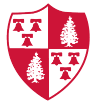

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Abstract

The purpose of this Master of Arts (MA) thesis is threefold:

First, this reflective paper provides a critical literature review on English Language Teaching (ELT) in Sri Lanka.

Second, this reflective paper presents seven guiding principles which will steer my English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching in an urban public university in Sri Lanka.

Third, drawing from the seven guiding principles, this reflective paper presents a complete syllabus and three assignments as concrete examples (attached as appendixes) which will be implemented in a College of Humanities and Social Sciences in an urban public university in Sri Lanka.

The importance of the present reflective paper can be summarized under four main points:

First, the critical literature review could help researchers and practitioners to better understand the complex linguistic situation and ELT in Sri Lanka.

Second, based on the seven guiding principles I will have a new syllabus which will be implemented in my ESL classes in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. After the implementation of the syllabus, I will reflect on my experience of implementing the syllabus and improve the syllabus further.

Third, the seven guiding principles which will inform my future practice as an ESL teacher are transferable to English dominated post-colonial countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and so on.

As a novice ESL teacher in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, one of the challenges I faced was the lack of a formal syllabus for my ESL classes. It gave rise to multiple issues in

relation to teaching methodology, lesson planning, and teaching materials, resulting in the dissatisfaction of my students and myself. It was the lack of a formal syllabus for my ESL classes that motivated me to design a syllabus for an intermediate level ESL course in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. I believe that the new syllabus steered by the seven guiding principles presented in this MA thesis will create a new synergy in my future ESL classrooms.

Keywords: reflective paper, guiding principles, English as a second language, syllabus

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Teaching English as a Second Language in an Urban Public University in Sri Lanka: A Reflective Paper

by

Kasun Gajasinghe Maramba Liyanage

A Master's Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

Montclair State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Arts

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College/School: The College of Humanities and Social Sciences

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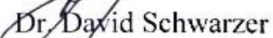

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN AN URBAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN SRI LANKA: A REFLECTIVE PAPER

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts

by

KASUN GAJASINGHE MARAMBA LIYANAGE

Montclair State University

Montclair, NJ

May 2019

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List of Abbreviations

Given below is the list of abbreviations used in this reflective paper. This list is arranged in the alphabetical order.

APA	-	American Psychological Association
BA	-	Bachelor of Arts
DELIC	-	District English Language Improvement Centers
EAP	-	English for Academic Purposes
ELT	-	English Language Teaching
ELTU	-	English Language Teaching Unit
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
ESP	-	English for Special Purposes
IELTS	-	International English Language Testing System
LTTE	-	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MA	-	Master of Arts
MCQ	-	Multiple Choice Questions
MLA	-	Modern Language Association
PRINESETT	-	Professional In-Service English-Teacher Training
TOEFL	-	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UK	-	United Kingdom
US	-	United States
UTEL	-	University Test of English Language

I. INTRODUCTION

This Master of Arts (MA) thesis grew out of my early experiences in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, and my new academic experiences in a large state university in the U.S. It emphasizes the transformative power of reflection, inquiry, and value of lived experiences in rethinking established practices in ESL. It also underscores the need for developing innovative syllabi for teaching ESL based on clear guiding principles.

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Sri Lanka is affected by multiple ideological and material conditions. As a novice ESL teacher in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, one of the challenges I faced was the lack of a formal syllabus for my ESL classes. It gave rise to multiple issues concerning teaching methodology, lesson planning, and teaching materials, resulting in the dissatisfaction of my students and myself. It was the lack of a formal syllabus for my ESL classes that motivated me to design a syllabus for an intermediate level ESL course in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. I believe that the new syllabus steered by the seven guiding principles presented in this MA thesis will create a new synergy in my future ESL classrooms and provide insights to ESL teachers, especially in the Sri Lankan university context to rethink and redesign ESL courses.

In this introduction, the following subsections are presented:

1. Purposes of this reflective paper
2. The significance of this reflective paper
3. Context
4. My positionality

Purposes of This Reflective Paper

The purpose of this reflective paper is threefold:

First, this reflective paper provides a critical literature review of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Sri Lanka.

Second, this reflective paper presents seven guiding principles which will steer my ESL teaching in an urban public university in Sri Lanka.

Third, drawing from the seven guiding principles, this reflective paper presents a complete syllabus and three assignments as concrete examples (attached as appendixes) which will be implemented in a College of Humanities and Social Sciences in an urban public university in Sri Lanka.

The Significance of This Reflective Paper

The section below briefly describes the importance of the three main purposes of this reflective paper:

1. To conduct a critical literature review of the research published on ELT in Sri Lanka

The critical literature review on ELT in Sri Lanka is useful for researchers and practitioners in Sri Lanka to better understand the complex linguistic situation and ELT in Sri Lanka.

2. To present seven guiding principles which will steer my ESL teaching in an urban public university in Sri Lanka

While reflecting on my ESL teaching experiences in Sri Lanka, I realized the importance of framing key principles on which my ESL syllabi, teaching materials, and methods will be

based on once I go back to teach ESL to undergraduates in Sri Lanka. The guiding principles proposed in this reflective paper are drawn from cutting-edge research on (second/ foreign/ heritage) language education available at present. Moreover, the seven guiding principles presented in this reflective paper are transferable to similar ESL teaching situations in Sri Lanka and other English dominated post-colonial countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and so on.

3. To present a complete syllabus and three assignments as concrete examples (attached as appendixes) which will be implemented in a College of Humanities and Social Sciences in an urban public university in Sri Lanka.

When describing the seven guiding principles presented in the second chapter, I will refer to a new syllabus designed for an intermediate level ESL course in Sri Lanka (see Appendix A). Also, in this thesis, I will describe in detail three concrete assignments of the new syllabus to demonstrate how the guiding principles will drive ESL pedagogy in my classes. The new syllabus and the three assignments are important because they will be implemented when I resume my duties in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. Also, I could reflect on the experience of implementing the syllabus and improve it further. Moreover, the syllabus and the three assignments presented in this reflective paper will provide insights to ESL teachers in Sri Lanka, particularly those who are teaching in the university context as to how they could develop their own syllabi.

Context

Sri Lanka is a multiethnic and multilingual country. According to the Department of Census and Statistics (2012), there are eight ethnic groups in Sri Lanka such as Sinhala, Sri

Lankan Tamil, Indian Tamil, Sri Lankan Muslim, Burgher, Sri Lanka Malay, Chetti, and Bharatha. The three main languages spoken in Sri Lanka are Sinhala, Tamil, and English. Starting from 1978, the Constitution of Sri Lanka recognizes Sinhala and Tamil as the official languages and English as the link language (Constitution of Sri Lanka, 2015, article xvii). In the Sri Lankan context, "link language" means the language which facilitates interethnic communication between the speakers of Sinhala and the speakers of Tamil. Especially during the time of war from the early 1980s to 2009, it was considered that English could facilitate interethnic communication and ethnic harmony in Sri Lanka. Even during the postwar period in Sri Lanka English is presented as the only language that can link the Tamil and Sinhala speaking communities (David, 2015).

The majority of Sri Lanka's population speaks Sinhala while only a minority of the population speaks Tamil. According to the Department of Census and Statistics (2012), from the Sri Lankans who are above ten years old, 79.7% are literate in Sinhala, 26.4% are literate in Tamil, and 30.8% are literate in English. This census data is based on a self-report questionnaire collected countrywide. The term literacy in this context is defined as "the ability of a person, to read and understand a short letter or a paragraph in a particular language and ability to write by understanding" (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012, p. 175).

The situation in oral language proficiency of ethnic groups in Sri Lanka is different from the census data mentioned earlier. In my experience, when considering oral language proficiency, while most of the Sinhala speakers are monolingual or bilingual in Sinhala and English, most of the Tamil speakers are trilingual in Tamil, Sinhala, and English. However, on the one hand, since English is the language of the British colonizers, and considered the language of westernization, it is resisted by nationalist groups in Sri Lanka (Canagarajah, 1999;

Parakrama, 1995). On the other hand, due to the local and international demand for English, it is considered the most important language that is required to secure well-paid jobs and receive higher education both locally and internationally. Therefore, a degree, preferably in the English medium, obtained from a public university in Sri Lanka is considered the primary qualification to receive a well-paid job in the public sector as well as in the private sector. Therefore, all ethnic groups tend to prioritize learning English rather than learning Tamil or Sinhala as their second language (David, 2015). However, since the university entrance examination is very competitive, only a small proportion of the candidates qualify for university entrance. According to the data available on the educational level of the population above 25 years old, only 3% have received a college degree in Sri Lanka (Department of Populations and Statistics, 2012).

The Sri Lankan public education system is mainly segregated based on the language of instruction and the urban/rural divide. The Tamil-speaking students go to Tamil medium schools, and Sinhala-speaking students go to Sinhala medium schools. It is only in a minority of urban elite schools that Sinhala-speaking and Tamil-speaking students get the opportunity to mix. Even within the limited number of urban multilingual schools those who study in the Tamil medium are separated from the students taking classes in the Sinhala medium (Davis, 2015). The linguistic segregation of public schools in Sri Lanka has contributed to the prolonging ethnic conflicts manly because nationalist ideologies are reinforced at the school itself (Cardozo, 2008; Gaul, 2017). Although the language of instruction in Sri Lankan public schools is either Sinhala or Tamil, some urban and suburban public schools have a bilingual stream (Sinhala/English or Tamil/English) in which a selected group of students get the opportunity to study certain subjects in English (Nanayakkara, 2014). Although only a selected minority receives the chance to study in the bilingual stream and in addition receives ESL education, the vast majority only receives

ESL education to help them improve their English. Usually, English instruction in middle and high schools is 45 minutes per day and is taught five days a week. ESL instruction continues starting from first grade, at least until the second year of university education.

When students enter public universities, taking an English language placement examination is mandatory. Based on the placement examination score, students are placed in three levels: beginner level, intermediate level, and advanced level. Correspondingly, students who score above 80% for the placement test are exempt from the ESL program. Typically, most of the Tamil-speaking and Sinhala-speaking students interact with each other for the first time in their life only at the university, and particularly in the ESL classes.

In the university speech community, the old domain of English as the language of power, privilege, and prestige is gradually disappearing. However, English still maintains its niche for specific roles and functions such as scholarly research and international exchanges. Nonetheless, it can be identified that most of the students and even some of the teachers in the university community hold on to narrow nationalist ideologies in which their mother tongue is entirely sufficient for all academic and social interaction, and the use of English is frowned upon as unpatriotic. These are not ideas that everybody believes in, but their adherence within the university subculture is necessary to maintain the ideological and political control of students. For instance, especially during the hazing period, the senior students ban the freshmen from speaking English. Even the most unconscious use of English words in Sinhala or Tamil speech will result in verbal or/and physical harassment. Moreover, the student unions portray the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU), which is responsible for ESL education in the entire university, as the main enemy of the student subculture and an agent of western values.

Much like in other universities in Sri Lanka, in the urban public university in which I taught, all the colleges except the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, offer courses only in the English medium. In the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, although there is an expectation that students will learn English during the freshman year (through ESL courses conducted by the ELTU) and move into English medium programs in their second year, students still can get a degree either in the Tamil medium or the Sinhala medium. However, opportunities to major in particular fields in the Sinhala or Tamil medium is limited. For example, the Department of Geography decided that from 2014 onwards those who major in Geography should follow all the courses in the English medium. Similarly, although the Department of Sociology offers majors in the Sinhala medium and English medium, it does not provide a major in the Tamil medium. Consequently, Tamil-speaking students have no choice other than to attend classes offered in the English medium. Such language-based inequality at the university, on the one hand, affects future goals of the students; and on the other, places added importance on English in the university context.

With long-term English instruction or without it, the undergraduates who major in English medium programs need to write research papers, reports and complete other assignments in English. However, the ESL courses that are offered by the ELTU are not designed to accommodate the academic English language needs of the students. Since the establishment of the ELTU, it has been customary for the ESL teachers to do remedial work to help students to improve their English grammar and vocabulary with the expectation that, once they become competent in English, students themselves will be able to complete the assignments given in other courses. For instance, students read poems, write stories, and do grammar exercises in the ESL classes, while in other courses they read and write research papers and reports. It was after

my discussions with Dr. David Schwarzer that I started reflecting on this mismatch between the unstated objectives of the ESL courses and the immediate English language needs of the university students. In high-insight, it is my current understanding that ESL courses at the university should cater to the immediate academic needs of the students such as writing and reading research papers, writing and reading reports, doing academic presentations and so on.

This MA thesis is based on my experiences as a Fulbright Master's student studying Applied Linguistics in the U.S. and my early experiences as an ESL teacher in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. The syllabus that is developed as a crucial part of this MA thesis is for teaching English to the intermediate level students at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of an urban public university in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is important to describe the course content in a typical intermediate level ESL class in this particular urban public university in Sri Lanka. Typically, intermediate level classes aim to make students familiar with academic texts which are descriptive and argumentative, teach students how to take notes, summarize effectively, and write short, narrative and descriptive essays. Similarly, the teaching materials are prepared to focus on four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and teaching grammar (see Appendix F and Appendix G). Thus, the informal ESL curriculum is more futuristic than being focused on helping undergraduates grapple with their present academic needs.

My Positionality

The purpose of this section is to frame my positionality as an ESL teacher and a researcher in the context of ELT in Sri Lanka. This section is important because it enables me to explore how my experiences have conditioned my understanding of ELT in Sri Lanka at large and understand the gradual change of my practices as an ESL teacher. At the same time, this

section enables me to understand the power relations and tensions between English language users in Sri Lanka and my co-locatedness within the very same structures of power relations (Da Silva & Webster, 2018). Moreover, acknowledging my positionality helps me to deal with the question of accountability in this reflective paper. It is important to admit that I have multiple and simultaneous identities that may lead to particular dilemmas (Muhammad et al., 2015) in the course of writing this paper.

Growing up in a rural village

I was born and raised in a rural village in the Southern province of Sri Lanka. Both my mother and father are Sinhala Buddhists, and they belong to the lower middle class. My last name indicates that I belong to the upper caste. My father is a teacher of English in a rural secondary school and my mother, like many women in my village, is committed to working at home, making sure that her husband and children lead a comfortable life. My father does not have a college degree. He had received his English language education from a District English Language Improvement Center (DELIC). Although my mother almost always spoke in Sinhala at home, she had learned English from my father.

I am bilingual in Sinhala and English – Sinhala is my mother tongue and the main language in which I received my primary and secondary education. However, English has gradually become the language mainly used for academic purposes, while Sinhala plays a significant role in my daily communications with friends and family. I do not speak Tamil except for basic commands and phrases.

I learned English the hard way, as opposed to urban, upper-class children who learn English at their mother's knee. Often, the conversations at our home took place in Sinhala, yet

my father sometimes code-meshed on and off to give us commands such as, “bring that,” “do this,” “go there,” “get up,” “sit down” and so on as he spoke Sinhala. For me, formal education of English took place in school and my father’s private English lessons. Unlike other students in my village, I was relatively privileged to have access to English at an early age because of my father. Therefore, my English language learning experience is an outlier as compared to the realities and experiences of most English language learners from rural areas in Sri Lanka.

My ESL learning experiences in my father’s private English lessons

Apart from teaching ESL in a rural public school, my father gives private lessons in English (English tuition classes). Typically, English grammar was the focus of my father’s private English lessons. At the outset of every lesson he usually dictated some sentences in the class, and the students would copy them down and follow his instructions: "turn these sentences into negative sentences," "make these sentences into questions," "turn these sentences into the past tense," "write these sentences in the future tense" and so on. After the grammar lessons, he dictated vocabulary lists such as lists of animals, birds, colors, relatives, stationary and so on for students to write down. In addition to the grammar drills and vocabulary lists, he used textbooks prescribed by the Ministry of the Education, because it helped students to get a head start with the lessons taught at school. However, he did not believe that textbooks prescribed by the Ministry of Education had any significant impact on learning English. He also used the total physical response method in the sixth, seventh, eighth-grade classes. The students (including myself) were delighted during this short period since they got a break from the grammar lessons and had the opportunity to run around and play. He very rarely code-meshed in Sinhala in his classes, because he believed that code meshing was not a good practice.

In 2015 my father bought a computer and used it to teach English to students who came for private English lessons. After that, instead of dictating sentences and vocabulary lists, he used PowerPoint to present sentences and vocabulary lists to the students and instructed them to write them down. Although the teaching aid changed, the method of teaching did not. Furthermore, at least once a month, he used the computer to show English movies to the students, because he thought that it is essential to expose the students to English spoken by native speakers of English. Also, he encouraged students to buy English to English Oxford English dictionaries instead of buying locally published English to Sinhala dictionaries.

My ESL learning experiences at three public schools in Sri Lanka

I went to elementary and middle school in my village. In the elementary and middle schools, teaching and learning English was centered around the textbook prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Since the textbook governed the whole teaching process, the teachers also seemed to be under some form of pressure and a sense of responsibility to complete all the units in the textbook. In most cases, the only reference materials available for the teachers was also the textbooks. In some ESL classes, everyone got the chance to read sections from the textbook at least once a month, but some teachers had their favorite students (including me) who were frequently requested to read sections from the textbook. When the students were not paying attention, the teachers either scolded them for not paying attention or, completely ignored them instead of understanding why they were not paying attention and using different methods to include them. Sometimes, we were asked to write essays. Usually, the topics were: "Myself," "My Mother" "My Father," "My Brother," My Sister," "Environment," "The New Year Festival" and so on. These essay topics recurred in ESL classes throughout my elementary and middle

school life. At the end of the term, the teachers never got feedback from their students because that was not a requirement.

To receive high school education, I moved away from my village to a leading Sinhala Buddhist public school (which is not as anglicized as some of the elite schools in Colombo and Kandy) in one of the main cities in the Southern Province of Sri Lanka. My experiences with English language learning at the high school were slightly different from the experiences at the schools in my rural village. In contrast to the ESL teachers in my rural schools, the ESL teacher in this urban school seemed to be more proficient in English. Reflecting on her use of English, I remember that all the students, including me, were particularly impressed by her accent. It sounded more "English" than how my father or my previous ESL teachers spoke English. In addition to doing the activities in the prescribed textbook, she got us to read extra materials such as poems, short stories, and essays and explained them. She also seemed to be more respectful towards all the students in the class despite their level of engagement in the classroom. This ESL teacher tried her best to get everyone engaged in the lesson, and unlike the ESL teachers in my village schools, she encouraged us to write poems and stories in English. Moreover, the lessons in the textbook which was used to teach ESL had more culturally relevant and age-appropriate lessons. Other than these differences, the ESL lessons had the same routine of doing grammar exercises, reading and writing answers to comprehension passages, engaging in listening activities and so on.

In high school, I studied English literature, Sinhala literature, and logic. Studying English literature was doubly challenging because English was my second language, and I faced the challenge of identifying myself with an alien culture. Selecting English literature was politically charged than selecting Sinhala literature or logic because it seemed to add some extra value to

my education. After all, English provided access to opportunities that Sinhala could not. I remember teachers and classmates asking me the reason for choosing to study Sinhala instead of a foreign language such as French, German, or Japanese because studying such foreign languages with English was the trend at that time (perhaps even today). In such occasions, I just answered that I liked Sinhala literature and I would like to be a translator one day. Even though Tamil is widely spoken in Sri Lanka, neither did I feel the importance of learning Tamil nor did anyone advise me to learn it at that point in my life. Now I realize that the reason for this is the marginalization of Tamil as the language of the other within the mainstream Sinhala speaking community.

Throughout my school life, I felt privileged to know some English and enjoyed some benefits it brought. At the ESL examination at school, some of my friends relied on my answers to questions such as multiple-choice questions (MCQ), filling the blanks and matching (these types of questions were common in all the examinations). My friends thought that my English was far better than theirs and assuring them that was true I got the highest score for English in the class every year. Similarly, at the morning assembly, I was usually invited to speak in English, and this created a sense of pride within me. Moreover, the main reason that I entered a privileged urban school in Sri Lanka was my intention to study English for the university entrance examination.

My experiences at an urban public university as a student majoring in English

After passing the university entrance examination, I entered an urban public university in Sri Lanka. It was in the university that I became aware of the politics of English, and I was at the center of tensions associated with the English language. For example, within the student body,

there were two groups of students: the "raggers" (the students who support hazing) and the "anti-raggers" (the students who resist hazing). During the first three months, the raggers prohibited the freshmen from speaking in English. Moreover, the Tamils, the Muslims, and the Sinhalese were separated, limiting communication between these groups outside of the classrooms. Perhaps, during the hazing period, the only space the freshmen from different ethnic groups could meet and communicate was the ESL classroom. Most of the Sinhala students studied their first-year courses in the Sinhala medium, and most Tamil students studied in the Tamil medium. Communication between the Sinhala-speaking undergraduates and the Tamil-speaking undergraduates was difficult without the intervention of English. According to my observations, most of the Sinhala-speaking students were bilingual in Sinhala and English while most of the Tamil speaking students were trilingual. However, both groups resorted to English when they communicated with each other. Since I majored in English and studied in the English medium from the first year itself, I did not fit into the “English-hating-model student” created and perpetuated by the raggers. They saw me as an asset for their political campaigns because I knew English but they did not trust me since I was the face of the rival against whom they mobilized their political campaign.

In contrast, anti-ragging was mainly based on classism, regionalism, and English. Most of the anti-raggers (especially the popular students in this group) often spoke only in English, and most of them had formed groups based on the elite schools that they had attended. Also, some of them even flaunted that they did not know enough Sinhala to perform their exclusiveness within the university community. A way of anglicized upper-class life (mainly promoted by the students of the Department of English) was at the core of the subculture of anti-raggers. Their behavior and values defeated the very purpose of resisting ragging. On the one hand, I did not feel

welcome by many of the anti-raggers; and on the other, I could not principally agree with them too. Consequently, I occupied the intersections between the raggers (who were against English) and anti-raggers (who unquestioningly embraced English). However, this position enabled me to personally experience how the English language constructed one's identity in different contexts in Lankan society.

I was not the typical student that fell within the expectations of the Department of English of my university, mainly because I did not come from the "right class," "right school," and the "right geographical region." I was born and raised in a rural village, came from a lower-middle class family, did not learn English at my mother's knee, did not go to an urban anglicized school, and on top of that, I was a first-generation undergraduate. Although there were a few students who were not from upper-class families majoring in English in my batch, the Department of English did not have a plan to improve the English language skills of the students. In my view, there was an apparent mismatch between the interests, expectations and sociocultural positionality of the students, and the interests, expectations and the sociocultural positionality of the Department of English. Also, the university did not have a writing center which helped undergraduates to improve their written work in English. From most of the professors at the Department of English, I usually got my assignments and final papers back with lots of scratches in red ink and a final comment which said that my arguments were compelling, yet there were many sentence-level errors which brought down the grade. At the outset, this was frustrating because language skills do not develop overnight. Later, I became an expert in predicting what grade I would get depending on the instructor, and to accept whatever the grade that I got. Although the general climate of the Department of English was such, there were a few

exceptional teachers who were supportive of the students and helped them realize their full potential.

My experiences as an ESL teacher at an urban public university in Sri Lanka

Immediately after graduating in 2014, I started teaching ESL at the ELTU in the same university from which I received my BA degree. Considering my profession as a university teacher, many students and some colleagues of mine in Sri Lanka identify me as someone from an upper middle class, privileged, Sinhala Buddhist family. Others would not think so because of my family background, where I was born and brought up, the schools I attended and so on. It is my identity that places me in a unique position and enables me to empathize with rural students. Also, the unique position that I occupy enables me to understand the politics of English in Sri Lanka critically. For my Tamil-speaking students and colleagues, whose ethnicity is Tamil or Muslim, I am the privileged other. I do not speak Tamil (except for a few words and phrases), and that is, from my part, a barrier between my Tamil-speaking students and me. Also, as a result of the almost 30-year civil war and the ethnonationalist violence perpetrated against the minorities in Sri Lanka by Sinhalese politicians and ethno-nationalist mobs, Tamil speaking minorities treat Sinhalese with a fear mixed distrust.

At the university I was instructed by senior ESL teachers to teach a set of grammar exercises, reading comprehension exercises, and conduct listening activities and so on with my students. The ELTU did not have a formal curriculum, textbooks were not prescribed and the teachers collaboratively developed grammar exercises, reading comprehension activities and so on targeting beginner, intermediate and advanced learners. None of the novice teachers were trained to teach ESL. While most of the teachers had majored in English, some teachers had

majored in disciplines such as Geography, Psychology, Sociology and so on, which were not related to ELT, but they were recruited to the ELTU because they have completed their degrees in the English medium. At the outset, I was teaching English the way I was taught English by my teachers and how I was instructed to teach by the senior ESL teachers at the ELTU. However, I gradually tried to do some changes in my teaching methods. For instance, I used controversial topics and political cartoons in my ESL classes to keep the students engaged and to generate discussions through reading materials and discussion topics that match with the sociocultural and ideological position of the students. It was through in-class reading and writing activities that I demonstrated to students the different contexts in which different grammatical structures are used. Also, in terms of changing the spatial structure and classroom arrangements, I took my students outside of the classroom on certain occasions hoping that they would be able to concentrate better when the environment and the structure of the “classroom” changed.

My academic experiences as a Fulbright Master’s student in the U.S.

Now I am a Fulbright Master’s student, studying Applied Linguistics in a large state university in New Jersey. I applied for the Fulbright Master's Student Award mainly to equip myself with knowledge and skills that would change my ESL teaching and facilitate positive changes at the ELTU. As a result of the Fulbright academic experience in a large state university in the U.S., I have grown as a teacher and a researcher. In the U.S. I have felt that my social class, ethnicity, or caste in Sri Lanka is immaterial. In addition to my physical appearance, my accent is an integral part of my identity in the U.S. There are instances that I have felt that I am being judged because of it. However, when I speak with American English speakers and people

who speak other Englishes, I feel less self-conscious than when speaking in English with a fellow Sri Lankan.

While studying in the U.S., I was exposed to a completely different academic environment from what I had in the urban public university in Sri Lanka. Particularly the Teaching Methodology course I took, and the Beginner Hebrew class that I observed were eye-opening mainly in terms of syllabus and material design. The general learning environment in all the classes was quite different from the experiences I had in Sri Lanka because they did not have a teacher-centered learning environment. Most of the instructors gave us multiple opportunities with specific guidelines to improve our grades which I never experienced as a student in the urban public university in Sri Lanka. Moreover, students received a comprehensive syllabus which included a course schedule, grading components, course policies, and so on. After every semester, students got the opportunity to evaluate the instructor and provide feedback to help the instructor to improve his/her teaching.

In conclusion, I have an emic view of ELT in Sri Lanka. My positionality is constructed by my social class, ethnicity, profession, caste, mother tongue, the rural village that I come from, the relatively privileged position as a son of an English teacher, and the current position as a Fulbright scholar. I have my own biases on ESL education in Sri Lanka based on my personal experiences as an ESL learner and a teacher in Sri Lanka, and my education, especially the knowledge and skills that I received because of my Fulbright academic experience. Having witnessed and experienced English language-based discrimination in Sri Lanka and as a result of enjoying benefits that the English language provides; I believe that improving ELT is crucial in empowering university students in Sri Lanka.

II. A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN SRI LANKA

This chapter presents a critical literature review of the significant scholarly work on ELT in Sri Lanka. This critical literature review identifies some common patterns in the available literature. The following are the three key areas identified through this critical literature review:

1) Historical analysis of English in Sri Lanka

2) Linguistic analysis of English in Sri Lanka

3) Analysis of English language teaching in Sri Lanka

Under the historical analysis of English in Sri Lanka, three stages of the development of English in Sri Lanka are identified and discussed. They are as follows: 1) the English language in the colonial period in Sri Lanka, 2) the English language in the post-colonial period in Sri Lanka, and 3) the English language in the 21st century Sri Lankan society.

The focus of the linguistic analysis is on opposing discourses on how English language standards intersect and impact on ESL teaching and implications of three designations given to English in Sri Lanka. This section has two sub-sections:1) What variety of English should we teach in Sri Lanka? and 2) English as a Second Language, Foreign Language, and a Link Language. Under the subsection *What variety of English should we teach in Sri Lanka?* I present arguments for Sri Lankan English, the distinction between Standard Sri Lankan English and Non-standard Sri Lankan English, and arguments against Sri Lankan English.

In the third section titled the analysis of English language teaching in Sri Lanka, the focus is on 1) responding to glocal demands for English, 2) need for a transformation in ESL pedagogy and 3) typical postcolonial challenges faced by ESL teachers and learners in Sri Lanka.

This chapter is important because of the following reasons:

1. This critical literature review could help researchers and practitioners to better understand the complex linguistic situation and ELT in Sri Lanka.

2. It sheds light on how English in Sri Lanka has been perceived by various scholars and the conflicting ideologies behind their perceptions.

3. It gives insights into what ideological, linguistic and pedagogical challenges Sri Lankan English language learners and teachers face and possible solutions to some of them.

1. Historical Analysis of English in Sri Lanka

From a historical perspective, three stages of development or evolution of English in Sri Lanka can be identified. They are as follows:

1. The English language in the colonial period in Sri Lanka
2. The English language in the post-colonial period in Sri Lanka
3. The English language in the 21st century Sri Lankan society

In the following subsections of this chapter, the three stages mentioned above will be mapped using the available literature. Recognize how scholars have presented the “evolution” of ELT in Sri Lanka is essential for a critical understanding of what has been accepted as “common sense” in this area of study. Similarly, a historical examination of ELT in Sri Lanka helps

identify how ELT was produced by colonization and how attitudes, practices, and uses of the English language have evolved across time.

A. The English Language in the Colonial Period in Sri Lanka

This section presents the purposes that the English language served in the colonial Sri Lankan society. This section is important because it shows that English was not just the language of the British colonizers, but it was instrumental in the process of colonizing Sri Lanka. Similarly, this section is important because it shows how different ideologies associated with English in Sri Lanka came into being and how they affected or continue to affect ELT in Sri Lanka.

Theories and practices of ELT in former colonies still carry traces of their colonial histories because of their long histories of colonial occupation, the direct connections with ELT, and because ELT theories and practices derive from European cultures and ideologies (Pennycook, 1998). Therefore, it is essential to understand English in its colonial context because "there are deep and indissoluble links between the practices, theories, and contexts of ELT and the history of colonialism" (Pennycook, 1998, p. 19). Moreover, I believe every ESL teacher in Sri Lanka should carefully study the relationship between the English language, ELT and colonization because of the reasons mentioned above. While English was a tool of oppression, it also enabled a minority to climb the social ladder – hence a means of colonization. Based on these reasons this section is divided into two subsections as follows:

1) English as a means of colonization

2) English as the key to upward mobility

English as a means of colonization

The use of English in Sri Lanka is traced back to 1796 since the British East India Company took control of the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka by defeating the Dutch (Fernando, 1977; Gunesekera, 2010b). Even before the British completely colonized Sri Lanka in 1815 English had been used in Sri Lanka for various purposes. However, ELT was initiated by Christian missionary schools in Sri Lanka (Saunders, 2007).

The English language occupies a significant position in the colonial period in Sri Lanka because it was the means of colonizing the minds of the politically colonized people (Viswanathan, 2014). As stated by Pennycook (1998) ELT was “at the heart of colonialism” (p. 2). The British did not execute a plan of keeping the colonized completely illiterate in English and ruling them merely by brute force. Rather, the British rulers who governed Sri Lanka (and India) understood the value of English educated natives who would follow the orders of the colonial rulers and help them control the larger masses in the colonies (Viswanathan, 2014). The famously quoted words from “Minute on Education," delivered in 1835 by Thomas Babington Macaulay show how important English education was as a means of colonization. According to Macaulay (1835), the objective of providing education in English was to “form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, – class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect” (as cited in Sharp, 1920, p. 22). According to Macaulay’s words, the objective of the “civilizing and educating” a selected group of the colonized was at least twofold: 1) to create a class of colonized people who are subservient to the British but are instrumental in controlling the rest of the population, and 2) to make the colonized people believe that the English-speaking people are the most civilized and intellectually sophisticated on the earth (Viswanathan, 2014).

English educated bilinguals in Sri Lanka were never considered to be on par with the British administrators. The responsibility of educating and anglicizing privileged locals was entrusted mainly to the Christian missionaries with the support of the British government. According to Saunders (2007), "…missionaries believed instruction in English would help "civilize" the population, they also recognized the importance of disseminating English for administrative purposes and as a language of enlightenment ideals…" (p. 2). These words underscore that English education played an active role in colonizing the minds of Sri Lankans under British rule. Another implication of the above words is that the English language was taught for administrative purposes rather than for day to day use.

Consequently, English education made sure that the British empire would thrive in Sri Lanka with the support of influential locals. Robert Percival claims that the British administrators in Sri Lanka worked keenly "to introduce our [British] learning and religion among the natives in the surest means of improving and consolidating our [British] empire in the island" (as cited in Dharmadasa, 1992, p. 28). In this context, the phrase 'our learning' reveals that English education was British propaganda that created awe towards the colonizer. At the same time, it made the colonized Sri Lankans look down upon their native languages and culture.

In the colonial period, the power of English and the English educated class was maintained particularly through the unequal access to Education in the English language. According to Saunders (2007),

> A 1906 colonial education commission argued that providing English education was neither suitable, not desirable for all Sri Lankans since it would lead them to desire a life other than that of agrarian labor. A year later the Roman Catholic Archbishop of

> Colombo claimed that teaching English in small towns was disruptive, leading students to challenge their social position and rebuke their paternal trade. (p. 3)

As a result, education provided in the English medium was only available for a privileged urban group of people who already had established influence over other locals, and English gave them more power and opportunities to improve their life under the colonial rule (Duraiswamy, 1998). The English medium education was not only discriminatory in terms of excluding those who were poor, lower caste and so on but also discriminatory in terms of trying to uproot the Sinhalese and the Tamils from their cultures. For instance, according to Kandiah (1979), in the English schools that the children of the bilingual middle class attended the whole atmosphere was English because the medium of instruction and administration, as well as all activities, were in English. Moreover, instances where students were punished for using their first languages or mother tongues, have been recorded in Sri Lanka. According to Kandiah (1979) in some of the English schools, students had to pay a fine if they were heard speaking in either Sinhala or Tamil. Saunders (2007) confirms this when he states "when Ediriwira Sarachchandra, a prolific playwright and a professor of Sinhala attended school in [the] early 1900s…he reports that students would receive a monetary fine for speaking Tamil or Sinhala in class" (p. 2). Indeed, speaking in English was made a rule rather than a choice in these colonial English medium schools which produced a negative attitude towards the students' native languages and encouraged English monolingualism. Hence, the monolingual bias that is strong in ESL teaching today in Sri Lanka can be traced back to the colonial period.

The English educated class, as expected by Macauley and like-minded colonial administrators, formed an emergent westernized and urbanized middle class in which "English was the effective language of activity, and their native language in the more domestic spheres

and, particularly, in their dealings with underlings" (Kandiah, 1979, p. 82). Their use of English in so-called socially, economically and culturally important spaces, and use of Sinhala or Tamil with servants and lower-class people further reinforced the "superiority" of English and "inferiority" of Sinhala and Tamil.

English as key to upward mobility

The English language gradually started to be associated with upward social mobility, and it became an intrinsic part that characterized the local elite and the middle class. According to Fernando (1977), not only the use of the English language but also the adoption of Christianity which came hand in glove with the English language marked this social class. Although this emergent social class did not have the same power of the English colonizers, they wanted to be associated with the colonizers and stand apart from the rest of the colonized who did not have access to education through the English language. One of the ways of keeping themselves apart from the majority was to distance themselves from their mother tongues. Fernando (1977) states:

> Some of these Anglicized bilinguals went to the extent of flaunting a claimed lack of proficiency in the vernacular mother tongue. Such a claim, since it was accompanied by a near-native control of English, associated the speaker with the sort-after English culture while simultaneously disassociating him from the despised local counterpart. (p. 344)

The above extract demonstrates the contrasting attitudes of the elites towards the English language and their mother tongue: English was considered superior, and their mother tongues were deemed to be inferior. Knowing Sinhala or Tamil well was considered a disqualification to be in this class. Since only a minority of Sri Lankans got the opportunity to receive their

education in the English language, it made English the most important language in Sri Lanka. English was baggage of superiority available for the privileged (Duraiswamy, 1998).

However, some scholars have presented English education in the colonial period as a liberating force in Sri Lanka. Saunders (2007), for instance, argues that “the study of English offered considerable material advantages for Sri Lankans. Since speaking, it allowed them to move away from hereditary caste-based systems and to establish themselves in more prestigious occupations based on education…” (p. 3). This generalized statement seems to be distorting the lived reality of most of the Sri Lankans. The implication that English is the solution to the caste issue is too simplistic. For instance, providing a more nuanced picture of colonial education in Sri Lanka Canagarajah (2005) states, “…English proficiency came to be distributed according to the already prevailing caste hierarchy… the few English schools were concentrated in the towns, leaving the rural folk vernacular-educated and monolingual” (p. 422) thus proving Duraiswamy’s (1998) claim that English education was discriminatory and perpetuated the superiority of the colonial administrators and the English educated elites. For the “ordinary” people, English was the key to upward mobility to which they had no access.

Summary

In summary, teaching English in Sri Lanka started as an intrinsic part of British colonization. At least from 1815 to 1956, English was used as the language of administration and as the medium of instruction in a minority of schools which created an urban bilingual privileged middle class in Sri Lanka. People who received their education in English embraced the English language, culture, and Christianity and formed an emergent English educated social class. English schools had a linguistic environment that criminalized the use of the mother tongues of

the students and advocated a monolingual (English only) language policy. Since this group of people was economically, socially and politically powerful, this class became the desired model of success for the upwardly mobile individuals in lower social classes. However, people from economically and politically disadvantaged backgrounds were not given access to English and therefore systematically kept away from this class.

B. The English language in the postcolonial period in Sri Lanka

The purpose of this section is to present the complex relationship among the English language, ELT and post-independence politics in the period between 1948 and 2000. It is important to acknowledge that framing 1948 to 2000 as the post-colonial period in Sri Lanka is arbitrary, yet these years were chosen to identify the postcolonial period because Sri Lanka received independence from the British in 1948, and 2000 marks the beginning of a new millennium. This section is important because it explores a crucial historical juncture of the sociocultural and political trajectory that has created certain attitudes towards English which condition the teaching and learning of English even in the present-day. This section has three subsections:

1) English as a weapon

2) English in the face of Sinhala and Tamil nationalism

3) The democratization of English in Sri Lanka

English as a weapon

By the time Sri Lanka got its independence from the British, a local English-speaking middle class was well established. According to Ponnambalam (1980),

> In terms of consciousness, ideologies and interests, dress, consumption patterns, and lifestyles they [the English-speaking middle class] were in every sense British and wanted to remain so. They … became the local component of the ruling class with the establishment of internal "self-government" in 1931. (p. 16)

The mainly used language of this social class was English when compared to the emergent Sinhala-English and Tamil-English bilinguals initially created by the British Education system in the 1800s. They were exposed to the English language from their birth and consequently picked it up in action (Kandiah, 1979). Therefore, they were different from the Sinhala English or Tamil English bilingual counterparts who were imitating and following them.

When the British left Sri Lanka, the English-speaking elites "inherited" the country and maintained the status of English as the language of power and privilege (Canagarajah, 2000; Parakrama, 1995; Gunesekera, 2010b). Although the British had left, and Sri Lanka won self-governance English still reigned supreme. The criminalization of speaking the mother tongues of Sri Lankans at school had worked perfectly well enough that English had become the norm in all levels of administration and day to day experience of the Sri Lankan elite. Pointing out that English was an intrinsic part of the postcolonial-elite-consciousness De Votta (2004) reveals the following:

> Banking transactions in the vernacular languages were deemed illegal as late as 1953, and even parliamentary debates were conducted in English, with the speaker's permission being required in order to use Sinhala or Tamil. Telegrams could not be sent in the vernacular languages until March 1956. (p. 45)

Even after Sri Lanka had gained independence from the British, the ruling class did not want to recognize that English was discriminating against the majority in Sri Lanka. When individuals who did not know English were in situations where English was the only language allowed to be used, they would have perceived the English language as a weapon. While English privileged elites, they in turn privileged the English language as the language of power and prestige (Parakrama, 1997).

The English language was used to discriminate against Sri Lankans who did not speak it. Therefore, English was/is called *Kaduwa* which means ‘sword’ (Kandiah, 1984). According to Canagarajah (1993) developments that took place in the postcolonial period “disgruntled the monolingual majority to make them perceive English as a double-edged weapon that frustrates both who desire it as well as those who neglect it” (p. 604). Even in the villages, where, during the colonial period people did not have illusions of learning English, people started perceiving English as the passport to better opportunities in cities (Hayes, 2010). English was available around them, but they could not reach the same competence as their urban counterparts.

Parakrama (1995), Kandiah (1984) and Canagarajah (1993) identify the metaphor *Kaduwa* used by most of the Sri Lankans to refer to the English language as a result of them comprehending their own predicament in front of English as discrimination, injustice, and violation of rights. However, Raheem and Ratwatte (2004) identify that the use of the term *Kaduwa* to refer to the English language as an expression of anger towards the elite because the lower classes were not able to use English. They state, “during the 1970s and early 1980s, English was perceived as a weapon and those who could not wield it with competence were aware of their inability [they were cut off from upward social mobility] and thus resented those who could” (p. 102). The phrase that they use, “with competence,” indicates that it was not

knowing or speaking the language that was required but a particular standard of English language competency. Also, they perceive the use of the term *Kaduwa* as an expression of anger towards the upper class rather than the English language, unequal access to English in the education system and their emergent fear towards the language. They do not seem to understand that the "awareness of their inability" comes from the constant reinforcement of the standard perpetuated by the elite. In contrast to their deficit view of ESL learners, Canagarajah (1993) more empathetically explains that the monolingual Sinhala and Tamil speakers in Sri Lanka were disgruntled because "…English has functioned as a valued linguistic capital over the local Sinhala and Tamil languages to provide socioeconomic advantages for native Lankans" (p. 604) but most of them had limited access to English.

English in the Face of Sinhala and Tamil Nationalism

President S. W. R. D. Bandaranayake and his government made Sinhala the official language in Sri Lanka through the 1956 Official Language Act. The Official Language Act of 1956, also known as the Sinhala-Only Act, was a turning point in the post-independence Sri Lankan society. In the pretext of dethroning the English language and empowering the locals, Sinhala was made the official language in Sri Lanka by the Bandaranayake regime. This act was a move to secure most Sinhala votes of the country (DeVotta, 2004). This move triggered ethnic unrest and created the impetus for the civil war between the Sinhalese and the Tamils (DeVotta, 2004). Similarly, this language act confined English to an English educated elite minority in the country who continued to use English as their mother tongue (Gunesekera, 2010b; Kandiah, 1984). The following is an extract from the 1956 Official Language Act:

> The Sinhala language shall be the one official language of Ceylon: Provided that where the Minister considers it impracticable to commence the use of only the Sinhala language for any official purpose immediately on the coming into force of this Act, the language or languages hitherto used for that purpose may be continued to be so used unit 1 the necessary change is effected as early as possible before the expiry of the 31st day of December, 1960, and, if such change cannot be effected by administrative order, regulations may be made under this Act to effect such change. (Sri Lanka Const. Art. XXXIII)

It is argued that making Sinhala the sole official language in Sri Lanka was a decolonial move to give access to government jobs for broader masses (Saunders, 2007). However, it can be understood that this move was just another political stratagem to consolidate power by the votes of the majority, Sinhalese. As a result of the 1956 Official Language Act, the education system, including universities (except for some Anglicized schools in Colombo and Kandy) converted into Sinhala as the medium of instruction (DeVotta, 2004). Nonetheless, it has been misrepresented by certain scholars that both Tamil and Sinhala were used in administration and education since 1956 onwards. According to Little, Shojob, Sonnadara, and Aturupane (2018), “From 1956 onwards, Sinhala and Tamil gradually became the sole media of instruction in all schools” (p. 1). However, in reality, Tamil is the medium of instruction in relatively a smaller number of schools than Sinhala. Tamil was made the official language in Sri Lanka much later. It was the 1978 Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka that presents an important modification to the Sinhala Only Act, which states that Sinhala remains the official language (Article 18) and Sinhala and Tamil are both recognized as official languages (Article 19). This convoluted statement is necessary to maintain Sinhala supremacy.

Because of the 1956 language act, the Tamil society was forced to undergo a double burden imposed by the first colonial language, English and the second colonial language, Sinhala. As mentioned above one of the results of populist politics of the 1956 Official Language Act was the violation of a human right – It violated the right of the Tamil speakers to use their mother tongue outside of the domestic sphere. While the 1956 Official Language Act enabled the Sinhalese to develop the Sinhala language as an all-purpose language quickly, it took some time for the Tamils to do so (Suseendirarajah, 1992; Canagarajah,1995). According to Canagarajah (1995), the reason for the Tamils to take time to develop the Tamil language as an all-purpose language lies in the fact that Tamils found English to be relatively "neutral" than the Sinhala language. Learning English for them was an act of resistance against Sinhala dominance. However, this situation did not last long as Tamil separatism emerged to counter Sinhala nationalism.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) prohibited the use of Sinhala and English in the areas of Sri Lanka that were under their control. According to Canagarajah (2005), "Military officials have publicly insisted on the need to use only Tamil for formal and informal purposes in the community" (p. 425). Saunders (2007) states that the Tamil only policy promoted by the LTTE "served as a claim for the LTTE holding a purer Tamil identity than the Bilingual Tamil representatives in the parliament. The LTTE's governance, the policy implicitly suggested, would be more faithful to that identity" (p. 7). Thus, the Tamil only policy resisted not only the Sinhala nationalism but also the dominance of English which loomed over their culture and society.

The democratization of English in Sri Lanka

Although the 1956 Sinhala Only Act officially demoted English, the value of English and the demand for it grew even stronger. English was offered as a second language in schools and universities. According to the report of the Committee of Enquiry in the section on the Teaching of English in Ceylon Schools published in April 1960,

> (i) the general aims of teaching English should be the acquisition of a competence in the language; (ii) English should be compulsory; taught to all up to and including Standard VIII. Thereafter it should be optional; (iii) educationally, the earlier the language is started the better; (iv) that the language should be introduced in meaningful units. The direct method is favoured… (as cited in Sumathipala, 1968, p. 407).

Making English a compulsory language in schools by 1960, just three years after Sinhala was made the official language, shows that the demand for English did not decline because the colonizers were not anymore in Sri Lanka, and Sinhala was made the official language. Hayes (2010) records that especially in villages, “English was strongly perceived to be a passport to greater economic opportunity in the city” (p. 531). Therefore, despite the nationalist fervor, English education was considered crucial.

Making English a compulsory subject in public education made it necessary for the government to start English teacher training programs in Sri Lanka such as Professional In-Service English-Teacher Training (PRINSETT) and District English Language Improvement Centers (DELIC). The objective of these programs was to meet the demand for English language teachers in rural schools. PRINSETT was a crash course of a few weeks and DELIC program was a one-year training program which contributed to the spread of English teachers in rural

areas of Sri Lanka making English available in places where it was not previously available (Parish & Brown, 1988). The government of ill-prepared for the transition and as a result the English teachers who were sent to rural schools were undertrained and under-facilitated in contrast to their urban counterparts teaching in privileged schools.

In summary, English in the postcolonial society in Sri Lanka was relegated to a secondary position by the 1956 Official Language Act, and the Sinhala language was promoted as the official language. Although the English language lost its place as the official language, its status in society was augmented since it enabled upward social mobility (at least gave illusions of upward mobility to the rural, underprivileged students) and was restricted to the elite. Also, there was much resistance towards English by both Sinhalese and Tamil since it was the language of power that they did not have access to it mainly because of systemic inequality. This situation increased the demand for English and the government's objective to spread English created both hope and disillusionment, thus leading to causing frustration in underprivileged students.

C. The English Language in the 21st Century Sri Lankan Society

This section identifies new developments associated with English and ELT in Sri Lanka. This section has two subsections:

1) English as a key to globalization

2) English/Sinhala and English/Tamil bilingual education

The focus of this section is on the role of English, attitudes towards English, and the role of ELT in the 21st century Sri Lankan society. This section is important because it enables ESL

researchers and practitioners to understand the role of English in Sri Lankan society and changes in attitudes towards English.

English as a key to globalization

In the 21st century, Sri Lanka English is mainly associated with globalization, trade, higher education and so on. Notably, due to the advent of technology, exposure to the English language has increased as never before. According to Raheem and Ratwatte (2004), English is "being perceived, at least by the younger generation… as a component of modern life going hand in hand with pop music, computers, hand-phones, and so on" (p. 104). Thus, influence and the demands of high globalizing powers such as information technology, trade, and education have changed previously held attitudes towards English as a weapon. According to Gunesekera (2010b), "today, the '*kaduwa*' syndrome is no more – the clamour for English is heard from all quarters…" (p. 4). One of the most significant challenges faced by ESL teachers and students during the post-colonial period was the attitude towards English as a weapon. The fear and trepidation that the students faced when learning and using English impacted the language learning process.

Because English is identified as the key to connecting with globalization, promoting English throughout Sri Lanka has become a national priority more than ever before. The National Committee on Education (2009) recognizes that "With globalization, the increasing use of English as an international language, and the expanding role of information and Communication Technology, the need for proficiency in English has come to the foreground" (p. 97). Thus, English is seen as an international language associated with better jobs and educational opportunities abroad. Little et al., (2018) claim, "In the current era of globalization,

the role of English is perceived by many sections of [Sri Lankan] society less as the language of oppression and more as an international language of importance within an internationalized economy and society" (p. 2).

Especially concerning university education and scholarship, English has gradually regained its dominance mainly because of the interest in keeping up with global education. However, universities are challenged with inadequate resources and trained English teachers to support the English language needs of the students. According to Ranasinghe and Ranasinghe (2012), "… the language of instruction in certain degree programs like Management Studies has already been shifted from the vernacular to English in most universities without having adequate facilities to teach English for undergraduates, particularly those who are low in their proficiency" (p. 208). The transition to English as Ranasinghe and Ranasinghe (2012) points out is done in a disorganized way at the expense of the education of the rural and urban underprivileged students.

English-Sinhala and English-Tamil bilingual education

The bilingual education program in Sri Lanka was started in 2001 to teach selected subjects to high school and middle school students. According to the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka, the purpose of the introduction of bilingual education from grade six is as follows:

Bilingualism should be promoted by using English as the medium of instruction in selected subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Technology including Computer literacy, Social Science in secondary grades, year by year from Grade 6, depending on the availability of teachers. It is expected that students will reach an acceptable level of proficiency in English at the end of junior secondary education… (National Education Commission, 2003, p. 116-117).

The primary objective of this bilingual education program is to improve the English language skills of monolingual Sinhala and Tamil students (Mahawattha, 2012; Wijesekera, Alford, & Mu, 2019). However, the bilingual education program has been introduced only to a selected number of public schools (Mendis & Rambukwella, 2010; Mahawattha, 2012; Nanayakkara, 2014). According to Perera & Kularatne (2014), the bilingual stream is available only in 17.5 percent of the total number of middle schools in Sri Lanka. While the bilingual education program is considered important to improve the quality of secondary and tertiary education in Sri Lanka, one of the key criticisms leveled at it is that it is unplanned and hastily implemented (Balakrishnar & Thanaraj, 2011).

It is crucial to rethink the bilingual education program in Sri Lanka because of several issues. First, English-Sinhala and English-Tamil bilingual education is restricted to a minority of urban and suburban public schools. This reality indicates that the terms “poorly planned” or “hastily implemented” do not correctly explain the current form of the bilingual education program. In other words, the bilingual education program has been designed and implemented to appease the urban and suburban middle-class. For instance, Premarathne, Yogaraja, Medawattegedara, Senarathne & Abdullah (2016) oversimplify and misrepresent the rural-urban disparities in terms of bilingual education as the lack of interest in rural students to learn languages:

> Generally, unlike urban areas, students in rural areas have no interest in learning languages. On the one hand, they do not find any use for it, and on the other hand, the environment does not encourage them to learn languages. Neither in school nor at home, do they have anybody to persuade them. Introducing the bilingual system in such places will create problems. (Premarathne et al., p. 17)

While students in urban and suburban public schools have access to bilingual education in either Tamil and English or Sinhala and English, ESL teachers in these schools are shorthanded. The very fact that bilingual education is provided "depending on the availability of teachers" (National Education Commission, 2003: 116-117) fundamentally contradicts the primary objective of the bilingual program because it deliberately discriminates against students in rural schools where ESL teachers are limited. Consequently, the present bilingual program reinforces and even contributes to worsening the English language proficiency gap between urban and rural students.

Second, the bilingual program is not even open to all students in the school because students are selected to it through a mandatory English language proficiency test administered by the school. Only a minority of students who have considerable English language proficiency is selected to study in the bilingual education program. This process of sieving out prevents most students (who are relatively less competent in English) from gaining bilingual education. The implication is that the bilingual education program caters only to a minority of students who are relatively competent in English and the students who are less competent or weak in English are barred from the opportunity of studying in the bilingual program. As a result, once again it completely defeats its objective, which is to improve the English language skills of students in public schools. In fact, none of the scholarly work on the bilingual education program in Sri Lanka cited in this reflective paper discusses this issue. The fact that none of the scholars have discussed this issue is quite telling that policymakers and teachers do not understand that the mandatory English language proficiency test contributes to worsening the inequality within the Sri Lankan education system. Students should have the choice to decide whether they want to be educated in the bilingual program or not. The policymakers and teachers have to help students

make an informed decision rather than sieving out most students through an English language proficiency test.

Third, the very idea of initiating a bilingual education program merely to improve English language skills does not align with improving students' Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills as well as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (Cummins, 2003). This approach also undermines the significance of students' home languages and the development of academic knowledge, over the development of their English language skills. This is why Mahawattha (2012), found that 65% of the population of students in her study on bilingual education in Sri Lanka had difficulties in expressing academic knowledge in English. Mahawattha (2012), also reports that the dropout rate is also significantly high in the bilingual stream. Therefore, it is important to promote a bilingual program that develops both Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills as well as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (Cummins, 2003).

Finally, it is an interesting observation that English-Sinhala and English-Tamil bilingualism is promoted in (selected) Sri Lankan public schools instead of promoting Tamil-Sinhala bilingual education, although Sinhala and Tamil are co-official languages in Sri Lanka. One of the key barriers to implementing a Sinhala/Tamil bilingual education policy in Sri Lankan public schools is ideological. What successive governments have done so far is the introduction of a 'Sinhala as a second language' program for Tamil-speaking students and a Tamil as a Second language program for Sinhala-speaking students (Davis, 2015). Because of the hegemony of Sinhala in (Southern), Sri Lanka Tamil-speaking students are more fluent in Sinhala than their Sinhala counterparts who rarely speak Tamil in the classroom or outside (Davis, 2015).

Ideally, in a trilingual education program in Sinhala, Tamil and English are required to accommodate the complex sociocultural and historical aspects of Sri Lanka. Certainly, it is feasible to envisioning and implementing a trilingual education program in Sri Lankan public schools. Davis (2015) demonstrates how an ethnically diverse group of Sri Lankan youth volunteers in an International NGO in Sri Lanka were encouraged to communicate in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Similarly, Wijesekera, Alford, and Mu (2019) present how two public school teachers allowed students to use Sinhala, Tamil, and English in their Mathematics and Citizenship Education classes. Although the primary medium of instruction in these classes was English, the teachers allowed students to use their native languages. More research studies like the above are needed to initiate a multilingual education program in Sri Lanka.

In summary, although the attitude towards English as a weapon is gradually disappearing from the Sri Lankan society, English is seen as the language of power and desired by everyone as a tool to upward social mobility and better education. Most importantly, English is recognized for its “international” value. Therefore, both in public schools and universities different measures are taken to promote education in English. One of such measures taken to improve the English language proficiency of students in public schools in Sri Lanka is the bilingual education program. However, the bilingual education program is intrinsically iniquitous and therefore needs to be rethought and reframed to provide equal opportunities to all students to benefit from it.

In summary, in the 21st century Sri Lanka, the attitude towards English as the language of power is disappearing because it is associated with globalization and Sri Lankans have gained more access to English through modern technology. Mainly, for the contemporary generation, English is associated with music, movies, social media and so on. To address the ever-increasing

need for English and improve the quality of English language education a bilingual education program has been introduced to a selected urban and suburban group of public schools in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, this bilingual education program is fundamentally unjust.

2. Linguistic Analysis of English in Sri Lanka

This section presents a linguistic analysis of the English language in Sri Lanka. This section is important because it explores how conflicting discourses on English language standards impact ELT in Sri Lanka. It is also important because it explores the implications of different designations given to English in Sri Lanka. This section is divided into two main subsections:

1. What variety of English should we teach in Sri Lanka?
2. English as a Second Language, Foreign Language, and a Link Language

The first subsection explores an ongoing debate on English in Sri Lanka between two groups of scholars. One group (which composes the majority) argues that it is Sri Lankan English that should be taught in Sri Lanka, but not British English or any other variety. The opposing group claims that an international variety of English, preferably British English, should be taught in Sri Lanka. The first subsection also deals with the distinction between standard Sri Lankan English and nonstandard Sri Lankan English. The second subsection explores the available literature on three different designations given to English in Sri Lanka: “second language,” “foreign language” and “link language.”

A. What variety of English should we teach in Sri Lanka?

Particularly from the post-1970s sociolinguists in Sri Lanka have made a case for Sri Lankan English as a distinct variety of English (Kirkpatrick, 2010; McArthur, 2002; Mendis &

Rambukwella, 2010). The emergence of a body of work on Sri Lankan English has triggered a debate as to what variety of English should be taught in ESL classes in Sri Lanka. The debate on Sri Lankan English is tied to the question of English language standards and ESL pedagogy. Therefore, this debate has undoubtedly impacted ELT in Sri Lanka mainly as a result of some policymakers and teachers embracing Sri Lankan English and others vociferously rejecting the existence of such a variety.

This section has three subsections:

1. Arguments for Sri Lankan English
2. The distinction between Standard Sri Lankan English and Non-standard Sri Lankan English
3. Arguments against Sri Lankan English

First, this section is important because it juxtaposes the arguments made for and against Sri Lankan English to understand how negotiating between these views could open up opportunities to improve ELT in Sri Lanka. Second, this section is important for me as an ESL teacher to help shape my stance on deciding what linguistic standards I should accommodate in my ESL classes. Finally, this section is important for other ESL teachers in Sri Lanka to decide what English language standards they would accommodate in their courses.

Arguments for Sri Lankan English

De Souza (1979) is the first to make a case for Ceylon English or Sri Lankan English. De Souza (1979) distinguishes between British English and the English spoken by the Sri Lankan elite. His focus is on pronunciation differences between British English and Ceylon English. De Souza (1979) says:

> Our English-speaking elite in Sri Lanka have evolved their own pronunciation... The distribution of phonemes (boarder, border, go, court, fort, lord, stay), the phonetics and phonology of our pronunciation, unaspirated initial p, t, k, clearly variant w etc. and features of intonation distinguished standard Ceylon English, and this kind of English pronunciation should be taught in schools" (p. 43)

Passé (1955) draws on De Souza's work and further develops a case for Sri Lankan English. He identifies that the Sri Lankan form of English has a distinct flavor of its own (influenced by Sinhala and Tamil) regarding pronunciation, intonation, idiom, grammar, and vocabulary. Halverson (2010) and Gunesekera (2010b) validate this argument that Sri Lankan English is significantly influenced by Sinhala and to a certain extent by Tamil.

One of the main arguments made for Sri Lankan English is that there are individuals who were born and raised in Sri Lanka whose mother tongue is English (Kandiah, 1981; Mendis & Rambukwella, 2010). According to Kandiah (1981), Sri Lankan English is "an independent and viable native linguistic organism which has its own distinctive format and organization and which its habitual users acquired in that form as a first language" (p. 92). Therefore, the argument is that there are native speakers of Sri Lankan English and their mother tongue should be recognized as a distinct variety of English.

Contributing to the codification of Sri Lankan English, Gunesekera (2010b), in her book titled *The Post-Colonial Identity of Sri Lankan English* traces back the trajectory of Sri Lankan English to as far as 1896, when a Glossary of Native & Foreign Words occurring in Official Correspondence & Other Documents was published (Gunesekera, 2010b). According to Gunesekera, "Today, English is used for practically all purposes in Sri Lanka, but it is not the English of the colonizer, it is the English of once colonized. It is Sri Lankan English, with its

borrowings and influences from Sinhalese and Tamil" (p. 20). At the outset of her book, she defines Sri Lankan English as "the language used by Sri Lankans who choose to use English for whatever purpose in Sri Lanka" (2010b, p. 11). This definition sounds farfetched and, in her book, Gunesekera contradicts herself by interchangeably using the terms Sri Lankan English and standard Sri Lankan English. However, the purpose of her book is to describe "the English used by the Sri Lankan elite" (p. 24) which is "Standard Sri Lankan English." She notes that there is a reluctance in the Lankan society to accept that Sri Lanka has its own variety of English. The reluctance to accept that Sri Lankan English is a homebred variety of English, according to her, comes from "the colonial belief that English, in particular, belongs to the British and to nobody else" and "the linguistic insecurity of speaking a variety considered inferior by its speakers by virtue of the fact that we believe we have tampered with the original" (Gunesekera, 2010b, p. 20). Like De Souza (1979) and Kandiah (1981), Gunesekera (2010) claims that Sri Lankan English should be taught in schools in its full form (Gunesekera, 2010a).

Michael Meyler also has contributed to the codification of Sri Lankan English with the establishment of an online dictionary titled *Miris Gala* and through his intermittent articles to the online newspaper, *Groundviews*. The main aims of his work are to argue for the existence and recognition of Sri Lankan English as a variety of English and to discuss issues encountered in compiling a dictionary of standard Sri Lankan English. According to Meyler (2009), "Sri Lankan English is – or ought to be – an inclusive term, accommodating all the various ways in which English is used in Sri Lanka, by people from different regions, different ethnic groups, different religions different generations, different social classes and so on" (p. 180). This definition is as broad as the initial definition provided by Gunesekera (2010b). However, he recognizes that Sri Lankan English, defined by Gunesekera (2010b) and the like-minded, is not inclusive in reality.

Hence his acknowledgment is articulated by the phrase "or ought to be." Meyler (2009) underscores something that has been ignored by Gunesekera (2010b), her predecessors, and followers – that the very definition of "Sri Lankan English" is discriminatory.

Reinforcing the case for Sri Lankan English further, scholars have argued that there are dialects of Sri Lankan English. For instance, Fernando (2010) found that there are four dialects of Sri Lankan English as opposed to the two dialects identified by Gunesekera (2010b). Meyler (2007) mentions that there are several sub-varieties of Sri Lankan English. Moreover, according to him "Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers speak different varieties; … the older generation speaks a different language from the younger generation…" (p. x-xi).
However, empirical research is still scarce in this area of study. Certainly, what Parakrama (1995) observed is still valid today:

> All the writing to date [on Sri Lankan English] has been based on random examples and personal experience. Nothing like a large-scale sociolinguistic survey or a systematic study has been undertaken. As a result, the findings of linguists remain more impressionistic than necessary, even the acceptability of the few cited examples are contested. (p. 34)

The above statement can be proven through all the work on Sri Lankan English. For instance, Gunesekera (2010b), Kandiah (1996) and so on, create their own examples rather than taking them from written texts and audio recordings or a systematically collected corpus. Trying to avoid the pitfalls of relying on the researcher's opinion and intuition, a corpus of Sri Lankan English is being compiled (Mendis & Rambukwella, 2010). The only corpus-based study on Sri Lankan English is *The Lexis and Lexicogrammar of Sri Lankan English* by Tobias Bernaisch (2015). Bernaisch (2015) describes the lexicogrammar of Sri Lankan English by comparing it

with Indian English and British English in relation to the occurrences of particle verbs, light-verb constructions and verb complementation.

There are a few books that claim to be teaching Sri Lankan English: the previous and current textbooks prescribed by the Department of Education for the University Entrance Examination syllabus and two books published by Ratnayake: *A Thousand Voiced Choir* (2017a) and *Grammar through Literature* (2017b). *A Thousand Voiced Choir* is written based on her personal experiences as the Chair and the Senior Lecturer of the ELTU of an urban public university. It is interesting because it presents a case study as to how she developed lessons and assessment methods and tested the improvement of the students who followed her curriculum at a university in Sri Lanka. Here, she promotes teaching and learning of Sri Lankan English. In her book *A Thousand Voiced Choir,* she says, "I think English has to be learnt, but that didn't mean that you should look down on your own culture. I hated Western accents in Sinhala or Tamil speakers, I hated making fun of the 'native' accent…" (Ratnayake, 2017a, p. 31). In my view, this statement is interesting because of two reasons. On the one hand, learning the English language has come to the point that English language learners look down upon their own cultures, languages, and values because they are considered impediments in learning English. In such a context, fostering "Sri Lankanness" in the ESL classroom is important. On the other hand, the movement towards codifying and teaching "standard Sri Lankan English" has led to the intolerance of diverse accents used in the English spoken by Sri Lankans. Ratnayake (2017a) sounds nationalistic in her defense of (spoken) Sri Lankan English. However, she does not explain as to why she hates "Western accents in Sinhala or Tamil speakers." This idea is an articulation of a certain form of linguistic purism which can result in discrimination. In my view

what we need is not a system which favors one variety of English and laughs at the use of another, but an approach to ELT that celebrates differences in accents and varied pronunciation.

In *Grammar through Literature*, Ratnayake (2017b) uses a novella and poetry written by her and English poems written in standard British and American English to teach English grammar. In my view, like in most books designed to teach prescriptive grammar, the audience of this book is those who are proficient in English. The absence of poetry by Sri Lankan poets except for her own poetry itself is problematic mainly because poems and prose written in British and American English do not expose students to "Sri Lankan English." Although she says that there is a range of audiences of this book, there is only one – those who are proficient in the English language. This example shows that she believes in teaching grammar explicitly to ESL learners. She says that one of the main objectives of publishing this book was to give access to young students in rural villages to have access to English, yet the problem is how relevant the poems by Thomas Hardy, Emily Dickinson and so on is to the students in rural villages in Sri Lanka. Also, in her book, teaching a distinct variety called Sri Lankan English is not presented. The work on Sri Lankan English is undoubtedly an important one for teachers and policymakers. However, the discussion on Sri Lankan English should move away from its classism, ethnocentrism, and nationalism.

The Distinction between Standard Sri Lankan English and Non-standard Sri Lankan English

The distinction between elite and non-elite English is claimed to be made based on phonology and syntax of two groups: the elite learners of English who learn English as their first language and the non-elite users of English who learned it as their second language (Gunesekera, 2010b; Meyler, 2007). According to Wijetunge (2008), the non-elite variety "is spoken by the majority of Sri Lankan English speakers who have no access or very limited access to English

from birth and who rarely are required to use English in their daily activities" (p. 2). Canagarajah (1993) sees this distinction as a result of "the democratization or popularization of English" (p. 604). In his view, the creation of a "non-standard" variety of English has emerged since unlike in the colonial times, in the postcolonial period a majority of the population has access to English. The definition of standard Sri Lankan English provided by Gunesekera (2010b) is "the English used by the Sri Lankan elite…, which is part and parcel of belonging to the 'English speaking' class" (p. 24). This definition is not based on any linguistic grounds (although it is presented as it is based on pronunciation) but on social class. Thus, the distinction made between the standard and the non-standard forms of English (elite and non-elite) appears to be more sociopolitical than linguistic.

Drawing from Gunesekera (2010b), Wijetunge (2008) presents the following characteristics as defining phonological features of non-elite English. According to Wijetunge (2008), standard Sri Lankan English differs from nonstandard Sri Lankan English mainly in terms of phonology. For instance, she found that the "speakers of "Not pot English" confuse /o/ and /ɔ/., either by substituting /ɔ/ with /o/, or overusing /ɔ/. As a result, these speakers of Sri Lankan English are not able to distinguish between 'hole and hall' or 'coal and call.' In addition, confusion of /p/ and /f/, insertion of lax front close vowel/I/ before consonant clusters (Ex: /Iskuul/ for school), use of /ʃ/ for /s/ and use of /s/ for /z/, are other features… (p. 3). Gunesekera (2010b) also maintains the above. Moreover, it has also been identified that there are syntactic differences which are marked as indicative of the non-elite variety of English in Sri Lanka. However, this very distinction is problematic since the second language learner's speech should not, by any means, be considered a variety or a dialect of English. The labeling of the English spoken by ESL learners in Sri Lanka as "substandard English" has created a negative

environment in which the ESL learner feels ashamed and scared to speak in English. Canagarajah (1993) examines that although English has been popularized in Sri Lanka, it has only provided “limited mobility into lower-middle-class rungs for aspirants” because their English is branded as “non-prestige substandard Sri Lankan English” (p. 604). The paradox is that just by learning ESL one is not recognized as a “fluent” speaker of English because of the gatekeeping of the elite through the benchmark of pronunciation. According to Parakrama (2012), “The term ‘prestige’ invariably describes the elite standard” (p. 111). The standard Sri Lankan English discriminates against those who learn English as a second language. The dilemma faced by the ESL learners in Sri Lanka is succinctly put by Parakrama (2016), when he says “Non-elite users of English [in Sri Lanka] are caught in a double bind as they are doubly penalized whether they speak or not” (p. 23). Ironically, there is a demand for English and a need to learn it, but when the ESL learner uses English in real life situations, they are laughed at rather than accepted and celebrated. According to Canagarajah (2005), “The English proficient also found a linguistic criterion to distinguish themselves from the rest in order to maintain their vested interests: Even though both their dialects were different from British English, there was ‘standard Sri Lankan English,’ while the dialect of the lower status groups was stigmatized as ‘non-standard Sri Lankan English” (p. 424).

Standard Sri Lankan English also discriminates against non-Sinhala speakers of English because it is based on the elite Sinhala community. Gunesekera (2010b), states that “The prestigious variety… considered to be Standard Sri Lankan English, is based on Sinhalese” (p. 34). Therefore, “Standard Sri Lankan English” is not only classist but also ethnocentric. In other words, an individual whose mother tongue happens to be Tamil will never be considered a speaker of Standard Sri Lankan English.

Certainly, it is crucial to question why ESL learners' English should be designated as "nonstandard Sri Lankan English" or "substandard Sri Lankan English" or "not pot English." The only identifiable motive behind this naming is the need to maintain the superiority of those who speak English as a first language in Sri Lanka. The branding of ESL learners' English as "nonstandard Sri Lankan English" in Sri Lanka also invokes linguistic fossilization (Selinker, 1993) further stigmatizing the common English usages (phonological, lexical and syntactic) of ESL learners.

Arguments against Sri Lankan English

Several scholars in Sri Lanka have rejected the arguments made for Sri Lankan English. For instance, Goonetilleke (2011) states, "English in Sri Lanka has not evolved to the required stage to be declared as a standard language" (p. 1). He further argues that promoting Sri Lankan English would contribute to widening the gap between the English language proficiency of underprivileged and privileged students. Goonetilleke (2011) maintains the following on standard Sri Lankan English:

> The concept of Kaduwa (Sword) has emerged in a different guise; the new Kaduwa (Sword) of oppression is the so-called Sri Lankan English. The privileged classes will learn an international variety of English and will be able to maintain their higher position in society permanently. The underprivileged classes who are being taught a local variety of English will be further disadvantaged. Those who will stand to benefit will be the elites. (p. 1)

Due to similar reasons pointed out by Goonetilleke (2011), Fonseka calls "Sri Lankan English" a "fallacy." According to Fonseka (2003) "Sri Lankan English" is a misnomer, and it confuses the learner as well as objectives of learning the English language. To avoid confusion,

he proposes to "teach the learners an internationally recognizable standard form of English" (p. 7). He further notes that "…the standard form of English in Britain is today represented by 'BBC English' while its counterpart in the United States, by 'network English.' The best solution for Sri Lanka is to promote one of them rather than creating a form of English of her own which would have no appeal to the international educated speech community" (p.7-8). Both, Goonetilleke (2011) and Fonseka (2003) agree that an international variety of English, preferably British or American should be taught in Sri Lanka.

Although it can be argued that the standards of "Standard Sri Lankan English" are set by the elite speakers of English in Sri Lanka and discriminates against ESL learners, it cannot be justified that British English or any other standard variety of English is less discriminatory or fair. I strongly reject the argument that spoken English in Sri Lanka should be imitating an international variety. On the one hand, the phonological, lexical, and syntactic characteristics that have been identified as standard Sri Lankan English (in speech) are more familiar to ESL learners in Sri Lanka than phonological, lexical, and syntactic characteristics of British English. On the other hand, If Sri Lankans are supposed to learn spoken British, American, Australian or Canadian English (which are also not homogeneous entities) is the Sri Lankan government going to employ British, American, Australian or Canadian English speakers to teach English? Are the current English teachers going to be trained to teach any selected variety of (spoken) English? How is any variety going to be selected? Neither Goonetilleke nor Fonseka answers any of these pedagogically important questions.

In fact, it is from Kandiah (1979), a proponent of Sri Lankan English that one could learn what variety should be selected as the written standard of English. Kandiah (1979) mentions the following:

> Unlike informal speech, which is generally taken as much for granted as the air we breathe, writing is one of those communicative modes that invariably conjures up the explicit notion of a standard, together with the judgments associated with it. And it happens that when the Lankan English user is required in any communicative situation to make such judgments, he unhesitatingly plumps for the standard of the original model [British English], rejecting those well established and distinctive forms and features that define the form of English that he so naturally uses in everyday speech (p. 103).

He recognizes that British English is the written standard in Sri Lanka and the spoken variety of English is influenced by native languages and significantly shifted from British English. At the same time, he identifies that there are well-established forms and features that are Sri Lankan that can be used in formal written texts. The sociolinguistic character of English in Sri Lanka seems to be similar to Sinhala and Tamil languages that are diglossic. Certainly, drawing from Tamil and Sinhala, of which the spoken variety is learned through day to day use and exposure, and the written standards are learned at school one could come to the conclusion that the English language teacher should teach the written standard when students write but allow them to speak the variety that they acquire gradually through interactions with their teachers, peers, and the community at large. This way, I believe, a broadening of the standard (Parakrama, 2012) at least in the spoken form will empower the non-elite English speaker in Sri Lanka.

In summary, the variety of English that should be taught in Sri Lanka because of ideological, linguistic and social reasons. While some scholars have found distinct differences between Sri Lankan English and British English, some scholars dismiss the importance of the study of Sri Lankan English. The discourse on Sri Lankan English has its own limitations and

therefore discriminatory. However, the solution for this is not embracing British English as the most suitable variety to be taught in ESL classes in Sri Lanka.

B. English as a Second, Foreign and a Link Language in Sri Lanka

This section focuses on existing literature on English is a second language, foreign language or link language in Sri Lanka. This section is important because understanding these different labels associated with English in Sri Lanka can inform ELT.

English as a second language

As mentioned above, for a minority of Colombo-centered elites in Sri Lanka, English is the first language, and for a majority, it is their second language (Mendis & Rambukwella, 2010). This classification is done based on how English is learned and used, proficiency, and choice, Kandiah (1979). Kandiah (1979) calls the mother tongue speakers of English as "habitual users" of English who have "picked up" English naturally without formal English language instruction. Roberts, Raheem, & Colin-Thome (1989) reports that English had become the mother tongue of the majority of the Burghers in Sri Lanka. This argument is confirmed by Fernando (1996) who notes that Burghers in Sri Lanka had embraced English as their mother tongue in as early as the 1940s and 1950s and they continued to regard English as their mother tongue. Based on a study conducted in 2008, Rajapakse claims that Burghers still consider English as their mother tongue.

In contrast, for the majority in Sri Lanka, cutting across ethnic and regional boundaries, English is a second language. This has been the case since the outset of the postcolonial period. According to Ruberu (2001),

> the Special Committee on Education (Kannangara Committee) in 1943 recommended that "the study of the English language must be retained in the school curriculum so that English should be universally taught as a compulsory Second Language, introduced in the third standard in the primary schools. (p. 18)

This extract portrays the importance of ESL in the entire education system from primary education to tertiary education. According to Mendis & Rambukwella (2010), for those who learn ESL, English has functional value, meaning that it is used only for particular activities or purposes rather than in every aspect of life. Also, it is important to note that English as a second language means that English is used in day to day life, unlike a foreign language which is not used in the day to day life of the learners.

English as a foreign language

Based on regional differences and access to English language teachers and facilities, some scholars argue that English should be treated as a foreign language in Sri Lanka. The argument made is that even though English is taught as a second language in Sri Lanka, based on the context, it becomes a foreign language to some students. For example, in rural areas in Sri Lanka, students do not even have teachers to teach English. Even though most of the experts in the field agree that English is a second language in Sri Lanka, there are a few scholars who believe that English must be taught in Sri Lanka as a foreign language. For instance, Duraiswamy (1998) discourages the teaching of ESL starting from grade one. She says, "… the teaching of English should come later as it is alien in our surroundings especially in the rural areas. Once the two national languages are well established in the minds of the young primary students, English could be introduced" (p. 23). For Duraiswamy (1998) English is not a Sri Lankan language.

Considering the role played by English in Sri Lanka, it is rather problematic to call English in Sri Lanka a foreign language. However, according to the National Institute of Education, the objectives of the English language syllabi of the grades three to five are:

> [To] lay the foundation of the gradual development of the students' abilities to communicate effectively in English through speaking, reading, writing and listening; Enrich students' participation in primary school through positive, enjoyable foreign language learning experience (as cited in Little et al., 2018, p. 3)

This shows that even the National Institute of Education considers English as a foreign language. Such an attitude is premised on the notion that English language learners in Sri Lanka are not exposed to English as they go about their day to day activities.

In my view, calling English a foreign language in the Sri Lankan context is a misnomer. The confusion is well articulated in statements such as “Although English is a foreign language, it is taught as a second language” (Sanmuganathan, 2017 p. 623). It is true that the exposure to the English language in rural villages is rather limited, yet it is not as limited as exposure to French, Japanese or Korean. Such languages are not used outside of language classrooms in Sri Lanka. However, English is used in advertisements, TV and radio programs, music and so on. Other than the fact that there are first language speakers of English in Sri Lanka, this itself is sufficient to maintain that English is not a foreign language but a second language for the majority of people in Sri Lanka.

English as a link language

Given the linguistic, religious, and ethnic diversity in Sri Lanka, most of the time English plays the role of a lingua franca or a link language. Perera and Kularathne (2014) trace the origin

of English as a link language to the period when ethnic tensions between the Sinhalese and the Tamils emerged:

> [Need for English as a link language] was felt when ethnic conflict emerged in Sri Lanka in 1950s grew up to a civil war in 1980s threatening the peaceful existence among people and this, consequently, gave rise to a thought a link language can be used as a catalyst to reestablish endangered peace and harmony in the country. (p. 108)

The purpose of designating English as the link language was to facilitate inter-ethnic communication and perhaps ethnic harmony. Attanayake (2018) notes that it was the late president J. R. Jayawardhana's idea to promote English as the link language in Sri Lanka to bridge the gap between Sinhalese and Tamils. According to the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (1978), "The Official Language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala. Tamil shall also be an official language. English shall be the link language" (Article 18). Through this Act, the constitution of Sri Lanka attributes a political function to English rather than an educational one. Rather than facilitating interethnic communication, English created a space for the Tamil-speakers and Sinhala-speakers to maintain the linguistic and cultural distance between them.

Although promoted as top-down language policy, the use of English as a link language in Sri Lanka is shared by both Sinhala and Tamil speakers. According to Canagarajah (1999), English plays the role of a link language for the Tamils in Sri Lanka because the government institutions mainly operate in Sinhala. He says:

> It [English] serves as a link language between these [government] institutions and the civilian population, so the Education Ministry, for instance, is forced to use English, rather than Sinhala, when corresponding with Tamil parents, teachers, and education

> officers. The Tamil community also needs English as a bridge to the symbolic and material rewards that are tied to international education and professional centers (Canagarajah, 1999, p.71)

As Canagarajah explains, the Tamil-speakers in Sri Lanka learned English at least for two reasons: to communicate with government Sinhala speaking personnel and to build or maintain links with the global community.

To claim that "English became the effective lingua franca between the two communities [Sinhala speakers and the Tamil speakers]" (Raheem and Ratwatte, 2004, p. 97) is too simplistic because such a statement downplays the political function of the 1978 language policy. Also, this statement is ironic because English was not a neutral language. In fact, given its political history and the violence perpetrated by the British, it was more politically loaded than Sinhala or Tamil. It is unanimously agreed upon by scholars that Sinhala and Tamil should be recognized as official languages in Sri Lanka and English should be the link language and this attitude continues till today. For instance, Kumar (2015) in his newspaper article titled *English: Lanka's Only Feasible Link Language*, argues that the Sri Lankan government should facilitate English language education because "in Lanka, only English can serve as link language between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities" (p. 2). He argues that Sinhala-speakers and Tamil-speakers do not have any incentive to learn each other's languages and therefore promoting English in Sri Lanka is essential. However, up until today, having English as the link language has not contributed much to ethnic harmony in Sri Lanka.

Attanayake (2018) proposes that English as a link language in Sri Lanka should be redefined because of the changing educational system in Sri Lanka. According to Attanayeke (2018), English links Sri Lankan students with new knowledge and scientific advancement. She

further argues that English is a link language links one with his/her profession because English is highly used both in the private and the public sectors. However, she does not problematize the notion of English as a link language for inter-ethnic communication. She maintains that the current interpretation of English as a link language should be broadened.

In summary, the debate not only whether Sri Lankan English should be taught or not but also whether something called Sri Lankan English exists as a distinct variety of English is an important discussion that has been continuing at least since the 1970s. The proponents of Sri Lankan English and those who oppose it seem to have some validity to both their claims and some negotiation should take place since this debate has been impacting the ELT process. Moreover, one of the biggest issues in the arguments posited by both groups is their self-contradictory nature. The proponents of Sri Lankan English who claim that Sri Lankan English is the English used by Sri Lankans (including every English language user in Sri Lanka), unwittingly contradicts this by making the distinction between substandard and standard English and calling the so-called standard variety Sri Lankan English. Also, those who criticize the arguments made for Sri Lankan English want to teach British English (spoken and written) in Sri Lanka to empower rural students without considering pedagogical issues. Based on the critical literature review, it can be concluded that due to varied reasons, the terms "English as a second language," "English as a foreign language" and "English as a link language" are used in Sri Lanka. On the one hand, these terms are used to refer to English because of historical and pedagogical reasons. Although there is a clear explanation as to why the terms "link" and "second" are used to qualify English in Sri Lanka, there seems to be no such clear reason as to why the term "foreign language" is used. Whatever terms are used, the English language has an unignorable presence in the lives of the Sri Lankan. The key issue is that the uncritical use of

various designations used to refer to English may lead to confusions that affect ESL teaching and policymaking.

3. Analysis of English Language Teaching in Sri Lanka

This section reviews available literature on ELT in Sri Lanka under the following three subsections:

1. Responding to glocal demands for English
2. Typical postcolonial challenges faced by ESL teachers and learners in Sri Lanka
3. Need for a transformation in pedagogy in ELT

A. Responding to glocal demands for English

Internationalization of Sri Lankan universities, opportunities offered by study abroad programs (such as Erasmus Mundus Program) to undergraduates, and the flow of students to English speaking countries such as the U.S., the U.K., Canada, and Australia for their postgraduate studies have increased the demand for English in Sri Lanka. Consequently, ESL teachers are faced with the challenge of catering to these increasing global demands. At the same time, there is an ever-increasing demand for English in the local job market, both private and public, despite the general attitude towards English as the handmaiden of westernization and consequently a threat to national and cultural identity.

ELT around the world is intrinsically tied to globalization. According to Ranasinghe & Ranasinghe (2012), "the importance attached to English as a medium of instruction increased further during the last two decades after Sri Lanka became increasingly exposed to globalization" (p. 205). Consequently, the demand for English obligated schools and universities to change the medium of instruction from the students' native languages (Sinhala and Tamil) to the English language. However, Ranasinghe & Ranasinghe (2012) examine that only a limited number of

reforms were carried out in state universities in Sri Lanka "to facilitate the shift towards the English medium education mainly due to resource constraints" (p. 205). Thus, though not successfully, Sri Lankan universities have started to accommodate global demands by moving into English medium education from native language-based instruction. However, not all departments in public universities have been able to keep up with the changes.

A project funded by the World Bank gained much popularity in Sri Lankan public universities because it was focused on improving ELT. The project was titled Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education (IRQUE). However, although the project promised to enhance the quality of overall university education, much emphasis was put on improving the English language skills of the undergraduates (Perera & Canagarajah, 2010). As the project brought in important financial resources to the universities (in varying degrees), the university teachers were pressed to implement programs imposed by the project. Such World Bank-funded projects continue to influence public universities in Sri Lanka. For instance, Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) is another World Bank-funded project that was initiated in 2019 to support the higher education system in Sri Lanka. Standardized English language tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) also influence English language teaching in Sri Lanka. University students take private English lessons to pass these examinations aiming for career prospects and higher educational opportunities in countries such as the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Australia and so on. Private IELTS and TOEFL training centers have been established throughout major cities in Sri Lanka to cater to this increasing demand. In these courses and general ESL classes, according to Parakrama (2012), "They [students] are taught that it is necessary for the achievement of international intelligibility criteria, which is a

requirement imposed by the Global North" (p. 113). These examinations impose American or British English language standards on Sri Lankan students who have no or minimal access to these varieties of English (Parakrama, 2012).

The emphasis on catering to global demands may lead to undermining local realities. In *Critical ethnography of a Sri Lankan classroom: Ambiguities in student opposition to reproduction through ESOL*, Canagarajah (1993) presents how students felt disconnected with an American English language textbook that was used in an ESL class in a university in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. According to Canagarajah teachers need to identify (2005), "local social practices, communicative conventions, linguistic realities, and knowledge paradigms for actively informing language policies and practices for classroom and communities in local contexts" (p. xi). Canagarajah (2005) found that ESL students face a conflict “face between cultural integrity, on the one hand, and socioeconomic mobility, on the other” (p. 601). To negotiate their cultural values while learning English, by learning “only grammar in a product-oriented manner” enabled them to somewhat detach themselves “from cultural alienation while being sufficiently examination oriented to pass the course and fulfill a socioeconomic necessity” (p. 601). He also found that “they oppose the alien discourses behind the language and textbook” (617). Therefore, he suggests that ESL teachers should make sure that culturally appropriate teaching materials and textbooks should be used in ESL classes. Meyler (2011) also emphasizes the need to design ESL teaching materials ensuring that the content presented in them relate to local contexts and the "language introduced is consistent with the local standard" (p. 182). However, Meyler (2011) believes that ESL students should be exposed to different varieties of English as needed. As a result, ESL teachers are faced with the challenge of not only catering to global demands but also localizing ESL pedagogy to accommodate the cultural realities of the students.

B. Typical postcolonial challenges faced by ESL teachers and learners in Sri Lanka

Being a postcolonial country, ESL teachers and students face certain typical postcolonial challenges such as resistance to the English language, dilemmas in relation to choosing a linguistic standard, urban-rural divide, lack of continuous professional development for teachers and so on.

The undergraduates of Sri Lankan public universities have the challenge of overcoming the negative attitude to English perpetuated by the university subculture. The negative attitude towards English in the university as the language of colonization, classism, and discrimination continues from the post-colonial period to the 21st century. For instance, Gunesekera (2010b) refers to a divide in the student body based on English language proficiency. She says, "in the 1970s and 80s, the distinction in the Sri Lankan universities was between the "Haras" and the "Kults"…what divided the "Haras" from the "Kults" was knowledge of English… The conflict between these two culturally different groups was an ongoing one" (p. 22). According to her, those who were proficient in English (Kults) were looked down upon by most of the students (Haras) who were not proficient in English. This conflict is still going on in all the universities in Sri Lanka. Today the words "Haras" and "Kults" are replaced by "raggers" and "anti-raggers" respectively. According to the findings of a recent study conducted in a university, mostly the university subculture seems to rule the process of learning English (Chandradasa & Jayawardane, 2017). They found that the values in the university subculture such as unity in the student body by embracing Sinhala and Tamil nationalism, rejecting English as the language of the colonizers and the upper class adversely affect the English language learning process. Moreover, they found that particularly during the hazing period students come to the ESL classes only to escape from getting hazed. According to Rathnayake (2013), "the negative attitudes

inculcated thus in the students at the initial stages cause student absenteeism in English classes… these distractions impede the smooth functioning of the General English program which in turn has a negative impact on the qualitative development of the undergraduates." (p. 71).

World Englishes (Kachru & Nelson, 1996; Melchers & Shaw, 2013) is a very important subdiscipline within linguistics that has influenced English language teaching, particularly in postcolonial countries. As mentioned in an earlier section, like in India, Pakistan, Singapore, many scholars in Sri Lanka have made a case for Sri Lankan English (Gunesekera, 2010b; Kandiah, 1979). However, this has caused a controversy as to what standard should be taught in ESL classes. For instance, Gunesekera (2010 a) claims that although Sri Lankans laugh at British accents which occurs in the speech of Sri Lankans, still there are people who prefer received pronunciation over Sri Lankan English. Even within Sri Lankan English, researchers have identified different dialects (Fernando, 2010; Gunesekera, 2010b). This invokes the question of whether one dialect can be called Standard Sri Lankan English (Fernando, 2010). In contrast, as mentioned above there are scholars who argue that an international variety of English should be taught in ESL classes in Sri Lanka (Goonetilleke, 2011; Fonseka, 2003). However, Kandiah (1979) has identified while Sri Lankans speak a distinct variety of English, the standard British English is accepted as the written variety. As a result of this ongoing dialogue on English in Sri Lanka, ESL teachers and curriculum developers are faced with the challenge of having their own stance. More research is needed to search for common ground and create a common consensus as to what variety or dialect of English should be taught in ESL classes in Sri Lanka.

Many scholars have identified that ESL teachers in Sri Lanka lack continuous professional development after their preliminary training period in national colleges of education (Raheem, 2004; Wijeskera, 2014). Attanayake (2017) identified that in the university ELT in Sri

Lanka "…teachers show less concern for course objectives as a main criterion for lesson materials preparation…" (p. 243). The lack of continuous professional development has been a serious challenge faced by ESL teachers because their training in curriculum design, lesson planning and so on are mainly limited to the knowledge and experiences that they had during their three years of teacher training. According to Raheem (2004), "There is a necessity for teachers to recognize the need for further professional and/or pedagogical development and to strive to move beyond the initial training given at the beginning of their careers" (p. 43). Wijeskera (2014), points out that sustainable and continuous teacher training is important because it is teachers who play a central role in "curriculum implementation and their repertoire of skills, professional knowledge, perceptions, pedagogic practice, all contribute to instructional curriculum or what they do in classrooms." (p. 4). Therefore, much needs to be done to develop the field of ELT pedagogy in Sri Lanka.

C. *Need for a transformation in ESL pedagogy*

ELT in Sri Lanka since independence is considered to be a complete failure (Passé, 1955; Parakrama, 2016; Wijesekera, 2012). For instance, Souza (1979), states: "I am afraid that the entire English teaching programme in Sri Lanka, including the teaching programmes of our University Campuses, is a frightful waste. Something is very wrong with ends and means, with targets and standards" (p. 38). Scholars have pointed out that teaching materials and methodologies used in ESL teaching in Sri Lanka are inappropriate and carry negative attitudes towards learners (Parakrama, 2016). Therefore, changes to ELT in Sri Lanka have been suggested by local and international scholars (Meyler, 2011; Attanayake, 2017).

The need to transform the typical ESL classroom arises in all aspects of teaching ESL such as pedagogy, evaluation, context, and resources. At a broader level, it has been identified that regional disparities significantly affect ESL teaching in Sri Lanka (Wijesekera, 2012). Lack of trained teachers and inadequate material resources such as textbooks have become a huge impediment in rural public schools in Sri Lanka. For instance, the recommendations of the National Policy Framework on General Education (2003) proposed by the Presidential Task Force have not been effectively implemented in rural schools. Mallawa and Fernando (2003) found that activity-based oral English recommended by the National Policy Framework on General Education (2003) has not been successfully implemented in all 17 districts considered in their study. Gunewardena, Wijetunge, and Perera (2003) found that strengthening policy measures at the elementary and middle school ESL education was not successful. Wijesekera (2005) less than one percent of the students in Sri Lankan schools received bilingual education in English and their native language. Finally, Wijeratne, Cumaranatunge, and Perera (2003) maintain that the Sri Lankan public schools have not been able to strengthen the high school general English program to improve the employability of students. As solutions to such issues, Wijesekera (2012) proposes that measures should be taken to effectively communicate new policies to teachers, to monitor ESL teaching in public schools, and develop teacher education. To bridge the cultural gap between the English language and the local students Meyler (2011) proposes that teachers should create or have access to teaching materials which are focused on teaching Sri Lankan English. According to Meyler (2011), "Sri Lankan English is also relevant in the area of teaching and learning resources, such as dictionaries, which are seen as valuable resources for language teachers and learners. Moreover, yet the most widely available and authoritative dictionaries are of limited relevance to the local context" (p. 182).

Even at the university level issues about ESL pedagogy have been identified (Parakrama, 2016; Attanayake, 2017). Parakrama (2016) identifies that ESL teachers equalize English language errors with (lack of) intelligence of the ESL learners and contribute to perpetuating a negative attitude towards ESL learners. He states:

> … once the mistakes [in the English language of the learner] are fixed, and only once they are fixed, are we ready to recognize that the student is capable of higher order thinking. If he can't get his grammar and spelling right then, he cannot be intelligent or sensitive enough to be ironic, thoughtful and scholarly. The double discrimination is that language errors preempt serious engagement with substance so that while mistakes are penalized the ideas expressed by students are devalued too. (Parakrama, 2016, p. 136)

The deficit view that ESL teachers have towards their students has adversely affected ESL pedagogy because the most emphasis is on the eradication of errors. Parakrama (2016) further examines that the ESL teaching (particularly textbooks) is usually catered towards a model student who "[has] access to a luxurious lifestyle" (p. 136). He states, “The sad reality is that students who don't fit this model are marginalized and alienated, even demeaned…" (Parakrama, 2016, p. 136). Moreover, according to Parakrama (2016), most of the teaching materials used in ESL teaching are alienating and "the students' own experiences, and lifestyles are, in effect devalued through under-emphasis and trivialization. Hence, the linguistic and cultural insecurity that the average student faces when confronted with English is reinforced (p. 136-7). Gajasinghe (2014) also claims that there is a mismatch between ESL teaching material and the sociocultural space that the university students occupy. In his presentation, Gajasinghe (2014) argues that the use of controversial materials in the ESL classroom can help ESL teachers to make their ESL teaching materials more relevant to the ideological space the students occupy.

Teachers' awareness of language politics has been identified as a critical requirement to become an inclusive ESL teacher in Sri Lanka. For example, Canagarajah (1993) points out the importance of considering the ESL classroom as a political site and position classroom research to identify the ideological conflicts played out in it. He says, "Teachers are in fact well-disposed to the study of the politics of language learning since they are crucially situated in the actual site where varying ideological forces from outside the classroom converge to shape the learning process" (p. 155). However, he does not provide teachers how to use their awareness of how "varying ideological forces from outside the classroom converge to shape the learning process" (p. 155) can be used as a resource in their ESL teaching.

In short, this section explored how ESL teachers and educational institutions have tried to accommodate both global and local demands. There are also many other challenges identified both from the side of the ESL learners like the university subculture and the side of the teachers such as the lack of professional development training. The need for transformation in ESL teaching methods and materials is one of the main concerns of the scholars in the field. However, there is an apparent shortage of research papers and books providing concrete ideas as to how teachers could overcome challenges that they face in ELT in Sri Lanka.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MY PRACTICE IN AN URBAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN SRI LANKA

This chapter is divided into the following two sections:

1. Seven principles which will guide my future ESL teaching
2. Guiding principles in practice: Three concrete examples

The first section of this chapter presents seven guiding principles that will steer my future ESL teaching in Sri Lanka. In this section, first, each of the guiding principles is defined drawing from cutting edge research on (second/foreign/heritage) language teaching. After that, I will selectively reflect on my ESL teaching experiences in Sri Lanka explaining why the particular guiding principle considered is important. The second section of the first section is dedicated to discussing how my future ESL teaching will change based on these guiding principles.

In the second section, I describe three concrete examples from the new syllabus that is developed as a crucial part of this MA thesis demonstrating how my future ESL teaching in an urban public university in Sri Lanka will change. First, a description of the assignment will be provided referring to the assignment guidelines come under appendices (see Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, Appendix D). Second, I will explain how some of the guiding principles complement each other in the selected assignment to make my future ESL teaching more effective and meaningful for the students. Third, I will present implication or transferability of these assignments to other ESL teachers in Sri Lanka and other similar post-colonial contexts.

This chapter is important because it presents how and why my future ESL teaching in an urban public university in Sri Lanka will change. Likewise, reading this section might encourage ESL teachers in Sri Lanka. Moreover, the seven guiding principles which will inform my future

ESL teaching are transferable to English dominated post-colonial countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and so on. However, the seven guiding principles presented in the following section are not to be perceived as a panacea for all issues in ESL teaching in Sri Lanka or to be perceived as a set of guidelines that all teachers should follow.

1. Seven Principles which will Guide My Future ESL Teaching

The following six guiding principles are adopted from Schwarzer and Petrón (2005):

i. Students use authentic materials for authentic purposes and with authentic audiences.

ii. Students and teachers negotiate the curriculum of the class.

iii. The whole is taught first, and the parts are understood later.

iv. Language is developmentally constructed.

v. A community of learners which extends beyond the classroom is created.

vi. Critical pedagogy provides the framework for language learning (p. 575 – 577).

Schwarzer and Petrón (2005) discuss the above guiding principles in the context of teaching Spanish as a heritage language. Nonetheless, these guiding principles are very much applicable to teaching ESL as well. The guiding principle that is added to supplement the above mentioned six guiding principles is that *Translingualism is encouraged as a fundamental means of language teaching and language acquisition.* Since all the guiding principles are interrelated and complement each other, they do not follow a particular order or a hierarchy of importance. In other words, every guiding principle is equally important. This section presents how theory informs practice.

Guiding Principle 01: Students and teachers negotiate the curriculum of the ESL class

Definition

In a typical ESL classroom, the teaching methodology, assessment criteria, teaching materials and all the other aspects involving pedagogy and learning are decided by the teacher. The teacher has complete authority over students, and planning assignments and classroom activities. The authority of the teacher gives the impression to the ESL learner that the teacher is not to be doubted or challenged. Therefore, the power that the teacher has over the students negatively affects the learning process. In Freirean terms, the teacher-centered traditional model of teaching makes teachers treat their students as “empty vessels” waiting to be filled by the teacher’s knowledge (Freire, 1985a). Therefore, experts in education have emphasized the importance of moving away from the method of education that Freire (1985a) termed "the banking method," to make the classroom student-centered. One strategy used to change the power relations between the teacher and the students is negotiating the curriculum with the students.

There is a considerable number of research studies that point out the benefits of negotiating the curriculum by the students and teachers. These research studies identify developing a sense of ownership of what the students learn, throughout the process of learning, as a primary result of the negotiation of the syllabus. According to Glasby & Macdonald (2013), the practice of negotiating the curriculum provides an opportunity to maximize the learning productivity mainly because the sense of ownership to learning comes within the learners and they feel a sense of commitment to learning. In typical classrooms, the power dynamics centered

around teaching and learning inevitably lead the students to feel that the teacher does not recognize their voices in the process of learning. Therefore, it is crucial to share power in the classroom to make the teaching process more engaging. This point is highlighted by Bohny et al. (2016) who state, "when classroom power is shared, there is a negotiation of norms and assignments, which gives students the opportunity to think critically and problematize situations" (p. 189). Emphasizing the role of the teacher in negotiating the curriculum with the students, Schwarzer (2011) states that teachers must "negotiate the curriculum with the students while using students' interests as a springboard to cover the 'mandated' curriculum" (p. 149). According to him, negotiating the curriculum is vital because that boosts students' interests and they feel that the teacher is considering their interests as essential resources and topics of discussion to be used in the ESL class.

Moreover, negotiation of the curriculum with the students helps create a more inclusive learning environment in a classroom which is rich with diversity. Howley and Tannehill (2014) state the following:

> Negotiation may promote successful learning that requires the teacher to value difference, scope, variety, diversity, inclusivity, and change through understanding the heterogeneity of the class, approaching learning as an active process, and valuing students' knowledge and interests. (p. 193)

When the curriculum is negotiated, the students feel that their teacher recognizes their voices and values their ideas. The opportunity created for the students through the negotiation of the curriculum can boost the self-esteem of the students, and make the students realize that the

teacher respects them. It is also important to note that it is the teacher's responsibility to carefully plan and decide what can is negotiable and what is not negotiable with the students.

Based on the above discussion, the guiding principle: *students and teachers negotiate the curriculum of the ESL class* can be defined as the ESL teacher's stance and practices of creating an engaging space for students to contribute to developing the curriculum by giving the students an opportunity to express what they expect from the course, and the teachers attempt to meet the expectations of the students within the constraints of the course.

Past Experiences

At the urban public university that I taught ESL, the teaching materials were designed and prescribed by the relatively experienced teachers at the ELTU. However, at the time I was teaching ELTU (2014-2017) the ELTU did not have a formal syllabus for any of the ESL courses it offered. Usually, the focus of the informal syllabus was to teach grammar in isolation and to teach reading, speaking, writing and listing as separate language skills (For an outline of topics that was used in one of the courses offered by the ELTU see Appendix F). According to the provided outline, the mid-semester examination was a listening quiz. For this examination, students were prepared by giving them five to six practice listening quizzes. Moreover, each quiz took around two hours every week to be completed and discussed. All the audio clips used for listening activities were taken from IELTS practice tests. Usually, the end semester examination had several grammar-based questions, a comprehension question and a question where the students had to write a newspaper article on a given topic. When I was asked to teach such lessons, and administer such examinations, I always felt uncomfortable because intuitively I felt that this was not good teaching. All the ESL classes were teacher-centered, and the lecture

method was used when explaining reading passages and grammar activities. Occasionally, there were group activities that seemed to be effective. However, the lack of lesson planning was a significant issue in ESL teaching at the Sri Lankan urban public university.

At infrequent staff meetings, when I raised questions regarding changing the teaching materials and how we evaluate our students, senior teachers at the ELTU often resisted that and challenged me to design a syllabus on my own if I have issues with the existing teaching materials and methods of evaluation. At that point, I was not able to design a syllabus on my own because I had no training in curriculum design and lesson planning.

Reflecting on this experience, I realize that none of the ESL teachers at the ELTU had received training in curriculum design and they were teaching English the way that they were taught by their teachers or what they intuitively understood as "good teaching." For instance, the outline of the topics (see Appendix F) had been used for more than 20 years at the ELTU. There were other novice teachers who were dissatisfied with the ways they were teaching ESL and evaluating the English language competency of their students, but they too did not have the required training to change their teaching materials, teaching methods and methods of evaluation.

In my ESL classes, I had a lot of power and students seemed to accept whatever I taught them. At least they did not openly resist me when I was teaching them. They seemed to accept that the teacher knew what to teach and how to teach it. Therefore, the students were waiting for the teacher to make all the decisions for them. However, I have never asked my students what they would like to learn in the ESL classes or how I could help them better with their academic needs as their ESL teacher.

In contrast, in the ESL teaching methods course that I took in a large public university in the U.S. for my MA degree, the teacher negotiated the curriculum with the students through several methods. At the outset of the class, the teacher asked the students as to how he could teach them better and made accommodations for the students who learned differently. Also, in the midsemester survey, the teacher asked the students to tell him two things that they like about his teaching and two things that they would like to change. Towards the end of the semester, he provided them with the opportunity to select a topic of their interest for the final research project and provided several topics from which the students could choose. When negotiating the curriculum, the teacher clearly stated the non-negotiables. For instance, attendance, reading the required chapters, doing the required number of assignments and so on were non-negotiables. After experiencing how the curriculum of the ESL teaching methods class was negotiated, I realized that this is a practice that should be adopted in my ESL classes in Sri Lanka.

Future Implementations

To make sure that I am aware of expectations of my students, on the first day of the class they will be given a simple survey which includes questions which are focused on finding their expectations of the course. Some of the sample questions are as follows: "What do you expect to learn in this ESL class?", "What is the most important quality of your favorite professor?", "Tell me one thing that your instructor needs to know to teach you better?" and so on. When the students feel that what they are doing in an ESL class has direct relevance to their academic needs they feel motivated to engage in the learning process.

In the new syllabus developed for my future teaching (see Appendix A) in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, the students will be given a choice between writing a research

paper or a report (see Appendix B). Based on their immediate academic needs the students can decide whether they want to write a research paper or a report. The course requires students to read research papers, and for that, they are requested to bring research papers that they are expected to read in other courses. Furthermore, the students in my ESL class will be given the opportunity to do an oral presentation on their research papers or reports for extra credit. This negotiation is necessary not only to motivate the students but also because there is a general fear of the students to speak in English as opposed to writing it. Therefore, when the presentation is not compulsory, the students will feel less threatened by the idea of presenting his/her research paper or report to the class. Also, this negotiation will particularly motivate the students who feel the need to get a better grade.

The non-negotiables in this class will be attendance, the final examination, writing a research paper or a report, and writing the translingual dialogue journal. Correspondingly, writing drafts, peer reviewing them, and submitting them for instructor's feedback are also non-negotiable. As mentioned above, negotiating the curriculum does not mean that students decide entirely what is to be taught in the classroom. The negotiation process takes place within a pre-constructed structure for the course.

Guiding Principle 02: The whole is taught first, and the parts are understood later

Definition

When a child learns his/her native language, he/she does not learn vocabulary and grammar in isolation. Children learn language by interacting with their family and their community and by being exposed to language via different media. In every instance, they get exposed to the whole language including extralinguistic expressions. However, in second

language learning, particularly ESL learning, usually, students are taught vocabulary and grammar first, before teaching them how to use language in real life situations. This practice has been the norm for decades. However, some scholars argue that languages should be taught holistically so that the students understand or acquire the parts in the process of learning the whole.

The language learning process is meaningful when students are exposed to the target language in its complete sense. Teaching the whole first and parts later helps students to have a complete picture before understanding small segments. Talking about the benefits of teaching the whole first, Schwarzer (2009) underscores that teaching the whole first so that the students could understand the parts later encourages the teacher as well as the learners to grasp the language as a whole rather than isolated components. Learning a second language is a gradual process. Therefore, particularly in ESL classrooms, it is essential for the students to have "a sense of the whole to understand the parts. The whole provides an important context in which the parts are naturally embedded" (Freeman & Freeman, 2016, p. 72).

The common practice of teaching grammar and vocabulary in isolation is done in good faith expecting students to learn the language faster. Most of the teachers follow this method because they have learned ESL this way and they have been trained to teach this way. Moreover, there is an influence of grammar books on ESL teaching. Even though teachers have been using this method for decades, it has not been proven to be successful. However, typical ESL teachers do not tend to explore the effectiveness of other possible methods of teaching ESL. However, Freeman and Freeman (2016) state that teaching grammar in isolation "does not help students write whole, grammatically correct essays or reports. Phonics lessons, teaching sounds, and letters do not ultimately lead to the reading and understanding of complete texts. The parts do not

add up to the whole…" (p. 73). Teaching phonics is not an effective way of teaching language because the emphasis in this approach is not on meaning but mechanically connecting sounds, words, and structure.

Freeman and Freeman (2016) have identified that the cause of teaching grammar and vocabulary in isolation as a result of the recognition that all learning involves a process of differentiating parts out of the whole. This has led to the understanding that parts should be taught first to help students to understand the whole. Therefore, teachers tend to take it for granted that they should teach parts first and the whole later. According to Freeman and Freeman (2016), there is a change how second languages are taught as a result of the new understanding that the whole should be taught first, and the students should be facilitated to understand the parts in and through the process of learning the whole. According to Freeman and Freeman (2016), "Instead of beginning with discreet bits of language, teachers attempt to expose students to a wide range of the target language. They use specific techniques to make the new language understandable" (p. 88). They do not present this argument as an alternative or an experimental approach to language teaching. For them, "Whole-to-part teaching is critical because emergent bilinguals are not able to learn all the small parts and then assemble them into meaningful wholes" (p. 8).

Another important aspect of teaching the whole first is the emphasis on "meaning." When students are taught phonics, vocabulary, and grammar in isolation, they tend to merely understand the lexical meaning of the words and an understanding of the syntactic structure. Learning grammar in isolation, studying vocabulary lists and using phonics to read also demand memorization, and is not meaningful learning. Consequently, students do not understand how to use parts that they have learned in context. Freeman and Freeman (2016) suggest that teachers

should focus on helping students to understand the meaning and to use words and the structures meaningfully. They argue that the teachers must give students the opportunity to understand "the big picture and, even if they do not understand all the English language instruction involved, they can understand key points and vocabulary as they construct meaning" (Freeman & Freeman, 2016, p. 88).

Particularly in contexts where adults are taught a second language teaching the whole first is crucial because they do not get the impression that the materials are childish, and the teacher has unwittingly infantilized them by teaching phonics. In other words, when teaching the whole first, the adult learners are treated as mature, intellectually competent, logical human beings who make their own choices in the language learning process.

Based on the above discussion, the guiding principle: *the whole is taught first, and the parts are understood later* is defined as the language teacher's practices of exposing students to the target language as a whole to facilitate the learner first to understand the whole meaning of a given text and, to eventually be able to distinguish between parts of language.

Past Experiences

As mentioned in the previous section, one of the conventional teaching methods employed in the ESL classrooms in Sri Lanka is the grammar-translation method through which students are introduced to basic grammar rules. ESL teaching in Sri Lanka is heavily influenced by the contrastive analysis (Lado, 1957) and error analysis (Corder, 1967). Teaching grammar in isolation occupies a central role in ESL teaching at my urban public university in Sri Lanka (see Appendix F and Appendix G). Some of my colleagues too shared my feeling that teaching vocabulary and grammar in isolation was not a good practice. Others argued that the students

requested them to teach more grammar and they were obliged to meet this demand coming from the students.

Being dissatisfied with teaching grammar explicitly, I thought that I should teach ESL students how English grammar occurs in context. Therefore, I moved away from teaching grammar out of context, but I was still focusing on teaching linguistic parts without helping the students understand the whole first. For example, instead of teaching a list of adjectives, I gave my students a reading activity and some comprehension questions (see Appendix H). Moreover, after they had read the passage and answered the questions, I explained to them how adjectives had been used in the reading passage. When reflecting on this experience, I realize that I had once again taught them grammar explicitly. Also, I understand that the teachers at the ELTU taught grammar and vocabulary lists mainly because they were also taught grammar explicitly, or that is how they have seen other teachers teach. The students demanded grammar from their ESL teachers because they think that the more they learn English grammar, the more fluent they will be.

Parts of the English language were taught particularly in beginner and intermediate ESL classes because teachers thought that the students needed to learn the basic grammatical structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation first before they write paragraphs, then short essays and eventually research papers. The mainstream understanding of language teaching and learning is that there is a sequence or a linear order that the students should follow. When teaching English this way the teacher's primary obligation is to first explicitly teach the graphophonic system and then the syntactic system (Wilde, 2000). It is believed that only after completing these who stages step by step students could comprehend the meaning of the relatively complex texts that they read. Disruption of this linear order is thought to confuse the ESL students.

Besides, reflecting on my ESL teaching in Sri Lanka made me understand that teaching vocabulary and grammar in isolation as a colonial language teaching practice where English education was focused on creating a clerical staff to assist the British administrators, but not critical language users. In contrast, when the whole is taught first, and students are supported in understanding linguistic parts later students become agents in the learning process.

Teaching vocabulary and grammar first and waiting until the ESL learners become competent users of English to perform activities that require higher-order thinking does not help undergraduate students with their immediate academic needs. For instance, the students are writing research papers without English language assistance from their ESL teachers. The fact that they complete their academic needs without the assistance of their ESL courses indicates that they are capable of doing activities that require higher-order thinking in English without being proficient in grammar and vocabulary. It is my conviction that ESL teachers should help them with their immediate academic needs.

Future Implementations

The focus of my future ESL classes will be first on teaching language as a whole (reading and writing research papers or reports) rather than teaching vocabulary and sentence structures in isolation. In the process of reading and writing research papers or reports, students will come across vocabulary and sentence structures which are being regularly used in scholarly writing. Consequently, they will understand the parts as a result of understanding the whole. In all the three assignments presented (see Appendix B, Appendix C, Appendix, D), the assignment does not expect students first to learn the required grammatical structures and vocabulary. Instead, students learn grammar and vocabulary in the process of doing the assignments.

Even though there is a grammar book used in this class, the activities in the grammar book will not be completed in the order that they appear. Only the grammar components that will appear in the final examination will be discussed explicitly since the students should have a clear understanding of what grammar components they will be tested at the end-semester examination. The end semester exam is non-negotiable because it is a faculty requirement.

Guiding Principle 03: Language is developmentally constructed

Definition

When teaching a (second) language through the grammar-translation method or using phonics, there is much emphasis on error correction. Teachers see learner errors as signs of incompetence, but not as marks of development. For instance, Rosen (1987) states that even though various studies have found that “the time-intensive practice of the teacher's ‘error-hunt’ does not produce more mechanically perfect papers, 100-year-old tradition persists” (p. 62). According to Rosen (1987), typically teachers use grammar drills to teach mechanical and grammatical correctness and point out errors in their papers so that the students could correct them (Rosen, 1987). Thus, elimination of errors is at the center of (second/foreign/heritage) language teaching.

Consequently, scholars have argued that errors should not be seen as signs of incompetence but as signs of development (Weaver,1982; Schwarzer, 2011; Schwarzer & Luke, 2001). For instance, according to Schwarzer (2011), it is crucial to, “…conceptualize language as a developmental process. Errors, miscues, and attempts are a valuable part of the language learning process” (p. 149). Therefore, the language teachers are expected to create an atmosphere that values the attempts made by students to read, speak and write without feeling threatened by

the language they learn. Consequently, language teachers should move away from the traditional notion that students' speech and writing should be error free. According to Schwarzer & Luke (2001),

> As teachers, our goal is not to erase the errors, miscues, and mistakes made by our students, but rather to create environments in which the student can develop new miscues, mistakes, and errors that are more advanced and more accurate than the previous ones. (p. 6)

According to the above words, the teacher should create an environment in which the students are not scared to take risks. This environment can be created by making students feel that their miscues, mistakes, errors are a valuable part of the learning process. The ability to recognize language "errors" as marks of development and the ability to appreciate students when they take risks in the language classroom is necessary to empower language learners.

Schwarzer & Luke (2001) further emphasize the importance of students viewing both failure and success as learning experiences: "Students who learn from their errors will become more comfortable risk-takers than students who are encouraged only to succeed" (p. 6). When the students are not scared to take risks, they "try out their own hypotheses and interpretations" (Schwarzer & Petrón, 2005, p. 6). In other words, students take risks with the structures and vocabulary that they have newly learned. Risk taking should be viewed as essential attempts or trials toward learning although the teacher does not receive the desired solution.

Thus, the guiding principle, *language is developmentally constructed* is defined in this context as "the language teacher's ideology and pedagogical practices in which so-called language learner-errors are considered signs of linguistic development rather than signs of

incompetency." Therefore, a teacher who implements the guiding principle, "language is developmentally constructed," does not view her/his students from a deficit perspective. Every "error" is seen as an attempt at risk-taking and therefore a sign of development, the more advanced "errors" that the learner makes, the more he/she moves forward in the continuum of language proficiency (Schwarzer & Luke, 2001).

Past Experiences

As an ESL teacher, I witnessed teachers correcting the pronunciation of their students explicitly whenever they "caught" what they considered mistakes. For example, beginning level ESL students in Sri Lanka typically do not identify the distinction between a range of similar sounds such as /p/, /f/, and /s/, /z/ English sounds. Consequently, the term "paddy field" is often pronounced as /fædı fild/ or /pædı pild/ by beginner level ESL students. Intermediate level students usually confuse the pronunciation of words such as /ship and zip/, /seat and sheet/, /hole and hall/, /law and low/ and so on. Teachers corrected such pronunciation "errors" particularly because these kinds of pronunciation were identified as "substandard/ uneducated/ nonstandard/ not-pot/" Sri Lankan English pronunciation.

As an ESL student, I did not like to be corrected on my pronunciation publicly. Therefore, I made sure not to correct my students' pronunciation on the spot whenever I heard them. Instead, I discussed the errors in pronunciation at the end of the class because I thought that correcting the students whenever they made an error could affect their confidence. Towards the end of the class, I wrote down words that the students mispronounced and taught the class how to pronounce them correctly. The students did not seem to be offended or intimidated by how I corrected them mainly because it was not targeted at individual students. Usually, in such

instances, students themselves clarified certain doubts that they had about pronouncing certain words. I did this not because I was looking down upon my students but because I was concerned how their pronunciation will be perceived by other teachers and students at the university as well as when they interact with the world outside of the university. Also, when correcting written work of my students, I used a pencil (imitating one of my English teachers who thought that pencil marks on students' written work do not strike as powerfully as red ink). Moreover, occasionally, I had one to one discussions with my students about the regularly occurring errors in their writing. I also made a list of common errors that my students had done in their written work and discussed them in the class.

Reflecting on this experience, I understand that I had not recognized that "errors" are at the heart of one's English language developmental process. Although I was trying to teach differently from many other teachers of English in Sri Lanka, I was also trying to erase what I considered errors in the developing linguistic repertoire of my students. On the contrary, in the ESL Teaching Methods class that I took for my MA, reading *Miscue Analysis* by Wilde (2000) completely changed my perception of so-called learner errors, particularly in reading. In this book, the author calls for an ideological change as to how teachers perceive learner "errors." She wants language teachers to understand what strategies students use when they read as opposed to correcting mistakes and using phonics to teach reading. To mark the shift in her thinking and teaching, she uses the word miscue instead of "errors" and "mistakes."

Furthermore, in the beginner level Hebrew as a foreign language class in which I conducted informal observations; the teacher modeled for the students instead of correcting them explicitly. For example, in the dialogue journal the teacher used the same words that the students had written to model for them instead of explicitly correcting them. She always requested her

students to pay close attention to her responses in the dialogue journal. Without explicitly correcting the mistakes that the students had made, the teacher modeled to help students to understand their mistakes and correct themselves. Now I understand that it is more important to create a space for the students to take risks and practice what they learn rather than correcting their "errors."

Future Implementations

In my future ESL classes, the three-tier mastery approach (Guskey, 1980; Guskey & Jung, 2011) plays a key role. By doing so, my students will get multiple opportunities to reflect on their miscues and to learn from the miscues other students make. Hence the drafts, peer reviews and the instructor's feedback play a crucial role in the new syllabus that is developed as a crucial part of this MA thesis (see Appendix A). When conducting peer reviews, the students will be given a checklist to facilitate this task. For the students, this is an opportunity to solve problems (Vygotsky, 1978) with the support of their peers. Vygotsky (1978) defines the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under [the] guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86). Based on the notion of ZPD, peer reviewing multiple drafts is how I will facilitate my future ESL students to use language capacities that they bring into the class.

Moreover, another primary method of facilitating language learning in my future ESL class is through "modeling" for students rather than correcting them explicitly. For instance, the research paper that is read in the ESL class (see Appendix A) is a model given to the students to use when writing their own research papers. Similarly, the textbook (see Appendix E) also

provides structural, syntactic and lexical models for the students to use in their research papers or reports. They may also find models in other research papers that they read from their own fields.

Guiding Principle 04: A community of learners which extends beyond the classroom is created

Definition

Building a community of learners is a well-researched area in the field of language education. Tung-Chiou (2010) points out the importance of the surrounding social environment in which students grow up for their linguistic development. According to him, "schools, homes and the whole community have to cooperate to create an atmosphere and provide opportunities for practicing…" (p. 50). Similarly, Short (1998) underscores the importance of social setting and its impact on language acquisition. Short (1998) identifies that the benefit of building a community of learners is the space created for the language learners to "form relationships and dialogues with each other has a major impact on the potentials and constraints those learners perceive for their own learning" (p. 34). Moreover, by creating a community of learners, the teacher encourages collaborative work (Short, 1998). Working collaboratively as a community helps them to breakdown "obstacles that keep them from learning fully with and from others" (p. 50 -51). Short (1998) has listed down six aspects that contribute to the formation of a community of learners. They are:

> (1) come to know each other, (2) value what each other has to offer; (3) focus on problem-solving and inquiry; (4) share responsibility and control; (5) learn through action, reflection and demonstration; and (6) establish a learning atmosphere that is predictable and full of real choices (p. 35).

These six aspects are crucial to create a community of learners that goes beyond the ESL classroom. Schwarzer, Haywood & Lorenzen (2003), propose that teachers should “involve community members as active participants in the class. Parents, community activists, clergy, volunteers, and staff personnel are valuable resources for appreciating language diversity as an asset” (p. 459). Their focus is on how the community outside the classroom can be used in language teaching as well as learning.

Moreover, scholars have argued that creating a community of learners is important because it creates a space that enables students to take risks and interact with one another. According to Curran (2003), “Creating a classroom environment where students feel safe, secure, and a sense of belonging will help reduce fear and anxiety” (p. 337). Here the term “secure” means that the students will feel comfortable to take risks within the classroom. Once ESL students feel comfortable to take risks in their ESL classroom, they will do the same outside of the classroom. When the students collaborate and support each other in language learning, and when they learn from each other’s mistakes, they do not feel the trepidation to experiment with new words and structures that they learn when writing and mainly speaking in the class.

Based on the above discussion, the guiding principle *a community of learners which extends beyond the classroom is created* is defined as the creation of mutually respectful and supportive relationships among students and their communities to encourage students to engage in an interactive, holistic language learning process through productive dialogues with each other.

Past Experiences

The ESL courses that I taught in Sri Lanka were not focused on building a community of learners. Therefore, most of the time, students were given exercises and activities as well as assignments to complete individually. There were instances when I got my students to engage in pair work or group work, but I did not plan them well. For instance, I did not assign specific responsibilities or roles to the group members, and I did not provide explicit instructions to facilitate the engagement of all the members of the group. Most of the time, the level of participation was very high among the students who were relatively competent in English, whereas those who were not very competent in English were most of the time silent and participated minimally.

When reflecting on my ESL teaching in Sri Lanka, I realize that I had not understood the value of creating a community of learners. However, I tried to experiment with new ways of teaching my students facilitating them to interact with each other. For example, I took my students out of the classroom and taught the class under a tree. That day, I assigned them a pair of work to walk in different directions for 10 minutes and write down ten things that they came across. After the students came back, I told them to write down a few sentences describing the nouns that they have listed.

Moreover, the ELTU of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in which I taught, annually organizes an End of Intensive English Course Concert where students present dramas and skits, and sing English songs. All of these are group activities, and students practice them at least for one month every evening on weekdays. This concert is much appreciated by the professors and the students at the urban public university because it brings the teachers and students together and also allows the students to use English. However, this concert marks the

end of such student interaction, and after the concert, the teachers go back to teaching ESL using the lecture method.

My reflections on these experiences make me realize that I intuitively understood the importance of students interacting with one another and using English freely for their English language development. Also, so did many other teachers. However, in typical ESL classrooms, students do not get many opportunities to work as a community because actual language teaching in the ESL classes is governed by the teaching materials that are very much individual focused. Also, teachers are not trained to plan interactive activities in their ESL classrooms. It is only after gaining experience through assisting Dr. Schwarzer to conduct a workshop on Faculty Development that I understood that teachers should facilitate group activities by providing them with a group discussion guideline (see Appendix I).

Future Implementations

Throughout the semester, students will engage in group activities and discussions. I will provide them a group discussion guideline to make sure that all the students participate in group discussions (see Appendix I). That way, I will be facilitating the students to interact with each other in the class. At the same time, students will provide feedback on each other's work when they conduct peer reviews of drafts of the research papers or reports that they write. This way they will be interacting on Canvas even outside of the classroom. Similarly, since the peer reviews are not done anonymously, students will exchange their ideas about the drafts with each other without merely providing feedback on Canvas.

Since the students will use the research papers or reports that they write for other classes, the ESL class will not function in isolation; instead, it will be connected with the other courses

that the students follow. Because of this unique situation that is created the students can get assistance from professors in other courses that they follow to complete the assignments in the ESL class. The space to get assistance from professors who teach other courses to my students also contributes to creating a community of learners.

Another important aspect which helps create a community of learners is the translingual dialogue journal that helps students to interact with the teacher throughout the semester. When writing the translingual dialogue journal the students will get the opportunity to ask questions from the instructor about classroom discussions and clarify doubts. Students can also provide constructive feedback to the instructor as to how to better facilitate the English language learning process. Such opportunities contribute to creating a positive and interactive learning environment.

Guiding Principle 05: Critical pedagogy provides the framework for language learning

Definition

Critical pedagogy in second language studies is primarily focused on how teaching a second language can contribute to change society. For instance, Norton & Toohey (2004) claim that "Advocates of critical approaches to second language teaching, are interested in relationships between language learning and social change." (p. 1). According to Freire (1985b), "Studying is a form of reinventing, recreating, rewriting, and this is a subject's, not an object's task…" (p.1). Therefore, the language teacher should recognize the student's agency and foster a risk-taking space in the classroom. Freire's ideas have been instrumental in putting the foundation to critical pedagogy. Cho (2006) points out that taking the voices and experiences of

marginalized students into account is important to achieve social change through second language teaching. He says "Critical pedagogy is based on the premise that emancipation can be realized when people have an adequate understanding of their own oppressive situations" (Cho, 2006, p. 133). In this view, teachers have a social responsibility to create a space for students to contest dominant ideologies in the ESL classroom.

There is a social justice orientation in a curriculum that is influenced by critical pedagogy. According to Cho (2006) "Opening to the voices and experiences of marginalized groups is no doubt critical and necessary in critical pedagogy…" (p. 131). Most of the ESL students in Sri Lanka come from underprivileged or marginalized backgrounds. Those who are from upper-class backgrounds learn English at their mother's knee. Also, their schools are over saturated with qualified English teachers, unlike the schools to which their rural counterparts attend. According to Pennycook (1990) "…we must start to take up moral and political projects to change those circumstances. This requires that we cease to operate with models of intellectual inquiry that are asocial, apolitical or ahistorical" (p. 25). Therefore, it is the ethical obligation of the ESL teachers in Sri Lanka to make sure that his/her students are provided multiple opportunities to learn English critically while questioning commonsense. For instance, one of the questions that can be explored by students in Sri Lanka is "Why is English the language of power and prestige in Sri Lanka?". Exploring this question in the ESL class will enable students to understand how society reproduces inequality through the English language.

Providing opportunities to learn ESL critically is important because students will understand that the teacher is valuing their agency. According to Smyth (2011), teachers should change mindsets and orientations rather than "using 'how to do it?' approaches". This attitude underscores the importance of ESL learners having a sense of ownership of the learning process.

Smyth (2011), state that “questioning the authority of the teacher as the sole source of knowledge” (p. 50) as a central characteristic of critical pedagogy. In the ESL classroom, teachers can create such a space for students by inviting the students to research on their own about topics discussed in the ESL classroom. Kumar (2015) states that as an implementation of critical pedagogy in the ESL classroom, students should be encouraged to question the “hegemony of ‘one meaning,’ one English (as opposed to many Englishes)” (p. 93). Such a critical understanding of English is important for ESL learners in Sri Lanka to have self-confidence about the variety or varieties of English that they use.

Based on the above discussion, the guiding principle; *critical pedagogy provides the framework for language learning* is defined as the language teacher’s practices of making students critical and engaged with the real-world issues and empowering them to problematize taken for granted realities through the English language learning experience.

Past Experiences

While teaching ESL at the urban public university, I recognized that the ESL teaching materials were not suitable for the adult students mainly because the ESL teaching materials did not consider the unique social, political and cultural position that the university students occupy. On the one hand, the reason for the mismatch between the social, political and cultural position that the university students occupy and the ESL teaching materials, is the deficit view that teachers have towards ESL learners (particularly beginner and intermediate level) that ESL students should learn English first before they discuss politically and socially significant topics. On the other hand, ESL teachers think that good ESL teachers should not be political when

developing teaching materials and teaching. For instance, some senior ESL teachers at the ELTU advised me that I should not discuss any controversial topics in the ESL classroom.

However, I decided to use controversial topics for discussions in my ESL classes because I wanted to be different from other ESL teachers and I wanted to respect the students as adults instead of infantilizing them because they were not proficient in English. For instance, we discussed topics such as legalizing abortion in Sri Lanka, premarital sex, polygamy, legalizing prostitution in Sri Lanka and so on in the ESL course. These classes were very different from the typical ESL classes that I taught because the students were critical and engaged as never before. Since students held strong opinions regarding such controversial issues, they expressed their opinions regardless of their level of English language competency. As I reflect on instances in which controversial topics were used to teach English in my class, I feel that it was an opportunity to learn English while critically engaging in the classroom. However, the use of controversial topics in my ESL classes was experimental. At that point in my career, I had not read on critical pedagogy, and therefore, I did not know how to sustain what I was doing as an integral part of my teaching.

Moreover, critical pedagogy as a practice is crucial in ESL teaching in Sri Lanka because English was once the language of the colonizers and it is still the language of power and opportunity in Sri Lanka. Especially in a context where English is more than a language and is at the top of the linguistic hierarchy, students should be given the opportunity to reflect on their positions in connection with English.

I experienced critical pedagogy as a practice in the ESL teaching methods class that I took for my MA. In that class, the teacher assigned the students to write a reflection on the

chapters that they were supposed to read for every week. When the reflections on the readings were posted on Canvas, the professor replied to every reflection proving feedback to the students. When the professor responded to my reflections, I felt that my ideas were acknowledged and valued. Also, classroom discussions were not typical lectures. Every student was invited to present several chapters to the class, and the teacher initiated a discussion in which students got the opportunity not only to understand the readings critically but also to challenge the teacher. The teacher was not offended by the questions of the students; instead, he appreciated the counterarguments.

Future Implementations

Critical pedagogy will be an integral aspect of my future ESL teaching in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. For example, the main research paper that the students read (see Appendix A) in the ESL classroom will be *Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka* by D. Hayes. Reading a research paper on ESL teaching and learning in Sri Lanka will make the students reflect on their relationship with English and the role of English in Sri Lanka. They will also understand the causes of some of the challenges that they face when learning English. Most importantly, reading this research paper in the ESL classroom will create a space for students to understand that English is just another language like their own mother tongues. This realization will enable them to control their fear of using English and feel empowered to take risks when using English, first in the ESL classroom and second outside of the classroom.

In the future, I will acknowledge and appreciate the agency of my ESL students and recognize their various skills and knowledge that will facilitate the English language learning

process. I believe that learning to write a research paper will make them empowered and confident not only in the ESL classroom but also in other courses that they follow. Moreover, in the translingual dialogue journal, the students will be requested to ask questions from me. Even in this assignment the student's agency is acknowledged and appreciated.

Guiding Principle 06: Students use authentic materials for authentic purposes, and with authentic audiences

Definition

According to Schwarzer (2011), language teacher should use "authentic materials in their classes, for authentic purposes, in front of authentic audiences" (p. 149) to make their teaching effective and meaningful from the point of view of the students. This approach to language teaching is fundamental as it moves beyond the conventional meaning of using "authentic materials" in language teaching. It further improves the notion of using authentic materials in the language classroom by focusing on the purpose of teaching materials as well as the audience.

Citing an example as for how to use authentic materials, Jacobson, Degener & Purcell-Gates (2003) state,

> Consider the use of newspapers in the adult literacy classroom. If a teacher brings in copies of a newspaper article from a year ago, about a subject that the students don't care about, only to teach specific skills such as summarizing or finding the main idea, the newspaper is not being used in an outside-of-the-classroom fashion. People simply do not read the newspaper with those purposes in mind. (p. 16)

In the above quote, what they emphasize is the importance of not only the type of the texts but also how those materials are used in real-life situations. Inability to understand the importance of both these aspects will make the material and activities unauthentic (Jacobson, Degener & Purcell-Gates, 2003). Moreover, the language teacher should consider the real-life audiences of his/her students. For instance, if an ESL teacher assigns a student who is majoring in physics to write a newspaper article on new year celebrations at the university and submit it to the ESL teacher is not an authentic assignment, which has an authentic purpose and an authentic audience. In contrast, if an ESL teacher assigns a student who is majoring in journalism to write a newspaper article on a topic that the student is interested and submit it to a local newspaper, it is an authentic assignment, which has an authentic purpose and an authentic audience.

Moreover, if the teaching materials identified as "authentic" by the teacher is not perceived so by the learners because they are not related to their day to day lives, then such materials cannot be considered authentic. Explaining how authentic materials and authentic purposes relate to each other in the ESL classroom, Breen (1985) states "what is authentic is relative to our proposes in the classroom and to the points of views of the different participants in that classroom" (p.61). The important point highlighted in this explanation is the emphasis on understanding the difference between lived realities of students, and the realities of the teachers in a classroom and outside of it. He also emphasizes the importance of being conscious of real-life purposes of the overall classroom experience on language learners.

Based on the above discussion, the guiding principle *Students use authentic materials for authentic purposes, and with authentic audiences* can be defined as the practices of the teacher to teach language meaningfully by making sure that the teaching materials are connected with the real-life experiences of the students, the purposes of the activities and assignments of the class

have real-life immediate applicability, and the audiences to which they present their work are real and connected with the student's life.

Past Experiences

When I was teaching ESL in Sri Lanka, most of the time, the activities and assignments that the students in my ESL courses completed were not directly relevant to what the students were studying in the university. Since a prescribed textbook was not used, most of the time teachers felt burdened with preparing teaching materials. Consequently, the easiest way to prepare teaching materials was to download grammar activities and reading passages from the internet or take excerpts from grammar books. While the students were writing research papers and assignments in English for other courses, we chose to teach "how to give directions, how to write newspaper articles, grammar-based lessons such as passive voice, tenses, adjectives, and adverbs, and so on (see Appendix F and Appendix G). This type of teaching materials was not authentic because they did not have a direct connection with the immediate language needs of the students. Also, neither did they have an authentic purpose nor an authentic audience.

While reflecting on my ESL teaching experiences in Sri Lanka, I understand that the teaching materials and the assignments were not authentic from the students' point of view. After reading scholarly articles on the importance of using authentic teaching materials for authentic purposes, with authentic audiences, I have realized the impact such an approach would have on my students.

In the beginning Hebrew as a Foreign Language class in which I conducted informal observations the teacher assigned the students to interview someone in Hebrew using the words and sentence structures that they had learned in the class. She informed the students that if they

interviewed a native speaker of Hebrew, they would get extra points. Also, she told the students that if a student could not find a native speaker of Hebrew, she would find a native speaker who is willing to be interviewed. After all the students completed their interviews, she told everyone to present the audio or the video of the interview to the class. Consequently, the assignment that the teacher created was authentic because the majority of the students in the class had family and friends in Israel. Therefore, this assignment had an authentic purpose and an authentic audience.

Future Implementations

In the new syllabus developed for an intermediate level ESL class at an urban public university in Sri Lanka (see Appendix A), writing a research paper or a report is included as the main assignment (see Appendix B). Reading and writing research papers and reports is commonplace in one's university life. Therefore, the assignment of writing a research paper is an authentic activity for my students. As I reflect on my ESL teaching experiences in Sri Lanka, I realized that this reality has been either unidentified or ignored by the ELTU mainly because the ESL learners are viewed from a deficit point of view. In that, the ESL learner's lived realities in the university context are ignored, and the learners are infantilized because they are not proficient in English. In the proposed assignment (see Appendix B), the students are expected to work on a research paper or a report that they are writing for another course. They may also revise a research paper that they have already written during a previous semester. Therefore, the students know that there is an authentic purpose to this assignment and that the research paper or the report has an authentic audience. In the course of doing this assignment, the students will be reading research papers that they are supposed to read in other classes. The use of the same reading materials from other courses in the ESL class also makes the English language learning process authentic from their point of view.

Also, writing the dialogue journal is also an authentic activity with an authentic audience. In this activity, the student and the teacher are engaged in a real-life conversation (in writing) about the classroom discussions and what they learn. Also, students are encouraged to use their complete language repertoire as if they are engaged in a casual conversation. They will not feel obliged to use English, and that will not clog the students down. When the students mesh their mother tongue and English, they will feel free to take risks.

Furthermore, the presentation that the ESL students are invited to do at the end of the semester for extra credits is also an authentic assignment or activity with an authentic purpose because learning how to do an academic presentation is meaningful and useful in the university context. Since students will present a research paper to the class, they will feel that they are not wasting their time on a presentation that is just done for the sake of getting extra credits.

Guiding Principle 07: Translingualism is encouraged as a fundamental means of language teaching and language acquisition

Definition

Translingualism as a linguistic practice, ideology, and pedagogy (Schwarzer, Bloom & Shono, 2006; Tung-Chiou, 2010; Canagarajah, 2012; Grabarczyk, 2015; Lee, 2018) is an emergent area of interest in applied linguistics in the twenty-first century. Translingualism effectively shifts the focus from individual language norms and standards in multilingual situations to a more complex and nuanced understanding of how languages are performed by users who are innovative and sensitive to the context and histories of languages within the situations of their use. Therefore, it would appear that in translingualism the central unit of analysis is the user-oriented multiple language context which defies breaking down language into separate languages as is usually

undertaken in the conventional sociolinguistic analysis. Hence, scholarship on translingualism has an “explicit concern with the fluidity and negotiability of language boundaries, premised on the possibility that language is never normative but instead always negotiable” (Lee, 2018, p. 3).

Canagarajah (2013) explains that “the term translingual enables a consideration of communicative competence as not restricted to predefined meanings of individual languages, but the ability to merge different language resources in situated interactions for new meaning construction” (2013, p. 1-2). Therefore, a major consideration of translingualism, according to him, is the “negotiation of diverse linguistic resources for situated construction of meaning” (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 1). Similarly, translingualism recognizes the hybridity of what is typically considered “standard English” or “monolingual texts.” The labels such as “standard English,” or “monolingual” are ideological constructs which cover the diversity in all acts of verbal and written communication (Canagarajah, 2013). Thus, translingualism calls for treating all languages, dialects, and varieties equally, challenging their hierarchical positioning in society.

It is the need to acknowledge, celebrate and study the context-bound dynamic nature of language use in multilingual communities that makes it necessary to use the term translingual, instead of bilingual, multilingual or plurilingual. According to Canagarajah, bilingual, multilingual and plurilingual approaches to the analysis of language “keep languages somewhat apart” (Canagarajah, 2013 p. 2). In other words, while translingualism considers the boundaries between languages as fluid and dynamic, and meaning-making is based on negotiation; bilingualism, multilingualism, and plurilingualism acknowledge that languages are in contact with each other, but they exist as separate entities (Canagarajah, 2013; Lee, 2018).

Translingualism is defined by Schwarzer, Bloom, & Shono (2006) as "Languages and literacies that develop while interacting with each other in a dynamic and fluid way while moving back and forth between real and "imagined" glocalized borders and transacting with different cultural identities within a unified self" (p. 208). According to the above definition, the boundaries imposed on languages are transcended by "ordinary" people in their day to day communication. Therefore, translingualism is not "new" by any means (Canagarajah, 2013 & Lee, 2018). It is important to understand language and literacy development in second/foreign/heritage learners as a fluid and dynamic phenomenon, and not as one language competing against another as it is typically viewed in (second/foreign/heritage) language education. Furthermore, the conceptualization of language as performance rather than a mere tool used for communication also marks a significant shift in translingualism (Canagarajah, 2013)

A translingual approach to language teaching is important mainly because it creates a space for both teachers and students to think beyond the "monolingual bias" (Kachru, 1994) and "native-speakerism" in ELT (Holliday, 2015). Telling the students that they could code mesh or play with words and structure of their mother tongues and the second/foreign/heritage languages that they learn problematizes the privileging of some languages over others. However, this does not mean that the power associated with languages, varieties, and dialects in multilingual societies will suddenly disappear. However, by acknowledging and celebrating the day-to-day use of the language repertoires of language learners, teachers could challenge mainstream norms associated with language use in society. That is why Zapata & Laman (2016) says "A translingual orientation makes us sensitive, performative, emergent…" (p. 367). Given all this,

translingualism as pedagogy has the potential to transform the typical ESL classroom into a more dynamic and inclusive space.

Past Experiences

In the ESL classes that I taught in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, I tried my best only to use English as much as possible. This is because, as a novice teacher I believed that students should be immersed in English to make them proficient in it. I thought that the ESL students in Sri Lanka are not sufficiently exposed to the English language outside of the classroom. Therefore, I told my students to try to use English in the ESL classroom as much as possible so that they could practice what they learn in the class. Sometimes, when my Sinhala-speaking students asked specific questions in Sinhala, I told them to ask the same question again in English. I helped them by providing words and phrases to construct their questions. They were told to ask the questions again in English to persuade them to speak in English. Tamil speaking students who were struggling with English had to pick Sinhala and English words from their linguistic repertoires when they wanted to ask questions from me because I do not have a working knowledge of Tamil. They did not ask me questions in Tamil, either because they assumed that I did not know Tamil or because they thought that I would be offended if they spoke to me in Tamil (after all for them I represent the dominant "other"). I used Sinhala when I felt that what I was explaining in English was too complicated and confusing that the students would not understand. When using Sinhala in the ESL class, I requested a Tamil and Sinhala bilingual Muslim student to translate what I said in Sinhala to Tamil. Therefore, the Tamil-speaking students did not have many opportunities to use their native language for their English language development.

Moreover, leveraging translingualism as pedagogy in my ESL classrooms in Sri Lanka is important because a translingual approach to ESL will help me and my future ESL students to recognize and foster the use of different dialects of English spoken in Sri Lanka. As presented in the critical literature review, there is an important ongoing debate between the proponents of Sri Lankan English (Kandiah, 1981; Meyler, 2009; Mendis & Rambukwella, 2010; Gunesekera, 2010b) and those who oppose arguments made for Sri Lankan English (Goonetilleke, 2011; Fonseka, 2003). I believe that much work needs to be done in this area to make sure that "one type of normative English… is not valorized at the expense of most others" (Lee, 2018, p. 2). Typically, British English has been the standard in Sri Lanka (Kandiah, 1981), yet there is a shift in attitudes towards English in Sri Lanka mainly because of the work published describing and codifying Sri Lankan English. For instance, as a result of my education in English and linguistics, I started considering myself as a speaker of Sri Lankan English. I consciously avoided using whatever linguistic item that was supposedly not standard Sri Lankan English in my linguistic repertoire. For instance, I stopped pronouncing "pocket" as /pɒkɪt/ (the pronunciation that I was taught at school) and started pronouncing it as /pɒkəʈ/, because /pɒkəʈ/ is considered Sri Lankan English pronunciation and /pɒkɪt/ is British. Similarly, I got rid of the phrase "no any" from my linguistic repertoire because I learned that "no any" was a phrase used in "non-standard Sri Lankan English," and "standard Sri Lankan English" did not permit this "aberration." For me, it was principally important to resist colonial values associated with English, and linguistic negotiation was necessary to be, at least marginally, a part of the Sri Lankan English speaking community.

Concerning phonology, lexicogrammar, and idiom, Sri Lankan English is closer to my students and me rather than British English. However, after conducting the critical literature

review, I understood that what is framed as standard Sri Lankan English is limited to the urban, Sinhala elite (Parakrama, 2012). Consequently, it discriminates against other ethnic groups and rural Sri Lankan learners of English in Sri Lanka. However, going back to British English as the standard, to which my ESL students and myself have no access to is not a solution for the question of standards in the ESL classroom. All linguistic standards (American English, British English, Australian English for instance) discriminate against minorities. This is why scholars in Sri Lanka have proposed the need to broaden the standards of Sri Lankan English to include the broadest local standard (Parakrama, 2012; Parakrama, 2016), and, have emphasized the need to recognize emergent dialects of Sri Lankan English (Fernando, 2010). Critical awareness of scholarly discussions on English language standards in Sri Lanka has made me realize that an ESL teacher should think beyond rather narrow and prescribed language boundaries of standard Sri Lankan English or standard British English "in favor of mutually cooperative and spatially resourceful means of communication, reflective of a requisite performative competence" (Lee, 2018, p. 4).

In short, by "recognizing difference as the norm" (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 585) a translingual approach to ESL pedagogy makes it possible for me to accommodate different dialects of English spoken in Sri Lanka in my ESL classes, and also help students use their mother tongues in the ESL classroom to facilitate their English language development.

Future Implementations

In my future ESL classes in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, I will request students to work in homogenous groups based on their native languages. Working in homogeneous groups based on their native languages will create a risk-taking space where they get the opportunity to

use both their mother tongue and the target language fluidly. For instance, when reading research papers, the preview, view, review method developed by Freeman and Freeman (2005) will be used. In that, the students will preview materials on how to write each section of a research paper or a report before coming to the ESL class in their native languages. Also, in the ESL class, we will view how to write each section of the research paper or the report in English. Finally, the students will review (in homogeneous groups base on their mother tongues) what we have discussed. In this step, they will be requested to use their full linguistic repertoire without being restricted by language boundaries.

Similarly, when the students write the translingual dialogue journal, they are requested to use their full linguistic repertoire instead of only restricting themselves to English. I will model for the students to help them communicate effectively and to encourage them to take risks by using vocabulary and sentence structures that they learn in the ESL class. I believe that writing a translingual dialogue journal will also contribute to extending the risk-taking space created in the ESL classroom. Also, translingualism creates a space for me to be more inclusive and active in terms of accommodating linguistic and cultural diversity in the ESL classroom.

Moreover, a translingual word wall (Schwarzer, Fuchs & Hermosilla, 2011) will be created to facilitate teaching in my future ESL classrooms. The translingual word wall will be developed throughout the semester by inviting students to bring translingually written texts that they encounter outside of the classroom. The translingual word wall will make students familiar with certain structures of English and also reinforce that languages enrich each other in the real world, and therefore, they should not imitate monolingual English speakers for the sake of demonstrating that they are proficient in English.

2. Guiding Principles in Practice: Three Concrete Examples

Based on the seven guiding principles presented in the previous section, I have developed a syllabus (see Appendix A) which will be implemented in an intermediate level ESL class in a College of Humanities and Social Sciences in an urban public university in Sri Lanka. Once I have implemented it and reflected on the experience, the syllabus and the reflections could be useful to other ESL teachers who are exploring ways to develop syllabi for their ESL courses in Sri Lankan universities and other similar post-colonial countries. This section mainly focuses on how practice informs theory.

The three assignments presented in this section are:

A. Writing a research paper or a report (compulsory assignment)

B. Translingual dialogue journal (compulsory assignment)

C. Presentation of the research paper or the report (optional assignment for extra credit)

Under each of the assignments mentioned above, first, a description of the assignment will be provided referring to the assignment guidelines presented as appendices (see Appendix B, Appendix C, and Appendix D). Second, the description will be followed by an analysis of the guiding principles presented in the first section of this chapter. Third, I will present implications or transferability of these assignments to ESL teachers in Sri Lanka and other similar post-colonial contexts.

A. Writing a Research Paper or a Report

Description of the assignment

In this individual assignment, the students work on a research paper or a report that they are going to submit for one of the other courses that they take. The students can also choose to revise a research paper or a report that they have already written and submitted during a previous semester. This assignment is mainly focused on the structure of the required sections of a typical research paper or a report. Similarly, it makes students familiar with the vocabulary and sentence structures commonly used in research papers and reports. This assignment is built through 5 units of the course (see the course schedule of the new syllabus in Appendix A). The three-tier mastery approach is used in this course (Guskey, 1980; Guskey & Jung, 2011). Therefore, the students are given multiple opportunities to revise their drafts based on peer reviews and feedback from the instructor (see Appendix B for the complete assignment guideline).

The analysis of the assignment in relation to the guiding principles

Students and teachers negotiate the curriculum of the ESL class: Negotiation of the curriculum with the students takes place in this assignment in two steps. First, the ESL students get the chance to decide whether they should write a research paper or a report based on their immediate academic needs. Accommodations will be made as necessary to facilitate those who choose to write research papers or reports. Second, they are given the opportunity to read research papers or reports in an area of study selected by the students to facilitate their own ESL learning process. The students will be informed to bring research papers or reports that they are reading for other courses to the ESL class (see Appendix A). Parallel to each unit of the class, the students will read each section of the research papers that they have selected. For this purpose, they will be divided into homogeneous groups based on their majors and native languages.

The whole is taught first, and the parts are understood later: In this assignment (see Appendix B), the students are first exposed to whole or complete sections of the research papers from their areas of interest for them to get a complete sense of the language used in the research papers. Once I facilitate the students to understand the whole first, they will be able to understand the parts (vocabulary and grammar). In other words, in this assignment, I do not expose students first to the vocabulary and English grammar and expect them to acquire those parts first before writing the research paper. This assignment intends to facilitate the ESL students first to get an overall idea of each section of the chapters of the textbook and parts of the research papers that they read and gain a whole idea of the meaning that has been communicated. After that, they will be able to explore what vocabulary and sentence structures have been used in the chapters and sections of the research papers that they read. It is this critical awareness that is needed to become effective users of language – not memorizing vocabulary and grammar.

Language is developmentally constructed: Since I believe that language is developmentally constructed, my purpose in this assignment is to facilitate the English language development of the students rather than picking on their miscues and explicitly correcting them. First, the textbook and the research paper we read section by section in the ESL classroom during the whole semester, provide models for the students to develop their research papers. For the students who write reports, these models will be helpful, and they will also be provided with appropriate models if they have not received sample reports from their instructors in other courses. Second, the students get the opportunity to develop their writing skills through the peer review process and the feedback that they receive from the instructor. It is also important to note that I have allocated only one point for mechanics in every unit (see Appendix B). This allocation of points is significant because the common practice in ESL evaluation is to allocate

the highest proportion of the score to mechanics. I decided to allocate one point for mechanics for every section of the research paper based on my new understanding that ESL teachers should focus on the developmental aspect of the students rather than trying to eliminate language "errors" or penalize them for their "errors."

A community of learners which extends beyond the classroom is created: Through the peer reviewing process and classroom discussions, a community of learners will be created through this assignment (see Appendix B). The peer reviews will be done on Canvas. Consequently, the classroom is extended beyond the four walls in a typical classroom. When students review each other's work, they usually tend to talk about the papers that they review out of the classroom. I received a similar experience in the U.S. when I peer-reviewed the work of my colleges in an ESL teaching methods course and an action research course that I followed in a large public university. Since the reviews will not be done anonymously, the students tend to share their ideas about the drafts that they reviewed with the author of the drafts. Peer-reviewing each other's drafts builds a community that goes beyond the classroom. Similarly, classroom discussions will play a central role in my future ESL classes. Also, discussions and group activities contribute to creating a community of learners. Moreover, the present assignment (see Appendix B) connects the ESL classroom with the other courses that the students are taking.

Critical pedagogy provides the framework for language learning: In my future ESL classes, the students will not be treated as empty vessels (Freire, 1985) because I strongly reject the banking model of education (Freire, 1985) that is followed in typical ESL classes. The ideas, observations, and knowledge of the students will be highly valued. Mainly, in the peer reviewing process, the students get the opportunity to use their knowledge to facilitate the learning of the others. Thus, as opposed to the mainstream deficit view of ESL students, they will be

empowered by acknowledging their agency as adults and critical thinkers. Rather than making them feel inept by reinforcing that they are not proficient in English, the assignment is used to create a space for the students to use what they know to help them improve their language skills.

Students use authentic materials for authentic purposes, and with authentic audiences: Writing a research paper or report is one of the most authentic assignments that can be given in an ESL class to undergraduate students in Sri Lanka. Rather than designing a syllabus in which grammar and vocabulary is taught in isolation or teaching English through a futuristic syllabus which prepares students to face the outside world after graduation, I believe that the syllabus in the ESL classroom should relate to the immediate life of the university students. It should facilitate their learning in other classes. In the process of writing the research paper or report, the students in my ESL course will be using authentic materials (research papers that they are reding for other courses), for an authentic purpose (writing or revising a research paper or report) with an authentic audience (the students in the ESL class, the instructor of the ESL class and the instructors of another course for which they are writing the research paper or the report).

Translingualism is encouraged as a fundamental means of language teaching and language acquisition: Finally, in the process of doing this assignment (see Appendix B), the students will be encouraged to read research papers and reports in their mother tongues as a part of the ESL course. Similarly, I will use the preview (in the mother tongue of the student), view (in English) and review (in both the mother tongue of the students and English) method of facilitating multilingual learners developed by Freeman, & Freeman (2005). Furthermore, for one extra credit, the students are encouraged to write an abstract of the research paper or a summary of the report in Sinhala or Tamil. This way I am demonstrating to my students that our native languages are as important as the target language, English.

Moreover, I will provide supplementary materials and make the required accommodations for the students who decide to write a report in this class. The students will also be requested to, first, read research papers or reports in Tamil or Sinhala before coming to the ESL class. Second, in the ESL class, the students and I will discuss (in English) each section of the research paper. Finally, they will read a research paper of their own choice in English and discuss its characteristics (structure, use of vocabulary and common sentence structures) in Sinhala or Tamil and English.

Implications for ESL teachers

After examining the syllabi of courses offered by various departments in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, I identified that one of the most common assignments that the students are expected to complete is writing research papers and reports. However, as mentioned above the ELTU does not help students to write research papers or reports in the ESL course that it offers. Like other ESL teachers in my urban public university in Sri Lanka, I too had not reflected on the fact that the ESL classes I taught were not helpful to the students to complete the assignments that they get in other courses at the university. After reflecting on as to why the ELTU did not help students to write research papers or reports in the ESL classes, I realized that there are at least two reasons: 1. The deficit view that ESL learners are not ready to learn how to write research papers in English because they are not proficient in English. Therefore, students should first learn English vocabulary and grammar before taking on writing research papers or reports. 2. Moreover, the notion that teaching how to write research papers is not a responsibility of the ESL teacher – the ESL teacher should teach English grammar, vocabulary and the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Yet, to

better service the ESL students, this reflective paper presents that teachers should understand the immediate English language needs of the undergraduates and cater the ESL courses to them.

The title of the assignment, writing a research paper or a report, should not be misunderstood as a transformation of the ESL teacher's role from teaching English to teaching research. In this assignment, the ESL teacher's role is to facilitate the writing process of a research paper or a report, by guiding students to understand the structures used in these genres, and by facilitating students to acquire common syntactic structures and lexical items used in research papers and reports. Consequently, in this assignment, I will focus on the form, syntactic structures, vocabulary, consistency, coherence and so on, in research papers and reports that the students write, instead of their content. In other words, teaching students how to conduct research is the responsibility of instructors who teach research methods, the ESL teachers' role is to service the ESL needs of the students.

For this assignment, I am using the textbook *English for Writing Research Papers* by Wallwork (2016) and the research paper Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka by Hayes (2010). The textbook follows the following structure: Title, Introduction, Review of the Literature, Methods, Results, Discussion, and Conclusions. Consequently, each unit of the course is scheduled according to the structure of the textbook (see Appendix A for the new syllabus and Appendix E for the contents of the textbook). The research paper: *Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka* was selected to be read in this class, parallel to the chapters of the textbook, due to two reasons: 1. It follows the structure of the textbook, and 2. It is on English language teaching in Sri Lanka. Rather than reinventing the wheel at the beginning of every semester by designing teaching materials, ESL teachers should consider using appropriate textbooks. Using a textbook allows teachers to save

more time for lesson planning. It should also be noted that textbooks are not always perfect, and therefore the teachers should not blindly follow the textbooks that they select. It is also not necessary to follow the same structure of the selected textbook – the ESL teachers could select sections which are most suitable for the students. Thus, the textbook should be used as a resource but not as a crutch.

B. Translingual Dialogue Journal

Description of the assignment

The translingual dialogue journal (see Appendix C) creates a platform for ESL learners to engage in an ongoing conversation with the instructor throughout the semester. The translingual dialogue journal will be written on Canvas or an available online platform such as Moodle. Conversations on the translingual dialogue journal will be based on class discussions. To earn the total points allocated for the assignment, students are expected to submit at least 15 entries in the translingual dialogue journal (see Appendix A). When writing the translingual dialogue journal students are given the opportunity to mesh English, Tamil, and Sinhala. In other words, they are invited to use their full language repertoire freely so that they acquire the vocabulary, rules, and structures of the English language through the writing process.

As mentioned above the purpose of writing a translingual dialogue journal is to create a platform for the students to use their full linguistic repertoire freely in an ongoing dialogue with the instructor. In other words, the translingual dialogue journal will create a space for the students to use language without being clogged by monolingual ideologies. Therefore, it creates a safe space for the students to take risks using English. My working definition of a translingual dialogue journal is: “An ongoing written conversation in which the ESL teacher and students

communicate over a long term using their full language repertoire without restricting themselves to one named language." In this assignment "The teacher is a participant… rather than an evaluator who corrects or comments on the student's writing" (Peyton, 1993, p. 2). While writing the translingual dialogue journal, the students and the teacher will play with words and syntax of their native languages and English.

ESL teachers could also use online teaching and learning platforms like Canvas or Moodle to facilitate ESL learning of their students better. My experiences of using Canvas as a student and a teaching assistant in a large public university in the US has made a significant impact on my teaching. Using an online platform to facilitate ESL teaching does not require money. There are online platforms available for free that teachers could use to improve their teaching. As presented in this reflective paper, using an online platform could be used as an extension of the ESL classroom to create a safe space for the students to practice using the target language.

Analysis of the assignment in relation to the guiding principles

The whole is taught first, and the parts are understood later: In this assignment (see Appendix C), the main focus is on exposing ESL students to language as a whole without breaking it into parts and teaching them grammar and vocabulary. The students will ask questions regarding the lessons taught, and I will reply to their questions. Every entry should have a minimum number of sentences and students should reply to the entry posted by the instructor (see Appendix C). What is emphasized when writing the translingual dialogue journal is the importance of communicating with each other meaningfully. When having a dialogue between two individuals, each speaker expects to communicate a message and therefore there no

expectation of complete grammatical accuracy. When writing the translingual dialogue journal too, I expect that my students assume that they are having a casual conversation with the teacher.

Language is developmentally constructed: Writing a translingual dialogue journal takes into account the developmental aspect of language learning. Therefore, in this assignment (see Appendix C), I have not allocated marks for mechanics. I did not allocate points for mechanics with the expectation of making ESL learners feel comfortable with making miscues and "correct" their miscues by themselves. In other words, they will not feel threatened by any requirement of writing in "correct" English. Not being threatened by English is essential for the students to practice using English vocabulary and sentence structures that they acquire in the ESL classroom. Instead of pointing out language errors that the students make, I will be modeling for them in my replies to them as to how they could correct themselves.

A community of learners which extends beyond the classroom is created: The translingual dialogue journal also contributes to creating a community of learners which extends beyond the ESL classroom. Since the translingual dialogue journal will be written via Canvas as a personal conversation with the teacher the relationship between the students and the ESL teacher becomes stronger as the semester progresses. Notably, in language education, a strong relationship between the student and the teacher is essential because the teacher is an important member of the student's community with whom the student can practice using English.

Critical pedagogy provides the framework for language learning: When writing the translingual dialogue journal, the students get the opportunity to become critical because the ESL teacher creates a space for them to ask questions and clarify them. Since the student and the teacher and the students are having a dialogue, the teacher will not be pouring knowledge into

the students. Similarly, because the dialogue takes place online, the students have plenty of time to formulate their questions and answers. Moreover, since the assignment is a written conversation both the teacher and the students have the opportunity to reflect on what they have discussed online. Moreover, writing a translingual dialogue journal empowers students because it provides them an opportunity to clarify doubts even after the ESL class. For instance, the translingual dialogue journal is a vital platform for those students who feel afraid to talk in front of others in, and it can be the first step for them to communicate freely in English.

Students use authentic materials for authentic purposes and with authentic audiences: When the ESL learners use the translingual dialogue journal to communicate with the teacher they have an authentic purpose of doing so. They are using the dialogue journal to engage in a conversation with the teacher about what they learned in the ESL classroom. In that sense, the translingual dialogue journal operates as an extension of the ESL classroom. Also, the students have an authentic audience – the ESL teacher.

Translingualism is encouraged as a fundamental means of language teaching and language acquisition: Finally, in this assignment, the students are encouraged to use their complete linguistic repertoire (see Appendix C). At the outset of the ESL class, students will tend to use more Sinhala and Tamil in their journal entries. However, as the class progresses students may tend to use more English words and expressions in their entries. When the teacher and students communicate with each other translingually, the students feel comfortable to take risks and play with words and phrases that they learn in the class. One of the challenges that I face as the ESL teacher is my limited knowledge of Tamil. However, since there are only a few Tamil students in each ESL class, I will be able to get the assistance of a Tamil-speaking ESL teacher to help me with reading and responding to the dialogue journal entries of the Tamil-speaking students in my

future ESL classes. In the meantime, I have started learning Tamil with the expectation of bridging the linguistic and cultural gap between the Tamil-speaking students in my future ESL classes and me.

Implications for ESL teachers

ESL teachers should take into account the changing linguistic environments of the students and how their students use English in their daily life. A linguistic landscape done in Sri Lanka (see Appendix C for selected examples) shows how fluidly language is used in advertisements and marquees. Using such resources and drawing from the developing literature on translingualism, writing a translingual dialogue journal has been developed as an assignment in this reflective paper. It is crucial that ESL teachers should pay close attention to how different languages occur outside of the ESL classroom and connect the ESL classroom with the outside world.

The fact that the ESL teacher does not know all the languages spoken by his/her students should not impede using translingualism as pedagogy. For instance, Schwarzer and Fuchs (2014) present that monolingual teachers could use translingualism as pedagogy. Moreover, Schwarzer, Haywood, & Lorenzen (2003) present ten concrete ideas as to how monolingual teachers could foster multiliteracy in linguistically diverse classrooms. When writing the translingual dialogue journal, the ESL learners will feel that their native languages are as valuable as the target language. Consequently, they will not feel the need to imitate monolingual native speakers of English to demonstrate their English language proficiency and they will feel more confident to use English.

Moreover, it should not be misunderstood that when writing the translingual dialogue journal the students are expected to code mesh in English and their native languages every time they write a journal entry. It is crucial that the ESL teachers provide a guideline to the students (see Appendix C) so that they know the expectations of the assignment. The ESL teacher should explain to the students that they are free to use language as if they are having a casual conversation with a friend or a colleague using their complete linguistic repertoire.

C. Presentation on the Research Paper or Report

Description of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to give the undergraduates in an intermediate level ESL class that I will be teaching an opportunity to present their research paper or report in English to an audience of students and teachers for further feedback. The students will be invited to present the research paper or the report that they had written in the semester to earn five extra points. They will be given 10 minutes to make the presentation. If they like to present their research paper or report to the class, they will be requested to inform the ESL teacher at least three weeks before the last day of class to assign a time slot for their presentations. (see Appendix D for a detailed description).

Analysis of the assignment in relation to the guiding principles

Students and teachers negotiate the curriculum of the class: This assignment is another example which demonstrates how the teacher could negotiate the curriculum of the ESL class with the students. Since this is not a compulsory assignment, the students have the choice to decide whether they want to get the extra five points by making a presentation on their research papers or reports written in the semester. From my side, this is how I motivate the students to

practice using English in an academic environment. Also, in this assignment, some students get another opportunity to improve their final score. Rather than making the ESL class grade oriented and making students feel that if they lose points during the first half of the semester, they will not be able to get a good score at the end, it is important to motivate them by giving them opportunities to get extra points and improve their grade.

Language is developmentally constructed: Since I believe that language is developmentally constructed, in this assignment I have allocated only one point for mechanics (see Appendix D). As mentioned above I consider this assignment as an opportunity for the students to practice how to make a presentation in an academic environment. The students who present their work in the ESL class will present better in other courses because of the feedback that they receive after they practice presenting in the ESL classroom. Moreover, providing extra points itself is a recognition of the fact that language is developmentally constructed. Some students need more time than others to develop linguistic competency. As a result, they may not score well during the beginning stages of the ESL course; however, as the ESL course progresses, they would get better. Yet, their performance at the beginning of the class does not demonstrate the gradual development of their linguistic competency. Therefore, this assignment helps those students to regain points that they had lost at the beginning of the semester.

Critical pedagogy provides the framework for language learning: This assignment is an instance in which students' agency is celebrated. Hence, critical pedagogy provides the framework for this assignment too. My role is to provide the opportunity to the students, and it is their empowerment that is demonstrated by deciding to present the research paper or the report that they have written. Moreover, after the presentation, there will be a question and answer session in which the presenter will get the opportunity to answer questions as it is customary in

conferences. Such experiences are important not only as a significant part of their English language development but also to develop their critical thinking.

Students use authentic materials for authentic purposes and with authentic audiences: The research paper or the report that the students develop throughout the semester is an authentic text. Moreover, when presenting the research papers or reports that they have written, the students have an authentic purpose for presenting their research papers or reports – which is to practice how to present their research paper in other courses. Similarly, the audience in front of which they present will be similar in other courses that they take. Thus, the audience is also authentic.

Implications for ESL teachers

When examining the second-year courses in an urban public university in Sri Lanka, I came across the fact that there are instances when students are required to do academic presentations in English. Therefore, for my ESL students, it is important to practice how to do an academic presentation. However, doing academic presentations was not a recurring assignment as writing research papers or reports. Therefore, I decided to invite my students to present their research papers or reports to the class instead of making this assignment compulsory to everyone.

It is crucial for ESL teachers to find multiple ways to motivate ESL students. One of the ways to do so is to give them opportunities to earn extra credits. For instance, as presented above, allowing the students to do a presentation of the research paper or the report will provide a second chance for the students who would like to work harder to improve their final score. This will motivate students to work harder. However, it should not be misunderstood that students

should be given extra work to motivate them. Doing meaningless busywork demotivates students.

IV. CONCLUSION

Writing this MA thesis has been a transformative experience that changed my understanding of "good" ESL teaching and empowered me with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach my students better. At every step of the process of writing this reflective paper, I started to see ESL teaching in Sri Lanka through a different lens. For instance, when teaching ESL in Sri Lanka, I was critical of how ESL was taught in my university and thought that the hierarchical administrative structure in the university should be solely held accountable. At that time, I did not understand how to change my practices as an ESL teacher to facilitate students' learning because I did not recognize my agency. I still believe that there should be an overall transformation of the ESL program in my university in Sri Lanka. However, writing this MA thesis enabled me to understand the capacity of an individual teacher to make specific changes in his/her practice despite considerable limitations within the ESL program. This reflective paper is a testimony to such changes that will take place in my future ESL classes at an urban public university in Sri Lanka.

There are two sections in this conclusion: a) conclusions of importance for ESL teachers and b) implications for ESL researchers in Sri Lanka.

1. Conclusions of Importance for ESL Teachers

Based on the knowledge and experiences gained through writing this reflective paper, the following are conclusions of importance that I suggest for ESL teachers in Sri Lanka, as well as ESL teachers in other post-colonial, English dominated countries.

A. The importance of understanding your positionality as an ESL teacher

The section titled *My positionality* in the introduction presented how several key aspects in my life such as my ethnicity, being an ESL learner from a rural village, an ESL teacher in an urban public university, and a postgraduate student in a large university in the U.S. and so on, have constructed my positionality as an ESL teacher. These aspects have conditioned my perceptions of ESL teaching in Sri Lanka. In other words, my understanding of “good ESL teaching” is conditioned by my positionality. Because of my positionality, my biases are different from an ESL teacher who comes from an urban, upper-class family who learned English at her/his mother’s knee. The unique positionalities that ESL teachers occupy may provide new insights into how they could positively impact ESL teaching in schools and universities.

In this reflective paper, ESL teachers and researchers in Sri Lanka get the opportunity to better understand ELT in Sri Lanka from my point of view. For instance, now I understand that my Tamil students may perceive me as the "privileged other" because I am Sinhala. Hence, I shall take careful measures to bridge the gap between us. I should make sure that they feel included in my ESL classes mainly because most of my students are Sinhala. ESL teachers take it for granted that every student in his/her ESL classes, despite their ethnicity feels welcome because the primary language used in the ESL classroom is English. Such an attitude makes ESL teachers insensitive to subtle ways that students who belong to different ethnicities and speak different languages can be othered in the ESL classroom. Thus, understanding one’s positionality enables the ESL teacher to understand the reasons for his/her practices and how his/her biases on ESL teaching influence one’s teaching. Therefore, all ESL teacher should understand their positionality to make their teaching inclusive.

B. The importance of critically reviewing the significant work on ELT

The first chapter of this reflective paper provides a critical literature review of ELT in Sri Lanka which is useful for me as well as other ESL teachers and researchers to understand the complexity of the ELT context in Sri Lanka. The critical literature review of this reflective paper is categorized into three sub-themes: the historical analysis of English in Sri Lanka, the linguistic analysis of English in Sri Lanka, and the analysis of ELT in Sri Lanka. First, the critical literature review helped me understand how functions of English and attitudes towards English and ELT in Sri Lanka have evolved. Second, it helped me understand how the debates on language standards and identity of English used in Sri Lanka have impacted ESL teaching. Finally, the critical literature review helped me understand the challenges encountered by ESL learners and teachers in Sri Lanka.

My initial understanding of ELT in Sri Lanka was mainly based on my observations and experiences. When critically reviewing the literature, I started to question my previous conceptualizations of certain aspects of ELT in Sri Lanka. For instance, before conducting the critical literature review, I believed that ESL teachers in Sri Lanka should teach their students how to speak and write in standard Sri Lankan English. However, after completing the critical literature review, I understood that there are competing and developing dialects of Sri Lankan English and the standard Sri Lankan English is limited to urban English-speaking Sinhala elites in Sri Lanka. Therefore, I am now determined to accommodate different dialects of spoken Sri Lankan English in the ESL classroom and make students aware of these differences. It is essential to acknowledge variations/diversity in spoken language and respect it, rather than forcing students to conform to a standard that discriminates against them. In terms of academic writing, Sri Lankans still seem to look up to the standard of British English. However, as a result

of the critical literature review, I am now aware that there is a lack of research in this area that limits our understanding of how English used in scholarly work by British scholars and Sri Lankan scholars differ.

As mentioned above, in the critical literature review significant scholarly work on ELT in Sri Lanka has been categorized only into three focus areas, even though there can be other ways of understanding the literature on ELT in Sri Lanka. For instance, how different groups of scholars discuss ELT in Sri Lanka from different points of view will be another way of conceptualizing ELT in Sri Lanka. In other words, how a Sri Lankan scholar living in Sri Lanka conceptualizes ELT in Sri Lanka can be perhaps different from how an expatriate Sri Lankan scholar conceptualizes ELT in Sri Lanka. Thus, critically reviewing the literature is essential to gain different insights into ELT in any context and the awareness gained through critically reviewing the literature empowers ESL teachers.

C. The importance of reflecting on your teaching

Being dissatisfied with ESL teaching in Sri Lanka, I tried different ways to change my practices to become a better teacher. However, I did not know how to do significant changes, because I was a product, and unwittingly a contributor to mainstream ESL teaching. It was after taking a class on ESL teaching methods that I realized the importance of reflecting on my teaching in Sri Lanka. For instance, I thought that getting the help of a Sinhala- Tamil bilingual Muslim student to translate what was explained in Sinhala was a good practice because I was trying to help the Tamil speaking students that way. Until I reflected on this practice, I did not realize that my actions had racist implications. Even though there is no argument that it was done

in good faith, I do not think that it helped the Tamil speaking students to feel welcome in my class.

As teachers, the vantage points from which we reflect on our practices are crucial because our knowledge and experiences condition our understanding of teaching. For instance, in this reflective paper, I reflect on my teaching in Sri Lanka from the point of view of a graduate student who was exposed to cutting edge theories and practices in (second/foreign/heritage) language education in a large public university in the U.S. It is this position that I occupy which enabled me to think differently about my practices and demonstrate how my teaching in Sri Lanka in the future will be radically different from how I used to teach ESL before receiving the Fulbright Master's Student Award. Therefore, reflecting on one's practices is a never-ending process.

Reflecting on how students enunciate their resistance in the ESL classroom is also important. Typically, students do not openly criticize their teachers. This may be either because the teacher has much authority over the students or because they like the teacher and do not wish to offend the teacher. Shirking, being silent in the class, not doing the required work, cutting classes are how some students usually resist or express their dissent. Being sensitive to these responses, especially to those that are implicit, is imperative to facilitate ESL students better.

D. The importance of developing guiding principles to steer your teaching

Developing guiding principles to steer my future teaching is crucial for me as an ESL teacher because I lacked such principles to guide my teaching in Sri Lanka. The lack of guiding principles was the main reason why I did not know how to improve my teaching. In other words, I was teaching ESL the way I was taught English and how I was instructed to teach by the senior

ESL teachers at the ELTU. I tried to be creative and different from most of the ESL teachers in Sri Lanka, but the changes that I did were experimental and not sustainable because they were not governed by any principles. For instance, I used political cartoons in my ESL classes to generate discussions so that every student in the class would feel strongly to contribute to the discussions. Using political cartoons was effective; however, it did not have long term effects on my teaching per se. Therefore, I consider that it is essential to explore cutting edge literature on language education in developing guiding principles. The principles should not be merely based on one's experiences and intuition as to what one believes as "good" teaching. That is why I adopted six of the guiding principles from Schwarzer & Petron (2005) and developed one guiding principle based on available scholarly work on translingualism (Schwarzer, Bloom & Shono, 2006; Tung-Chiou, 2010; Canagarajah, 2012; Grabarczyk, 2015; Lee, 2018). Therefore, I highly encourage other ESL teachers to develop their own guiding principles to steer their teaching.

The need to develop guiding principles based on cutting edge scholarly work on language education does not mean that traditionally used teaching materials and teaching methods are completely useless. Teaching methods and materials should evolve to suit the needs of the evolving generations of learners and the sociocultural conditions around them. The issues concerning ELT that I have identified as a student and a teacher are symptomatic examples which demonstrate that the failure of the English language teaching in Sri Lanka is the inability of teachers and curriculum designers to change their practices to suit the educational and linguistic needs of the changing Sri Lankan students. Changing an ESL teacher's practices should be based on a set of principles; otherwise, ad hoc changes done by teachers may not be sustainable.

E. The importance of developing syllabi

Based on the seven guiding principles presented in this reflective paper; I have developed a syllabus which will be eventually implemented in Sri Lanka when I resume my duties as an ESL teacher. When I was teaching in Sri Lanka, the ELTU did not have formal syllabi for the courses that it offered. Therefore, neither the students nor the teachers had any idea as to what the objectives of the course were. This affected lesson planning and the development of teaching materials.

The new syllabus presented in this reflective paper (see Appendix A) is not ideal. It has its limitations. For instance, the textbook that I use (see Appendix E for the contents of the textbook) does not explicitly cater to an audience of Sri Lankan undergraduates learning ESL. However, the textbook is focused on an international audience and "designed for both experienced and inexperienced authors" (Wallwork, 2016, p. v). Rather than merely complaining that I am unable to make specific changes in the curriculum until someone writes a textbook for ESL learners who conduct research in Sri Lanka, my resolve was to use this textbook that serves the purpose of the class. After developing the syllabus and three assignments, I have understood that every ESL teacher has the potential to develop their own syllabi to enhance the quality of their practice.

My next step in the long journey as an ESL teacher is to implement this new syllabus and reflect on that experience to improve it further. Once I implement the syllabus and reflect on that experience, I can share the experience with other ESL teachers in Sri Lanka.

2. Implications for ESL Researchers in Sri Lanka

This section provides some implications of this reflective paper for ESL researchers in Sri Lanka.

A. The need to research Sri Lankan English

The scholarly work on Sri Lankan English has given rise to certain controversies at least because of three reasons: 1. English is still considered the property of England and white settler colonies such as Australia, America and so on, 2. Internationally English language standards are being set and maintained by standardized English language tests such as TOEFL and IELTS, and 3. There is a dearth of research based on empirical studies that describe Sri Lankan English, mainly its syntax. The scholarly work on Sri Lankan English reviewed in this reflective paper has laid the foundation, particularly, to the study of the spoken varieties of English in Sri Lanka, yet this is not enough to understand Sri Lankan English in its full form. For instance, I was not able to find scholarly work that explores the use of standard Sri Lankan English in written academic work by Sri Lankan scholars. As Kandiah (1979; 1984) and Gunesekera (2010) indicate, Sri Lankan writers look up to British English as the written standard. However, more research in this area will help ESL teachers and curriculum designers, particularly in the university context, to better understand the influence of Sri Lankan English in academic writing.

B. The need to research the bilingual education program in Sri Lanka

The bilingual education program in Sri Lanka is an under-researched area. As mentioned in the critical literature review, the primary purpose of implementing the bilingual program in public schools in Sri Lanka is to develop English language proficiency. It also has the potential to foster ethnic harmony in Sri Lanka. However, for this purpose, the bilingual education

program should encourage not only English-Sinhala or English-Tamil bilingualism but also Sinhala-Tamil bilingualism. In the current bilingual classrooms, English operates as the link language that facilitates interethnic communication. Consequently, the bilingual program in Sri Lanka is misunderstood as the "English medium." Certainly, the term English medium (Balakrishnar & Thanaraj, 2011) is very telling of the main objective of the bilingual program in Sri Lanka, that is to improve English language proficiency of students in public schools. In this sense, "bilingual program" is a misnomer. Therefore, more research should be conducted to find how the bilingual program in Sri Lanka could foster multilingual development rather than contributing to perpetuating the sociocultural value of English. A multilingual approach to education with equal emphasis on Sinhala, Tamil and English will, in turn, develop multilingual competency of students and contribute to building sustainable ethnic harmony.

In its current form, the bilingual education program in Sri Lanka contributes to perpetuating and perhaps increasing inequalities in the education system. As mentioned in the critical literature review, there are at least two ways in which the bilingual education program in Sri Lankan public schools perpetuate and increase inequalities in the education system. On the one hand, the bilingual education program is restricted to a limited number of urban and suburban public schools, and on the other, the students who are relatively competent in English are the ones who are selected to study in the bilingual stream. Therefore, much needs to be done to create equity in and through bilingual education. In this regard, more research would undoubtedly contribute towards positive pedagogical reforms in the bilingual program in the Sri Lankan education system.

C. The need to design textbooks

While reflecting on my teaching in Sri Lanka, I realized that the lack of a textbook led to many pedagogical issues in ESL courses. For instance, at the beginning of every semester, the English instructors at the ELTU had to either create teaching materials from scratch or modify existing materials. This effort was time-consuming and often unguided. All the required teaching materials for the ESL classes were not available at the beginning of the semester, and the teachers received the required handouts for their ESL classes every week or sometimes just before their ESL class. Because of this situation, particularly novice ESL teachers did not have enough time for lesson planning. Similarly, the students also could not prepare for the ESL classes since they did not receive the handouts on time. There was also the issue of disconnectedness between teaching materials. One effective way to deal with such issues is by using an appropriate textbook.

One of the challenges that I faced while developing the syllabus for an undergraduate intermediate level ESL class is the shortage of suitable textbooks worldwide on teaching ESL students how to write research papers or reports. The textbook chosen for the syllabus presented in this reflective paper (see Appendix A and Appendix E) has its own weaknesses. For instance, it does not directly cater to undergraduate students studying in a Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Sri Lankan universities. Therefore, designing textbooks to guide undergraduate ESL learners specifically catering to their immediate academic needs will contribute a great deal to the development of ESL teaching in university contexts in Sri Lanka.

D. The need to conduct action research

Action Research is a qualitative approach to research that empowers both researchers and participants. Action research brings together all stakeholders to solve problems that affect a community or an organization (Dwyer & Stringer, 2005). For instance, in educational institutions, action research enables researchers to work in partnership with teachers, students and the community members with whom the students interact.

When critically reviewing the literature on ELT in Sri Lanka, one of the most striking surprises that I had was the unavailability of action research studies conducted on ESL teaching and learning in the university context. There is a lack of action research in general in the field of ESL education in Sri Lanka. As pointed out in this reflective paper, ESL teachers in the university context have been working in isolation without communicating with instructors who teach other academic courses at the university. If a platform is created for ESL teachers to work collaboratively with instructors of other courses, ESL students will be able to identify the direct link between what they study in other academic courses and their ESL classes. In this regard, an action research study will create a platform for ESL teachers, instructors of other academic courses, and undergraduates to collaboratively solve challenges that they encounter in ESL programs in Sri Lankan universities. Moreover, ESL teachers themselves can be researchers rather than expecting external intervention.

In summary, this reflective paper highlights several conclusions of importance for ESL teachers in Sri Lanka such as the importance of understanding the positionality of ESL teachers, critically reviewing the significant literature on ELT, and reflecting on teaching practices, and the importance of developing guiding principles and syllabi. At the same time, this reflective

paper provides implications for ESL researchers in Sri Lanka such as the need to research Sri Lankan English and the bilingual education program, the need to design textbooks, and the need to conduct action research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: The new syllabus that is developed as a crucial part of this MA thesis

ELA 203: ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR ARTS

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

First semester 2020

Monday & Wednesday 03.00-05.00 PM

Main Arts Building, Room No. 33

Instructor: Kasun Gajasinghe | Office: ELTU, Room No: 05

Email: kgajasingha@gmail.com | Office Hours:

Instructor Mailbox: ELTU21

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will ensure that students are successful at University Test of English Language (UTEL) Level 5 in the reading and writing examinations. More specifically, the course aims to familiarize students with academic texts of a descriptive and argumentative nature, including visuals such as graphs and tables, as well as to ensure that they can summarize, take notes, skim and scan effectively, and write short narrative/descriptive/informative texts.

COURSE OBJECTIVES (based on UTEL benchmarks for the intermediate level)

At the end of this course the students will be able to:

- Use contextual, structural, and morphological clues to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases
- Write down notes if they are dictated slowly
- Use all basic tenses appropriately to convey meaning with a fair degree of accuracy and fluency
- Summarize a short text on a familiar subject with a fair degree of accuracy

- Identify and understand the key ideas in a longer text
- Understand simple explanations and descriptions in short academic texts
- Understand instructions about a process
- Use a limited range of cohesive devices to make a short speech on a general topic
- Use 'WH' and yes/no questions appropriately to ask for information
- Provide appropriate responses to fairly complex questions with a reasonable degree of accuracy
- Express opinions on familiar topics with a reasonable degree of fluency and accuracy

PRE-REQUISITES:

ELA 101 and ELA 102

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Required textbooks:

Wallwork, A. (2016). *English for Writing Research Papers*. London: Springer

Torres-Gouzerh, R. (2016). *Practice Makes Perfect: Intermediate English Grammar for ESL Learners*. McGraw-Hill Education: New York.

The instructor will provide other supplementary materials when needed.

Recommended books:

Madura Dictionary (English-Sinhala) or Malalasekera Dictionary (English – Sinhala) or

Oxford English-Tamil dictionary

Smith, S. (2018). EAP Foundation: Academic Presentations. Evident Press.

GRADING POLICY AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ASSIGNMENTS

Breakdown of grading: Given below are the breakdown of the grading components and brief descriptions of each assignment components. Detailed assignment guidelines and rubrics will be provided and discussed in class.

Course Requirements	Percentage
Dialogue journal	15%
Research paper or Report (midterm)	35%
Written examination	40%
Preparation, participation, and attendance	10%
Total	100

Extra Credits: You can receive extra credits (up to 5 points) by presenting the research paper or the report that you write or revise in this class. You will receive more information in this regard in the 10th week of the class.

Similarly, for one extra credit, you are encouraged to write an abstract of the research paper or a summary of the report in Sinhala or Tamil.

Dialogue Journal (15 points)

In this assignment, you will be having an online conversation with the instructor. The instructor will provide topics or questions for the dialogue journal entries. They will be based on classroom discussions. The dialog journal will be written via Canvas. You need to submit ten journal entries to earn 15 points (1.5X10=15).

Research Paper or Report (35 points)

For this assignment, you can either work on a research paper that you are submitting for one of your classes or you can revise a research paper that you have written during the previous semester. Also, if you are writing a research paper for publication, this will be an opportunity for you to improve it. This is an individual assignment. This assignment includes three main tasks.

They are: 1) Reading research papers, 2) Writing your research paper and 3) Reviewing a research paper written by another student in your class.

or

You will work on a report that you are submitting for one of your courses. You may also revise a report that you have already written for another course. More information will be provided in class. You may work on this assignment individually, in pairs or groups of three.

You may do this assignment in pairs or individually.

Final Examination (40 points)

The written final examination is scheduled by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of **______**. Therefore, it is nonnegotiable. This will include a variety of reading, writing and listening activities. This will be administered by the English Language Teaching Unit at the end of the semester and will be worth 40% of your final grade. A practice test for the final examination will be done in class. A discussion of answers will follow the test.

Preparation, participation, attendance: (10 points)

Class attendance is mandatory. To excuse an absence, you should provide me with the necessary documentation (a doctor's note, written evidence of participation in an academic event, etc.) *You are allowed one unexcused absence during the whole semester.* You will receive 5 points for attendance. You will earn 5 points for preparation and participation. You should do your homework, participate in group work, contribute to develop and maintain the Word Wall to get points for preparation and participation.

NOTE: In addition to these assignments you will be given homework to practice grammatical structures and vocabulary that you learn in class. It is highly recommended that you do the homework assignments because the 4 hours that we meet in the class is not enough to be fluent in English. Certain sections of the homework assignments will be discussed in class.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following evaluation criteria are applied to all written and oral work. For major assignments, detailed rubrics will be provided.

A: *Demonstration of superior work.* Work demonstrates a deep and detailed understanding of the material and is logically developed. Creativity or special insights are evident, and work is free from spelling, grammatical, and formatting errors.

B: *Very good work.* Work demonstrates a clear understanding of the material and provides relevant details that ground theory in practice. Work displays coherent organization, addresses the purpose of the assignment, and is relatively free from spelling, grammatical, and/or formatting errors.

C: *Satisfactory work.* Work, for the most part, demonstrates an understanding of the material and provides a few relevant details. Work displays a basic level of organization mildly addresses the purpose of the assignment, and contains a few spellings, grammatical, and/or formatting errors.

D: *Unsatisfactory work.* Student work displays a severe lack of understanding of the material and provides little or no relevant detail. The work is poorly organized, does not meet the purpose of the assignment, and contains numerous spelling, grammatical, and/or formatting errors

F: *Work is neither satisfactory nor complete.* Student work displays no understanding of materials and provides no detail. The work lacks organization, does not meet the purpose of the assignment, and does not adhere to spelling, grammatical, and/or formatting guidelines.

94-100%= A	84-86%= B	74-76%= C	64-66%= D
90-93%= A-	80-83%= B-	70-73%= C-	60-63%= D-
87-89%= B+	77-79%= C+	67-69%= D+	59% or below= F

(Adapted from Schwarzer, D. Action Research Class EDFD504, 2018 Summer)

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy

University Attendance policy: The College of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of ________ follows the 80% attendance policy that has been approved by the 315th Faculty

Board. All students are expected to fulfill this requirement to be eligible to sit the end-semester examination. If a student gets less than 80%, he/she is ineligible to sit for the end semester examination. Please refer to page 114 of the College Handbook for additional information.

Course Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory. To excuse an absence, you should provide me with the necessary documentation (a doctor's note, written evidence for participation in an academic event, etc.) *You are allowed two unexcused absence during the whole semester. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a reduction in your points for attendance.* Students are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students. Students who are more than 15 minutes late will be counted as absent.

Late Work

I will accept late work. However, one point from the late assignment will be reduced daily since the due date. However, some assignments may include a 24-hour grace period during which students will not be penalized for late submissions. Students will be informed about the grace period in advance. Similarly, the examination must be taken during the scheduled time except in cases of illness or emergency. Please remember that you should always present valid documentation in such instances (ex: doctor's note).

Academic integrity policy and Student Conduct

Academic dishonesty or any other violations of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated. You are expected to express yourself in your own words. If quoting directly or paraphrasing the work of another, you must cite your source. Cheating on an examination is also considered to be academic misconduct and may result in a failing grade for the examination. Academic misconduct will be handled seriously and is grounds for receiving an F in the course. If you have questions regarding this policy or what precisely academic dishonesty entails, please refer to the pages 265-274 of the Faculty Handbook (4.4. Examination procedure, offenses, and punishments).

Students with Disabilities

Based on the university's policy on accommodating students with disabilities, within the classroom, I will make accommodations for learners with documented disabilities. If you need

further assistance, please contact the University Special Needs Resource Unit, or upon your request, I can help you connect with the Special Needs Resource Unit.

CLASS SCHEDULE*

The tentative schedule below indicates the units which will be covered each week, along with the examination dates. Homework assignments will be assigned regularly.

*This schedule is subject to revision as necessary. Students will be notified of any changes.

Week	Date	Course topic/Classroom activity	Assignments due
Unit 1: Introduction to the Course and Reading and Writing the Introduction of a Research Paper/ Report			
1	Monday	Syllabus	
	Wednesday	Explanation and Discussion of Assignment 1: Writing a research paper/ report Overview of a research paper Introduction to the dialogue journal Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	Home Work: Read Chapter 12: Titles (p.199 – 216) Chapter 14: Introduction (p. 249 – 264) Translingual Dialogue Journal 1
2	Monday	Discussion of chapters: Chapter 12: Titles (p.199 – 216) Chapter 14: Introduction (p. 249 – 264) Writing the title of the research paper/ report Introduction to the Dialogue Journal Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Read the introduction of: Hayes, D. (2010). Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka. *Tesol Quarterly*, *44*(1), 58-	Translingual Dialogue Journal 2

		83. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	
3	Monday	Reading the introduction of a research paper (written in English) selected by the students. Read in pairs or groups of three. Start writing the introduction of your research paper: Do activity 14.2 in the textbook. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Bring a preliminary draft of the introduction to the next class
	Wednesday	Revise the preliminary draft of the introduction. Use the questions in 14.13 in the textbook Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	Submit the first draft of the Introduction for peer review Home Work: Read Chapter 15: Review of the Literature (p.265 – 275)
Unit 2: Reading and Writing the Literature Review			
4	Monday	Chapter 15: Review of the Literature (p. 265 - 275) Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Read the Literature Review of: Hayes, D. (2010). Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka. *TESOL Quarterly*, *44*(1), 58-83. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Submit the second draft of the Introduction for the instructor's feedback Translingual Dialogue Journal 3
5	Monday	Reading the Literature Review of a research paper (written in English)	Bring a preliminary draft of the literature review to the

		selected by the students. Start writing the Literature Review of your research paper: Do activity 15.2 in the textbook. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	next class
	Wednesday	Revise the preliminary draft of the Literature Review. Use the questions in 15.9 in the textbook. Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	Submit the first draft of the Literature Review for peer review Homework: Read Chapter 16: Methods (p. 277 - 293) Translingual Dialogue Journal 4
Unit 3: Methods			
6	Monday	Chapter 16: Methods (p. 277 - 293) Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Read the Methods section of: Hayes, D. (2010). Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka. *Tesol Quarterly*, *44*(1), 58-83. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Submit the second draft of the literature review for the instructor's feedback Translingual Dialogue Journal 4
7	Monday	Reading the Methods section of a research paper (written in English) selected by the students. Start writing the Methods section of your research paper: Do activity 16.4 in the textbook. Work individually or in pairs.	Bring a preliminary draft of the methods section to the next class

		Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Revise the preliminary draft of the Methods section. Use the questions in 16.18 in the textbook. Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	Submit the first draft of the methods section for peer review Homework: Read Chapter 17: Results (p. 295 - 307) Translingual Dialogue Journal 5
Unit 4: Results/Findings			
8	Monday	Chapter 17: Results (p. 295 - 307) Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Read the Results/Findings section of: Hayes, D. (2010). Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka. *Tesol Quarterly*, *44*(1), 58-83. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Submit the second draft of the methods section for peer review Translingual Dialogue Journal 6
9	Monday	Reading the Results of a research paper (written in English) selected by the students. Start writing the Results section of your research paper: Do activity 17.2 in the textbook. Work individually or in pairs. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Bring a preliminary draft of the methods section to the next class
	Wednesday	Revise the preliminary draft of the Methods. Use the questions in 17.14	Submit the first draft of the Results/Findings for peer

		Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	review Homework: Read Chapter 18: Discussion (p. 309 -329) Translingual Dialogue Journal 7
Unit 5: Discussion			
10	Monday	Chapter 18: Discussion (p. 309 -329) Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Read the Discussion of: Hayes, D. (2010). Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka. *Tesol Quarterly*, *44*(1), 58-83. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Submit the second draft of the Results/Findings for the instructor's feedback Translingual Dialogue Journal 8
11	Monday	Reading the Discussion of a research paper (written in English) selected by the students. Start writing the Discussion of your research paper: Do activity 18.3 in the textbook. Work individually or in pairs. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Bring a preliminary draft of the Discussion section to the next class Translingual Dialogue Journal 9
	Wednesday	Revise the preliminary draft of the Discussion. Use the questions in 18.19 Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	Submit the first draft of the Discussion section for peer review Homework: Read Chapter 16: Conclusion (p. 331-347)
Unit 6: Conclusion			

12	Monday	Chapter 16: Conclusion (p. 331-347) Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Read the Conclusion of: Hayes, D. (2010). Duty and service: Life and career of a Tamil teacher of English in Sri Lanka. *Tesol Quarterly*, *44*(1), 58-83. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	Submit the second draft of the Discussion section for the instructor's feedback. Translingual Dialogue Journal 10
13	Monday	Reading the Methods section of a research paper (written in English) selected by the students. Start writing the Conclusion of your research paper: Do activity 19.4 in the textbook. Preparation for the end-semester examination (15 minutes)	
	Wednesday	Revise the preliminary draft of the Methods. Use the questions in 19.12 Preparation for the end-semester examination (final 15 minutes)	Submit the first draft of the conclusion section for peer review
Unit 6: Preparation for the final examination and final presentations			
14	Monday	Practice Examination	
	Wednesday	Discussion of answers	Submit the second draft of the conclusion section for the instructor's feedback.
15	Monday	Introduction to Academic Presentations	
	Wednesday	Introduction to Academic Presentations	Submit the Final draft of your research paper/ report

Resources

Unit	Resources
1	Structure of a research paper: https://cirt.gcu.edu/research/developmentresources/tutorials/researchpaper How to read a research paper: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xq9TrOmGT_E
2	Key features of a report: https://unilearning.uow.edu.au/report/5a.html https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/campuses-services/pdfs/sample-research-report.pdf http://www.library.dmu.ac.uk/Support/Heat/index.php?page=483 https://student.unsw.edu.au/report-writing-support

Appendix B: Assignment guideline for writing a research paper or a report

Assignment Guideline for Writing a Research Paper or a Report

30 points

a. Description of the Assignment:

This is an individual assignment. For this assignment, you will work on a research paper or a report that you are going to submit for one of the other courses that you are taking this semester. You may also choose to revise a research paper or a report that you have already written and submitted during a previous semester. In this class, you will mainly focus on the structure of the required sections of a typical research paper or a report, and vocabulary and sentence structures commonly used in research papers or reports.

The three-tier mastery approach is used in this course (Guskey, 1980; Guskey & Jung, 2011). Writing of the research paper or the report builds through 5 units of the course. After you complete and submit the first draft of each unit, the completed first draft of each stiction of the research paper or the report, one of your classmates will peer reviewed it. After that, once you revise the peer-reviewed section of the research paper or the report and submit the second draft of it, I will provide extensive feedback. Revise the second draft based on my feedback and submit the final draft to receive a grade. Likewise, once you have completed all the sections, put them together and resubmit the complete research paper for the final grade. At this stage of writing the research paper or report you may revise your final draft before submitting it to receive a final score.

The due dates for the assignments for each unit are in the class schedule.

b. The objective of the assignment:

The objective of this assignment is to teach you how to read and write research papers in English in one of your areas of study.

Choosing to write a research paper or a report

For courses in Humanities and Social sciences research papers are written based on secondary sources or original research. Usually, a research paper is organized in the following order:

- Title
- Abstract

- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Appendix: any documents you want to include to support your research paper including photographs, statistics, maps, transcripts of interviews, etc.
- References

Components of a report: Generally, in social sciences reports are used to report what you observe in the field, including the behavior of people, details of places and events. Reports provide an analysis of the observation. When writing a report with the data you collected, you could organize your report in the following order:

Report: Option 1

- Title Page
- Summary (Abstract)
- Contents (Table of Contents)
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Appendices
- Bibliography
- Acknowledgments
- Glossary of Technical Terms

https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/writing/writing-resources/reports

Or

Report: Option 2

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Recommendations
- References
- Appendices

https://www.otago.ac.nz/accountancyfinance/study/resources/otago01515115.html

Note: Sometimes, your instructors may provide you with a structure of the research paper or report that they use in their courses. On such occasions, you can make relevant changes to the structure of your research paper or report base on the structure they give you. Make sure to provide me with this information during the first week of the class to make accommodations in the class schedule.

c. Follow these steps:

1. Read the assignment guideline carefully.
2. Choose a research paper or report that you are writing for one of your courses such as Sociology, Geography, Economics, History, etc.
   Ex: If you are writing or if you have already completed a research paper on the gendered division of labor in household chores in Sri Lanka for SOC205 Sociology of Family, you can work on improving that research paper for this class.
3. Depending on the subject area that the research paper or report that you write or revise belongs to I will decide the citation manual (APA or MLA) that you should use in your research paper or report.
4. Based on our discussions in class, write or revise each section of your research paper or report. Throughout the semester there will be separate lessons on how to use correct

academic English in writing research papers and reports focusing on different components of research papers and reports.

5. Complete the first draft of each component of the research paper or report and submit it for peer review. All the drafts must be submitted on the due date, and I will direct it to another student to peer review.
6. Peer Review.

   Based on the rubrics given by your instructor, you must review and evaluate the drafts of each section of the research paper or report given to you. The drafts for peer review will be assigned mainly on your shared academic background. However, there can be instances in which you will be randomly assigned a draft for peer review.
7. Revise each draft of every section of your research paper or report based on the feedback you receive from your classmates and submit it for the instructor's feedback.

   Based on the feedback you receive from your classmates, make necessary changes and improve it. If you need clarifications on the feedback, please talk to the classmate who reviewed your research paper or report.
8. Submit the revised research paper or report for the instructor's feedback.

   This is another opportunity for you to improve each section of your research paper or report.
9. Revise the final draft of your research paper or report based on my feedback and resubmit it.

d. Assignment components:

Introduction	6
Literature Review	5
Methods	5
Results	5
Discussion	5
Conclusion	6
Conducting peer reviews	3
Total	35

e. Sample Grading rubric for evaluating the literature review

The literature review of your research paper or report will be evaluated based on the following grading rubrics. Therefore, please make sure to go through this rubric to check whether you have covered all the aspects mentioned in the rubric before submitting the introduction for peer review.

Criteria	Ratings		Pts
05 to 10 citations (from the last ten years) in APA style	2.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	2.0 pts
The study is situated in the literature - why is it important?	1.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	1.0 pts
Research question/s is well formulated?	1.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	1.0 pts
Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, structure, etc.)	1.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	1.0 pts
Total points			5.0 pts

(Adapted from Schwarzer, D. Action Research Class EDFD504, 2018 Summer)

Appendix C: Assignment guideline for writing a translingual dialogue journal

Assignment Guideline

Translingual Dialogue Journal (15 pts)

Description of the assignment

In this assignment, you will engage in an ongoing conversation with the instructor on Canvas. Therefore, it is an individual assignment. The conversation on the dialogue journal will be based on class discussions. You are expected to submit ten journal entries to earn 15 points (1.5X10=15).

This assignment is called the "Translingual Dialogue Journal" because in this assignment you are allowed to mesh English, Tamil, and Sinhala. In other words, you are invited to use your full language repertoire freely so that you acquire the vocabulary, rules, and structures of the English language through the writing process.

Objectives of the assignment:

There are two objectives of this assignment:

i. To provide an opportunity for the students to have an on-going conversation with the teacher about the class discussions and clarify questions.

ii. To provide a platform to the students to use English, Tamil, and Sinhala without restricting themselves to one language.

Follow these steps:

1. The instructor will post a question on canvas.
2. Read the question carefully and reply to the question. You should have a minimum of 5 sentences in your reply.
3. When replying, put the date at the top of the journal entry. Always start with an opening greeting and end with a closing salutation.

4. At the end of the entry ask a question that you have about a previous lesson(s) to clarify your doubts, or state what you liked about an earlier lesson and why you liked it.

5. Read the teacher's response carefully and reply to the response. Your reply can be short. If you need further clarification, do not hesitate to ask another question.

6. You are invited to mesh English, Sinhala, and Tamil as if you are having a casual conversation with a friend. Do not write all the sentences in Tamil or Sinhala. Use as much English as you can.

Here are two examples from advertisements that you have seen where Sinhala and English, and Tamil and English are meshed.

Playing with words:

1. An advertisement of a refrigerator

Playing with grammar:

2. An advertisement for a telephone

3. An advertisement for a mobile carrier

Here are some more examples of playing with grammar in Tamil:

Samalify/Samalification: சமாளி+Fy/fication

Kalaichufy: கலாய்ச்சு+fy

Sothapify: சொதப்பி+fy

You are invited to use them as models when you write your journal entries.

7. Always pay careful attention to the sentence structures and vocabulary used by the instructor. Consider them as models when you construct your sentences and questions.

Rubric

Every journal entry will be given 1.5 points. The following rubric will be used to grade this assignment.

Criteria	Points
The student has responded to the question asked by the teacher	0.5
The student has used more than five sentences	0.5
The student has asked a question from the instructor or has stated what he/she liked about a previous lesson and why did he/she like it.	0.5
Total	1.5

(Adapted from Schwarzer, T., Begging Hebrew, HEBR101, 2018 Fall)

Appendix D: Assignment guideline for the presentation of the research paper or report for extra credits

Assignment Guideline

Presentation of the Research Paper or Report for Extra Credits- 5 points

a. Description of the assignment

You can present the research paper or the report that you wrote in the ESL class to earn five extra points. You will be given 10 minutes to make the presentation. If you like to present your research paper or report to the class, please inform me at least three weeks before the last day of class, so that I have enough time to assign a time slot for your presentation.

b. The objective of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to present your research paper or report in English to an audience of students and teachers for further feedback.

c. Your presentation must have the following components:

Slide 01 – Title

Slide 02- Introduction

Slide 03- Literature Review

Slide 04- Methods

Slide 05- Results

Slide 06- Discussion

Slide 07- Conclusion

Slide 08- References

d. Grading Rubric

Criteria	Ratings		Pts
All the required slides are included: Eight slides (0.5x8)	4.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	4.0 pts
Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, structure, etc.)	1.0 pts Full Marks	0.0 pts No Marks	1.0 pts
Total points			5.0 pts

Appendix E: Selected extracts from the contents of the book, *English for Writing Research Papers* by Adrian Wallwork

Part II Sections of a Paper

12 Titles 199
- 12.1 What's the buzz? 200
- 12.2 How can I generate a title? How long should it be? 201
- 12.3 Should I use prepositions in my title? 202
- 12.4 Are articles (*a / an, the*) necessary? 203
- 12.5 How do I know whether to use *a* or *an*? 204
- 12.6 Should I try to include some verbs? 205
- 12.7 Will adjectives such as *innovative* and *novel* attract attention? 206
- 12.8 Is it a good idea to make my title concise by having a string of nouns? 206
- 12.9 What other criteria should I use to decide whether to include certain words or not? 208
- 12.10 How should I punctuate my title? What words should I capitalize? 209
- 12.11 How can I make my title shorter? 210
- 12.12 How can I make my title sound more dynamic? 211
- 12.13 Can I use my title to make a claim? 212
- 12.14 Are questions in titles a good way to attract attention? 212
- 12.15 When is a two part title a good idea? 213
- 12.16 How should I write a title for a conference? 213
- 12.17 What is a running title? 214
- 12.18 Is using an automatic spell check enough? 215
- 12.19 Summary: How can I assess the quality of my title? 216

13 Abstracts 217
- 13.1 What's the buzz? 218
- 13.2 What is an abstract? 219
- 13.3 How important is the Abstract? 220
- 13.4 Where is the Abstract located? 221
- 13.5 What are 'highlights'? 221
- 13.6 How should I select my key words? 222
- 13.7 Why should I download the instructions to the author? Isn't it enough to check how other authors for the same journal have structured their abstract? 223

15 Review of the Literature . . . 265

15.1 What's the buzz? . . . 266

15.2 How should I structure my Review of the Literature? . . . 267

15.3 Do I need to cover all the literature? And what about the literature that goes against my hypotheses? . . . 268

15.4 How should I begin my literature review? How can I structure it to show the progress through the years? . . . 268

15.5 What is the clearest way to refer to other authors? Should I focus on the authors or their ideas? . . . 269

15.6 How can I talk about the limitations of previous work and the novelty of my work in a constructive and diplomatic way? . . . 270

15.7 What tenses should I use? . . . 271

15.8 How can I reduce the amount I write when reporting the literature? . . . 274

15.9 Summary: How can I assess the quality of my Literature Review? . . . 275

16 Methods . . . 277

16.1 What's the buzz? . . . 278

16.2 How should I structure the Methods? . . . 279

16.3 What style: should I use the active or passive? What tenses should I use? . . . 280

16.4 How should I begin the Methods? . . . 282

16.5 My methods use a standard procedure. Do I need to describe the methods in detail? . . . 283

16.6 My methods in the paper I am writing now are (almost) identical to the methods I published in a previous paper. Can I repeat them word for word? . . . 283

16.7 Should I describe everything in chronological order? . . . 284

16.8 How many actions / steps can I refer to in a single sentence? . . . 285

16.9 Can I use bullets? . . . 286

16.10 How can I reduce the word count? . . . 287

16.11 How can I avoid my Methods appearing like a series of lists? . . . 287

Appendix F: Syllabus of EN 200

EN 200: SEMESTER I

Listening **Mid Semester Examination**

- 3-5 practice in the class

Grammar

- Reported speech
- Tenses (Revision)

Writing

- Graphs
- Newspaper article (Inverted pyramid format)

Reading comprehension (Explain in your own words)

More comprehensive contextual meaning End Semester Examination

1. Making plastic rot
2. Degradable nature of plastic
3. Waterborne diseases
4. Sleep and sleep disorders

Appendix G: Grammar drills used in ESL teaching

SIMPLE PRESENT OR PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

EXERCISE 1

Underline the most suitable tense to make meaningful sentences.

1. Mark *is/has been* in Canada since April.
2. Jane is a good friend of mine. I *know/have known* her for a long time.
3. Jane is a good friend of mine. I *know/have known* her very well.
4. 'Sorry I'm late. How long *are you/ have you been* waiting?' 'Not long. Only five minutes'.
5. Martin *works/has worked* in a hotel now. He likes his job very much.
6. Linda is reading the newspaper. She *is/ has been* reading it for two hours.
7. 'How long *do you live/ have you lived* in this house?' 'About ten years'
8. 'Is that a new coat?' 'No, *I have/ I've had* this coat for a long time.'
9. Tom *is/ has been* in Spain at the moment. He *is/has been* there for the last three days.

EXERCISE 2

Right or wrong? Correct the verbs that are wrong. (The verbs are underlined)

1. I've lost my key. I can't find it. **Right**
2. Have you seen Ann yesterday? **Wrong ; Did you see**
3. I've finished my work at 2 o'clock. ……………………………….
4. I'm ready now. I've finished my work. ……………………………….
5. What time have you finished your work? ……………………………….
6. Susila isn't here. She's gone out. ……………………………….
7. Jim's grandmother has died in 1989. ……………………………….
8. Where have you been last night? ………………………………..

EXERCISE 3

Fill in the blanks using the given verb in present perfect or past simple.

1.Have they done their homework?

a) Yes, they ……………………………… (do) it all.

b) Yes, they ……………………………….(do) it before they left school.

2. Have you found the matches?

a) No, I ……………………………………….

b) No, I ………………………………………. (not find) them yet.

3. Have you been here before?

a) No, I ………………………………………

b) Yes, I …………………………………….. (be) here several times.

Appendix H: Handout that I used to teach adjectives and adjective phrases

Write ten adjectives that you come across while reading the following passage.

There are people who will tell you that they have no fear of the jungle, that they know it as well as the streets of *Maha Nuwara* or their own compounds. Such people are either liars and boasters, or they are fools, without understanding or feeling for things as they really are. I knew such a man once, a hunter and a tracker of game, a little man with hunched-up shoulders and peering, cunning little eyes, and a small dark face all pinched and lined, for he spent his life crouching, slinking, and peering through the undergrowth and the trees. He was more silent than the leopard and more cunning than the jackal: he knew the tracks better than the doe who leads the herd. He would boast that he could see a buck down-wind before he could scent him, and a leopard through the thick undergrowth before it could see him. "Why should I fear the jungle?" He would say. "I know it better than my own compound. A few trees and bushes and leaves, and some foolish beasts. There is nothing to fear there". One day he took his axe in his hand, and the sandals of dear-hide to wear in thorny places, and he went out to search for the shed horns of deer, which he used to sell to traders from the towns. He never came to the village again, and months afterwards in thick jungle I found his bones scattered upon the ground, beneath some thorn-bushes, gnawed by the wild pig and the jackal, and crushed and broken by the trampling of elephants. And among his bones lay a bunch of peacock feathers that he had collected and tied together with a piece of creepers and his betle-case, and the key of his house and the tattered fragments of his red cloth. In the fork of one the thorn bushes hung his axe: the massive wooden handle had been snapped in two. I do not know how he died; but I know that he had boasted that there was no fear in the jungle, and in the end the jungle took him.

All jungles are evil, but no jungle is no evil than that which lay about the village of *Beddagama*. If you climb one of the bare rocks that jut up out of it, you will see the jungle stretched out below you for mile upon mile on all sides. It looks like a great sea, over which the pitiless hot wind perpetually sends waves unbroken, except where the bear-rocks rising above it, show like dark smudges against the grey green of the leaves. For ten months of the year the sun beats down and scorches it; and the hot wind in a whirl of dust tears over it, tossing the branches and scattering the leaves. The trees are stunted and twisted by the drought, by the thin and sandy soil, by the dry wind. They are scabrous, thorny trees, with grey leaves whitened by the clouds of

dust which the wind perpetually sweeps over them: their trunks are grey with hanging, stringy lichen. And there are enormous cactuses, evil-looking and obscene, with their great fleshy green slabs, which put out immense needle-like spines. More evil-looking still are the great leafless trees, which look like a tangle of gigantic spiders' legs-smooth, bright green, jointed together-from which, when they are broken, oozes out a milky, viscous fluid.

From Village in the Jungle by Leonard Woolf

Answer the following questions:

1. How is the hunter described?
2. How are the trees described?
3. What happens during ten months of the year?
4. What do you think happened to the hunter?
5. What do you feel when you read this passage?

Grammar Focus: Adjective phrases

What Is an Adjective Phrase?

An adjective phrase (or adjectival phrase) is a phrase used to modify a noun. In other words, it says something about the noun. The principal word in an adjective phrase is an adjective. In the following examples, the adjective phrase is in italics, and the principal word is in bold:

- These are unbelievably **expensive** books.
- Kamalinee was extremely **annoyed** by your comment.
- My mother was very **unhappy** with the service

Like an adjective, an adjective phrase can be used before or after the noun that it modifies.

Using five of the ten adjectives that you have found in the text formulate five adjective phrases. Use them and create five meaningful sentences.

Appendix I: Group discussion guideline taken from Fulbright Faculty Development Workshop (Schwarzer, 2018)

Group Discussion Guidelines

For Facilitators:

- Arrange the group into a circle, if possible, so each participant can see and hear one another.
- Set the rules for the participants (see example below).
- State that no one should interrupt each other during the discussion.
- Encourage everyone to share as much or as little as they would like; however, everyone must participate to some extent.
- Remind them to seek clarification if they do not understand something.
- Make the discussion topic clear and help them stay on track with the topic.

For Group Discussion Participants:

1) Everyone participates; no one dominates.
2) Stay on track of the discussion topic.
3) Be willing to share and participate.
4) Only one speaker at a time.
5) Feel free to ask speakers specific questions after they have finished speaking.
6) Keep a positive tone.
7) Be respectful and considerate of others.
8) Be an active listener.
9) Maintain an open-mind.
10) Don't be afraid to ask questions.