially appear inclusive when at a closer glance, they do not include any representation of minority groups (gays and lesbians, Islamic women, etc.) that might create discomfort in the classroom, nor do they invite any discussion about representations they do or do not include. From this perspective, a depoliticised, inoffensive curriculum is a more appropriate curriculum. As Gray (1997) observes,

> while coursebooks can be seen as feminized for ethical reasons they are also sanitized for commercial purposes. The politically correct […]

> inclusivity is undermined by a commercially motivated exclusivity which neutralizes the material and often prevents linguistic engagement with certain topics. (p. 159-160)

Gray (2000) pursues his line of investigation into the way ESL teachers adapt ESL textbooks to reflect more inclusive values. One of the ESL instructors surveyed by Gray stated that as a working-class person, "he felt unrepresented in coursebook material, and that the culture represented in the coursebook conveyed an implicit sense of superiority […]" (p. 277). Another teacher in the study also pointed out that many of the textbooks seem to have a "very straight and middle-class attitude" (p. 277). If teachers raise these points in their interviews it is most likely because they perceive this lack of representation as being problematic.

The alternative to the teaching of English based on ELT materials' representation of an Anglo-centric cliché is, as suggests Prodomou (1988) to recognize the teaching of English as a "non-neutral process which recognizes the ideological nature of language teaching" (p. 74). Prodromou develops this idea by explaining that the topics teachers choose to include in their teaching and the particular way in which they teach these topics reflects the teachers' "attitudes to society in general and the individual's place in society, and that our own educational practice is an implicit statement of power relationships, of how we see authority in the classroom and by extension in society outside the classroom" (pp. 74-75).

Similarly, Pennycook (1994) suggests that English teachers should be aware of the political dimension in ELT and that they should mistrust underlying ideologies that construct the global nature of English as neutral. They should critically evaluate the implications of their practice as teachers in the production and reproduction of social inequalities. As has been demonstrated above, the textbooks that are used by teachers and students of ESL do, in effect, reproduce much of the status quo. How, then, are teachers supported in becoming more aware of the political dimension in ELT?

4. Conclusions drawn on the criticality of the curriculum

By exploring the mission statement of an ESL school, and the objectives and pedagogical materials for two courses, I have come to the following conclusions: English learners studying under this particular curriculum are only given the opportunity to become more socially aware and more responsible global citizens if they and their teachers take the initiative to transform the curriculum by actively adopting critical approaches to teaching and learning. Although the space given in the curriculum can be used for critical reflection, there is no explicit system to ensure that these principles are applied in all classroom interactions and decisions, and therefore, there is no guarantee that democratic and critical education is truly happening.

Given these findings, it seems that within the private ELT industry, learners, teachers, and material developers must move beyond referring to minority groups and alternative lifestyles more representative of a diverse reality by creating concrete opportunities to discuss these alternative ideologies, and to challenge social inequalities. The point is not simply to include a range of identities but to do so in a way that facilitates critical reflection of these identities, and encourages investigation into the workings of language and representation in order to make them transparent.

This school's mission statement and Communication syllabus can be used as tools that support resistance to dominant ideologies if they are interpreted as such by teachers. The space given to the teachers and students in the curriculum outline is meant for them to build a lesson plan based on their own interests and needs. This is the space that the participating teachers and myself used in the following study to critically question and resist some assumptions present in the ESL classroom and materials. Understanding how certain classrooms might respond to and engage in critical reflection is a first step towards exploring the possibility of alternative discursive practices that might contribute to a system-wide positive social change.

Chapter IV:

Research Design

1. Conceptual Framework

The guiding principles of this study are that the privileged student population attending private language schools may already be in a position to create change because with their financial and educational privilege comes the power to promote change. In order for students to use their privilege towards positive social change, they must develop critical thinking skills and learn how to challenge social injustices and to reject the status quo.

In this study, I assessed teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of lesson plans that are based upon principles of critical pedagogy, as defined in Chapter III. Through the teachers' reactions to the lessons, and by their interpretations of their students' reactions, I gauged the potential success of critical approaches to ELT in the private language school industry. The data were collected during teacher interviews that took place post-implementation of each lesson plan. I focused on three critical areas: how teachers felt while implementing the lesson, how they perceived their students' reactions to the lesson, and their attitude toward the possibility of implementing more critical lesson plans.

The key actors able to determine the true impact of a critical lesson plan are the students themselves, and holding a dialogue with the students and understanding their personal responses to the lesson plan would be ideal. However, in this first step towards the exploration of the potentiality of critical pedagogy in this educational context, I evaluated teachers' responses because without the teachers' support, critical pedagogy cannot exist for students. In addition, I had to recognize that the outcome of the implemented lesson plans was controlled, to a significant extent, by the teachers' commitment to the success of these lessons. According

to Wadsworth (1998), human actors are both capable of thwarting research prediction, and capable of selecting theories or probabilities they want to see manifested. In the case of this study for example, the participating teachers altered the critical lesson plans in order to better respond to the needs and interests of their students thereby increasing the chances of a positive outcome for the implementation of the lesson plans.

In exploring the practical implementation of critical pedagogy, the approach I took to design the research process had to incorporate elements of critical pedagogy, making the research as participatory as possible. Two main principles guided me towards Participatory Action Research (PAR): First, the researcher is not the holder of the knowledge. Rather, all the participants in the project contribute to the knowledge base, participate in creating knowledge, and interpret the meaning of their own experiences. Second, the participants are not objects on whom the research is conducted but rather the subjects of the inquiry who set the agenda, participate in the data analysis, and decide what future actions to take or in which directions to go.

Although I initially designed the methodology of this study without the contribution of the participating teachers, I invited the teachers to become active researchers by providing me with alternative suggestions on the methodology of the study and on new research questions that had arisen from their experiences. Also, although I initially developed two lessons built upon critical pedagogy principles (see Appendices 12 and 13), participating teachers chose either to implement these lessons, to adapt them or to recreate lessons plans to better suit their own teaching styles or their students' learning styles and objectives. The two lessons were to be implemented over two days within one session (four weeks). Based on multiple resources, I created lesson plans around the themes of human rights and media literacy. These lessons were communicative, encouraging students and teachers to express and question their understanding of these issues from a critical perspective. Whichever lesson plan the teacher ultimately

implemented, it had to be based on educational, social, environmental and economic issues pointing to the importance of increasing the awareness of social responsibility for all global citizens.

2. Methodology

a. Recruitment of Participants

My intention for this study was to explore the particular context of the corporate run ESL school and to inquire whether there is space in this type of educational setting for a critically constructed curriculum. Consequently, participants had to be recruited from a private language school. Being director of a private language school where I am familiar with its curriculum and philosophy, where I am comfortable with its team of administrators and teachers, and where I have direct access to its resources, I wished to conduct the research in this very school. I initiated the study by first asking the owners of the school for permission to conduct the study in the school, and I obtained their approval and encouragement. The leadership and ownership of this school is particularly progressive. The founder and president of the school created a philosophy based on humanism, centred on the students' and staff's needs and on their personal path towards self-actualization. This vision trickles down into the daily functioning of the school and is observable in practice during staff meetings, for example, and teacher-led workshops.

Following my application to the Ethics Review Board of the Faculty of Education at McGill University and the granting of the Ethics certificate (see Appendix 4), the next step was to recruit 3 to 6 participants willing to join me in the inquiry into the implementation of critical lesson plans in this particular context. The invitation to participate in the study was extended to all teachers of ESL at the private language school where I am employed. Following the

advertisement flyer (see Appendix 5), there was a general meeting for those curious about the research in which I summarized the context for the study to the teachers and outlined the steps and time involved in the study. I explained as clearly as I could that teachers could freely choose to participate in the study or not. At the end of this information session, I left the teachers with the consent form (see Appendix 6) and with the survey (see Appendix 7) to fill out and return only if interested in participating in the project.

Six teachers showed up at the information meeting and four of them ultimately chose to participate in the study. It may be of value to note that the two teachers who did not end up participating in the study were in fact unable to do so because they were not going to be teaching classes at the school in the following session due to insufficient student numbers. Of the six teachers who were interested in participating in the study, two teachers who eventually participated in the study had already used elements of critical pedagogy in their teaching while the four others had not. This did not factor into the selection of candidates but will be considered in the interpretation of the data.

The profile of the four participating teachers is somewhat similar in that all teachers are young adults, between the ages of twenty-three and thirty-five, and they all have completed a university degree, though only one of them in Education. The other teachers studied history, international development, and biological sciences before undertaking a course to become certified in Teaching English as a Second Language. Two of the teachers, Jonas and Lorraine, had been teachers of ESL for over 5 years, Brett had been teaching for two years, and Cathleen had only been teaching ESL for two months when the study began. All of the teachers' names are pseudonyms.

b. Ethical Concerns

The main ethical concern in relation to this study is the relationship between myself, as the researcher, and the participants because I am the director of the school in which the study takes place. This makes me the supervisor of the participants, who are teachers at this school. I am aware of and understand how this potential conflict of interest can impact the study and I took specific measures to ensure that that the participants did not feel pressure to participate or did not feel penalized in choosing not to participate. One of the measures I initially adopted in order to circumvent this conflict was to avoid mentioning my name in the recruitment flyer so as not to pressure the teachers to show up to the meeting based solely on my identity. However, the Ethics Committee suggested that on the contrary, I should be as transparent as possible in all stages of the study and include my name and identity on the recruitment flyer. I made the appropriate changes to my methodology, resubmitted my proposal to the Ethics Review Board, and received approval.

In addition, I tried to lead this study as democratically as possible. That is to say that I made efforts to involve the participants in the project so that there would be as many opportunities as possible for them to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings surrounding their practical classroom experience with critical pedagogy. I also hoped to involve the participants in such a way that they felt as if this was a project in which we investigated the potentiality of critical pedagogy as a team.

Although the data stemming from the survey and interviews remained completely confidential, it was impossible to guarantee the confidentiality of the identity of the participants from each other, since they participated in the focus group together. I did not anticipate that the participants' knowledge of the identity of the other participants in the study would put any of the participants at risk. If a participant wished to remain completely

anonymous, even to the other participants, he/she may have chosen to withdraw from the focus group.

c. Tools of inquiry

In Participatory Action Research (PAR), several different research tools can be used to conduct research because PAR is more of a holistic approach to problem-solving than a single method for collecting and analysing data (Wadsworth, 1998). Generally common to qualitative research, the tools in this study included: a questionnaire survey, interviews, and a focus group.

As explained in Chapter III, an exploration of the curriculum of the school comprised the first stage of inquiry, prior to the design of the study involving human subjects. In this second phase of the study, I collected data from three sources: a teacher survey, two post-implementation interviews per teacher, and a focus group which was attended by all four participating teachers. These three sources assisted in my understanding of the experiences of four teachers regarding their adoption of critical approaches to ELT.

i. Survey (see Appendix 7)

Before presenting the lesson plans to the participating teachers, I asked them to fill out a survey to help me assess their understanding and baseline use of critical pedagogy concepts in their approach to teaching classrooms, under regular circumstances. The following inquiries were made within the survey: topics of discussion introduced by the teacher, topics of discussion introduced by students, teachers' estimation of students' socio-economic backgrounds, teachers' impressions of students' motivations for learning English, teachers' priority ranking of their roles and responsibilities in the ESL classroom. Examining the results of the survey helped to understand and explain teachers' use of specific teaching themes in their classrooms.

The data collected from the survey could not be generalized nor analysed quantitatively because of the small sample size. Its purpose was to give me an idea of how teachers perceive their students' socio-economic context, linguistic needs, and learning intentions, and how these measure up against each teachers' own priorities, attitudes, opinions and habits in the classroom.

ii. Post-implementation interviews

Immediately after the implementation of each lesson plan, I met privately with each teacher. I led short individual interviews in order to gauge their spontaneous impressions regarding the implementation of the lesson plans. The interview guides (see Appendices 8 & 9) include 6 or 7 questions, which focus mainly on three aspects: the teachers' responses, the teachers' interpretations of the students' reactions, and the teachers' feelings about the next lesson implementation. I recorded these interviews, which lasted no longer than 15 minutes per participant teacher and while I transcribed the interviews, I embedded my own observer comments. The semi-structured interviews with the teachers included the following types of questions:

- How do you feel at this very moment, right after having implemented the lesson plan?
- Generally speaking, how did the implementation of this lesson plan go?
- How did the students react to today's lesson plan? Could you describe their responses?
- Did all students take part equally?
- How do you feel about implementing another lesson plan?
- Will you do anything differently?
- Is there anything that I haven't asked about and that you think I should know to help me better understand what went on in your class today?

Following the implementation of the second lesson plan, teachers were again interviewed and questions resembled the questions in the first interview, but also included two

additional questions to explore the teachers' overall impression on critical pedagogy in the ELT industry:

- Do you feel this second lesson plan was any different from the first lesson you implemented? How?
- How do you feel about implementing more of these types of lessons in the future? Why?

One of the teachers involved in the study felt that his experience with the implementation of the two lesson plans was so positive that he created a third lesson plan, implemented it, and spoke to me about his experience with it (see Appendix 10 for amendment request and approval). For this third post-implementation interview, I adapted the second post-implementation interview guide (see Appendix 9).

iii. Focus group

The focus-group discussion was adopted as one of the modes of inquiry because the nature of this qualitative inquiry is participatory and as such, it seeks to gather not only information about what the teachers thought and felt about critical approaches to teaching, but also to gather their own interpretations and reflections on the experience as a whole.

As mentioned earlier, working within the framework of critical pedagogy and PAR, all the participants should have an opportunity to contribute to creating knowledge, to set the agenda, to participate in the data analysis, and to decide what future actions to take or in which directions to go. This was the intention behind the focus group. The focus group question guide (see Appendix 11) was flexible and the questions were designed to encourage interaction among participants. Ultimately, the questions inquired into the teachers' own interpretations of the success and/or need for these types of lessons.

I believe that the active participatory role taken by the teachers in this research project, especially as seen through the focus group discussion, not only generated additional reliable data but also improved data interpretation. Teachers' perspectives given in answer to the focus group questions and the additional questions they posed which led to further discussion ultimately improved the quality of the research. These perspectives make the study more practically relevant to the field because they reflect unique insights and genuine concerns stemming directly from the implementation of the lesson plans, as experienced by four individuals with unique teaching backgrounds. The data originating from the focus group is representative of the teachers' own reflections on the study and will be used, to a certain extent, in the Discussion section of the study rather than as primary data to be included uniquely in the Results section of the study.

3. Organization and coding of data

Using the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), I collected data, looked for emerging themes and recurrent events, categorized them, and re-evaluated my themes and categories. I wrote analytic memos about my data, and re-evaluated my previous theories as I compared old data with new. As I collected and analysed data from the surveys and the interviews, I found issues to explore and questions arising that created a need for additional questions to be added to the focus group discussion. The themes of students' linguistic needs and of teacher support, themes generated by the post-implementation interviews, continued to expand and generated more themes that guided the development of another set of questions and points to be raised at the focus group.

I used two strategies to organize both the interview data and the focus group data: First, I listened to the taped interviews a number of times and I organized an Excel worksheet. On the left, I listed the participating teachers vertically, and on the top, I listed the questions asked

horizontally. Hence, there were seven columns derived from seven questions that directed my listening and which I filled in, in memo style notation: teachers' spontaneous feelings, implementation, students' reactions, student participation, attitude toward next implementation, recommended changes or adaptation to next to next lesson, and other comments. This allowed me to establish parallels and variations between the teachers' answers and their experience. Through this organisation, many themes and key words emerged: students' evolving responses to the lessons, teachers' feelings of engagement, teachers' preparation time, students' linguistic needs, and appropriateness of topics. These very themes became the initial categories that soon expanded into other categories, or collapsed into each other in my final analysis of the results.

Another strategy used to organize and analyse data was searching for keywords in the participants' answers after having transcribed the interviews, I. The key words emerged from the previously mentioned Excel chart. Searching for key words/themes and their synonyms in the teachers' interview transcripts allowed me to understand the particular perspective of each teacher on that specific theme.

4. Recognizing my own values and biases

During this research I continuously inspected my expectations and values as a continuing reminder of the role that values have in inquiry. Ongoing self-reflection and journal writing throughout the course of the study helped me identify and account for the interference of my assumptions in my study. In the same way as I shared my values in the introduction and again here, I have attempted to take my values and biases into account while exploring and interpreting the data results. For example, as an advocate for social responsibility, I hope that my research regarding the adoption of critical approaches to teaching ESL will contribute towards raising greater consciousness in the privileged students at the school. My hopes are

that these students will learn to think critically about inequalities and social injustices so that they may create social change in their home environment.

Throughout the individual interviews and the focus group, as I listened to the participants, I remained aware of my hope for a positive outcome. In addition, I remained conscious of my own assumption that students and their greater social circle benefit from the students' development of critical thinking, and that it is the role of an educational institution to teach for social change. I kept my mind open to the notion that this study could inform me about other pedagogical approaches that lead to critical thinking and to social change. It is also possible that critical pedagogy in the ELT industry may not be compatible with the teachers' evaluation of their students' needs, or with their own understanding of responsibilities as English instructors.

Chapter V:

Results

In this chapter, I will first review the information gathered on the pre-lesson plan survey. The objective of this tally is to ascertain, in a very general manner, the usual teaching themes adopted by the participating teachers, as requested by their students or as initiated by the teachers themselves prior to the implementation of the critical lesson plans. Next, I will present the data that was generated in the post lesson-plan implementation interviews, with the four participants. The four participants each implemented two lesson plans, as intended in the research design, totalling up to nine interviews because one of the participants, Brett, opted to implement a third lesson plan. Brett designed and implemented this lesson of his own accord and he approached me to express his desire to share his feedback with me. The interview protocol for this ninth interview remained the same as for the other interviews. Finally, I will review the data collected during the Focus Group.

While three of the teachers chose to adopt the lesson plans that I put forward (see Appendices 12 & 13), and adapt these lessons to their students' needs and to their own style of teaching, it is important to note that another participant, Jonas, did not adopt or alter the pre-planned lessons. Rather, he created his own lesson plans based on his perception of critical pedagogy, or what he refers to as lessons that allow students to become "socially aware". For Jonas, Lesson # 1 was on the theme of *Attitudes toward Marijuana*, and Lesson # 2 was on the theme of *Preconceived Religious Beliefs*. The reason Jonas designed his own lesson plans was a practical one: he wished to participate in the study but his teaching schedule had him instructing only in the afternoons and coincidentally, many of his students' morning Communication classes were taught by another participating teacher, Lorraine, who implemented the human rights and the media literacy lesson plans.

1. Pre-lesson Implementation – test survey

    a. Introduction

The pre-implementation survey (see Appendix 7) was a tool constructed and distributed to participating teachers in order for me to obtain a general idea of teachers' understanding and use of critical approaches to English Language teaching (ELT). It is by no means a comprehensive survey about their classroom practices, nor does it allow me to extract quantitative data about the participating teachers, their habits, their beliefs or their students' habits and backgrounds. The main objective of the survey was to gather a general idea of which topics were brought up and which topics were not brought up in the teachers' month of teaching previous to the study. In the survey, I chose to avoid the use of the term "critical approaches" to ELT, but rather used concepts to illustrate the concrete classroom content of this concept such as "[addressing and questioning] social and cultural hierarchies" (see Appendix 7). I avoided the term because I did not know if the participants in the study had heard this term prior to the study, or if they were familiar with the philosophy. In either case, I did not want the teachers to be distracted by the academic naming of a theoretical philosophy of education. Additionally, the fact that some teachers were not familiar with the term "critical pedagogy" does not presume that these same teachers had not already adopted certain of its pedagogical precepts.

    b. Topics of discussion, introduced by the teacher

In the month of teaching prior to the implementation of the study, all four teachers participating in the study had taught English mostly via a popular, mainstream cultural context and had made use of the students' own cultural backgrounds for communicative practice. For example, to stimulate classroom conversation or the use of a specific language function, they

did so within the context of a discussion on films, hobbies, relationships or on traditional cultural holidays. This snapshot of teaching themes is an incomplete representation of the tendencies of ESL teachers in the ELT industry, let alone at this particular school or even for these particular four teachers, but the information allows me to acknowledge the fact that these particular four teachers who, in the previous academic session were all teaching varying linguistic levels of students, all made use of similar contexts to teach the English Language.

Three of the four teachers participating in the study also introduced topics representing Canadian cultural and traditional topics. When asked to expand on the specific topics these lessons included, the teachers listed items such as "cold weather" (two teachers), "apple-picking", "long weekends at the lake/cabin", "winter activities/winter sports" (two teachers). Not included in the teachers' *Canadiana* lessons were topics such as socio-economic realities, language issues, multiculturalism, Aboriginal-related topics, or other matters that make up the Canadian cultural tapestry.

Outside of the Canadian realm of topics, at the global level, all teachers said that they included opportunities for their students to discuss international current events in their lesson plans, and three out of the four teachers also included opportunities for them to discuss current events specifically related to news stories that are very present in the media. At the time of this study, some of these topics were political debates stemming from issues in the Middle East, and in the USA. One of the participating teachers, Brett, identified international and current issues as the following topics of classroom discussion: development issues, poverty, religious intolerance, trade injustices, and human rights issues. These topics reflect some of the issues to be explored within the context of critical pedagogy as suggested by Shor (1992) and Giroux (1997).

Out of a more generic list of potential themes to explore in class, all teachers selected the topics of travel, hobbies, friendships, relationships, and entertainment as topics presented

and used to enhance classroom discussion. Three of the four teachers also selected history and gender roles as topics used to teach English and to facilitate discussion. These popular subjects of discussion were adopted by the teachers participating in this study in the academic-month of teaching prior to the implementation of this study, regardless of the level of ESL or type of ESL class they were teaching.

c. Topics of discussion, initiated by the students

According to the teachers participating in the study, the topics of discussion selected by the students themselves were very similar to the topics selected by the teachers. Film, literature and entertainment, international travel, shopping trends, and international current events all reflect the most popular themes typically used by the students themselves in order to initiate classroom discussion.

In the list of suggested topics of discussion that might indicate students' preferences, teachers seemed to agree as much on the topics selected by students to initiate conversation as on the topics the students tend to avoid. According to the teachers, themes that are rarely, if ever, introduced by the students themselves, include gender roles, local current events (Montreal or Quebec-based), and current political and social debates.

d. Teachers' estimation of students' socio-economic background

According to the four participating teachers, 0% or none of the students who attend classes at this school stem from the lowest socio-economic class of their country, and the assumption is that 0 to 10% of all students attending classes at this school originate from the lower-middle class of their country. The consensus among the four participating teachers in the study was that 90 to 100% of the students or *clientele* are upper-middle or upper class in their country of origin.

It is difficult to measure the teachers' estimations of students' socio-economic class against factual numbers because neither the school in this study nor the Canadian Association of Private Language Schools gathers information on students' family income. However, according to CAPLS' Student Profile Survey report (2007), "The international students studying at private language schools […] spend an average of $1083 per month on school tuition and fees" (p. 11). In fact, when considering other costs such as accommodation, trips and activities, eating out, shopping, car rentals, health insurance and other expenses, CAPLS reports that the monthly amount spent per student averages around $2675 (p. 11).

The participating teachers in the study are aware that approximately 90% of all students rely on study permits and visitor or tourist visas in order to enter Canada (CAPLS, 2007, p. 4) and because these types of visas do not allow students to work, it becomes clear that they possess the means to support themselves without working. If, according to estimates from the International Labour Organization (2003), 49.7 per cent of the world's workers are unable to lift themselves and their families above the poverty threshold of US$ 2 per day, then it can be assumed that any student who can travel by plane to an overseas destination and who can spend months without remunerated work while studying English is part of the wealthier half of the planet.

e. Teachers' understanding of motivations for learning English

In terms of teachers' perceptions of their students' motivation for learning English, there was some disagreement. After reading a series of seven statements illustrating students' reasons for learning English, teachers were asked to rank these reasons in order of priority. These potential reasons listed in the Pre-lesson-implementation Test Survey (see Appendix 7) were travelling, making international friends, communicating cross-culturally, gaining political influence, obtaining a well-paying job, being accepted to a specific university, and having

social and economic impact. Teachers also had the option to add "reasons" that may have been omitted and to grade these reasons into the general ranking of reasons for learning English. None of the participating teachers added any reasons, and out of the pre-established list of five potential reasons motivating the learning of English, they did not agree on the highest motivating agent, nor did they agree on the least motivating. The only consensus reached was teachers' perception that one of the students' main impetus to learn the English language was its correlation to furthering their careers or obtaining better paying jobs. Indeed, fifty eight percent (58 %) of the students who responded to the CAPLS (2007) survey indicated that they plan to use their English "to improve their professional opportunities" (p. 6). Beyond this justification, the variability of teachers' perceptions of students' motivation for learning ESL can only point to the students' potential variability of answers, which is also reflected in the 2007 CAPLS survey.

f. Teachers' priority ranking of their roles and responsibilities in the ESL classroom

All teachers agreed that the first and foremost responsibility of the ESL teacher is to "focus on enhancing the students' language skills such as vocabulary, grammar and oral communication". This was followed unanimously by the belief that the teacher's role in the class is that of a facilitator, leading the classroom discussions as an impartial mediator. Those who have written about critical pedagogy are clear that teaching is inevitably political and that teachers cannot be value-neutral (Giroux, 1997; Kincheloe, 2005). The question of the teacher's role as neutral or as situated and engaged will be taken up in the discussion section of this thesis.

Teachers disagreed on the point of avoiding certain sensitive topics that could create intercultural tension in the classroom. Two teachers in the study believe that avoiding certain

topics and protecting students' sensitivities is a top priority for ESL teachers. The other two other teachers believe this is the last point to be concerned with, ranking it behind the responsibility of including activities that encourage students to question their beliefs about socially accepted practices, and they rank it well behind the responsibility of including classroom activities that address and question social and cultural hierarchies.

2. Implementation of Lesson One

    a. Teachers' responses to the implementation of the lesson

Participating teachers adopted and modified the first lesson plan, which was a communicative lesson on the theme of human rights (see Appendix 12). The lesson was meant to introduce students to the concept of human rights via a simplified and abridged version of the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights, focusing on two case studies. Three of the participating teachers, Lorraine, Cathleen and Brett, implemented the lesson as it was designed, with some adaptations. Cathleen, whose group of students were at a lower-intermediate level of English, adapted some of the activities to an easier level by spending more time on certain activities, cutting certain activities out of the lesson plan, and by explaining obscure vocabulary words rather than asking them to derive the meaning from the context. Because Cathleen felt there was too much material to cover in the lesson as it was originally designed, she cut out some of the reading and writing activities and focused on the oral communication exercises.

Cathleen felt conflicting emotions while teaching this lesson, "good and bad," she expressed. When her students seemed confused about the subject matter, and unable or unwilling to express their thoughts about it, she felt uncomfortable. As the lesson moved forward and students developed more knowledge about the topic and gained both new vocabulary on the subject and more confidence to express their thoughts on the subject,

Cathleen felt more comfortable and experienced what she called "good" feelings about the lesson.

The other two teachers implementing this first lesson plan on human rights did not feel these conflicted emotions. Their feelings, as expressed to me in the post-implementation interview, were completely positive even though there were some strategic lesson plan adaptations to be made. Brett and Lorraine both felt that there was too much material to cover. Brett's strategy in dealing with this was to cover all points in the lesson, but to skim over certain activities more superficially than others. He opted, as Cathleen had done, to spend more time in class on the oral communication activities. He felt that some of the reading or personal reflection and writing exercises could be completed as homework assignments. He explained that giving his students some homework related to the topic of human rights was going to bridge today's lesson and tomorrow's lesson, in which he was going to present another human rights case study, this time a case study concerning a religious and cultural minority in Canada. Brett felt satisfied, though a little bit surprised, to see how positively his students received this lesson. In addition to feeling that this lesson could really allow his students to focus on their linguistic skills, he felt that the lesson allowed him to talk about "something useful." And although, like Cathleen, he felt that initially his students were taken aback and confused about the topic (he stated that some of his students had "never heard about human rights"), his overall feeling was that the lesson was ultimately well received.

This same feeling was reflected in Lorraine's spontaneous response to the first interview question. She stated that she felt "great" for two reasons: because the lesson had been very "successful", and because she had felt pride in having taught a lesson with the theme of human rights. She felt that teaching English via such a theme rendered ESL more useful from a social perspective. In the implementation of this lesson, Lorraine explained that she went though all activities on the lesson plan, thoroughly exploring certain activities she wished

to focus on such as the vocabulary related to human rights, and less time on those activities that seemed less relevant to her advanced ESL students.

The major variation that Lorraine brought to the lesson plan was in relation to the discussion of the case studies. In the pre-set lesson plan, both pre-selected human rights case studies ("Mohammed's Story: Earning a Living" and "Schoolgirl in Muslim gown" – see Appendix 12) discuss situations involving Muslim persons. In "Mohammed's story", although the issue itself is unrelated to religion per se and deals with the question of child labour and the right to education, Lorraine felt that both stories made an example of Muslim culture and hit too close to home, being herself a Muslim and having two Muslim students in her class. Although Lorraine believed in the value of discussing a few case studies, she felt that bringing up these two specific case studies in the classroom might focus the attention onto herself or the two Muslim students in the class and might create an unbalanced dialogue. She explained that she didn't want these two Muslim students to feel "in the spotlight, and all the students asking them questions about their culture, their religion, their country." Instead, she invited all students in the class to share familiar human rights situations from the news or through personal experience. By restructuring the class discussion in this way, Lorraine felt that she avoided a potentially uncomfortable situation for two of her students. Most students participated in this activity, including the two Muslim students who brought up personal situations that involved their religious dress and code of conduct.

For Jonas, the implementation of Lesson 1 presented different issues and reactions, because it was a completely unrelated lesson plan that contained only a few parallels to the lesson plan on human rights. Jonas' idea behind the creation of a lesson plan on attitudes towards marijuana was to "increase social consciousness in students from around the world who are now living in Canada to study. Because students [ask] what is going on? Why is it this way?" His lesson plan was centred on a "listening" exercise in which students watched a

60 Minutes episode that chronicled the legal proceedings of a "Canadian who had gotten into trouble for selling marijuana seeds over the Internet," explained Jonas. The lesson culminated in person-to-person interviews led by the students in the classroom questioning students around the McGill University campus. Again, the idea was not to investigate McGill students' use of marijuana but rather to understand the varying attitudes towards marijuana and what shapes these attitudes.

Jonas' feeling of satisfaction post-implementation of the lesson came from the successful execution of a lesson that dealt with a subject that is considered taboo in many cultures. Like Brett and Lorraine, Jonas' immediate post-implementation feeling was extremely positive. He felt the lesson went "really well, actually!" He judged the success of the implementation of the lesson plan on his observation of students' initial hesitant participation, which progressively transformed into enthusiastic participation in the activities of the lesson. Like the other three teachers, Jonas focused most of his activities on increasing the student's lexis and on putting it into practice in various oral communication exercises.

b. Teachers' interpretation of students' responses to the lesson

As described above, the teachers' personal feelings and reactions to the lesson implementation were based on their perception of their students' reactions to the lesson. If students participated poorly, teachers felt badly as in Cathleen's case, but when their students showed active interest in the topic and activities, teachers felt satisfied with the implementation. Therefore, it is difficult to differentiate teachers' post-implementation feelings from their interpretation of students' reactions to the lesson plan; the two go hand in hand.

In every participating teacher's classroom, the teacher observed a gradual change in his or her students' attitudes as the lesson progressed. In all cases with these new critical lesson plans, teachers identified an initial reticence by students to participate in their usual manner. In

some cases, all students were initially quiet, while in other cases, typically vocal students seemed silenced and typically quieter students vocalized their questions and thoughts. All four teachers commented on the changed group dynamics although they all agreed that the only difference to the lesson was the topic itself, and not the organization and type of activities of the lesson plan.

Lorraine was explicit about the difference between her students' reaction to the content of the lesson plan itself as opposed to its pragmatics: "in terms of group work, pair work, vocabulary, analysis, discussion, […] a little bit of reading, a little bit of writing, they're comfortable with this because this is what we've been doing […] and how it unfolded was very comfortable for them: nothing shocking, nothing weird". But when asked if, in relation to the theme, students responded with the same familiarity and comfort, she replied, "No! No, absolutely not. There was a difference in participation, and I felt that it was somewhat cultural." Lorraine goes on to explain how two Taiwanese students who usually represent the most vocal portion of students in her class, a group of twelve students, were not vocal on the day of implementation of this lesson plan. She specifies that these two students participated in all activities, but "in terms of group discussion and discussion of violation of human rights, they didn't have much to say." Immediately after having said this, Lorraine questions the source of this silence. Is it that "they didn't have much to say" or that "they just didn't want to say"? It is also possible that these Taiwanese students are working with a differently structured notion of the term "violation of human rights." These students' silence was not explored further so it is impossible to fully comprehend it.

This feeling was reflected in Brett's and in Jonas' responses as well. Jonas' interpretation of Asian students' sudden silence at the onset of the lesson is that they may have initially wondered "how to approach the topic." According to Jonas, this may very well have been the first time that students were invited to discuss the topic of marijuana as well as the

topic of human rights, and the feeling of intimidation can only be compounded by the fact that they are invited to discuss these topics in a second or third language. Brett echoes this interpretation of the students' initial quiet reaction as a "reflection of never having actually thought about this sort of stuff, coupled with being shy […]. And those were Asian students, who, generally speaking, aren't really supposed to give their opinion in the first place".

In her classroom, Cathleen observed that as the lesson advanced, participation increased. Cathleen is not certain that the initial lack of response came as a result of confusion and lack of knowledge about the topic, or if this silence resulted more directly from the difficulty of the topic at hand. It is important to reiterate that her students were at lower-intermediate level. She certainly noticed that the linguistically stronger students in the class participated more readily while the weaker students struggled and often did not participate because they were slower to formulate the complex and abstract ideas that this lesson called for. Once Cathleen noticed this, she specifically called on the "weaker" students and gave them the time and space needed for them to formulate their thoughts and to express them to the group.

Cathleen, Brett and Lorraine noticed that students were quiet in the classroom at the onset of the lesson and all three interpreted this as a hesitancy to participate due to the fact that they were unfamiliar with human rights and that they lacked a basic understanding of the theme necessary to contribute ideas confidently. Once their students had explored the concepts and acquired an understanding of the topic, however, participation was generalized to the majority of students.

Jonas attributes his students' initial hesitancy to the fact that talking about drugs is considered taboo in most cultures. When asked about their familiarity with the topic, "only one student had ever discussed drugs in school." Therefore, Jonas felt that students, and more specifically Asian students, were initially uncomfortable with the idea that they could openly

discuss this topic in a classroom environment, but that once students got over their initial intimidation, students started opening up and sharing their opinions. According to Jonas, the initial reactions and comments that were made in class reflected many pre-conceived notions about marijuana use. For example, students in the class seemed to share the idea that marijuana smokers are all delinquent criminals. As the lesson advanced, however, students learned to question their own assumptions and to inquire into the source of these assumptions. Ultimately, the more information they gathered on the uses and the consequences of uses of marijuana, the more they opened up to varying opinions.

Again, this pattern of increased participation as the lesson progressed was reflected in all cases. Even Cathleen, who deemed that her students' linguistic level was too weak for them to be able to engage in the discussion of such an abstract subject as human rights, stated that she received very positive feedback from her students who told her that they enjoyed the discussion. Lorraine directly asked her students for feedback about the lesson on human rights, and also received enthusiastic reactions from the class as a whole. This positive student response is echoed in the teachers' eagerness to implement the next lesson plan.

c. Teachers' attitude towards the next implementation

While certain challenges presented themselves in the initial stages of implementation of this first lesson plan, all teachers were enthusiastic about implementing the next lesson plan. Lorraine, for one, elaborated, "the general consensus was very positive and I absolutely look forward to the next [lesson plan]. I think that even if you had only given me one lesson I would look into doing another lesson on a similar topic because I got the feeling they want more." Cathleen was particularly looking forward to the next lesson plan implementation because of its specific theme. She explained that the media literacy lesson plan "will involve more students because it is less […] political, in a way." She felt that students would be naturally

more knowledgeable about the topic since they have contact with the media on a daily basis and so students would be able to delve into the subject without reviewing basic concepts about it prior to engaging in discussion. The topic would be more accessible to them because "TV and advertising is more *everyday* for them." This prediction was an accurate one as will be exposed in the following section relating the responses to the second lesson plan.

3. Implementation of Lesson two

    a. Teachers' responses to the implementation of the lesson

Teachers' reactions to the implementation of the second lesson plan (see Appendix 13) were even more enthusiastic than the first mainly due to the fact that students actively participated in the lesson from the inception to the conclusion of the lesson. In the post-implementation interview, Brett enthusiastically exclaimed that that he felt "Very Good! Very satisfied. [The lesson] was very well received, in the same way that the human rights lecture was, but [the media] is actually something they were more able to talk about."

Cathleen and Lorraine shared this enthusiasm. When asked about their personal reactions to the implementation, the two teachers immediately contrasted their students' responses to this lesson with their responses to the lesson plan on human rights. Based on their students' responses, the teachers were able to rationalize their own feelings towards the lesson. Cathleen thought the lesson went well, as she explains, "I feel good about how it went… maybe I think people were more into it than the other [lesson]. This one was less abstract and more visual and they got into it". Lorraine reiterates the sentiment when she describes her students' response. However, for Lorraine, her students' enthusiasm came as no surprise to her since she had taught similar lessons in the past and her experience had shown her that lessons on "media, advertising and marketing tend to be popular and an easily discussed topic amongst students." She also recognized that there was a certain comfort level with this material, which

she had experience teaching in the past. Immediately after implementing this second lesson plan, she stated that she felt "great!" and that the lesson "went really really well. It was really interesting." She made these comments based on her assessment of the students' appreciation of the lesson, which she based on their degree of participation in the lesson.

On a personal level, Brett said that he particularly enjoyed implementing the lesson on media literacy because it put him in the position of a learner, where he discovered the lexis of debate and where he felt he developed a new way of looking at visual elements in advertisements. He excitedly stated that he learned, "about the different fallacies and red herrings […]. I thought it was really good in a sense that it got me to think about ways to describe pictures that I hadn't thought about before."

In terms of the more practical aspects of the lesson plan, it is interesting to review the teachers' varying interpretation of activities laid out in the lesson. On the one hand, Brett felt that this lesson was very focused on writing exercises and that it presented the students with fewer opportunities for group and pair discussion than the previous lesson on human rights. On the other hand, Cathleen clearly stated the opposite impression when she explained that this second lesson was "more conversation-centred [in comparison with the lesson plan on human rights]" and "there was less reading comprehension." She did adapt the lesson to respond to her students' needs by transforming most activities that called for individual work into pair work "because they are lower level and that helps." Lorraine felt that this lesson plan, just like the first lesson plan, was "laid out in such a manner which [the students] are used to: group work, pair work." Ultimately, all teachers adapted the activities to create the lesson they felt gave their students optimal opportunities to practice oral communication.

The implementation of this lesson plan called for the use of the computer laboratory in order to view a couple of TV advertisements. In the initial design of the lessons, radio advertisements, rather than television advertisements, were included in the outline. However,

upon discussing the lesson with the participating teachers, all agreed that students would respond more enthusiastically to the visual component of a televised advertisement, a medium that they are so familiar with. The teachers were given the websites through which they could access a beer advertisement and a makeup advertisement and they were instructed to plug in headphones for each student's computer. Still, technical problems arose which took away from the natural flow of the lesson. Brett and Cathleen were both in agreement that the use of the computer laboratory added a more dynamic character to the lesson plan but to this, they added two different challenges. Cathleen was not aware that the only way students could access the sound accompanying these advertisements was by plugging headphones into each computer. As a consequence, her students did not have access to the sound bites that went along with the ads. They were frustrated at this shortcoming but Cathleen felt there was insufficient time remaining in the class to get the headphones and resume the activity. As for Jonas, he felt that "the computer lab, and headphones, it's a good way to do it, but it does end up being a little time consuming like as far as you have to go in there, set up the computer, get it on the website. […] You burn like 5 minutes trying to actually get that website up." He suggested that accessing these advertisements on video or DVD would save this wasted time and would involve less risk of failing technology such as a frozen computer screen or a malfunctioning set of headphones. This is indeed possible but was difficult to access in this case considering the time constraints of the study.

Again, for the implementation of the second lesson, Jonas devised his own lesson plan to avoid the situation where a few of students would already have participated in the lesson in Lorraine's morning class. The lesson he created, as he explains it, "was on awareness of religion, and awareness of beliefs." In this lesson, Jonas wanted his students to ask themselves and each other "Why do we believe the things we believe?" and he ultimately wanted his students to appreciate "the value of questioning the things that we are taught to be true." The

lesson was taught over two days. The way he constructed his lesson plan in an attempt to lead his students to this ultimate goal was, first, to question his students on their beliefs and on the foundation of their beliefs. He then went on to show a video documentary by Richard Dawkins, which questions the value of religion in society. The work on vocabulary and listening comprehension gradually directed the students towards a more generalized classroom discussion on the topic, on Day 2 of the class.

As opposed to Cathleen, Brett and Lorraine who all felt great about their students' motivated response from the onset of the second lesson plan, Jonas felt that "day one" of the implementation of this second lesson plan was "slow going" and that his students were reticent to "jump into it right away." On "day two" of the lesson, however, there was a change in classroom dynamics and Jonas felt like "things opened up a lot more. Students got into it a little bit more after the second day" and ultimately, Jonas ended up feeling "very positive" about the implementation of the lesson, and "a little surprised at the participation... the way it spread almost like wildfire: as soon as one student started talking about it, others felt more inclined to join in".

b. Teachers' interpretation of students' responses to the lesson

For the three teachers who implemented the lesson plan on media literacy, it seems that their students responded enthusiastically, and that all students participated equally. Brett described that in his classroom, from the moment he introduced the warm-up activity as described in the lesson plan, students "were into it right away." Cathleen continued to compare her students' reactions to those of lesson one, describing that in her class, "more of them talked; no one felt, I think, excluded from the topic" whereas in the lesson on human rights, Cathleen felt that many students' lack of knowledge on the topic prevented them from participating in the lesson or that their linguistic level was not strong enough to allow them to

put together the abstract thoughts necessary to talk about human rights. But in the case of the lesson on Media Literacy, no student seemed to have any problems contributing to the group discussions and students even went so far as to explain that they were wise to the pervasiveness of advertisement, that they knew how to read these ads, and that they should not take them at face value. According to Brett, his students also echoed these thoughts. And again, this resounded clearly in Lorraine's description of her students' responses to the lesson where, as soon as "we started in on it, they were very engaged. They didn't have any problems contributing, [or] participating. They all had something to say because obviously they realised that they've all been touched by advertisement."

When asked to justify their students' different responses to the media literacy lesson compared with their responses to the human rights lesson, Lorraine reflected that, most likely, "with the human rights lesson, the students felt that it was more of a socially conscious kind of lesson, and I think that it was very obvious there was sort of a responsibility, more of a serious tone to it. I don't think they see [media literacy] as serious a problem as human rights. It's a lighter topic for them." Lorraine quickly added that students did take media literacy seriously and this could be observed in her students' keen analysis of the new vocabulary and of the magazine advertisements, as well as in their eager participation in the discussions. Still, there was more of a light atmosphere in the classroom environment, an ease that seemed to have been absent during the human rights lesson plan.

Perhaps more parallels could be drawn between Jonas' implementation of his second lesson plan with that of the other participating teachers' experience with the lesson plan on human rights. His second lesson plan on 'awareness of beliefs' seems to have stirred similar reactions among his students as the human rights lesson did: initially, students seemed perplexed by the topic and reticent to express their thoughts about it. Jonas explains that the first day of this two-day lesson implementation "was a little tough going" although he felt that

there were some students, the linguistically stronger ones, who demonstrated an eagerness to participate. Jonas' explanation for this atypical silence in his class was that most students may not have known how to contribute to a discussion on a subject they have possibly never thought about. It is also possible that discussion about religion is foreign to students that come from atheistic societies. But on the second day, Jonas got the impression that everybody saw the value of joining in the conversation, "they saw something that was valuable to them and everybody tried to add [something about religion] or about where they came from anyway." Jonas went on to expand on this idea: some of his students are from Colombia and their identity as Colombians is closely meshed with the idea of being very religious Catholics.

Jonas explained students' hesitancy as a factor of the deeply personal nature of the topic. He compared the theme of this lesson plan and student reactions with his first lesson implementation on 'attitudes towards marijuana': "This lesson plan is more personal to them. It definitely struck a chord in everybody. The [lesson] that I did about drug use and the differences between marijuana and cocaine and your personal opinion, for most, […] it was very detached for them and they were entering into a new realm. This [religion], everybody was in it […]. And so it's personal for them."

Still, Jonas felt that the lesson was a resounding success. It seemed that suddenly all students, regardless of cultural or religious background, had contributions to make to the discussion and some questions to ask of each other to the point where even twenty minutes after the class was over, Jonas returned to his classroom and "there was a group of students still talking about religion […] And that's a sign that it stuck." And this, to Jonas, was the greatest demonstration that his students had appreciated the lesson. One of the students who had continued discussing religious beliefs after class time told Jonas that he could understand Jonas' own hesitancy in implementing such a lesson, but that he felt privileged to have had the

chance to hear other people's ideas about religion, and that in addition, this was "probably the only chance in [his] life [to] ever get to hear these things."

c. Teachers' attitude towards Critical Approaches to English Language Teaching (ELT)

In the second post-implementation interview, the participating teachers were questioned on how they would feel if, in the future, they were invited to implement more of these types of lessons. Brett, Jonas and Lorraine's responses to the question were overwhelmingly positive and passionate, followed by explanatory arguments in support of critical approaches to ELT. Cathleen's response was also positive but perhaps less expansive. All teachers initially justified their enthusiasm about implementing more of these lessons by reiterating their students' encouraging responses to the lessons: "these lessons were really well received", or "most of the students responded well to the lessons", and again "when you get positive reactions like that, it's really encouraging to do this type of lessons again." Although teachers' enthusiasm about the potential implementation of more critical lesson plans stems from their students' positive reactions, they also provided me with insight into what they felt students could gain if ELT became generally more critical.

According to Cathleen, the value in including classes like these in the curriculum is that it made students "think in a different manner." She felt that although some students seemed unsure about the direction of the lesson, by the end of each lesson they had learned to question what they or their classmates or even their teacher had previously said. They were also more open to being questioned by others and were able to revise their initial positions on a certain topic. Cathleen felt these types of lessons, even if linguistically challenging for a lower intermediate group of ESL students, allowed students to gain insight into various existing perspectives on a given topic.

This idea of "thinking in a different manner" was also picked up by Brett and Lorraine who felt that teaching English, and consequently learning English, often become a mechanical exercise because of typical textbook topics. Brett explained that by "breaking away from the typical mould" of the ESL textbook approach to ELT, and by focusing on very real topics that are relevant to the students' lives such as human rights or media literacy, "you can start generating these types of complex thinking processes and critical thinking, and you really allow [students] to become both active learners and advanced learners." Lorraine expressed this same concept by stating that these types of lessons encouraged her students to "[use] their brains more." Like Brett, she insisted that these lessons did not ask too much of the students. On the contrary, Lorraine felt that topics such as human rights, media literacy, as well as other topics she enumerates such as business ethics, racism, discrimination, stereotypes, social equality, or quality of life are indeed all relevant to students. These topics are equally relevant, regardless of whether the students are personally touched by them, or whether these issues touch their peers or members of their cultural community. Lorraine volunteered that some may believe that using a critical approach to introduce these topics made students "stray out of a comfort zone" but she disagreed with this argument. Rather, she felt that "they all are tapping into what's already inside them: personal experiences, things within their cultures, where they come from. […]. And all the information is there. It just needs to be tapped into."

Lorraine juxtaposed the topics enumerated above with the topics that are typically addressed in ESL textbooks such as fashion, Hollywood stars, or partying. She felt that very few of her students have concrete experiences in textbook themes such as fashion, for example, and that as a consequence, all students can say something generic about the topics because they are conditioned to do so, but the discussion never goes "any deeper. And these [critical] lessons do go deeper, and so [the students] feel more engaged." Lorraine went on to explain that not only do students demonstrate a higher level of engagement but that she also feels a greater

level of engagement, as the teacher. She clarified this statement by saying that when her students are invited to question topics from a critical perspective, her students feel more emotional about it and so Lorraine believed their learning "feels like a true experience because it's coming from within." She felt that it is this process of selecting a topic, reflecting upon it, questioning it, and ultimately making it personal that allowed "students [to] gain more satisfaction out of the lesson."

For Jonas, adding a component of critical questioning and thinking to his lesson plans was a new experience. In his second post-implementation interview, he explained that up until the implementation of these two lessons, he had always thought of teaching English in terms of linguistics, of language structure, of syntax. After the implementation of these two lesson plans, however, Jonas felt that if a teacher has the right mix of students, and if the teacher presents the material "in the right way," students would really respond well to the lesson and what's more, this may be the only opportunity students ever get to discuss such critical issues. Jonas stressed that the lesson must remain practical to the students, "useful and timely." This issue of responding to the students' needs and to their perception of practicality resounded during the Focus Group interview, and these results will be presented in the Focus Group section of this chapter.

An interesting perspective presented by Jonas was the relationship between language itself and the ability to express ideas related to sensitive or taboo topics such as the topics of human rights, drugs, or religion. Jonas believes that for certain cultures, the use of English can facilitate self-expression. He explained, "a lot of [students] feel more inclined to [express themselves] because it is not their native language. For example, Japanese, Korean [are] very indirect languages. A lot of students say, 'because it is English, I feel I can be more direct. I don't have to use the subtle nuances of my language when I speak about a taboo topic." Jonas

explains that he often heard this remark from his Japanese students during his time spent in Japan as an English teacher.

Ultimately, like the other participating teachers in the study, Jonas felt positive about including such lessons in his monthly teaching plan, and looked forward to working with other teachers at the school who have perhaps more experience than he does in designing critical lesson plans: "I would like to maybe work with some other teachers making more of these. [Teacher x] has a lot of great ideas. [Teacher y] as well, [Teacher z] as well […] It'd be really interesting to put our heads together and see what we can come up with." The main challenges to be noted, as echoed subtly by all teachers when discussing the future implementation of critical pedagogy, is the time involved in the lesson planning for critical lessons.

The frequency of implementation of these types of lesson plan was debated by two of the participating teachers during the second post-implementation interview and was also picked up again by all teachers during the Focus Group interview. How often would teachers and/or students wish to include elements of critical pedagogy in their lesson plans? Can an entire ESL curriculum be built upon concepts of criticality? For teachers, would this be feasible in terms of time constraints on lesson planning? For students, would this be desirable in terms of their practical linguistic needs? Lorraine believes that although these lessons do take "a little bit of extra time because its not a generic plan of 'oh, let's talk about fashion, or travel, or culture" where she can "just make up whatever [she] want[s] about fashion and make up a lesson which is really easy to do on the spot," she remains optimistic and feels "really encouraged" to include more of these lesson plans in her monthly curriculum planning. She explained that by adopting critical approaches to ELT a teacher automatically distances him or herself from generic lesson planning and hence, requires more planning and preparation because of anticipated student questions. Because of the weightiness of the topics, it becomes important for the teacher to "know exactly what they're talking about before they walk in there." As

Lorraine points out, this requires more time and would prevent a teacher from executing such a lesson plan if they were preparing for it spontaneously, at the last minute. Still, she insisted that this is "something that should be in every curriculum, to some extent, even if it is two lessons. Just to give a curriculum more substance." While she wouldn't make critical pedagogy "mandatory," she believes that teachers should at least "highly encourage it!"

Jonas also stated the same concerns over 'frequency' when he reflected upon the possibility of adopting and including more critical approaches to English in a curriculum. He did not focus so much on teachers' time involvement in the preparation of the lessons, but rather on the students' reaction to these lessons. He wondered how practical these types of lessons really are to the student who expects to learn the language of economics or grammar skills necessary to pass high-stakes exams. He explained, "making an entire curriculum around this, well, I think it'd be very interesting, but you really have to focus on the applicability of this after they're done studying." He can see the promising potential in what students are going to take from the lesson, and the value of them applying these critical thinking skills into their lives, "back into whatever country they are going to," but at the same time, he fears that students will eventually say, "This is why I came to Canada, to get into this university. How is [this lesson] going to help me do that?" And therein lies the challenge for Jonas. He feels that from the students' perspective, implementing one lesson or two lessons can be deemed acceptable "but a lot of the times, they want to see "ok, this is how this can help me get a job."

Encouraging students to develop critical thinking skills does not necessarily exclude the possibility of teaching students language usage that will allow them to obtain a high score in an exam or to reach any type of pragmatic objective such as having a successful job interview in English. I believe that these two goals are compatible and I will further explore this idea in the discussion section.

4. Implementation of Lesson Plan Three for Brett

Brett's experience with the implementation of the two lesson plans was positive and he felt that his students were open to more lessons of the same nature. He felt that the general consensus amongst his students, based both on his feelings and on some of their feedback, was that they actively wished to continue learning English by way of new and engaging topics. This is why he created a third lesson plan and implemented it with the intention of speaking to me about his experience, as though it were part of the study. Although his students did not specifically ask for topics related to social justice or that dealt with issues of power and inequality, they did recognise that the lessons on Human Rights and on Media Literacy were somehow different than the topics represented in ESL textbooks and those more typically adopted by their ESL teachers.

a. Teacher's response to implementation of the lesson

Brett's third lesson was themed around coffee. His lesson was stretched over two days. During the first day, he introduced the topic of coffee and general vocabulary related to the theme, such as the various types of coffees, how to order coffee, and the different methods in which to make it. He then presented a video on coffee, which introduced the class not only to the history and evolution of coffee agriculture and production, but also to the concepts of dumping, of mass marketing and of fair trade. The second day was dedicated to classroom discussion and debate around the concepts of mass marketing, of fair trade, of consumer choice and of the potential influence of the responsible consumer. Brett felt that his students immediately related to the topic simply because it is a part of their daily reality: "they drink coffee every day!"

In terms of language skills, this lesson allowed his students to practice their listening ability and their oral fluency, and in terms of language function, he focused on connecting

words and on comparing and contrasting. He achieved these linguistic objectives by "splitting [his students] into groups, asking them to differentiate between the various techniques for making coffee, discussing the advantages and disadvantages for each method, and then deciding, as a group, on the worst way of making coffee."

Just as Brett had felt he had "taken too long" to introduce the topic of Human Rights on the first day of the lesson implementation, this time again he felt that the students got "a bit too weighed down" with the long listening exercise and the long listening comprehension questionnaire on the first day of the lesson. He felt that, in a way, he had cheated his students out of the potential for more student interaction and for some class discussion on the topic. On the second day, however, Brett felt that there was some good debate around various topics. This created more or less passionate responses in his students depending on their nationality, the exact theme of the discussion, or the direction the debate took.

b. Teacher's interpretation of students' responses to the lesson

Again, because all his students were somehow connected to coffee, at least as consumers of it, they all participated in the classroom debate. A few students in Brett's class come from Brazil and from Colombia and they demonstrated an eagerness stronger than usual for classroom discussion. Brett explained that the Latin American students did not seem surprised by the contents of the video most likely because the video exposed a reality that these students live with and "they know very well that their country lives and dies by this export." Brett felt at the same time, that although the video was not an optimistic representation of coffee production, he also felt that the two Colombians and four Brazilian students in his class were "happy that they could talk to something they knew and they kind of felt like experts in that field."

According to Brett, the issue that caught all students equally unaware was their own potential power to drive the market by their personal consumption habits. It seemed to Brett that none of his students had previously reflected upon the power of choice that they possess as consumers. The students "were all very responsive to this idea [of affective change in market trends], reacting with "Oh, you can do something like this?! You can actually, as a consumer, make a choice!?" As students considered this new idea that one person can affect the products that people sell, their immediate response was hopeful and at the same time, Brett explained that some of his students' responses were cynical. Students questioned the potential impact of one sole consumer in opposition to corporation giants such as Starbucks or Nestle. They also put into question the intentions of giant corporations in relation to their importation of Fair Traded coffee. Students felt that these companies were not importing Fair Traded coffee as a gesture of goodwill, or as an effort to right the wrongs of the coffee industry, but rather to enhance their public image and relations. In light of this, students debated whether it was worth their while to change their consumption habits in order to ultimately support nothing more than a public relations campaign. Brett felt that most students in the class were very involved in this debate, and it was a "pretty universally loved topic" by Latin, Asian, and all student nationalities, but "there are always the two or three that just don't want to be a part of that sort of thing," meaning that there are always a few students who do not jump with enthusiasm into discussions on socially sensitive topics.

c. Comments about the adoption of critical approaches to ELT

The implementation of this third lesson exceeds the original study design, which had required the implementation of only two lessons from each participating teachers. This voluntary implementation of a third lesson points to Brett's inclination to adopt critical

approaches to ELT. Brett explained that he wants to stimulate his students' learning of English through the use of new and original topics. He explained that most of these students have had an average of eight to nine years of English lessons before attending a school like this one, and consequently, they have tired of the typical classroom routine of "get together with your friend and talk about the best vacation you've ever had". He feels that an important element that makes lessons "really interesting for students, whether they are interested in the general context of global social issues or not, is that [the lessons] are new, for them." Novelty, however, is not enough to insure all students' active participation in the lesson: relevance to the student is also an essential element in the design of these lessons. In the lesson on coffee, Brett felt that the students "that have more at stake were much more involved." The issue of student engagement, topic relevance and student needs will be further explored in the Discussion chapter.

5. Focus Group

The focus group met exactly one week after the last post-implementation interview had taken place. Teachers had resumed their regular course of teaching and returned to their monthly course objectives as outlined by the school's curriculum guidelines. They had only superficially exchanged on their experiences with critical pedagogy, sharing the general outcome of each lesson and their students' positive reactions to the lessons.

In the focus group, all four teachers initially reiterated their students' encouraging responses to the lessons plans. The teachers felt that the students were generally open to discussing human rights issues and media literacy, most likely because the structure of the lesson did not deviate from the typical ESL lesson plan. According to the teachers' interpretations of their students' reactions, because the lesson allowed students to acquire new vocabulary, to practice certain linguistic functions, and generally to advance their language

usage, students felt in their element and felt that the lessons were useful to them. The only difference between these critical lessons and a more typical ESL lesson was the content itself. As pointed out in the post-implementation interview results, teachers found that the students who responded more enthusiastically to the social responsibility content and who were most engaged in the lesson were often the ones who could relate personally to the lesson.

Despite the enthusiasm expressed by the teachers, the post-implementation interviews provided the teachers with a chance to voice their concerns about critical pedagogy and to discuss challenges related to the implementation of critical lesson plans in the classroom. The following challenges were the main ones specified by the participating teachers either in the first or the second post-implementation interviews: time involved in lesson preparation, adapting the lesson to the appropriate linguistic level of the students, and focusing on the explicit needs and interests of the students. Based on these responses, I reorganized my Focus Group Protocol (see Appendix 11) to give the teachers another opportunity to reflect and expand on these issues of concern. Much of the focus group's discussion focused on the challenges encountered in implementing the lesson plans or in anticipated challenges if, in the future, private language schools were to adopt critical approaches more universally.

a. Lesson Planning

From the teachers' perspectives on lesson planning, all four teachers agreed that it took more time to prepare for these critical lessons than for the lessons they typically teach that are often derived from an ELT textbook. Jonas explained that with critical lessons, even if you are a highly experienced teacher, you simply cannot "plug and play. It's just not going to fly." He continued on to explain that in order to lead a critical classroom in which students will engage with the topic by questioning it and approaching it via multiple perspectives, the teacher must also "think!" The teacher cannot enter the classroom and automatically recite a lesson he or

she may have taught a dozen times in the past, regardless of the students in the classroom, their background, their linguistic level, or their realities. Lorraine echoed this idea, stating, "you cannot use this kind of socially conscious lesson as a "let's wing it" lesson. As Jonas pointed out, given the numerous responsibilities of the teacher, in addition to lesson planning, what will determine his or her openness to adopt critical approaches may very well be the availability of ready-made lesson plans. After all, Jonas stated very practically, it all "comes back to the fact that a teacher looks at that and goes, "how much time have I got to prepare to do this?"

The teachers also suggested that in every textbook or in every day's newspaper, there is a source for the creation of a new lesson plan. However, these independent sections of a potentially complete lesson need to be strung together. Jonas suggested "having a set curriculum where the entire lesson plan is already made, accompanied by a documentary, 30 minutes of listening, or a reading, that would be really useful." All teachers agreed that, in this study, having access to a complete pre-made lesson plan helped them gain confidence and helped them save time in their first implementation with this kind of a lesson. They suggested that other teachers would require the same support if they were to start adopting critical approaches to ELT.

And so unless there is more institutional support in terms of providing teachers with pre-set lesson plans or at least detailed guidelines, teachers might be dissuaded from adopting critical approaches to teaching. Brett observed, however, that since he implemented the lesson plans as part of this study and began looking for more lesson plans to implement, he came to "realise that [at the school], we have more than enough material already in the school to do this kind of stuff." And from the other three teachers' reaction to Brett's comment, there seemed to be a mutual recognition that the school is indeed already in possession of resources of this nature, and that the school is only one step away from encouraging more teachers to use this material. The four teachers agreed that it is simply a question of allowing teachers to become

better acquainted with this material. Unfortunately, Brett observes, these resources are currently unsystematically filed in a large unidentified binder sitting in the resource room. Perhaps, it was suggested, a reorganization of this material would be indispensable in order to make it more visible, more accessible and more attractive to the teachers. Brett suggested that the "binders in the resource room can be labelled more effectively." Jonas and Lorraine also suggested that these binders could "be introduced […], along with their content" at a teacher workshop, and ultimately, they could be "reorganized […] to help the teachers recognise the levels and the themes." If a more generalized implementation of a critical curriculum is to take place, it will be crucial for critical lesson plans to be easily accessible to the teachers, regardless of how this is done.

b. Students' needs

The challenge of responding to students' linguistic needs is twofold: first, the lesson plan must be adapted to the appropriate linguistic level, and second, teachers must differentiate between students' perceived needs or requests and their true needs. Cathleen's class, whose students were at the lowest linguistic level out of the four groups, felt that her students' attention was consumed by their effort to "get the information, to understand the topic and to talk about it." Indeed, Cathleen is the only teacher who brought up the issue of level appropriateness during the post-implementation interview, and she expanded on this during the focus group. Some of the activities focusing on language development were deemed too advanced for her class' level. With their attention mostly focused on their struggle to understand the vocabulary and basic concepts of the lesson, Cathleen felt it was difficult to focus on "specific grammar points or language structure." Cathleen explained that although students may be familiar with the theme of the lesson and they may be motivated to engage in classroom discussion, their "lack of vocabulary and lack of ability to express themselves on the

topic" led her class, at times, to a general state of frustration. She quickly reviewed her statement at this point of the Focus group discussion and specified that this frustration only occurred during the implementation of the lesson on human rights, and that in fact, approximately "half the class […] tried, and they were getting across" while the other half "seemed completely lost." In this case, I believe the solution may rest in better lesson planning where the activities should have been geared more appropriately toward the linguistic level of the students in the classroom.

During the two post-implementation interviews, Brett, Lorraine and Cathleen also addressed the central role played by the lessons' linguistic points. Lorraine and Brett felt that these language points served as essential backbones to the lessons, facilitating the classroom discussion. These points consisted of fundamental components of a complete English language lesson where students worked on concrete English skills while learning to think critically. In fact, for Lorraine, linguistic points should be the base of the lesson, and "then work [the points] into theme." She refers to both lessons when she explains, "if it weren't for the vocabulary that was new for them and that was really challenging and […] they really enjoyed […], it wouldn't be a very linguistically focused lesson." Both Lorraine and Brett felt that the sections dealing with specific language points such as the acquisition of new vocabulary words or the practice of language functions were "beneficial to [their] students" in addition to the fact that "they enjoyed [these activities] so much."

For Jonas, addressing students' linguistic needs within the political and ideological context of a critical lesson plan is as essential as it is for Brett and Lorraine but he expressed concern about being able to address this point successfully. Jonas insisted that most students, and especially "Korean students want to see something [concrete] in front of them" in terms of language points." He insisted that these lessons should not be "just a big touchy-feely, 'what do you think?" sort of lesson, in which students are only invited to explore their inner feelings

rather than working towards linguistic progress. In the creation of his own lesson plans on attitudes towards marijuana and on pre-conceived attitudes towards religion, Jonas did not focus on any concrete language point. Rather than integrate more typical exercises of language usage, Jonas initially felt that his students would feel sufficiently challenged by the discussions around the lessons' content. In the context of the focus group, Jonas revised this decision and agreed that students more readily express a sense of progress when they've addressed specific language points during the lesson. He explains that the question of how to include these concrete language points into a socially-themed lesson is a challenge that he personally needs to overcome: "I just need to find a way to address that specific topic of making it linguistically based and not just socially based." It is important to reiterate here that Jonas' lesson plans were different than the ones implemented by the three other teachers. In his design of the lessons, he did not provide for many linguistically relevant points other than the opportunities for listening comprehension and classroom discussion. Still, Jonas does agree that even though he did not think of integrating grammatical and structural points into his lessons, "these lessons lend themselves to a lot of linguistic points."

In the focus group, Lorraine, Brett and Cathleen gave tangible examples of possible strategies to help their students' linguistic progress while meeting the other objectives of the lessons such as a greater understanding of social inequalities. Lorraine suggested, "you can set up a context in which [the students] have to use a particular function, language function […] like giving your opinion, and disagreeing" to which Jonas added other language functions such as paraphrasing or making inferences. Brett added the functions of comparing and contrasting. For example, in the media literacy lesson, Brett introduced descriptors and reviewed the present perfect tense incorporating these language functions into the critical tasks of describing the advertisements' superficial layers and their social subtext.

Ultimately, the focus group all agreed that their primary objective was to ensure students' linguistic progress via the introduction or revision of specific points of language usage, integrated into a larger lesson. These points can focus on grammar, structure, lexicon or other, but the points must be explicitly included in the lesson in such a way that students realize that these points are part of the larger lesson.

6. Summary of Results

The research tools used at the various stages of this study provided me with data allowing me to speculate on whether critical pedagogy is compatible with the private industry of ELT. In the pre-implementation survey, the participating teachers revealed that they had limited or no experience with critical approaches to ELT, usually employing themes such as hobbies, popular culture, travel, shopping or relationships in order to stimulate oral practice of the English language via classroom conversation. The teachers felt that these themes reflected the preferred topics of discussion for the students.

The teachers stated that prior to this study, they occasionally touched on topics related to international and current events, but only one of the four teachers approached this theme in a more critical fashion by addressing issues of racial and religious intolerance and socio-economic issues. None of the participating teachers felt their top responsibility to be the encouragement of students to question their beliefs about socially accepted practices. Rather, all teachers participating in this study agreed that their main and most important responsibility was to provide their students with practical English skills.

Despite the teachers' and students' lack of exposure to critical approaches prior to the implementation of these nine lessons, the four participating teachers described all lesson outcomes as successful. In order to identity the lessons as successful, the teachers evaluated both their own emotional response during the implementation of the lesson and their students'

responses to the lessons. They interpreted student reactions such as their active participation in the lessons' activities or the students' verbalization of their appreciation for the new lesson genre as indicators of success.

Chapter VI

Discussion

The results presented in the previous chapter are discussed in this chapter. Connections will be made to theoretical works and trends in the findings will be identified. The discussion is structured around the curriculum inquiry, the survey, the post implementation interviews and the focus group, integrating the findings of each section to create a more interconnected whole. Using the data from all sources of inquiry will enable me to organize the information under common themes, to compare the teachers' experiences and impressions with critical approaches to teaching English as a second language, and ultimately, to speculate whether there is indeed space in the culture of the ELT industry for critical pedagogy.

1. Critical pedagogy in the classroom

When I introduced this study to the group of participating teachers, I focused mostly on the various steps involved in the study and on the time commitment it would require on the participants' part. I briefly summarized the framework of my study –critical pedagogy –but did not delve into the practical meaning of adopting critical approaches to ELT. One of the reasons for this was that I did not wish for the teachers to ponder and debate the theoretical precepts associated with critical pedagogy but rather, I wished for them to ponder and debate the practical aspects of this pedagogy as it unfolded in their classrooms. In the letter of consent, I made use of both the terms "critical pedagogy" and "social responsibility" in order to allow teachers to understand the underlying values of the study, but without ever exploring the definitions more deeply or the classroom implications of these concepts. It is therefore interesting to observe how each teacher's personal understanding of these concepts translates into an individualized implementation of each lesson plan. In the following section, I will

study the practical potential for critical pedagogy by examining the ways in which the four participating teachers engaged in a critical praxis by adapting two lesson plans and transforming them into purposeful classroom practices.

a. Practical conceptualization of critical pedagogy

As many critical pedagogues have noted, the gap between the theoretical literature and the practical approaches to critical teaching is significant. As Gore (1993) argues, some of the best writings of critical theorists offer little suggestion of strategies that educators might use in practice. Furthermore, "these writings provide no explication of what attempts are made within these educators' own classroom to implement the critical pedagogy they espouse" (Breunig, 2005). It seems that even those teachers who claim to be familiar with and to apply concepts of critical pedagogy in their classrooms are often misguided. In one example, Pagliarini-Cox and De Assis-Peterson (1999) studied the interpretation of critical pedagogy among trained teachers of EFL They found that the teachers' understandings of critical pedagogy varied greatly from the theoretical framework of critical pedagogues such as Freire or of Pennycook. Among the five teachers who mentioned that they used a critical approach and that they felt comfortable with the concept of critical pedagogy, only two of them "acknowledged the political dimension of ELT; Brazil's economical, political, and cultural dependence on the United States; the global nature of the language; and the need to mistrust the underlying ideologies" (p. 441). The other three teachers confused the concept of critical pedagogy with the idea that the critical teacher is, above all, self-critical of his or her own methods in order to modify them (p. 441).

Prior to this study, none of the participating teachers had heard of critical pedagogy but following a brief introduction to the pedagogy during the initial information meeting, two teachers, Brett and Lorraine realized that they already used elements of critical pedagogy in

their teaching. While the four teachers in this study associated critical pedagogy with the political nature of teaching, none of the teachers acknowledged, at any point, the political nature of the English language itself, nor specifically of English Language Teaching.

Certain themes or current professional concerns resonated within the teachers' definitions of critical pedagogy and most saw a direct link between their commitment to multiculturalism and a critical perspective. As part of their understanding of a critical lesson plan, all participants mentioned communicating awareness of race and culture, teaching through the students' experiences, encouraging students to seek out alternative understandings of the world around them, and incorporating student-centred structures. Jonas, for example, asserted that the topic he selected would help students develop critical thinking skills and that it would "open up their minds to a social consciousness that is different than in their country." Opening up to alternative social realities is certainly a starting point to adopting critical thinking but this version of criticality differs from Freire's, Shor's or Giroux' in that it does not uncover and rebel against oppressive relations of power. These authors discuss criticality as work that focuses on issues in which relations of power and inequality are present, usually in terms of both social or structural inequity and the cultural or ideological frameworks that support such inequity. According to Giroux (1997), schools as a whole need to be reconstituted as places

> where students learn the skills and knowledge needed to live in and fight for a viable democratic society. Within this perspective, schools will have to be characterized by a pedagogy that demonstrates its commitment to engaging the views and problems that deeply concern students in their everyday lives. Equally important is the need for schools to cultivate a spirit of critique and respect for human dignity that will be capable of linking personal and social issues around the pedagogical project of helping students become active citizens. (p. 143).

On the one hand, via the implementation of his lesson plan on attitudes towards marijuana, Jonas' students did not necessarily question relations of power per se, or ask whose interests particular knowledges or assumptions serve. On the other hand, the aim was to explore the socially constructed character of certain culturally rooted attitudes towards the uses of marijuana such as discrimination and beliefs about what is normal, right, or proper. In that sense, Jonas' lesson plan succeeded in initiating his students to a certain level of critical thinking and perhaps also to certain level of "knowledge needed to live in a viable democratic society", as expressed by Giroux, above. In his second lesson on "awareness of beliefs," Jonas seemed to have connected more closely with the aforementioned theoretical description of critical pedagogy, bringing Jonas' understanding of the concept in line with the other three teachers.

Indeed, throughout the study, during the interviews and the focus groups, the other three participants did not seem to struggle with the meaning of critical pedagogy. They did not appear to need to question or explore its meaning. Their understanding of the concept, whatever this understanding translated into, was intuitive. They did not word this concept with the same terminology as used by Freire, Giroux, Shor or Pennycook, but the teachers all felt that their students 'got at something' when they demonstrated a way of thinking that showed an openness to different perspectives that went beyond their own commonly held assumptions, and when they were able to question their own thinking processes. The teachers felt that they tapped into the core of a critical lesson and described this feeling as an indefinable sense of pride that they had during or after the implementation of the lesson. They translated this pride as signifying that they had taught something "important", something "deep", something "meaningful".

Brett associated the lessons' success with elements typical of anticipated responses to critical lessons such as a feeling of engagement but he also associated their success with the

idea of novelty, which allowed his students to explore and discover new perspectives. He expressed a belief that developing multiple perspectives broadens the students' view of the world. This, on a certain level, corresponds to critical thinking. Brett explained that the novelty of topics, "in and of itself, putting a new perspective on things, makes [students] very receptive to [the lesson]." Creating space for the expression of diverse social experiences may lead to the production of multiple and even divergent perspectives based on geographical location and origin, race, gender, class, etc. Allowing and facilitating the discovery of various socio-cultural perspectives is, after all, one of the objectives of critical pedagogy.

Another determinant of success for critical pedagogy and which was not touched upon or discussed at any point during the study is its potential for transformative action. In my own understanding of the approach, I believe that one of the important outcomes of engaging students in critical thinking is that it inspires them to become agents of social change. Certainly, adopting two isolated lesson plans over the course of a month-long session is insufficient to truly create a movement leading to practical action outside the classroom. Still, I believe that concrete action, linking classroom learning to genuine action towards a specific social issue, could have occurred. For example, in the lesson on human rights, the students could have agreed on one or many current human rights crises and organized a letter-writing campaign to help challenge the injustice. In Brett's third lesson on "coffee", the class could have surveyed the practices of various coffee providers in the school neighbourhood and collectively decided to support the one with the most socially responsible practices.

b. Teacher engagement

The teachers who chose to participate in this study were open and curious about a new type of pedagogy: had they not been open to implementing lessons that deviated from their personal teaching routines, they would not have joined the study. But to say that they were

specifically drawn to critical pedagogy would be false, because prior to the study, none of them were familiar with the concept and implications of critical pedagogy and only two of them had, on occasion, included elements of critical pedagogy in their lessons. So although it may be exaggerated to assume that the teachers in this study had a natural inclination towards critical pedagogy, it may be fair to assert that they at least had an enthusiastic and open-minded outlook towards it.

Out of the four participants, only Cathleen had previous experience in a field somewhat related to the concerns of critical pedagogy: Development Studies. According to Cathleen, the courses in her Bachelors' degree covered issues such as Human Rights, social responsibility and corporate responsibility, democracy, access to education, environmental sustainability and encouraged the development of critical thinking skills about these issues. In spite of her university background and familiarity with many critical issues, Cathleen's response to the implementation of the lesson plans was the least enthusiastic of the four teachers' responses. Her hesitant response was born out of her evaluation of the outcome of the lesson based on the students' lack of eagerness and participation in the class activities. Although it was clear from the beginning of the study that Cathleen was interested in the idea of transforming ELT into a socially aware practice and that she was emotionally invested in the success of these lessons and in their specific goal of raising students' awareness on power relations and societal inequities, her personal engagement did not translate into concrete classroom success.

In the specific case of Cathleen's experience with these two lesson plans, I believe there are two explanations that can elucidate the challenges she met in the implementation of these lessons: the English level of the students in her class and Cathleen's lack of teaching experience. Cathleen's scant two months of teaching experience prior to this study did not initiate her to the kind of challenge where she had to drastically adapt the lesson plan in order to suit it to the students' level.

Cathleen attributed the particular challenges of implementing the human rights lesson exclusively to her students' linguistic level, saying that the students were so intently focused on understanding the general gist of the lesson's theme that there was no possibility of delving more deeply into the core of the human rights debate or even to address any grammar points: "they didn't really understand a lot of the vocabulary. […] There was so much material that it was hard to focus on specific grammar points or language structure. […] It was more about them getting the information, getting them to understand and talking about it." I believe that I should have been more attuned to this potential challenge and offered more support to help address practical issues such as this one of incompatibility between the lesson's activities and the students' linguistic level. Although Brett and Lorraine also recognized that certain activities were ill suited to their students' linguistic needs, their experience in teaching allowed them to successfully adapt the lesson's activities.

Professionally speaking, Jonas and Lorraine share similar backgrounds: they both have between five and seven years of ESL teaching experience in the private school industry, they are well liked by all types of learners, and are adaptable to all levels of teaching, both seemingly able to balance the requests of the students with their own evaluation of the students' needs. Both Jonas and Lorraine approach ELT with an acute awareness of the particular context of the school operating as a business in which the student is rendered the client. This was observable in their talk, when they equated *satisfying their students' needs* to *great customer service.* For example, Lorraine clearly felt that she had a responsibility to "respect [the students'] wishes" and Jason stated that in this context, "where students pay to attend our classes, our first priority is to satisfy them, to give them what they want."

Although they both appreciate the customer-service side of this ELT context, and while neither of the two had heard of critical pedagogy or given much thought to the idea of teaching English for social change, they were both very successful and satisfied with the

implementation of the lesson plans. I believe their teaching experience played a large part in their success in the implementation of these lessons. Over years of teaching groups of multicultural young adults, Lorraine and Jonas have developed a confident understanding of what motivates their students and they have developed the flexibility to adapt their lesson plans in term of level challenge and activity of interest in order to optimize students' engagement in the classroom. As discussed in the post-implementation interviews, Jonas and Lorraine were able to adapt, change, shorten, expand, or simplify their lessons' activities in order to better stimulate their students' interest.

Brett's professional background differs from that of all three other teachers because on the one hand, he is very new to teaching ESL, as is Cathleen, but he also possesses a wealth of various life experiences, having worked in many fields such as health care and documentary film making prior to entering the ELT industry. His personal curiosity to explore new ideas and to understand new perspectives is very much part of his daily life philosophy and this is echoed in his comments when he associates the success of critical pedagogy with "novelty." He stated that his students' positive response came not so much from the issues raised, but by the newness of the lessons, "Part of the thing that makes lessons really interesting for students, whether they are interested in the general context of global social issues or not, is that they are new, for them." Allowing students to investigate, debate and develop their ideas on new topics such as human rights was, for Brett, the key to integrating new approaches such as critical pedagogies into the classroom.

Contradicting Jonas' statement that "from a teacher's perspective, [critical pedagogy] is just easier with higher-level students," Brett considered that limiting critical pedagogy to upper levels of linguistic competence, "really underestimate[s] what students can do." He argued that teachers too often use "the pre-made pair-work lesson plans" with which students are familiar and comfortable and which, according to Brett, do not challenge students. He believes that at

the early intermediate level where students usually "start doing things like paraphrasing," teachers should start change their strategies when "asking them what they want to do when we're deciding the curriculum." He suggested that rather than "just doing that blanket sort of thing, invite students to think differently by introducing questions such as "did you know that we can talk about things like globalization? And… this, and that. And give them sometimes an " oh, we don't always have to talk about going to the super market!" Brett's perspective was that the teacher's approach to teaching and the teachers' assumption about their students' interests and abilities all play an integral part in the successful adoption of critical pedagogy. Furthermore, the teacher must fuel students towards alternative possibilities for a revised curriculum while simultaneously making students responsible for the topics they ultimately choose to include in the lesson. Brett was confident, however, that if students experience critical lesson plans, they would start to develop critical thinking skills, which would empower them in allowing them to connect with new perspectives and to engage in debates about various realities.

According to Brett, the student is not the only beneficiary of critical pedagogy. He explained, "if a teacher can learn something with it as well, its exciting for them as well." This sense of empowerment encourages both students and teachers to continue along the path of critical pedagogy, just as Brett has continued since the end of this study.

c. Topics of discussion

In the survey filled out by the teachers prior to the implementation of lesson plans, they were asked to select which topics of discussion were initiated in the classroom, both by themselves and by their students. Topics that would typically be associated with questions of social awareness such as gender roles or local current events were selected by a few teachers who indicated that they occasionally brought up these topics to initiate classroom discussion.

All four teachers, however, believed that their students would never bring up such topics in their own initiation of classroom discussions.

For both the teachers and students, topics of popular culture and entertainment seemed to come up repeatedly as topics that contribute to easy group discussions. More specifically, these topics amounted to discussions about films, music and musicians, Hollywood stars, clothing and fashion trends, music and film festivals, holiday festivities, television shows, advertising, cooking, and sports, to name a few. The theme of travel also seemed recurrent for both teachers and teachers' perspectives of what interests their students. Again, in an ESL class, a discussion about "travel" will tend to be more specifically geared toward one of the following sub-topics: destinations/countries, modes of transportation, vacationing activities, accommodation, and local cuisine.

A teacher who is actively hoping to stimulate critical thinking processes in his or her students may believe that the best or only path to adopt is via the introduction of socially loaded questions such as gender roles. In fact, it is wrong to consider that lighter topics such as those derived from the larger category of popular culture will result in superficial classroom discussion and superficial thinking processes. Shor (1992) states that *all* topics have a potential for being dealt with in a critical manner, and this is where these students' desires and comfort levels, which seem to consistently bring them back to the same topics of discussion, can be compatible with critical pedagogy. So for example, if either the teacher or the students have brought up the topic of television shows, rather than focusing solely on the story line, the characters, the main ideas, the new vocabulary or idiomatic expressions, the class can question whether they are truly represented in the show, in terms of characters' values, their looks, their socio-economic status, their cultural background, their education, etc.

The topics enumerated above, brought up as popular and easy conversational topics for all students, can be examined by the classroom from a critical perspective. To be critical

means to be able to examine all topics and to go beneath the surface, beneath the seemingly generic, innocent and superficial nature of the topic, and recognize its political nature. As Shor (1992) explains, to be critical means "to connect student individuality to larger historical and social issues; to encourage students to examine how their own experience relates to academic knowledge, to power, and to inequality in society; and to approach received wisdom and the status quo with questions" (pp. 16-17). Indeed, critical approaches to ELT are not necessarily about addressing politically charged topics nor about discussing ethical issues. Rather, they are about learning to ask the right questions, about questioning the relevance and impact of a certain portrayed reality on the students' own realities, about discovering whose interest a certain reality serves. Teachers, and eventually students, need to know how to question the topics, any and all topics, and how to get to their deeper meaning, how to question their social context and how to expose their hidden ideology.

During her second post-implementation interview, Lorraine mentioned that certain topics such as shopping and fashion are so generic that students address the topic without much thought, almost automatically and only superficially, discussing the latest shopping trends in colour, brand names and styles. If Lorraine (or any other teacher) chose to put a critical spin on the popular topic of fashion, however, she could engage her students in delving more deeply into the exploration of the fashion world and many issues linked to it such as consumerism, body image and eating disorders, manufacturing and sweatshops, and advertising.

In the study's implementation of the two lesson plans, there was a shared feeling amongst Brett, Lorraine and Cathleen that the topic of media literacy was more easily acccessible to students than that of human rights. At the same time, they all agreed that the theme of human rights is an interesting one, and that its exploration is a necessary activity in the critical classroom. However, they did feel that the lesson on human rights was more demanding on the students than the media literacy lesson as observed in the students' initial

lack of participation. Perhaps in the context of this study, the teachers should have implemented the media literacy lesson first as a more gradual introduction to critical thinking. These two lesson plans also raise the practical point of how to present a topic in order to engage students. media literacy certainly lends itself naturally to visual and audio materials and these mediums, according to the teachers, kept students energized, entertained and motivated. Lorraine suggested that perhaps adopting a multi-media approach to the human rights lesson plan would have proven just as stimulating for the students.

2. Addressing Challenges

    a. Lesson planning and teacher support

As mentioned by all participating teachers during the focus group discussion, the biggest challenge to the practical adoption of a critical curriculum was the time-consuming lesson planning. This challenge is echoed by other teachers in various research projects focused on the potential implementation of critical pedagogy such as in Garcia-Gonzalez (2000) who observed this in California classrooms: "A factor hindering [the practice of critical pedagogy] at both schools was the lack of time to plan. None of the teachers had prep time" (p. 11). The most natural response to this challenge by the teachers, as seen in Garcia-Gonzalez's study and in this one, is to suggest greater institutional support. Again, as mentioned in the focus group, greater support can translate into a better organisation of available resources that lend themselves well to critical lessons. Also, to facilitate the implementation of critical lessons, teachers in this study suggested making fully developed lesson plans available and easily accessible to all teachers, as well as ensuring that these lessons are adaptable to a wide range of linguistic levels. This sentiment, once again, was echoed by the participating teachers in Garcia-Gonzalez' study in which she reported that " material and administrative support, however, remains of critical importance" (p. 12).

Supporting teachers by ensuring easy accessibility to structured lesson plans and to organized resources can certainly facilitate the adoption of critical approaches to ELT, but would all teachers benefit from this available support? What of the teachers with little awareness of or interest in critical pedagogy? To respond to this, another suggestion was made in terms of reaching the teachers who may not have any awareness of the existence of critical approaches to teaching. These teachers may or may not be interested in the concept, but they should at least be given the opportunity to discover it. It was suggested that an optional lunchtime workshop would be ideal to introduce curious teachers to the concept and answer their questions about critical approaches.

According to Cathleen, a teacher's background may have a lot to do with teachers' enthusiasm about critical pedagogy. Her feeling is that if a teacher is "familiar with this kind of teaching, then it's easy. If you're not, or if you're not interested, then you're not going to want to teach it." This, however, is not necessarily true, as demonstrated in Jonas' successful implementation of both lesson plans even though he had no previous experience in teaching critical thinking skills or in addressing social issues. According to the group, simply introducing the teachers on staff to this concept, via an hour-long workshop, may be sufficient to encourage many of them to change the way classes are taught at the school.

Finally, Lorraine's idea on how to facilitate the inclusion of this type of subject matter into the curriculum was to simply suggest it to teachers on the syllabus. As mentioned in Chapter IV, the school already provides its teachers with the monthly syllabus for each class, which indicates the objectives to be met for the level. The syllabus also puts forth a list of textbooks and themes that can optionally be used in the classroom to meet these objectives. Lorraine points out that these offer "topics and themes [...] like "fashion, food and travel. Why can't we replace some of these themes with human rights, globalization, environment, and ethics? I mean, as a suggestion?" All teachers agreed to this but Cathleen then put forward a

new idea: rather than integrating critical pedagogy into the regular curriculum of all classes offered at the school, the school could creating a content-based class that would focus only on critical issues. This was Cathleen's solution to the potential problem that not all students in a regular ESL class are interested in adopting critical perspectives on certain topics and Jonas supported the idea.

In creating a class specifically designed on tenets of critical pedagogy, students keen to learn about this for four weeks can sign up for it, and only a teacher motivated by critical pedagogy would take on the class, "that would be for students who want to learn and a teacher who wants to teach it". A content-based class may successfully attract students interested in self-reflection and in understanding, exposing, and working against societal injustices, but limiting this type of pedagogy to one specific course among the many offered at this school does not correspond to Shor (1987), Giroux (1997) or Kincheloe's (2005) visions of critical pedagogy in which teachers of all school subjects and "teachers at all levels of schooling represent a potentially powerful force for social change. […] What classroom teachers can and must do is work in their respective roles to develop […] methods that link self-reflection and understanding with a commitment to change the nature of the larger society" (Giroux, 1997, p. 28). Teachers cannot choose, based on the arbitrary title of the course, to work towards or to ignore the "political nature of their practice" (Shor, 1987, p. 211). Within the framework of critical pedagogy, all teachers should "understand that every dimension of schooling and every form of educational practice are politically contested spaces" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 2). This means that every moment of teaching and learning is potentially a moment of critical pedagogy and to opt out of critical pedagogy, even temporarily, is to support the status quo and is to veer away from one's commitment to change.

In their experience of implementing critical lessons however, all participating teachers at the focus group discussion felt strongly that teachers should be able to opt out of critical

pedagogy if they did not feel comfortable with the concept, or did not feel that it has its place in the ELT industry. At the same time, they all agreed with Lorraine that including more socially sensitive topics of discussion on the syllabus might have a inspiring effect on the teacher. As Lorraine stated, "that's not forcing it on anybody. But it just plants the seed." Indeed, perhaps "planting the seed" is, in this particular context, a shy but realistic interim step in the direction of a gradual and eventual more generalized critical curriculum. This suggestion of subtly influencing the teacher into adding elements of critical pedagogy into their lesson was supported by the other teachers in the focus group discussion, in large part because it responds in a practical way to their own teaching realities.

b. The teacher in the role of service provider

Another point of discussion brought up during the focus group was teachers' role in a language school that is run as a private business whose students are in fact, clients. Given the context that critical approaches are now part of the curriculum in Quebec Public Schools, do these four teachers of ESL feel that they should share the same responsibilities as those of teachers in public education? According to the teachers in this study as well as during my own observations, it is commonplace for ESL teachers to see themselves as contributing to general welfare because of the belief that they are genuinely aiding people to reach their objectives of improving their English skills, thereby facilitating communication with other people. ESL teachers may consider that they have met their responsibilities when they have attempted to teach as well as possible while providing a professional and efficient service.

In the private language school industry, the debate on the societal contribution of the ESL teacher pits the teachers' potential role and responsibilities as critical pedagogue against the students' position of consumer paying for a specific service. As a general outcome of this debate, ESL teachers have not been encouraged to address socio-political issues that educators

like Freire (1970) and Giroux (1997) have placed within the very heart of educational purposes. In fact, the very purpose of the private ELT industry thus far has been to generate profits by selling its language courses with little regard to social contribution.

Giroux (1997) argues that curriculum should be able to address both the practical, immediate needs of the student as well as a wider understanding of the world "which includes knowledge about power and how it works, as well as analyses of those practices such as racism, sexism and class exploitation that structure and mediate the encounters of everyday life" (p. 108). Not only does knowledge include the "basic skills students will need to work and live in the wider society, but also knowledge about the social forms through which human beings live, become conscious, and sustain themselves" (p. 108).

In this study, all four teachers felt that, as educators, they had a certain moral responsibility towards their students but because they teach at a private language school, the greater responsibility was to satisfy the customers' needs. While teachers agreed on the importance of teaching critical thinking skills via the use of a more politically and socially inclined curriculum, they all felt that their first priority lay with a more traditional definition of English language training. Two teachers, Jonas and Cathleen, agreed that teaching grammatical and structural points through a critical curriculum remains a challenge. Brett and Lorraine considered the feasibility of this option more optimistically, agreeing with Giroux' statement (1997) that "[…] the curriculum should be built on knowledge that starts with the problems and needs of students. It must, however, be so designed that it can provide the basis for a critique of dominant forms of knowledge" (p. 108). Critical pedagogy in English language teaching must simultaneously development English communicative abilities and the ability to apply them to developing a critical awareness of the world and the ability to act on it to improve matters, to create social change (Walsh, 1991).

Lorraine felt that she definitely has a responsibility towards the paying client who "expects to receive a service" and whose "wishes must be respected." The "service" that Lorraine is referring to here is the teaching of the English language, an English that is first and foremost applicable in practical circumstances. All teachers in the focus group agree wholeheartedly with Lorraine. They felt this was simply the reality of the industry. As seen here, even for the four teachers who were willing and open to implement these critical lesson plans, their main priority was to teach English for the sake of teaching English. This is a private language school in which students have not paid to learn how to create social change but have paid to focus on their English skills, on language improvement, and on bettering their employability.

Cathleen further elaborated that in this highly competitive business of ELT, one cannot force the students to discuss issues that do not necessarily concern them. According to her, if, students feel that they are wasting their time by being asked to broach a topic that does not seem useful to them, they have the right to "ask for a refund and go to another school where they will just get straight English."

Lorraine was optimistic, however, and argued that if "at the same time, we meet their linguistic objectives via these types of more critical lesson plans, why would [the students] need to go anywhere else?" Her belief is that teachers, even in a private language school, must remain educators and must also be critical thinkers. What she meant specifically by this is that an educator must be able to evaluate the classroom environment and decide what approaches are beneficial to the class. In this case, she stated, "the clientele we get here is pretty upper crust, I mean, in their countries, when they return, they will be the decision makers in law firms, and in politics, and in business" and for this reason, Lorraine felt that it is "important that they are exposed to a larger vision of reality […] and for us to infuse them with critical thinking skill." But at the same time, Lorraine insisted that they be exposed to critical thinking

skills "in addition to working on their linguistic skills and interview skills and so on." Jonas agreed that students absolutely need some "practical" skills to take home with them, like accuracy and fluency, although he concurred that there is great practical value in a students' ability to think critically. Still, he claimed, "when students pay to attend our classes, our first priority is to satisfy them. To give them what they want." And he received consenting nods from the other three teachers around the table.

Pennycook (1994) warns against this pragmatist stand to teaching English and argues for a more critical approach. He argues that the teacher who thinks he or she is meeting the needs of the students by specifically addressing linguistic issues "[…] may do a pedagogical disservice to the students" (p. 16). Pennycook (1994) explains that "a curricular focus on providing students only with academic-linguistic skills […] misses a crucial opportunity to help students to develop forms of linguistic, social and cultural criticism" (p. 16). As mentioned earlier, Lorraine and Brett felt there were no serious challenges that presented themselves in terms of responding to students' linguistic needs and of adapting the lessons' activities to their students' level. At the focus group, they offered that it was not only feasible but essential to introduce new language points all the while leading the students in their critical thinking activities. Lorraine and Brett's specific teaching in the context of this study indicated to them that they were indeed able to address linguistic issues all the while helping students develop "forms of social criticism".

As demonstrated in other action research projects however, many teachers have struggled with this same challenge of providing students with a satisfied sense of linguistic achievement while at the same time engaging students in the creation of social change. When Breunig (2005) is confronted by his colleagues who believe that the purpose of schooling is to prepare students in a utilitarian way for a changing workforce, Breunig argues that "schools can do both—they can prepare people for future work in the world that is, while still offering

them a vision of what could be" (p. 112). For Breunig, this vision of "what could be" means the "development of a more socially just world" (p. 112).

In another example, Morgan (2004) seeks to achieve the goal of providing his adult ESL learners with practically oriented grammar lessons while simultaneously locating these lessons in a broader sociocultural context. This strategy is similar to Brett's approach to teaching "comparing and contrasting," a skill required by his students in order to pass the high-stakes Cambridge First Certificate Exam. He successfully integrated these skills in the broader context of a lesson on Media Literacy in which students were asked to compare and contrast various representations of women in print advertising.

c. Creating a safe space through student engagement

In the pre-lesson-implementation survey, all teachers participating in the study agreed that a position of teacher neutrality is desirable. An important assumption underlying this stance and shared by the teachers in this study is that teachers should avoid influencing potentially impressionable young adults' minds. In the focus group, they agreed that good teachers should be able to instill critical thinking skills in their students without exposing their own rationale or opinion about a given topic. In adopting critical approaches to TESL, teachers effectively play a key role in facilitating classroom discussions of social and ethical issues and they may be able to enact the role of impartial mediator. With the very choices that teachers make when they facilitate such discussions however, teachers cannot avoid presenting a partially biased vision of social justice: they must decide which issues to recognize as social or ethical, for example, and this choice, in and of itself, is not a neutral choice. Kincheloe and Steinberg point to this very dilemma when they write, "How is a teacher to choose a textbook or how is he or she to decide what knowledge to teach? … [Students'] identities are constructed by incorporating and rejecting a multiplicity of competing ideological

constructions. Which ones do teachers encourage? Which ones do they discourage?" (Kincheloe & Steinberg, p. 12). The tensions and dilemmas that this facilitation role can produce may incite teachers to attempt to become neutral purveyors of "facts," referees of competing perspectives. It was certainly the case for these four teachers, all striving for "teacher neutrality" as an ideal.

This was particularly observed in Lorraine's implementation of the lesson on human rights and in Jonas' implementation of the lesson on "awareness of religious beliefs", where he repeated that no students were offended by the questioning of beliefs thanks to his sensitive presentation of the topic and his clear position as a neutral mediator, facilitating questioning and classroom discussion. Schenke (1996) argues that our understanding of safe should go beyond the trivial treatment of male versus female or black versus white, and that it should encompass discussions that venture into the domain of differences. Jonas experienced this by inviting all students to explore and express their own understanding of what religion is, whether an organized religion, atheism, a form of admiration for a political figure, or anything else. The class was encouraged to draw parallels between the various representations of religion and beliefs and to open their minds to these differences.

Jonas explained that sensitive issues can be brought up in class as long as the teacher takes great care in introducing these topics and managing the discussion. He said, "I think it really depends on how you present it. Really depends on how you set the scene to enter into this topic…because it is off-putting to many people." And so, Jonas made a particular effort to set up the class as a safe space by insisting that there was no debate going on in the class in the sense of proving or disproving a statement, no search for a definitive answer, no right or wrong, and no judgment of people's values, opinions or beliefs, and his teaching role was to ensure that all those ground rules were safely respected. He ensured that all students were equally entitled to their own perspective and to asking their own honest questions.

Several times, Jonas insisted that his role as teacher was not to "proselytize". Although Freire agrees that a teacher's role is not to proselytize, Freire's critical pedagogy supports an opposing view to neutrality, "It is my basic conviction that a teacher must be fully cognizant of the political nature of his/her practice and assume responsibility for this rather than denying it" (1987, p. 211). As Jonas explained, he wanted to "approach this topic in a sensitive way but in a realistic way to show them this is how it is, that these are our opinions and beliefs about X, and that they are different than other people's beliefs. Everybody is different of course, but just open up their minds to their social consciousness that's different than in [the students'] country." Cathleen was surprised that Jonas' classes were so successful. She admitted that she expected students to be reticent to offer their opinion and that some students would have taken offence to hearing opposing views to their own deeply rooted beliefs. Jonas insisted that no students were offended, "it was not an antagonistic argument, it was not confrontational." He really wanted to avoid that, and he felt that this was the secret of his lessons' success.

Lorraine not only feels that a teacher's role is to be a neutral facilitator of discussion but also feels it is safer to completely circumvent certain topics. She feels that much more thought must be given to the planning of critical lessons for the very reason that they bring up more personal and sensitive issues for the students in the class. The lesson must be screened and edited for material that could potentially put certain students in a vulnerable position. "I think human rights type lessons take a little bit more pre-thought to the lesson in terms of sensitivity during the lesson, in terms of offending somebody or touching critical issues, dependant on where [the students] come from," stated Lorraine. In the case of the lesson on human rights, Lorraine edited the content of the lesson in order to avoid touching a "critical issue" and to create a safe space for all students to express themselves from the same equal position. She did this by avoiding issues related to Muslim dress, more specifically related to the donning of hijab. Her rationale for this was that there were two students in her class who

were Muslim, one of whom wore hijab, and Lorraine did not want these students to feel as though they had been put on the spot, or to feel as though they had to be defensive of their traditions.

Although it was Lorraine's original intent to avoid addressing Muslim related issues, when she opened the floor up to her students, the two Muslim students were the most vocal, raising the very issues that Lorraine had attempted to avoid. As explained Lorraine, "I had two Muslim students who participated much more than usual, and they had a lot of personal experiences to share." Not only did these two students relate their personal struggles with human rights both as women in Saudi Arabia and as Muslim women in Canada, but they spoke more than they usually do in the class. In response to these two women's openness and candour, the other students in the class demonstrated greater personal investment in the honest telling of their own human rights testimonials. As a result, explains Lorraine, "everyone was equally able to participate and get into the lesson without, I don't think, any noticeable sort of negative feelings." Ultimately, it seems that when students feel personally engaged, they participate more actively in the class.

Upon reflection on the unintentional unfolding of the lesson, and on its success, Lorraine confided that she wanted to continue along the lines of critical pedagogy because she felt such strong student engagement in the lesson plan on human rights: "I would continue on these sort of themes. And [a lesson like this one] also encourages me to look into what other issues will engage students like that again."

As demonstrated by the students' reactions in the implementations of these nine lesson plans, the more personal the lesson, the more engaged the students become. Brett expressed it best by saying, "these lesson plans are more personal to them. They definitely strike a chord in everybody." By encouraging students to delve into their inner selves and discuss topics on a more personal level, these lessons offer students the opportunity to develop not only as English

speakers, but as critical thinkers. Jonas insists that the ELT environment provides the students with a unique multicultural opportunity to discuss such issues, "They'll probably never have a chance again in their lives to sit down with eight different countries and share their own opinions like this."

Brett mentioned that another essential element in creating a safe space in which students feel supported in expressing their opinions and sharing their doubts results from honest teacher engagement. He feels that this element further encourages students' motivation. As expressed earlier by Lorraine, Brett conveyed the idea that although the planning of critical lessons might require more groundwork, it is often the case that in preparing a critical lesson, the teachers themselves learn about the selected topic, "and then, if a teacher can learn something with [the lesson] as well, its exciting for the teacher and the students." Picking up on this idea, Lorraine agreed that not only do these "lessons go deeper" than the typical ESL lessons, allowing the students to feel more engaged, but that she, herself "feel[s] more engaged.[…] and that it would be beneficial to myself to learn more about [the topic at hand]."

As demonstrated above, deeper teacher engagement may ultimately encourage greater student engagement. This has also been argued by Giroux (1997) who states that engaging educators are in a position to empower their students "not only to engage in the world around them, but also to exercise the kind of courage needed to change the wider social reality when necessary" (p. 107). In this study, the teachers' interest and curiosity in the lesson topic, as well as the teachers' sense of pride in teaching, not only allowed for greater student engagement but also led to a positive end in itself, allowing for greater teacher motivation and satisfaction.

Chapter VII

Conclusion and Future Directions

1. Conclusions

Two main conclusions can be drawn from this study: first, there is indeed space for critical pedagogy in the corporate culture of the English Language teaching Industry, and second, the teachers in this study are ready to adopt critical approaches into their teaching, given a few conditions.

After having explored the philosophy and curriculum of the language school where I taught for three years and which I now manage, it is clear that there is some leeway given to the teachers to co-create the curriculum with the students so that the curriculum best meets the needs and interests of the students. If teachers and students opt to do so, the flexibility offered in the curriculum can be used to adopt critical approaches to teaching although there is currently no explicit statement leading teachers towards critical pedagogy, initiating active social change, or simply introducing critical issues and themes into the daily classroom discussions. The first step of this study also demonstrated that ESL textbooks do not present a critically aware perspective, most often portraying a North-American consumerist, young, educated, upper-middle class population. Thanks to the flexibility of the curriculum in this school however, and to the teachers' creative power, teachers do not have to rely on textbooks alone to create their daily lesson plans. Furthermore, as observed in the surveys, the four teachers participating in this study never limited themselves to the topics and themes presented in the ESL textbooks. They all used a variety of themes excluded from mainstream textbooks, some themes more critical than others, to stimulate classroom discussion.

Pushing classroom discussion beyond the level of black-or-white debating, asking students to delve more deeply and explore their assumptions about their social environment, inviting them to question their own biases and the biases of the information and images

presented to them in different mediums, these are not the most commonly adopted approaches in the private realm of ELT, and they are adopted only by a small number of ESL teachers. Two teachers participating in this study had previously introduced these types of topics into their teaching but none of the teachers had questioned relations of power or encouraged their students to uncover the biased representations put forth by ESL textbooks, in films, in advertisement, in newspaper articles and elsewhere. In the second portion of the study, the participating teachers at this school demonstrated that they are open to adopting critical approaches to teaching and that students respond with interest when given the opportunity to do so.

2. Future Directions

    a. Pedagogical projects

As demonstrated in the study, teachers of ELT have found that teaching English skills via "deeper", more "important" topics gives them a sense of pride, and their students feel this is an opportunity that they would not have found elsewhere. Consequently, as suggested by the teachers during the focus group discussion, adding critical topics to the suggested syllabus may be a first step in steering teachers towards the adoption of critical approaches to ELT and may lead students to meet their linguistic objectives through more innovative, more engaging, and ultimately more socially responsible class discussions. The discussion around which issues to include and at which level to include them was held in a round-table format where all teachers interested in this project can contribute their experiences and ideas. In this particular focus group, Brett expressed an interest in leading such a committee of teachers into this collaborative project. Lorraine offered her organizational skills to keep track of suggestions and, thanks to her familiarity with the school's textbooks and other resources, she offered to recommend concrete resources to support the teachers' suggestions.

As director, I am limited in some ways from being directly involved in the creation of this committee because it might inadvertently pressure teachers to join the group more so than if this initiative is completely teacher-lead. However, as director, I am in the privileged position to bring up these suggested changes to the curriculum team which is based at head-office in Vancouver. Together, we could ensure meaningful and consistent changes in the syllabi across the three branches of the school. Once the changes are adopted, the new lesson plans could be redistributed to a team of over one hundred teachers and the impact of these new suggestions might be just as widespread if all teachers take on the newly suggested topics.

Also suggested by Brett, and agreed to by all teachers, is the idea of offering optional workshops in which teachers can be introduced to the concept of critical pedagogy. In addition to discussing the concept and purpose of critical pedagogy, these workshops would facilitate the exchange of lesson ideas and would allow the teachers newer to critical pedagogy to familiarize themselves with specific lesson plans. Brett considered that these workshops would be deemed most practical if they focused on ways in which critically themed lessons could also address the linguistic needs of the students. He felt comfortable integrating practical linguistic points into his three critically themed lessons, rendering him the ideal leader of a workshop focused on this very issue. Again, I believe that in my position of director there would be conflict if I were to lead these workshops, potentially and inadvertently pressuring teachers to attend and forcing an interest in this type of pedagogy. To support this effort, however, a budget could be set up, contributing to sustain the activities of this committee, such as remunerating the teachers for their time and contributions in the workshop, or to help purchase or create resources more relevant to critical pedagogy, among other potential activities.

As was experienced and expressed by the teachers in the study, adopting critical approaches means an increased amount of time spent lesson planning, more preparation in terms of background information on the topic at hand and also in terms of presenting the topic

from an angle that would not offend any student in the class. As put forth by the teachers in this study, it would be ideal for the director of studies, the newly created Committee for critical pedagogy and myself to conjointly prepare and make accessible complete lesson plans. These lessons should include a wide variety of activities which would not only take into account students' linguistic levels and needs, but would also take into consideration the 'student sensitivity' concern. They would be organized in binders by theme and by level and be accessible to all teachers in the resource room.

It is my hope that the teachers involved in this research project will maintain this dialogue on the implementation of more critical approaches to ESL teaching. The teachers themselves are the most powerful actors capable of creating and sustaining change in the classroom and ultimately in the ELT industry at large. They can play a crucial role in nurturing a more active form of citizenship among their international students but they cannot overcome social injustices alone. For teachers to successfully implement critical pedagogy, they also must be nurtured and supported by their students, their director of studies, and the school's owners.

b. Further research

Although the teachers who participated in this study demonstrated that it is possible for ELT teachers to adopt critical approaches in the ESL classroom of a private language school, they have, in reality, only exposed their personal experiences with the lesson plans. Their interpretations of the experience and of their reactions do not reflect a generalized reality about the potential for a greater adoption of critical pedagogy in the ELT industry. The successful results of this study, however, do point to the need for the reproduction, on a larger scale, of a similar study to explore whether all teachers would respond as openly and positively to the implementation of critical lesson plans as did the four teachers in this study. In this large-scale

study, it would be of particular importance to examine the influence of the teachers' background knowledge, of the teachers' teaching experience and of the students' linguistic level on the outcome of the lesson implementation. Also crucial would be the assessment of the philosophies of other private ELT schools in order to consider whether their curricula are sufficiently flexible to allow for the adoption of critical approaches to ELT and whether teachers are given the autonomy to create their own lesson plans.

This study evaluated teachers' responses to the implementation of critical lesson plans and briefly examined their interpretation of their students' responses. However, it is the students' own personal perspectives that are perhaps most important for revealing the true applicability and effect of critical pedagogy. After all, students are the ones who select the ESL schools they will attend and their demands determine the type of service offered in the ELT industry. Thus it is of paramount importance to thoroughly assess their experience with the implementation of these lessons.

While it is essential to assess whether ESL students respond enthusiastically to critical pedagogy, what must truly be measured are the short and long-term effects of critical pedagogy on these students. We must evaluate the value of critical approaches in terms of the concrete transformation of ESL students into socially aware critical thinkers, actively working towards a more just society, long after they have stopped studying English.

c. Policy changes

While the teachers' commitment to critical approaches and students' positive responses are vital components to the success of critical pedagogy in the ELT classroom, without the support of the industry, namely the owners of the schools, national language school associations, ESL teacher associations and ELT publishers, a large-scale adoption of critical approaches would be impossible. In order to realistically initiate change at the industry level,

critical pedagogy must first be introduced at the committee level of the various associations for Private Language Schools around the world such as English-UK in England or the Canadian Association of Private Language Schools (CAPLS). The school owners or directors of the member-schools usually run these non-governmental associations and it is at this level that industry standards and policies are created and upheld. Prior to introducing critical pedagogy to the various relevant association committees, a number of questions would need to be explored: Where do the industry leaders such as the school owners see ELT on the continuum between 'school' and business'? Do private ESL school owners value the triple bottom line of corporate social responsibility? How could critical pedagogy be beneficial to their businesses? Would they be willing to support a change in their schools' teaching philosophy? And if so, would they support an industry-wide implementation of critical approaches to teaching by adopting policy favourable to this new standard?

It is my hope that this small-scale study will lead my colleagues, teachers and private language school administrators to a better understanding of the potential success of a critical approach to teaching ESL as well as to the crucial need for it. As Canagarajah (2006) states so clearly, "Human issues are not an add-on (or sweet coating) to a pedagogy for utilitarian and pragmatic purposes." (p. 18). International students need much more than to simply develop functional English skills. What they need, and what their communities need of them, is to develop analytical skills, communicative skills, and critical thinking skills leading to social action. Developing capacities for criticism, questioning, decision-making, and reflection and discussion across differences can only contribute to the students' personal success and ultimately, to the long-term sustainability of their communities.

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Appendix 1
School Philosophy

Our School Philosophy:

The First Principle is that learning works very well when it is student-centered.

We assume that you will be motivated to learn about things that personally interest you. Your dreams, interests and goals are as important as anyone else's, and that includes the teacher. The combination of a set curriculum structure and the flexibility to accommodate each student's special interests gives learning the freedom to flourish.

The Second Principle is that learning works better when it is made a part of the experiences of daily life.

Language courses at ILSC immerse you in these real world experiences with role playing, field trips, computer use and group learning activities. You learn to speak and write English or French in real world situations with teachers who are responsive to your personal needs and interests.

The Third Principle is that people learn best when they are confident, at ease and happy.

There is a great learning atmosphere at ILSC. We are a very friendly school and we encourage a positive sense of community where you are at ease to converse with others in English or French and develop friendships. In such a setting, you will find that language learning happens in a very natural and effective way.

To ensure that the above three principles will best assist your learning process, your ILSC teacher functions as a:

- **Modeller of language**: Your teacher is always assisting you to improve your English language skills in a positive, supportive manner.
- **Resource person**: You can count on ILSC teachers and counsellors to give of their time and energy to help you with all aspects of living and learning.
- **Facilitator**: ILSC staff are enthusiastic and always coming up with innovative ways to improve group and individual learning processes.
- **Co-designer**:, with students, of learning activities.
- **Coach**, mentor and friend.

Source : http://www.ilsc.ca/school-philosophy.aspx

Appendix 2
Course Outline : Communication Intermediate 1

Curriculum Outline – Communication Intermediate 1

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL ONE

LEGEND: NI=New Interchange; CC= Canadian Concepts 2nd edition

Themes:	**Communicative Functions:**	**Grammar/Skill Focus:**	**Text References & Quizzes**		
Themes are co-created according to students needs and interests			**NI #2**		**CC#4/ 5**
			Unit	**Quiz**	**Unit**
	Introductions and Conversation Skills	Present perfect vs. present perfect progressive; Contractions; Reductions	4; 12	p. 75	9: 2
	Talking about Preferences	Modals and phrases of Preference (prefer, would rather, like … better, I don't mind…)	10	p. 61	3:9
	Discussing Facts	Passive voice; Linked sounds; Listening for gist vs. detail	11	p. 67	6: 7
	Giving Opinions	Participle adjectives; Sentence stress; Listening for gist vs. detail	13	p. 81	
	Explaining Obligations	Modals of necessity (have to, have got to, must); Reduced forms	5	p. 90; 31	10:
	Offering advice	Modals and phrases of suggestion (should, could, ought to, had better, why don't we, how about)	5	p. 31	2:
	Describing Uses/Functions	Infinitives; Review articles (definite vs. indefinite)	7		
	Make casual requests	Review time clauses; Gerunds/Infinitives for common verbs	7, 8	p. 41	4:
	Making Requests	Imperatives; modals of permission; contractions	14		
	Making Suggestions	Advice using should/must	5	p. 31	2:
	Comparing Past/Present/Future	Time clauses; connectors; comparatives/superlatives; phrasal verbs; verb tenses	3	p. 15	

Additional Texts: **(Note: If you use references not listed above please check the AP or Skills curriculum outlines to make sure you are not overlapping)**
A Canadian Conversation Book; 50/50; Grammar in Use.
Teachers are also encouraged to use teacher-created materials in lessons.

Indicate what you and your students have planned per session (Fieldtrips limited to 6 hours/session and Videos limited to 4 hours/session, as per the Teacher's Handbook p. 25)

	Content (Where, Title, etc.)	Assignment/Learning Objective
Field Trips		
Videos		
Evaluation (Tests & Quizzes)		

Appendix 3
Course Outline : Business English – level 3

BZE3

Business Program Course Outline

Business English Level Three

Course Objectives: The Business English 3 course is designed for upper intermediate students who wish to:

- Develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in English
- Explore a variety of business topics from a Canadian, North American, and international perspective (including cross-cultural comparison of business practices)
- Enhance their English vocabulary in the area of business terminology
- Learn about work-related issues in Canada, including job ads, job search techniques, cover letters, resumes, and interviews

Course Topics: include some of the following

- Business Etiquette
- Banking
- Telephoning Skills
- Jobs and Interviews
- Stock Market / Investment
- Corporate Structure
- Management Styles
- Business Ethics
- Business and the Environment
- Marketing, Advertising and Sales
- Meetings and Negotiations
- The Canadian Economy
- International Trade
- Business Travel
- Entrepreneurs / Small Business Start-Ups

Course Materials

- *Insights into Business*
- *Market Leader Upper Intermediate*
- *International Business English*
- *Open for Business*
- *Pair Work* (business topics)

- Audio cassettes and Videos
- Field trips

Evaluation

- Peer Evaluation
- Class Participation
- Homework checks (include cover letter as a way to assess writing skills)
- Vocabulary quizzes
- Student Progress Reports

Appendix 4
Ethics Certificate

McGill

Faculty of Education – Ethics Review Board
McGill University
Faculty of Education
3700 McTavish; Room 230
Montreal H3A 1Y2

Tel: (514) 398-7039
Fax: (514) 398-1527
Ethics website: www.mcgill.ca/rgo/ethics/human

Faculty of Education – Review Ethics Board
Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans

REB File #: 675-0606

Project Title : ***Creating a socially responsible space in a corporate culture: Critical pedagogy in the ELT industry***

Applicant's Name: Nadine Baladi **Department**: DISE

Status: Master's Student **Supervisor's Name: Mela Sarkar**

Granting Agency and Title (if applicable): n/a

Type of Review: Expedited __✓ Full ____

This project was reviewed by: Starke-Meyerring/~~Stringer~~ Sheriff

Approved by
R. Bracewell Aug 10, 2006
Signature/Date
Robert Bracewell, Ph.D.
Chair, Education Ethics Review Board

Approval Period: Aug 10/06 **to** Aug 10/07

All research involving human subjects requires review on an annual basis. An Annual Report/Request for Renewal form should be submitted at least one month before the above expiry date. If a project has been completed or terminated for any reason before the expiry date, a Final Report form must be submitted. Should any modification or other unanticipated development occur before the next required review, the REB must be informed and any modification can't be initiated until approval is received. This project was reviewed and approved in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects and with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects.

Appendix 5
Advertisement Flyer

Teachers of ESL!
Would you like to take part in a research project?

Your TESL expertise and ideas would be precious to an M.A. student specializing in TESL and curriculum design.

I am particularly interested in understanding how you, the TESL instructor, incorporate issues of social justice and social responsibility in your international classroom

If you are curious and would like to find out more about this study in terms of its time commitment and tasks, please attend the non-binding

Information Session

Classroom 23

On …. Date….

See you then and there, if you've got the time!

Thank you!

Nadine Baladi
M.A. student, McGill

Appendix 6
Participant Consent Form

Dear Participant,

I am a graduate student at McGill University in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education. I would like to invite you to participate in a study in which your ideas and feedback will be invaluable!

I request your help in order to understand how teachers of ESL and their international students experience Critical Pedagogy. As part of my M.A. thesis project, I would like to ask you some questions bout your beliefs and attitudes regarding the inclusion of topics such as social responsibility both before and after your implementation of lessons created according to tenets of critical pedagogy. Ultimately, I hope that private language schools will use the results of this research to improve the quality of ESL programs offered to international students.

I am asking your consent to grant me permission to:

- conduct one preliminary written questionnaire
- suggest and discuss two lesson plans built upon tenets of critical pedagogy which you will then adapt, amend, and implement in your AM Communication class
- conduct two audio-taped interviews with you
- conduct a audio-taped focus group interview with you

If you agree to participate in the study, I will ask you to implement two 3-hour lessons in your class. The questionnaire (pre-implementation) and interviews (post-implementation) will address the experiences that you had with this critical approach to teaching ESL. The questionnaire consists of 12 questions (multiple choice, short answer). The meeting with all participants to discuss the lesson plans will last 30-35 minutes. The individual interviews will last 15-20 minutes and the focus group will last 50-60 minutes. Every response you give is equally valid and valuable. There are no right or wrong answers.

I will respect your confidentiality and I will ensure that no actual names will be used in my study. If students, teachers, or others are referred to, I will use pseudonyms, unless I have the express permission of those involved. The questionnaires and interview tapes will be kept under lock and key in my office. Once the interview tapes are transcribed they will be erased. The information I gather will be shared with my thesis committee only. These results may also be published in journals. Complete anonymity will be guaranteed throughout.

Once the study is completed I will forward a summary of the results to all the participants. I do not anticipate any risk (physical, emotional or otherwise) for you.

You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time without any questions, penalty or negative consequences. You also have the right to abstain from answering any questions.

Thank you for your consideration of my invitation! If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Nadine Baladi
Master's Candidate
McGill University, Faculty of Education,
3700 McTavish Street, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2

As the researcher, I have explained the implications of being involved in this study to _____ (participant's name). I have discussed the potential risks and discomforts associated with my research, as per the Informed Consent Form. I have asked the participant if he/she had any further questions about this study, and I have tried to provide the answers to those questions as clearly as possible, if they arose.

_____ _____
Researcher's Name Date

To potential participants: Please read the following and sign below.

- I understand why this research is being conducted and any risks, benefits or inconveniences that may result from my involvement.
- I understand that my confidentiality will be preserved before, during, and after the study.
- I have every right to withdraw from this research project at any time without any repercussions.
- The results of the study may be distributed and/or published in order to achieve the researcher's objectives.

I have read and understood the above conditions and agree to participate in this research project voluntarily.

___ I will complete the questionnaire.

___ I will attend the "lesson-planning" meeting

___ I will implement 2 lesson plans based in critical pedagogy to the best of my ability.

___ I will participate in the interviews and answer questions to the best of my ability.

___ I will participate in the focus group, answer questions, and respect the other participants' opinions.

_____ _____
Participant's Name (please print) Date

_____
Signature

The McGill University Faculty of Education has an Ethics Review Board for all studies using human subjects. If you have any complaints or concerns about any research projects within this faculty, this should be reported to the board at 514-398-7039

Appendix 7
Pre-implementation Survey

Pre lesson implementation- Test Survey

Dear Study Participant,

The following is a survey of your thoughts on a variety of different questions. Your answers will be kept confidential and will not be reported to anyone. I am asking you to complete this questionnaire so that I may better understand your opinions about teaching ESL to international students in a private language school.

Thank You!

Nadine

Your gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Your education level:
Finished high school ☐
Finished college/university ☐
Finished a Master's degree or PhD ☐

If applicable, please note your area of study during university: _____

Directions: For each of the following statements, please check all applicable answers

Statements
1. In the last month of teaching and lesson planning, I have included opportunities for my students to speak about ❑ popular culture ❑ their own cultural background and cultural realities ❑ "typical" Canadian culture and traditions, such as: _____ ❑ other cultural realities that are not represented by the student population of the class. If so, which cultures? _____ _____ ❑ other: _____
2. In the last month of teaching, I have included opportunities for my students to discuss ❑ international current events ❑ local current events ❑ the job market, interview skills, etc. ❑ marketing and/or advertisement ❑ shopping trends ❑ film, literature, entertainment

- history
- travel
- current political and social debates
- friendship and relationships
- hobbies
- gender roles
- health and personal well-being
- other topics: _____

_____

3. In the last month of teaching, I have observed that some students in my classes have initiated discussions about
   - international current events
   - local current events
   - the job market
   - marketing and advertisement
   - shopping trends
   - film, literature, entertainment
   - history
   - international travel
   - current political and social debates
   - friendship and relationships
   - hobbies
   - gender roles
   - health and personal well-being
   - other topics: _____

     _____

If you wish to make any comments about your answers, or about the statements, please feel free to do so!

_____

_____

_____

Directions: For each of the following questions, please read the instructions and write a number on the line next to each statement.

Statements
4. Based on your approximation, please indicate the breakdown of socio-economic backgrounds of the student population in your classroom. ➢ Top 10% (in students' country of origin): _____% of student population ➢ Upper-middle class (in students' country): _____% of student population ➢ Lower-middle class (in students' country): _____% of student population ➢ Lower 30 % (in students' country): _____% of student population
5. Regarding reasons for learning ESL, please rank the following statements in order of importance (1 = the strongest reason). If you believe that a statement does not reflect a reason for learning ESL, indicate this by writing N/A next to the statement.

- Travel ____
- Make international friends ____
- Communicate cross-culturally ____
- Gain political influence ____
- Obtain a well-paying job ____
- Be accepted to a specific university ____
- Have social and economic impact____

Other(s):

- _____: ____
- _____: ____

6. Regarding ESL teacher responsibility, please rank the following statements in order of importance (1 = the strongest responsibility). If you believe that a statement is <u>not</u> an ESL teacher responsibility, indicate this by writing N/A next to the statement.
   - Focus on enhancing language skills such as vocabulary, grammar and oral communication ____
   - Lead classroom discussions as an impartial mediator____
   - Include classroom activities that address and question social and cultural hierarchies____
   - Remain sensitive to student beliefs by avoiding issues that could create inter-cultural tension in the classroom____
   - Include activities which encourage students to question their beliefs about socially accepted practices____

   Other(s):
   - _____: ____
   - _____: ____

If you want to make any comments about your answers, or about the statements, please feel free to do so!

_____

_____

_____

Appendix 8
Interview Guide 1

<u>Post implementation of first lesson plan.</u>

Warm-Up

- How do you feel right now?
- Generally speaking, how did the implementation of this first lesson plan go?

Experience in the classroom using a critical approach

- How did the students react to today's lesson plan? Could you describe their responses?
- Did all students take part equally?
- How do you feel about implementing another lesson plan?
- Will you do anything differently?

Concluding Questions

- Do you have anything you'd like to say?
- Is there anything that I haven't asked about and that you think I should know to help me better understand what went on in your class today?
- Do you have any questions?

Appendix 9
Interview Guide 2

<u>Post implementation of second lesson plan.</u>

Warm-Up

- How do you feel right now?
- Generally speaking, how did the implementation of this second lesson plan go?

Experience in the classroom using a critical approach

- Do you feel this second lesson plan was any different from the first lesson you implemented? How?
- How did the students react to today's lesson plan? Could you describe their responses?
- Did all students take part equally? Could you describe their responses?
- How do you feel about implementing more of these types of lesson in the future? Why?
- Will you do anything differently?

Concluding Questions

- Do you have anything you'd like to say?
- Is there anything that I haven't asked about and that you think I should know?
- Do you have any questions?

Appendix 10
Amendment Request and Approval

McGill University – Faculty of Education
Research Ethics Board
ETHICS REVIEW - AMENDMENT REQUEST FORM

This form can be used to submit any changes/updates to be made to your currently approved research project. Explain what these changes are, and attach any relevant documentation that has been revised. Significant changes that have ethical implications must be reviewed and approved by the REB before they can be implemented. This form is also to be used for indicating changes to funding and personnel.

REB File #: 675-0606

Project Title: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN THE ELT INDUSTRY

Principal Investigator: NADINE BALADI

Department/Phone/Email: INTEGRATED STUDIES, 514.274.9402, nadine.balade@mail.mcgill.c

Faculty Supervisor (for student PI): MELA SARKAR

Principal Investigator Signature: _____ Date: Dec. 11/06

Faculty Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: 11 Dec 06
(for student PI)

For Administrative Use

____ Expedited Review ____ Full Review

__✓__ This amendment request has been approved.

Signature of REB Chair/ designate: _____ Date: Dec 11, 2006

Submit to Cargle Grossman, Education Ethics Coordinator, Education Bldg., rm 230, tel:398-7039 fax:398-1527

(version January/05)

Appendix 11
Focus Group Question Guide

Focus Groups
Interview Protocol

1. Did you have a chance to talk to each other about your experience with Critical Pedagogy? What did you share?
2. How would you describe students' responses to lesson plans that dealt with issues of social justice?
3. What were some challenges you encountered in trying to implement the lesson plans?
4. How do you feel about implementing lesson plans that deal with issues of social justice?
5. Critical approaches to teaching are now part of the curriculum in Quebec Public Schools. However, the students in this private language school are a paying clientele. Do you feel that the responsibilities of teachers in the private language school sector are different than in public mainstream education?

Appendix 12

Lesson Plan #1
Human Rights

Adapted from: **www.niace.org.uk/projects/esolcitizenship**
Potential ILSC Groups:

- **Communciation, Intermediate 2**
- **Communication, Intermediate 3**
- **Communciation, Intermediate 4-Advanced 1**
- **Business English 3**
- **Discussion Circle** (Advanced)

For stronger learners:

- *Don't give out the texts; turn into a running dictation, to allow varied listening/writing practice according to skills/abilities..*
- *Divert from the case studies as appropriate, expanding on current human rights events.*
- *For a Business class, focus on the Child Labour text.*

Length: 3 hours (with 15 minute break)
Objective: To allow students and instructor to understand human rights, how they are respected or not. The class should also learn to recognize the basic human rights issues that surround them more generally speaking, on a daily basis.
Language points (you may integrate the following):

- lexis of the press – *editors*, *scoop*, *paparazzi*
- reporting verbs – accused, denied, and so on
- past tenses in narratives
- past modal forms – for example '*she should have'/'he could have…*

---

1. Warm Up (10 minutes)
Who watched the news last night? Who read the newspaper this morning? What international news did you hear/read about? Did you hear/read about any specific human rights cases?

2. Introduction to the topic. What are human rights? (20 minutes)
Ask the students what words they associate with Human Rights. Have a student write these words on the board. Then, see if anyone can give a definition of Human Rights. Ask students to think of specific human rights. You can write these on the board, and return to them with activity #5.

3. Listening, spelling and/or or reading skills. Definition of Human Rights (20 minutes)
Read, dictate or distribute copies of the following text (*depending on students' level*):

"In 1948 the 56 member states of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They said that the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all

members of the human family were the foundation for freedom, justice and peace in the world. Discrimination against minority groups on grounds of age, race and gender, for example, is recognized and forbidden under international human rights treaties."

4. Pair work. Vocabulary from the text (20-25 minutes)

i. Have students work in pairs to define the following words (5-10 minutes). Lower level students may use dictionaries, but upper level students should first try to guess the meaning of each word.

ii. Review the vocabulary (10-15 minutes) as a class where each pair can volunteer a couple of definitions. The teacher should insure that these definitions are accurate:

- Declaration
- Inherent
- Dignity
- Inalienable
- Foundation
- Discrimination
- Minority
- Grounds
- Gender
- Forbidden
- Treaties

iii. Have students read or listen to the text again and ask one or two students to summarize it in their own words for the class (5 minutes).

5. Individual and Small group work. Discussion (20 minutes)

i. Activity from Appendix 12b (page 143): Have each student match the Human rights articles on the left side of the page to the sentences on the right side of the page.

ii. Ask learners to refer to a Human Rights Article and give examples of human rights issues they have heard about in Canada or in their own country, in the news and/or – if they are comfortable doing so – ask for issues from their personal experiences.

Break (15 minutes)

6. Group work. Reading Comprehension (15 minutes)

Split the class into 2 groups give one group the case study "Mohammed's Story: Earning a Living" (case study A), and the other group "Schoolgirl in Muslim gown case" (case study B). Learners read and formulate an initial opinion. As the teacher, walk from group to group to monitor and help with vocabulary queries.

8. Class presentation (5 minutes)

Ask for a representative of each group to give a summary of the case to the whole class. Other students in the group may step in to add precision.

9. Class discussion (20 minutes)

As a class, have students think about the case study again.

Discussion Questions on Child Labour (case study A):

- What rights are violated when children are forced to work? Refer to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- According to the article, family owned and small businesses are exempt from child labor legislation. Do you think this legislation should be changed? Discuss.
- When children are forced to work instead of going to school, the cycle of child labor is perpetuated from generation to generation. Discuss.

Discussion Questions on Freedom of Religion (case study B):

- Why did the lawyer take the case to the court?
- Which Article of the Human Rights Act is important in this case?
- What do you think happened in the European court?
- Do you agree with the court ruling? Discuss.

10. Individual Writing (20 minutes)

Using the vocabulary that they have learned, have students reflect and comment on the following:

i. Class discussion: Thinking and talking about the issue (5 minutes)

What do you understand by:

- Right to education?
- Freedom of religion?

ii. Journal writing. **(10 to 15 minutes in class. Can be completed as homework)**

Have students choose 2 questions (i & iii or ii & iii) to write about in their journal for the remaining duration of the class.

i. Why is it good to have a right to education? Give reasons and examples.
ii. Why is it good to have the freedom of religion? Give reasons and examples.
iii. In what cases can the right to education or the freedom of religion or be negative? Give reasons and examples.

Tools and texts for the class:

Case study A

Mohammed's Story: Earning a Living

Mohammed Aziz is 7 years old. Mohammed has just begun learning how to embroider zardosi (a form of embroidery in which gold and silver beads are sewn onto saris and other items) and only he knows how to do the small stitches, so he earns 10 rupees a week (US 25 cents). The Pashmina (silk and goat's wool) shawl he is embroidering is soft pink. "For export," the supervisor explains. It will sell for as much as US $400 on the streets of New York City.

Children working in family businesses are exempt from child labour legislation such as the Factory Act and a factory is not considered to be a place where less than 10 people work. Most children in India work in the informal sector – either in agriculture or at home for local consumption, only a small percentage work in factories producing goods for export.

Children work in this community because of large family size, poverty and the lack of a minimum wage. And when fathers are blind by 40 years old the cycle of child labour is perpetuated from generation to generation by the necessity to survive.

UNICEF believes there is a direct link between the quality and accessibility of education and child labour; improving the educational system will encourage more children to go to school, rather than to work. An estimated 1.74 million children do not go to school in Uttar Pradesh, and of those enrolled in school, only 48% of boys and 35% of girls complete their education. Working to end

child labour is a multiple challenge of mobilizing communities to improve their schools, implementing law reform that extends to the informal sector (where most children work) and enforcing a minimum wage – so parents can earn enough to allow their children to go to school.

Reference: http://www.niace.org.uk/projects/esolcitizenship

Case study B

Schoolgirl in Muslim gown case

Shabina Begum stopped going to her Luton school in September 2002 in a clash over her wish to wear an ankle-length *jilbab* gown. Originally, Shabina wore a *shalwar kameez* to school, but her deepening interest in her religion led to her wearing the *jilbab.* The long gown is worn by Muslim women, who seek to cover their arms and legs, but not faces or hands.

Her lawyer said the school was denying her religious rights and her education. She said it was against the European Convention on Human Rights and against British law. But the school argued that there was an alternative uniform for Muslim girls. They said the *jilbab* could divide Muslim pupils and it presented a health and safety problem.

The case was brought to court. Ultimately, the high court judge said the school's uniform policy was aimed at the proper running of a multi-cultural, multi-faith secular school. The court ruled that her human rights had not been infringed.

Reference: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/3808073.stm

Appendix 12.b

Now match the Articles of the Human Rights act (on the left) with the sentences on the right.

Article	
2 The right to life	i) You can't be punished if you haven't broken the law.
3 The prohibition of torture	ii) You can think what you want, or have the religion you want.
4 The prohibition of slavery or forced labour	iii) You can't be kept as a slave.
5 The right to liberty, personal freedom and security	iv) You can say what you think.
6 The right to a fair trial	v) You can go to a large public meeting, and mix with whoever you want.
7 No punishment without law	vi) You can't be tortured.
8 The right to respect for private and family life	vii) You can't have your freedom taken away (unless you are suspected of a crime).
9 The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	viii) People can't treat you differently because of your sex, religion, race or political views.
10 The right to freedom of expression	ix) You can't be tried without a proper and independent court
11 Freedom of assembly and association	x) People can't interfere with your family life, or read your private letters.
12 The right to marry	xi) You can't be killed.
14 Prohibition of discrimination	xii) You can get married if you want to.

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14

* Please note: there are no Articles 1 or 13 in Schedule 1 of the HRA 1998. In the Convention, *Article 1: Obligation to Respect Human Rights*, is not a right but an obligation to secure the jurisdiction to the rights and freedoms as defined in Section 1 of the Convention. *Article 13* is the *Right to Effective Remedy*. The Act itself provides the remedy.

Appendix 13

Lesson Plan #2
Fallacies in Advertising (Media Literacy)

Adapted from: **http://www.readwritethink.org**, author: Dauna Howerton
Potential ILSC Groups:

- **Communciation, Intermediate 2. Skip activities** (adapted vocabulary, slower pace, more teacher support such as leading discussions, directing questions, supporting student presentations, etc.)
- **Communication, Intermediate 3** (adapted vocabulary, teacher lead discussions)
- **Communication, Intermediate 4-Advanced 1**
- **Business English 3**
- **Discussion Circle (Advanced)**

Length: 3 hours (with 15 minute break)
Objective: To allow students and instructor to identify and understand the fallacies used in advertising and to recognize the logical fallacies that surround them more generally speaking.
Language points (you may integrate the following):

■ Descriptors – looks, attitudes, etc.

■ lexis of argumentation and debate – ad hominem, etc.

■ passive voice – for example "*she is represented as a friendly person"/ the cleaning product is made to look indispensable"*

1. Intro: (10 minutes)
Yesterday, who flipped through the pages of a magazine or newspaper? What kind of advertisement did you see?
Present students with a few advertisements in print gathered from around school or home, and begin developing a list of the different advertisements people typically encounter in their lives (make-up, perfume, cleaning products, sports gear, etc)

2. Group work (10 minutes) Where do we encounter advertising in our lives?
Ask students to work in small groups to add other types of advertising to the list (aside from newspaper and magazine). Is advertising more prevalent in Canada than in the students' home countries?

Examples: Television commercials, billboards, sporting arenas, malls, bus and metro stops, movies, brand logos on clothes, pack of gum lying on the class table, coke machine in school, etc. Have one student write these on the whiteboard. Review any new words (encourage those students who know the meaning of the words to explain it to the other students)

3. Group work + discussion (15 minutes) Where are there NO advertisements?
Ask students to think of places free of advertisements. Have students share their ideas and list the ad-free places on the white board. Allow for debate about whether these places are truly advertisement-free.

4. Vocabulary Introduction (5 minutes): What is a fallacy?

Ask students what the word "fallacy" means. (according to Webster's dictionary, it is: "an error in reasoning or a flawed argument. It's an argument that doesn't conform to the rules of logic, but appears to be sound")

5. Computer Lab Web Search (15 minutes): Introduce a few fallacies without explaining their meaning such as:

a) Appeal to emotions
b) Red herring
c) Appeal to the people / Appeal to popularity
d) False dilemma
e) Scare tactic
f) Hasty Generalization

Ask each student to look up 1 or 2 of these expressions on The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Once students find this website, have them search under: fallacies.

Return to class:

6. Applying meaning (15 minutes): Detecting the flaw in the logic

Once students have reduced the definition to one or two simple and clear sentences, each student should explain the meaning of the expression to the class (perhaps while the teacher notes explanations on the board).

As a class, allow students to think of examples to illustrate how 3 or 4 of these fallacies are used.

7. Pair work (20 minutes): Focus on advertisements

Using some of the advertisements that you brought into the class, have students identify the fallacy in each ad.

i. What technique do the advertisements use to persuade you to purchase a particular product, or to think and act in a certain way?
ii. What is your (teacher and students) opinion about the ads?
iii. Would you be persuaded to purchase this product?

15 minute BREAK

8. Class discussion (15 minutes): Impacts on the individual

What might be the impact of being told we need to be prettier, younger, thinner, richer, cleaner? (This may a good opportunity to review comparative adjectives)

9. Vocabulary Review (15 min): Who is in the ad?

a) Describe the characteristics of the person in some of the ads: gender, age, race, social environment, economic class, looks of the model, etc. *Review level appropriate vocabulary* for physical, social and personality descriptions
b) Write STEREOTYPE on the board. Does anyone know what this word means? What are some popular stereotypes? (Examples based on religion, on beliefs, on gender, on hobbies, on jobs, etc.)

10. Individual Written work (20 minutes). Description of ads with new vocabulary.

Choosing one ad per student, students should write out their answers

i. What audience is the advertisement intended for? What makes you say this?
ii. Is the ad reflective of a stereotype? How?
iii. Are you represented in these ads? If yes, how? If no, why not? (use some of the descriptors from activity #8 to express this idea)

11. Class discussion lead by students (20 minutes). Successful or harmful?

If there are more than 8 students in the class, split the class in 2 groups and do the following activity:

- Have each student summarize orally what he or she has written. After each student has done his/her mini-presentation (2 minutes maximum per student), have the group refer to all presented ads and discuss the following two questions:

i. What effect do these ads have? On whom? How?
ii. Why is it useful to figure out how ads function?
iii. Does everyone try to analyse ads?

12. Listening exercise (15 minutes). Radio advertisement

Have students listen to 2 or three radio/television ads.

i. What are the ads about?
ii. What fallacies are used in these ads?
iii. Who is the intended audience?

13. Homework: Television advertisement

Have students focus on television advertisements. For the next class, they will describe one example of a television commercial to the class, and explain the strategies used to persuade its audience that the product/idea is necessary to improve its lifestyle.