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An Approach to Critical Pedagogy in an English Language Teaching Context: a Case Study in Iran

by

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<u>ABSTRACT</u>

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Critical pedagogy (CP) as a philosophy of education and social movement has been debated for nearly five decades now and inspired many educators and researchers in various fields including English language teaching. Although the original scope of CP was to develop both theory and practice (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; Osborne, 1990; Sweet, 1998), discussions have been mostly focussing on the former and not much work has been done to implement CP in actual classroom practice (Akbari, 2008; Christensen & Aldridge, 2013; Davari, 2011; Gore, 1993, 2003). Moreover, research on classroom practice that is situated within this framework only rarely provides a comprehensive, empirically based analysis thus would not lay the groundwork for further discussion and a deeper understanding of pedagogical practice, its process and outcomes. More importantly, the research conducted within the paradigm of CP usually does not include the viewpoints of the learners despite their role assigned by CP theory to develop CP-oriented practices in collaboration with teachers (Crookes, 2012; Shor & Freire, 1987a; Wong, 2006); this has led to an important gap and the lack of a solid body of research on educational practices conducted within this framework.

This qualitative case study explores how an approach to CP was conceptualised, practised and experienced in an English language teaching context by its participants including the teacher and the learners in a higher education institution in Iran. The study stands out as important due to the fact that in the Iranian education system lecturing still prevails as the dominant teaching method, and pedagogical key concepts of CP including dialogue and critical thinking are widely ignored (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2012; Sadeghi, 2008; Sedeghi & Ketab, 2009; Shakouri Masouleh & Ronaghifard Abkenar, 2012). Therefore, this case study presents and analyses a rare example in the Iranian educational context where CP is still in an initial phase (Ghaemi & Piran, 2014; Safari & Pourhashemi, 2012).

This study investigates how the teacher explains and implements his teaching philosophy and method based on his approach to CP. For this purpose, interviews, audio recordings of classroom interaction and my personal field notes were examined through thematic analysis. Moreover, considering 'dialogue 'as the basis of a dialogic critical approach to teaching, the study explores how

'dialogic discussion' as the teacher's advocated pedagogical method, in line with other dialogic critical pedagogy advocates (Bartlett, 2005, 2008; Dysthe, 2011; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1994; Pollack & Kodikant, 2011; Roberts, 2000; Shor, 1980, 1992, 1993; Shor & Freire, 1987a, 1987b), was contextualised and practised. To this end, class discourse analysis was implemented to investigate the role and importance of dialogue in whole class discussions based on Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue. In addition to this, the study explores the learners' viewpoints on the teacher's main teaching method in practice. This is done through thematic analysis of two questionnaires handed to the learners at the beginning and the end of the three month fieldwork period, focus group discussions and the reflective diaries the learners developed throughout the course. These data sources are examined and triangulated to set the ground for discussing further how the teacher's advocated theory and method align or not with his actual teaching practice and how his theory and practice align or not with positions expressed in CP literature and discussion within the field of ELT in general terms and in Iran particularly.

The findings show that beside a need for theorising and practising CP, it is also necessary to develop a comprehensive analysis of the classroom discourse within a dialogic critical framework. While indoctrination and ideological imposition have been pointed to as the great risk of applying CP in the literature, their unfolding in practice is still under-theorised (Biesta, 1998; Burbules & Berk, 1999; Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003; Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014; Matusov & Lemke, 2015; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014; McArthur, 2010a, 2010b; Mejía, 2004; Palmer & Emmons, 2004). Therefore, a comprehensive analysis enables critical pedagogues to develop a critical stance towards their own and other's personal theories and their role in educational practice, and to raise awareness for the risk of misusing dialogue as a means of indoctrination and imposing one's views on others while believing in one's own strong commitment to dialogue and dialogic knowledge construction. On the one hand, such a research focus helps to conceptualise further the conditions under which CP can, or fails to, unfold its potential as a tool for empowerment and liberation. On the other, this study contributes to building a body of educational practice whose participants self-identify as participating in CP, and thereby adds to the work on how an approach to CP is implemented and carried out in class discourse, which is in need to be studied and analysed (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015).

The results of this study also highlight the significance of including the learners' voice in order to have a more comprehensive picture of the educational process, including the dynamics of actual classroom interactions and the perceived impact of teaching on the learners in this environment. This is specifically crucial where banking education prevails and the learners are unfamiliar with and unaccustomed to the basic principles and requirements of a critical dialogic teaching. By laying open the workings and mechanisms of these dimensions, both CP theory and practice can develop in parallel and the further shortcomings and risks can be noticed and avoided.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Zahra Abdi, declare that the thesis entitled *'An approach to critical pedagogy in an English language teaching context: A case study in Iran'* and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

- none of this work has been published before submission.

Signed:

Date: 11 September 2017

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There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a butterfly

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Wholeheartedly I dedicate the result of my efforts to my dear country

Iran

ABBREVIATIONS

CP: critical pedagogy

CT: critical thinking

EAP: English for academic purposes

EL: English language

ELL: English language learning

ELP: English language proficiency

ELT: English language teaching

ELT/L: English language teaching and learning

FG: focus group

FN: field note

IELTS: international English language testing system

Int: interview

Q1: questionnaire 1

Q2: questionnaire 2

Qs: questionnaires

RD: reflective diary

S: session

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TESOL: Teaching English as a second or foreign language

1. Introduction

This chapter introduces my thesis in three sections; first, the background to the study is presented which is followed by the research questions that this project was an attempt to answer, and ends with an overview of the study by presenting the structure of the thesis.

1.1   Background to the study

As an English teacher, it has been my main concern to explore effective methods applicable in the educational context of Iran to improve the learners' ELL. English is a compulsory subject in the Iranian national curriculum in schools, and included in higher education programs across the disciplines. Regarding higher education, English, both general and academic, is a compulsory subject and is examined in undergraduate and postgraduate university entrance examinations. Moreover, acquiring required grades in English exams such as EPT (English Proficiency Test), IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is one of the qualifications that PhD candidates of all fields of study need to acquire in order to be allowed to sit their PhD viva voce. However, English courses in state schools and universities hardly prepare the learners to acquire the desired English language proficiency level (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Forouzani & Foroozandeh, 2015; Jahangard, 2007; Khajavi & Abbasian, 2011; Mazdayasna & Molaei, 2015; Pazhouhesh, 2014; Riazi, 2005; Sadeghi & Richards, 2015; Zandian, 2015).

Being able to acquire the required grade in English tests is one of the common concerns of students who pursue higher education in Iran or abroad. In response to this demand, different English courses including IELTS or TOEFL preparation courses are offered in private institutes across the country. Tehran University, the oldest and the most well-known university in the country, also offers IELTS preparation courses in its semi-private branches namely, 'Foreign Language Teaching Institute', along with other foreign language learning courses such as French, Spanish, Germany, Russian, Korean, etc. It is on one of the IELTS preparation courses offered in this institute that I based my case study.

There are a number of reasons that convinced me to choose this case for my PhD research; I had attended in an English discussion course announced as "free discussion", run by the teacher who later accepted to participate in this study. It was there that I heard about CP and dialogic teaching and was introduced to critical thinking (CT) for the first time. Comparing to the

traditional lecturing classes that I had been experiencing all through my education, the idea to enhance CT skills through 'dialogic discussion' in English seemed to me admirably innovative. There, in the discussion sessions, I made friends with and talked to many learners who had attended the teacher's IELTS preparation course. Most of them told me that they found the IELTS preparation course different from any other English courses they had attended. As they expressed, they had a chance to talk and improve their English speaking, which they desired most, and learned about CT which they had never taught before throughout their education including school, university and other private English courses they had attended. Thereby, I became interested in CP and studied about it. The more I studied, the more I was convinced of the necessity of considering a dialogic critical approach to education especially in the education system of Iran where lecturing prevails and the basic principles of CP including CT and dialogue are mostly ignored. However, I wondered in what ways and to what extent CP could be applied in this context.

In line with the common criticism of CP, I recognised that, in spite of its initial emphasis and intention to move beyond an educational ideology (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; Osborne, 1990; Sweet, 1998), the research on CP is more on theorising than practising (Akbari, 2008; Christensen & Aldridge, 2013; Davari, 2011; Gore, 1993, 2003). I also found out that there is a lack of comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the educational practices within the CP framework and there is still a need for more analytical study of the application of this approach (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015). This has led to the shortage of a critical view toward the process and outcome of the few instances of the application of this approach to different fields of study. This could have been hindering the development of a legitimate body of the educational practices within this framework thus the common criticism of CP, the shortage of enough practice of this approach, prolongs. This makes the teachers, who are interested in CP and willing to apply it, less likely to find helpful guidelines to develop a CP approach and contextualise, practise and improve it in their educational settings especially in banking educational contexts where the basic concepts of a dialogic critical approach are unfamiliar and the requirements are unpractised if not unwelcomed and prohibited.

Additionally, despite the fact that CP has attracted considerable attention worldwide, it is a new approach to ELT in the educational settings in Iran and it is still in an initial phase (Ghaemi & Piran, 2014; Safari & Pourhashemi, 2012). Some research on CP, mostly on theory than practice, has been done in the field of ELT in Iran and few studies on practising this approach in ELT did not provide a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the process and its outcome. More importantly, they ignored the viewpoints of the learners who are supposed to be guided to

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participate actively in developing the syllabus within this framework in collaboration with the teachers. These highlight the necessity of investigating and analysing the application of such an approach to ELT in Iran. Initially, I felt lucky to find this IELTS preparation course as one of the rare examples of an effort to apply a CP approach to ELT in my hometown.

This case study as unfolds through the following chapters is an attempt to present a comprehensive picture and analysis of teaching that was described as CP by the teacher. It mainly focusses on the teacher who is the key figure responsible to guide and direct the class but also includes the learners' voice. As I explored and analysed through the chapters 6 and 7, in developing his teaching philosophy, he seemed to be inspired by CP but his classroom practice, as analysed in chapter 8, did not actually align with the key concepts and main principles of CP. As a matter of fact, it greatly contradicts what his approach to teaching advocates. The way the teacher managed classroom discussions, as the discourse analysis in chapter 8 shows, was not dialogic but *pseudo dialogic*, i.e. far from empowering and liberating. This was confirmed through the thematic analysis of the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9.

Evidently, as the analysis shows, his advocated teaching theory and method in practice can be considered as an even stronger form of *indoctrination* and *domestication* than lecturing in a banking education (Freire, 1970; Harpaz, 2005; Kincheloe, 2008; Palmer & Emmons, 2004; Pollack & Kodikant, 2011; Shor, 1992) as discussed in 2.2.1. Evidently, his teaching method in classroom practice has little, if any, in common with the basic requirements of a dialogic critical pedagogy and in many ways could be considered as an exemplar of a failure to avoid *ideological imposition* that is the risk of applying a CP approach (Blackburn, 2000; Burbules & Berk, 1999; Darder et al., 2003; Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016; McArthur, 2010a, 2010b; Mejía, 2004; Palmer & Emmons, 2004), as discussed in 2.3. The lack of congruence between his articulation and implementation of his approach to CP, as Breuing (2011) also asserts, highlights the necessity of the continual critical interrogation of the practices of self-identified critical pedagogues.

This thesis, consequently, includes my self- transformational journey from a former student who uncritically believed in and praised the teacher's teaching method and practice as an effective innovation and effort to apply a CP approach, to a researcher whose criticality developed through intensive studying and educational interactions in a different education system. Through this case study, I could reconsider the effects of the banking educational background I had gone through, and raise a critical awareness of teaching and learning regarding dialogue and critical thinking, which is of crucial importance in my future career as a researcher and an educator in the banking education.

1.2 Research questions

This qualitative case study explores how an approach to CP was conceptualised, practised and experienced in an English language teaching context by its participants including the teacher and the learners in a higher education institution in Iran. The main overall objective in this investigation is to develop a comprehensive picture and analysis of the process and outcome of an approach to a dialogic critical framework especially where banking education prevails and the learners are unfamiliar with and unaccustomed to the basic principles and requirements of a critical dialogic teaching. In order to achieve this, I created the following research questions:

1. What is the teacher's perspective on the relevance, aims, and theoretical assumptions of CP in ELT?
2. How does the teacher believe CP in ELT should be put into pedagogic practice?
3. What kind of instructional strategies does the teacher actually use in his classrooms?

After I engaged with data analysis, 'dialogic discussion' was explored to be the teacher's supported teaching method in line with the main teaching method in CP, and 'whole class discussions' were distinguished as the dominant class discourse. Considering dialogue as the basis of a dialogic critical approach to teaching (Bartlett, 2005; Dysthe, 2011; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1994; Pollack & Kodikant, 2011; Roberts, 2000; Shor, 1980, 1992, 1993, Shor & Freire, 1987b, 1987a), I explore how the teacher discursively constructs his teaching method in classroom interactions by investigating the role and importance of dialogue in whole class discussions as a CP teaching method.

Moreover, exploring the teacher's instructional strategy in classroom practice could not be comprehensive enough without including the learners' voice and exploring their points of view as they are the main participants and the target audience of the teacher's intervention. Therefore, this project includes answering the following question:

4. How do the learners view the teacher's actual instructional strategies?

By providing answers to the above questions, this study is an attempt to present a comprehensive analysis of a teaching theory and practice with an approach to CP in an ELT context in higher education institution in Iran. The findings call educators' attention to grow a critical view toward their own, and others', teaching practices to gain a reliable account of the process and outcome of their educational initiatives and efforts. This primarily helps them not to deviate from, or contradict, the key requirements of a dialogic critical framework, and to avoid *indoctrination* which is the great risk of applying a CP approach (Blackburn, 2000; Burbules &

Berk, 1999; Darder et al., 2003; Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016; McArthur, 2010a, 2010b; Mejía, 2004; Palmer & Emmons, 2004), as discussed in 2.3.This would lay the groundwork for improvement, comparative analysis and practical suggestions which help growing CP theory and practice in parallel. A comprehensive analysis of the application of this approach is even more crucial where banking education prevails and the learners are not familiar with the basic principles of CT and the requirements of dialogic critical teaching; therefore, it is unlikely for the learners to grow a critical view toward the teacher's approach which tends to result in the teacher's misevaluation of the effects of her/his teaching method and unawareness of the deviation from her/his own stated objectives.

1.3   Thesis structure

To answer the aforementioned questions, this thesis consists of 10 chapters; following this introduction, chapter 2 is devoted to critical pedagogy (CP) as the underlying conceptual framework of the thesis. It was chosen, primarily, as the participant teacher, on whom the main focus of this research is directed, claimed to align his teaching philosophy and classroom practice with this particular theoretical and pedagogical concept. The thesis, therefore, provides an opportunity to understand how CP is understood, interpreted and put into practice by a member of the teaching profession. Chapter 2 consists of five sections; after the introduction, I discuss the main concepts and key principles of CP in section 2. I also discuss 'existentialism' as the philosophy that greatly influenced Freire in theorising his CP, and 'critical thinking' as a closely related concept to CP, which provide the necessary background to discuss the teacher's teaching philosophy. I added these two sections after I engaged with my data and found out that existentialism is the building block of the teacher's teaching philosophy, and CT is his main educational objective. Then, I elaborate on dialogue as a key concept, and dialogic pedagogy as the main teaching method in CP. Next, I discuss the main criticisms toward CP followed by a section devoted to situating CP in the field of ELT. The chapter ends with the summary and conclusion section.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the educational context in Iran, which is needed to set the ground for understanding the context of my project, notably the classroom in which I conducted my research. The chapter consists of 5 sections; after introduction, I provided a short description of the education system in Iran, and English as a foreign language currently taught in Iran in sections 2 and 3. In section 4, CP as it is applied to ELT and the research done in this area in Iran are discussed in detail. The chapter ends with the summary and conclusion section.

Chapters 4 and 5 detail the research methodology and the analytical frameworks of the study, respectively. The former consists of 10 sections; after introduction section, 8 following sections are allocated to research questions and objectives, research philosophy, case study, pilot study, research setting, research instruments, validity of research findings and ethical approval. The chapter ends with the summary and conclusion section. The latter includes the two analytical frameworks of the study namely 'thematic analysis' which was applied to analyse the teacher's interviews and the learners' questionnaires, focus groups and reflective diaries, and 'class discourse analysis' which consists of six sections including Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue based on which a sample of class discussion discourse is analysed in chapter 8.

The four following chapters depict research findings and discussion. Chapters 6 and 7 address the first two questions to explore the teacher's particular philosophical and theoretical standpoint considering CP and English language teaching and learning (ELT/L). These two chapters provide the necessary background to discuss whether and how his teaching theory is in line with the key concepts of CP, and then with the field of ELT with a CP approach. These also set the ground to discuss his theory in practice in chapter 8, answering the third research question. Both chapters consist of 4 main sections each of which includes subsections developed based on the thematic analysis of the interviews with the teacher and the selected excerpts from class discourse. I made use of data from other research tools including class observation and field notes, and referred to data from focus groups and questionnaires wherever appropriate.

Chapter 6 starts with introduction which followed by a section on the teacher's approach to CP. It consists of two subsections namely the teacher's conception and objectives, and teacher-learner relationship. The following section, 6.3, consists of 2 subsections dealing with the teacher's conception of language and language learning perspective. The last section discusses and concludes the issues explored. Chapter 7 consists of 4 main sections; after introduction, the two following sections are devoted to the teacher's teaching method and his instructional strategy as the teacher advocated, namely 'dialogic discussions' and 'conceptualisation' respectively. In the last section, I summarise the issues explored with further discussions and conclusion.

Chapter 8 is devoted to answer the third research question in 4 sections, dealing with the role and importance of dialogue as a CP instructional strategy in the discourse of this ELL classroom. After introduction, section 8.2 provides the sampling of the class discussion, the transcription of

the selected episode and its description to set the background for class discourse analysis. The following section, 8.3, analyses the discourse of the selected episode based on Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue in 6 subsections corresponding to 6 subsections in chapter 5. The last section provides the discussion and conclusion.

Chapter 9 is devoted to answer the research question 4 in 10 sections exploring the learners' viewpoints about the teacher's teaching method in classroom practice. Analysing the learners questionnaires, focus groups and reflective diaries, 8 main themes were explored which are discussed through sections 2 to 9. The chapter ends with discussion and conclusion. The last chapter is conclusion that provides a synopsis of the findings relevant to each question, as analysed and discussed in detail in the four preceding chapters. The next two sections include contributions, limitations and recommendations. This thesis also includes 15 appendices and a bibliography including all the references I used and referred to in the text.

2. Critical pedagogy

2.1 Introduction

CP, the conceptual framework of this project, was determined as the participant teacher advocates it to be the guiding principle for theorising and practising ELT in his designed course. Whether and how this claim is supported by any evidence is what this case study primarily makes an attempt to explore and discuss. To this end, it is necessary to provide the required background knowledge about the key concepts of CP, its main teaching method and its application to ELT. To achieve this aim, this chapter includes 5 main sections; following this section, I introduce the key concepts and main principles of CP in four sub-sections. First, I discuss CP as an emancipatory education developed by Paulo Freire, the known father of CP. Then, in the two following sub-sections, I discuss briefly the philosophy of 'existentialism' which greatly influenced Freire in his conceptualisation of CP, and 'critical thinking' as the key concept of CP. These two sections provide the necessary background to analyse the teacher's teaching philosophy and his conception of CP in chapters 7 and 8. Finally, I discuss dialogue as a key concept of CP and the building block of dialogic teaching which is the main teaching method advocated by CP and also by the teacher who aimed to practice it in his designed ELL course. In section 3, the common criticisms of CP are discussed which is followed by the application of CP in ELT. The chapter ends with a summary and conclusion.

2.2 Key concepts and main principles

CP is a philosophy of education and social movement that has been debated for nearly five decades now and appears in many and various characterisations and constructions resulted in a vast body of literature defining it variably. The concept of CP can be traced back to John Dewey's 'Democracy and Education' in 1916 and then to the publication of Paulo Freire's 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' in 1968 which remains a common reference point for critical pedagogues. However, the term CP began to emerge and circulate more widely since 1983 after the publication of the book 'Theory and Resistance in Education' by Henry Giroux (Darder et al., 2003; Palmer & Emmons, 2004; Smith, 2002).

CP derives its basic conceptualisation and interests from critical theory that, in a narrow sense, is referred to the theoretical tradition developed by a group of scholars, the neo-Marxist Frankfurt

School, connected to the 'Institute of Social Research' at the University of Frankfurt around 1930 (Kaplan, 1994; Kincheloe, 2004; Miedema & Wardekker, 1999). Critical theory provides the theoretical basis for CP as teaching for social change based on the principle that education and society are intrinsically interrelated (Giroux, 2003). It assumes that 'social relations are infused with injustices and it is the responsibility of intellectuals to recognize and address power relations' (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2012: 154) to bring about 'a better and more just world, less suffering, and more individual fulfilment' by the use of human wisdom (Kincheloe, 2004: 53). As discussed later in this section, this is along the lines of the concept of humanisation which is what CP aims by enhancement of CT as the manifestation of human wisdom.

Criticality in critical theory is not simply a matter of evaluation by invoking a criterion or a set of criteria; rather, it is to raise an argument to persuade people to change their patterns of action. Therefore, besides diagnosis and critique, a stimulus to change is how critical theory defined itself as critical (Burbules, 1998). This is in line with the concept of praxis as one of the key concepts of CP which I discuss in the next section. In fact, critical theorists' implicit goal is the advancement of the emancipatory function of knowledge (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016) as they doubt the possibility of education in societies where 'transmission of knowledge has displaced personality formation as the aim of education'. This way, education primarily is used 'to ensure the production of persons that fit into existing societal structures' as 'a means for continuing suppression, not as a means for individual self-realization' (Miedema & Wardekker, 1999: 71). This is what Freirean CP strongly disapproves as banking education which I discuss along with its proposed alternative namely problem posing education in the following subsection.

2.2.1   CP as an emancipatory education

Paulo Freire (1921-1997), the Brazilian literacy educator, curriculum specialist, and social activist introduced the dichotomy between the banking model of education for the oppression and domestication of the oppressed, and dialogic critical pedagogy or problem posing education for liberation (Matusov, 2009; Shor, 1993). Before Freire coined this metaphor of banking education, Dewey (1916) had offered a similar metaphor of 'pouring in' to criticise pouring prescribed contents into students' minds and filling them with information and skills (Shor, 1992).

Banking education refers to the transference of certified knowledge in the mind of students in order to domesticate them through didactic lectures using commercial texts. It simply involves 'how do we best get the knowledge that serves our interest into the heads of our young people'

(Kincheloe, 2008: 4). Traditional classrooms based on banking concept hardly involve more than fostering passive and disinterested listening to all-knowing teachers in order to succeed in examination (Harpaz, 2005). This way, rote learning and skills drills not only bore and miseducate students but also inhibit their civic and emotional developments by not providing meaningful connection to their needs, interests, or community cultures (Shor, 1992). Monologic discourse is dominant in banking education and associated with the voice of the teacher as 'authoritative master of knowledge that is to be transmitted to their students' (Pollack & Kodikant, 2011: 130). This way, the banking model of learning dehumanises and simply reproduces the status quo (Palmer & Emmons, 2004).

Freire's proposed alternative to this system of domestication has roots in the works of Dewey and Piaget who favoured student-centred curricula focusing on the construction of meaning rather than memorising of facts. Evolved from this idea is Freirean method for critical learning namely problem-posing dialogue, where teachers are considered as problem posers who lead a critical dialogue in the class (Shor, 1992). Problem-posing education 'relies upon dialogue and critical consciousness, democratic teacher-student relationships, the co-creation of knowledge through interaction, and a curriculum grounded in students' interests and experiences' (Bartlett, 2008: 2). Despite the banking education which domesticates learners from their consciousness, through critical dialogues learners can 'gain undistorted knowledge by interacting with the world in terms of their own interest' (Harris, 1979 cited in Roberts, 2000: 141). In critical pedagogy classrooms, the learners are encouraged to engage in collective action, which is based on the principles of social justice, equality, and empowerment (McLaren, 2009). This way, problem posing education encourages critical learning and helps people to realise what holds them back, and to imagine a social order which supports their full humanity (Shor, 1980).

Shor (1992: 129) gives an inclusive definition of CP as:

> habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse.

According to the quote, CP advocates to internalise a way of living in which one constantly questions the status quo in search for deeper meanings beneath the events and actions in all levels of personal and social life. Applying this perspective to any field of study, a critical pedagogue guides students to question any taken-for-granted, dominant ideologies and

practices, and encourages analytical reflections on the actual conditions of their own lives (Riasati & Mollaei, 2012). Thus, the main aim of CP is 'educating students to become critical agents who actively question and negotiate the relationships between theory and practice, critical analysis and common sense, and learning and social change' (Giroux, 2007: 1). In this regard, agency, according to Shor (1992), means learning about the social, political, and economic structures in society that maintain the status quo and then using that knowledge to transform lives, individually and collectively. Essentially, the capacity for critique reflects the critical agency of the learners (Habermas, 1981).

CP as a transformative education, according to Kincheloe (2004: 8 & 6), 'is constructed on the belief that education is inherently political' and 'is grounded on a social and educational vision of justice and equality'. Therefore, the main concern of critical pedagogues is to promote social justice (Crookes & West, 2017), to cultivate the intellect and to expand the horizons of human possibility by 'transforming oppressive relations of power in a variety of domains that lead to human oppression' (Kincheloe, 2004: 45). Having a transformative, just, and egalitarian critical pedagogical vision, CP aims at educating 'empowered, learned, highly skilled democratic citizens who have the confidence and the savvy to improve their own lives and to make their communities more vibrant places in which to live, work, and play' (Kincheloe, 2004: 48). Thus, for social transformation, critical pedagogues are not powerful gatekeepers of knowledge but partners in collaborative and cooperative learning environments who need 'to understand the social context of teaching, and then ask how this context distinguishes liberating education from traditional methods' (Shor & Freire, 1987a: 33).

In this regard, 'conscientização', a Portuguese term translated as conscientisation or critical consciousness, can be considered as a significant dimension in Freire's pedagogy and an influential educational term in the current time (Liu, 2014). Conscientisation, according to Freire (1972: 51), refers to 'the process in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality'. In this regard, the act of coming to critical consciousness is more than simply determining the facts but also 'critiquing the social relations, social institutions, and social traditions that create and maintain the conditions of oppressions' (Burbules & Berk, 1999: 53). In fact, education for critically conscious thinkers involves 'engaging in the continuous improvement and transformation of self and reality' to struggle against inequality and oppression in many and various forms (Kincheloe, 2004: 72).

To reverse the passive experience of learning and to foster the freedom and ability to act, Freirean dialogic pedagogy, as the empowering education, is not something that teachers should do to students for their own good but is something that a democratic, critical teacher guide students to co-develop for themselves (Shor, 1992). Freirean pedagogy challenges both teachers and students, while advancing their literacy and knowledge, to empower themselves for social change and equality through questioning existing knowledge, posing critical problems and encouraging curiosity and activism (Shor, 1993). In this regard, students should play a substantial role in the development of curriculum content and even of materials (Crookes, 2012).

The authentic liberation, according to Freire (1970: 51), is praxis i.e. the process of humanisation, and 'the reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it'. This idea indicates that 'what happens in the classroom should end up making a difference outside the classroom' (Baynham, 2006: 28). In this sense, CP, according to Canagarajah (2005: 932), 'is not a set of ideas, but a way of 'doing' learning and teaching'. Thus, critical pedagogues need to theorise what they practice and practice what they theorise. In fact, CP does not in itself constitute a method; it is the individual teacher who needs to work through the micro-level pedagogical implications of the critical stance (Auerbach, 1998; Johnston, 1999). This way, a critical pedagogue's teaching is supposed to be the genuine manifestation of a critical praxis. In this regard, what sort of method a critical pedagogue uses totally depends on the concrete sociocultural context, which is supposed to evolve in response to local context and needs of the students resulting in generation of novel and different methods (Liu, 2014; Luke & Gore, 2013). Praxis, i.e. action informed and linked to certain values (Smith, 2002), is an on-going, dynamic cycle of transformation through dialogue (Liu, 2014). Therefore, dialogic discussions can be viewed as the point of departure to empower students to explore ways of changing society for a better (Akbari, 2008).

2.2.2 CP and existentialism

Sartre's existentialism, the philosophy of *being* vs. *existence* according to which humans *exist* while things simply *are* (Flynn, 2006), greatly influenced Freire and his conceptualisation of CP. In this sense, what effectively separates human beings from the world of things is *consciousness* which is in constant dynamic interaction with the world (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010). This is reflected in *conscientisation* as the key concept of CP discussed in the previous section. The main concepts of this philosophy including the dichotomy between 'being' vs. 'existence', 'humanism', 'liberation', 'authenticity', and 'sincerity' were explored to be the building blocks of the teacher's teaching philosophy and the philosophical framework that he teaches through class discussion

sessions. In this section, I discuss the main concepts of existentialism to set the necessary background to discuss the teacher's teaching philosophy in chapters 6 and 7.

Despite its claim to be novel, the tradition of existentialism in the history of philosophy in the West extends back to Socrates (469–399 bc) whose philosophical direction is 'know thyself', and his basic dictum is 'the unexamined life is not worth living'. As explored and discussed in chapters 6 and 7, Socratic philosophical direction and his dialogic method played a major role in the teacher's teaching method and instructional strategy. The primary focus of existentialism, as 'care of the self', is moral principles to perceive the 'proper way' to live one's life (Flynn, 2006: 1). In fact, existentialism can be considered as humanism which focuses on 'human individual's pursuit of identity and meaning amidst the social and economic pressures of mass society for superficiality and conformism' (Flynn, 2006: 8). The ultimate value in existentialism is human freedom which is rooted in the belief that any situation always consists of the possibility of moving beyond it by interpreting that event based on one's particular conscious state and related decision making (Palmer, 2001). This was reflected in Shor's (1992) definition of CP as discussed in the previous section. This is also the teacher's main concern and motivation to apply his approach to CP in his ELT as discussed later in 6.2.1.

Existentialism is the philosophy of freedom and responsibility the basis of which is the fact that human beings are capable of and responsible for standing back from their lives, and reflecting on their deeds (Flynn, 2006). In a socially conscious dimension of the philosophy, one realises that the freedom of either the oppressor or the oppressed cannot be acted upon directly. Rather, emancipatory efforts must be aimed at changing what Sartre called 'the bases and structures of choice', or Simon de Beauvoir's 'call to action' toward a society de-alienated and free of oppression. In other words, emancipatory movements should raise consciousness to a social problem, describe the vehicles of the oppression, and suggest the means to begin rectifying these structures (Flynn, 2006: 101).

The possibility of liberation is encapsulated in Freire's philosophy of emancipatory education. It is clearly manifested in Freire's *pedagogy of the oppressed* as he states the oppressed by taking action to liberate themselves will liberate the oppressor as well (Freire, 1970). His existentialist assumption invites humans 'to consider the legitimacy of their attitudes and values through a critical analysis of reality while recognising their freedom and agency to transform their circumstances' (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010: 125). For both Freire and Sartre, liberation is not a destination but a never-ending process as the choices and the changes they cause are perennial. No one ever becomes permanently liberated from potential oppression, however,

living in a liberated life gives people the right to search alternatives, question their existence and continually pursue their self-realisation (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010). As discussed in chapter 6, 'self-realisation' is the core concept in the teacher's teaching philosophy and the primary step of CT, the activation of which is the stated objective of the course.

Existentialism, as a person-centred philosophy with a moral perspective to 'truth' as self-formative and practical, requires a particular self-discipline to become a certain kind of person. The supreme ethical concern of existentialism is scrutinising the authenticity of one's personal life and of one's society. An existential analysis 'encourages us to explore the authenticity of our values and beliefs, and provides an ethic for action based on a fundamental respect for human dignity and freedom' (Hyslop-Margison, 2003: 67). However, what existentialism proposes regarding ethics is more than a moral content or recipe but an ethical style of how to live i.e. willing of freedom both for oneself and for all others (Flynn, 2006).

Authenticity, the key concept of existentialism, refers to a person who acts in accordance with desires, motives, ideals or beliefs that are her/his, not others, and express who s/he really is (Jeffries, 2002; Varga & Guignon, 2014). This concept has been changed through time; in our contemporary thinking, the ideal of authenticity directs us to *realise* and *be* who we *already are*, that is 'the unique, definitive traits already there within' us (Guignon, 2004: 4). Here, comes a closely related concept to authenticity namely the notion of *sincerity* the ideal of which for Sartre is 'to be what one is' (Sartre, 1956: 35) or, as Santoni (1995: 17) suggests, is 'to live *self-consciously*' or 'a life of honest self-awareness'.

The modern ideal of authenticity which advocates self-ownership and self-direction as the most meaningful and worthwhile way of life requires one, first, to pull oneself back from going with the flow, and to get in touch with that 'true self' through introspection and self-reflection in order to realise one's capacity for authentic existence. Afterwards, it needs one to express that unique constellation of inner traits, discovered in the process of inward-turning, in one's action in the external world. Supposedly, only by expressing one's true self one can achieve 'self-realization and self-fulfilment' as an authentic human being. Therefore, the highest goal in human life according to the ideal of authenticity is to *know* who we are and *be* that true self in our ways of being present in our relationships and practical activities (Guignon, 2004: 6).

Guignon (2004) and Varga (2012) propose a conception of authenticity as fundamentally a social virtue rather than personal. Social conception of authenticity is based on supposing that through cooperative and trustworthy interaction with others in social contexts one is able to form a coherent pattern of beliefs and opinions which characterise one's inner life and define one's self

(Guignon, 2004). Interacting in communities, individuals mutually develop a transparent self-understanding, and learn to present themselves to others, and to themselves, 'as people who have moderately steady outlooks or beliefs' (Williams, 2000: 192). In this sense, being authentic is not just concentrating on one's own self but also involves deliberating about how one's commitment contributes to the betterment of the public world in which one participates. Therefore, authenticity is both a personal virtue to the extent that it entails personal responsibility for self, and a social virtue insofar as it cultivates a sense of belongingness to the wider social context that makes the authenticity possible (Guignon, 2004).

The basic assumptions underlying the ideal of authenticity are deeply rooted in our inherited collective common sense, however, it is not clear what the notion of authenticity exactly means or implies. Critically reflecting on the concept raises basic questions such as what exactly is this "inner self" one is supposed to be true to?, what does it include or exclude?, and how can one distinguish whether one's deepest and most personal thoughts and desires are actually her/his to be embraced and expressed, or rather they are a product of social and historical conditions that need to be called into question, be worked over and replaced? Moreover, no matter how sincerely one expresses what one considers as one's own beliefs and feelings, attitudes and opinions are subject to constant change as one confronts different situations. In fact, what one finds within oneself could be a complex psychological state which is mostly transient and causes more confusion and despair thus cannot be a guiding ideal for one's life (Guignon, 2004).

Additionally, the demand placed on the seeker of authenticity is quite strict as it requires continuous self-inspection to find out one's exact feelings, perceptions and desires within one's field of consciousness with no clear marker to indicate their importance or peripheral (Guignon, 2004). In this regard, Socratic motto, '*Know Thyself'*, requires dramatic and often painful transformation of one's self through critical self-examination of her/his own opinions, assumptions, beliefs, and ideas. This constant critical self-examination could be aided through expressing one's beliefs and opinions freely in a safe atmosphere of a community. The process of '*Knowing Thyself*' sets the ground for '*Being Yourself*' which involves affirmation and acceptance of self by oneself and, through expressing it, by others (Fishman, 1985). It seems that this process of *knowing oneself* and *being oneself* is intertwined in a never-ending process as one's ideas and opinions are subject to constant change through time and in different situations.

As discussed in the previous section, the key concepts of CP, conscientisation and praxis, are rooted in existentialist conceptualisation of authenticity and freedom. Freire asks us 'to evaluate our circumstances authentically and to make choices that move our own lives and those of

others in different and more moral directions' (Dale & Hyslop-Margison 2010: 125). Therefore, authenticity could be seen as the self-awareness of the constant development of ideas, critical consciousness of the factors and reasons of this constant evolution, and honestly expressing it in one's behaviours, actions and decisions. Thus, authenticity is *to consciously live* one's *critically reflected ideas, which is* praxis, critical reflection and action.

2.2.3   CP and critical thinking

Critical thinking (CT), as a key concept of CP, was explored to be considered as the origin of CP by the teacher and activation of CT is his asserted aim of the course. This section provides the necessary background to analyse and discuss his teaching philosophy in chapter 6.

CP and CT invoke 'the term "critical" as a valued educational goal: urging teachers to help students become more sceptical toward commonly accepted truisms' (Burbules & Berk, 1999: 45). Broadly, CT and CP share some common concerns; the advocates of the two traditions would argue that helping people to think and act more critically results in more freedom and enlargement of the scope of human possibilities (Burbules & Berk, 1999). CT, according to Siegel (1988: 55), is a fundamental educational ideal that strives 'for the students' early achievement of a significant degree of autonomy and self-sufficiency'. A self-sufficient person is a liberated person 'free from the unwarranted and undesirable control of unjustified beliefs' (Siegel, 1988: 58). From a political point of view, democracies, which aim at subverting authoritarian tendencies, need citizens capable of arguing, reasoning, challenging, questioning, presenting cases and evaluating them (Alexander, 2008). Therefore, CT should be considered as the central issue to education (Peters, 2007) for the fact that democracies decline when citizens tend to comply and fail to debate (Alexander, 2008).

CT mainly focuses on individuals and aims at enhancing personal cognition based on thinking skills and disciplines of knowledge (M. Mason, 2007) by looking for elements such as clarity, precision, relevance, accuracy, depth and logic. Therefore, CT aims to develop learners' ability to reason, reflect, and make sound decisions (Brookhart, 2010). In this sense, CT is called 'artful thinking' by Barahal (2008: 299), which includes observing and describing, questioning and investigating, exploring viewpoints, comparing and connecting, finding complexity and reasoning. In this regard, reflective or intellectual thought, which is truly educative in value, is a process through which the ground or basis of a belief is purposely sought and its adequacy to support the belief examined (Dewey, 2014).

For a critical person having the capacity and skills to seek reasons, truth and evidence is not enough without inclinations to look at the world through a critical lens (Burbules & Berk, 1999). In fact, logic should be shaped by other aspects such as values and emotions thus CT requires active authorship of values, commitments and responsibility so it cannot be reduced to logic alone (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2014a, 2014b). Following the same line of reasoning, some scholars are opposed to the mainstream of CT which focuses mainly on teaching students principles of logical analysis, decontextualizes the thinking process and depersonalises the thinker. These scholars advocate that instruction in thinking skills should not only enhance learners' ability to reasonably and fairly investigate knowledge claims and arguments but also should provide them with strategies for personal enlightenment and emancipation from biases, prejudices and predispositions (Giroux, 1994; Kaplan, 1994; Langsdorf, 1994; Paul, 1994; Warren, 1994).

Addressing the relation between skills and dispositions, Paul (1994) distinguishes between 'weak' and 'strong sense' CT. The former simply involves learning the basics of logical analysis and demonstrating them whenever asked to do so, which may result in sophistry. The latter means incorporating these skills into a way of living while re-examining and questioning one's own assumptions, beliefs and viewpoints. Moreover, according to Paul (1990), for thinking to be critical it is essential to engage in dialogue in order to assess the truth claims through the others' perspectives. In this sense, he introduces social and contextual factors which are emphasised greatly in CP as well.

CP and CT bear some differences; the main emphasis of CP is collective transformation in thought and action through dialogue as the basic pedagogical method; Inspired by critical theory, CP considers society as basically divided by relations of unequal power so their primary concern is social justice. Therefore, critical pedagogues make an effort to enable citizens to resist such power effects by fostering a critical capacity in them. Freirean educational philosophy suggests that education aims 'to develop critical thinking by presenting the people's situation to them as a problem so that they can perceive, reflect, and act on it' (Crawford-Lange, 1981: 259). In fact, in CP fostering individual skills and dispositions is not a target in itself while it is the main concern in CT tradition. A critical person in the tradition of CP is the one who 'is empowered to seek justice and emancipation' and 'is moved to change it' (Burbules & Berk, 1999: 50-51). This expectation of action or social change clearly distinguishes these two traditions (Kessing-Styles, 2003).

Kaplan (1994), inspired by Freirean CP, argues that traditional CT fails to train learners for responsible citizenship and is unable to emancipate them from dominant, prescribed models. She states that the conventional CT 'teaches students to provide criticism of arguments, while the CP movement teaches students to provide critique as a foundation for criticism of the world around them' (Kaplan, 1994: 207). Thus, the other main difference between the two traditions is the fact that CP directly aims at challenging and transforming the institutional ideologies that oppress thinking whereas in a CT framework this is a welcomed but unintended consequence. In other words, CT is less concerned with thinking politically but rather with thinking analytically whereas this distinction is not valid in CP (Burbules & Berk, 1999). This particular insistence on thinking politically aiming at social change, as I discuss in 2.3, could be considered as the primary source of the risk of indoctrination in CP.

2.2.4   Dialogue and dialogic pedagogy

Dialogue is one of the key concepts of CP; liberating dialogue, as Shor and Freire (1987b: 11) discuss, is more than a mere educational technique to achieve some cognitive results but a means to 'transform social relations in the classroom and raise awareness about relations in society at large. It is a mutual learning process where the teacher [and the learners] poses critical problems for inquiry' (Bracket added). In fact, Freirean pedagogy is less a method than an ontology or a way of living in a more humanised world constructed on the basis of mutual trust and respect, and general freedom to reason (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010). Having a dialogic approach to teaching is in line with how CP expects critical pedagogues to distant from transferring knowledge through monologic lecturing which is dominant in banking education. They should aim to create a learning community as a safe and supportive environment where, together with learners, knowledge is co-created or at least dialogically shared and cooperatively understood. This approach views 'all ideas as open for testing through dialogic discourse; students' and teachers' voices are equally valued and disagreements are not seen as threats but as opportunities for learning' (Dysthe, 2011: 71).

In line with increasing disapproval and criticism of traditional 'monological' education (Fernandez-Balboa & Marshall, 1994), and the growing reception of social constructivist frameworks in education (Airasian & Walsh, 1997), dialogic education has been developed in the last 30 years in reference to various frameworks including CP. A growing number of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers use the term dialogic pedagogy to describe learning processes where teachers and learners critically interrogate the topic of study, express and listen to multiple voices and points of view, and create respectful and equitable classroom relations

(Lefstein & Snell, 2014). It reflects a view that 'knowledge and understanding come from testing evidence, analysing ideas and exploring values'. This approach to education inevitably demands learners' engagement and teachers' constructively intervention through dialogue (Alexander, 2008: 32).

Education, as Matusov (2009) argues, is basically a dialogic practice due to the inherently dialogic nature of the process of meaning-making, however, education as an ideology or project often distorts its inherent dialogicity and becomes anti-dialogical, inhumane and perverse (Matusov, 2009). In fact, dialogue must be the discourse of education, without which genuine education does not survive. Essentially, as Bakhtin (1984) asserts, dialogue is not an activity among other non-dialogic activities, but rather as the very nature of consciousness and humanity, thus should guide and be the yardstick of all teachers' pedagogical actions and designs (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014). Therefore, education should be designed to introduce learners to the life of dialogue for the fact that through engaging in dialogic relations with others, with oneself, and with the world, one can experience being human in the fullest sense (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014; Rule, 2015; Sidorkin, 1999). In this sense, dialogue in dialogic pedagogy is not something educators '*do* or *use'*; it is a relation that they '*enter into'* (Burbules, 1993: xiii, italics original)*.* Dialogue as the particular kind of interactive experience engages learners, stimulates and extends their thinking, improves their learning and directs towards discovery and new understanding (Alexander, 2008; Burbules, 1993).

According to Matusov (2009), education *through* dialogue in itself is not dialogic pedagogy. In fact, dialogue as 'the single adequate form for verbally expressing authentic human life', is basically open-ended and un-finalized (Bakhtin, 1984: 293). There is no predefined, 'final' word in an authentic dialogue (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014: 1) for the simple fact that the response of each participant depends on the others' verbal and non-verbal response (Rule, 2015). Based on this notion of dialogue, regardless of the instructional methods used, pedagogies are monologic when they serve teachers' predetermined single correct end by leading leaners to engage in dialogue in order to understand the key concepts and make sense of the key questions (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014). In fact, adding more humanity and dialogicity for the overall monologic purposes makes pedagogy even more excessively monologic as dialogue is used as a means for better transmission of knowledge or deepening learners' understanding and acceptance of taught knowledge (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014).

Similarly, the genre of discourse cannot authenticate its dialogicity or its lack of it; lecturing, a monologic genre, can be a prolonged dialogic turn as a reply to learners' inquiries or concerns

thus can be internally dialogic (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014). In fact, a lecture could be a verbal codification of reality, a creative reinvention of knowledge and not merely an oral transference of pre-packaged information or a sedating presentation that endorses the status quo (Shor & Freire, 1987a). Moreover, monologue as a 'centralised communication' when learners listen attentively can serve as 'preparation for a polyphony of voices' and provides the foundation of dialogue (Sidorkin, 1999: 81). On the other hand, a highly interactive and conversational class, a dialogic genre, might be quite monologic (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014), as a traditional teacher may make reality opaque while leading discussions in the class (Shor & Freire, 1987a).

Central to open dialogues is the subject matter under discussion, and on-going play of ideas rather than the opinion of individuals; interlocutors do not aim to stand up for their position or defeat their opponents; rather, distinct horizons of understanding merge to create a new understanding about the truth of a shared concern (Guignon, 2004). Following a similar line of reasoning, Matusov (in Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014) distinguishes between two main types of dialogue: epistemological and ontological. He argues that in the former, a goal, endpoint, value, or virtue is known in advance; it often pre-defines the virtue of its intellectual endeavour in unalterable oppositions. In an epistemological dialogue, the person is subordinated to and deduced from the idea so this type of dialogue, most often, maintains certain voices and generates person-ideas. While, the latter, ontological dialogue, is built around learners' significant existing or emergent life interests, concerns, questions, and needs thus it defines its own emergent endpoints by learners as provisional outcomes incorporated in dialogue (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

The real hallmark of a dialogic lesson is dialogic questioning that un-finalises itself and the inquiry (Miyazaki, 2011). The main concern of the dialogic teachers is to create authentic exchanges and promote learning through exploration and collaborative talk. To this end, they could apply some strategies to provoke whole-class discussion, enhance learners' engagement, and improve the quality of their answers. These strategies include asking open questions to which there is no one known answer, allowing the increased wait time after posing a question (Cazden 1988 in Wells & Ball 2008), and providing a space for learners to prepare their thoughts through small group discussions (Brown et al., 1993).

Dialogic discussions should be basically based on authentic questions which are 'those the teacher has not pre-specified or implied a particular answer'; un-authentic questions, on the contrary, lead the teacher to retain absolute control over the answers and therefore over the

direction of the interactions (Alexander, 2008: 15). Authentic questions are dialogic in that they 'signal to students the teacher's interest in what they think and know and not just whether they can report what someone else thinks and has said' (Nystrand, Gamoran, Kachur, & Prendergast, 1997: 33). Therefore, authentic questioning can be considered as a creative activity which boosts learners' motivation for investigation. It also indicates an active, critical, and creative attitude toward knowledge, and reveals involvement in and a deep understanding of the subject (Harpaz & Lefstein, 2000). Thus, 'the best evidence of a person becoming a learner is the person asking a genuine, information-seeking, question' (Matusov, von Dyuke, & Han, 2013: 56).

It is not just questions that need to be conceived with care but answers to those questions as well. Bakhtin (1986) defines dialogic meaning as a relationship between a genuine question and a genuine reply which can be another question or redefined question (Matusov et al., 2013). A dialogue fails to be productive and purposeful if the teacher frames a well-conceived question and gives the learners' enough time to answer but does not engage with the answers to be reflected upon, discussed and argued. In fact, answers need to provoke further questions and serve as building blocks of dialogue by prompting and challenging learners' thinking and reasoning (Alexander, 2008). According to Bakhtin (1986: 168), 'if an answer does not give rise to a new question from itself, it falls out of the dialogue'. In this sense, all exchanges should be 'chained into coherent lines of enquiry rather than left stranded and disconnected' (Alexander, 2008: 42).

Similarly, teachers' feedback is crucial in directing the discussion and developing the dialogic space. Feedbacks need to be informative and diagnostic to deliver a judgment substantively and with clear explanation, on which learners can build (Alexander, 2008). One of the techniques a teacher may use to take the learners' answers or statements forward and sustain the dialogue is reformulating learners contribution i.e. paraphrasing to make the response accessible to the rest of the class and/or to improve the way it has been expressed (Mercer, 2000). Moreover, instead of questioning round the class, the teacher may stay with the same learner to ask further questions to encourage sustained and extended dialogue for more complete or elaborated ideas (Alexander, 2008; Smith, Hardman, Wall, & Mroz, 2004).

The other crucial element in dialogic pedagogy is the relationship between the participants, which informs a dialogue that, reciprocally, contributes to further develop this relationship. In fact, a certain quality of social relations defines dialogic pedagogy rather than only interactive verbalism that is often equated with dialogue (Matusov, 2009). In educational contexts, an authentic dialogue presupposes equality among teacher and students who must trust each other

in a mutual respect, love, care, and commitment. Thereby, students are provided with opportunities to reconsider what they know and what they do not know, to think critically, to co-develop the session with the teacher, and to construct peer-relations instead of authority-dependant relations (Shor & Freire, 1987a).

Communication of freely participating people generates special social relations of humanity among the participants so that human reflection generates humanity and vice versa (Matusov, 2009). In fact, an authentic dialogue is defined by openness and 'underpinned by values of trust, love, mutual respect and epistemological curiosity' (Rule, 2015: xx). It is noticeable that this does not mean that all participants may play an equal role but any role each plays are equally important in co-constructing the knowledge and meaning. To this end, authority should be distributed so that all participants could gain their voice and practice empowerment in the safe and supportive community of the class. This is what critical pedagogues aim for, i.e. an egalitarian dialogic learning environment where the learners gain their voice and became the agents of their life towards a society respectful of human rights and needs (Matusov, 2009).

Regarding suitable themes for dialogic discussions in the class, Freire (1970) and Shor (1992) employed the concept of *generative theme* which is a 'topic taken from students' knowledge of their own lived experiences that is compelling and controversial enough to elicit their excitement and commitment' (Kincheloe, 2008: 11). Generative themes are useful for generating critical discussions as they grow out of students' culture and express problematic conditions in daily life (Shor, 1992). Peterson (2009) also highlights the significance of starting with generative themes, utilising the life experiences of students, poetry, movies and music to improve their critical thinking and awareness.

Shor (1992) suggests another thematic approach significant for an empowering process namely, *topical theme*s, which, unlike generative themes, are the materials not generated from students speech but brought to discussion by the teacher. Topical themes are social questions of key significance locally, nationally or globally which should be selected by the teacher for critical study with great care, consistent with the student-centred discourse and the democratic process. Moreover, topical themes must be presented in a meaningful context and be open to rejection or amendment by students. By offering diverse social and political themes, a critical teacher invites students to ponder over issues kept in the shadows or excluded from their attention and thus strengthens the democratic learning process.

2.3   Criticisms of CP

Many authors, according to Miedema and Wardekker (1999), considered CP as "the best", if not the ultimate, available paradigm for education which aims at synthesising all previous approaches with a clear critique of the societal conditions of education. However, CP could not fulfil its expectations and has met fierce criticism since its initiation (Darder et al., 2003; Ellsworth, 1989; Miedema & Wardekker, 1999). A great part of these criticisms were directed to the lack of practical outcomes for the fact that despite the original intention of CP, mostly discussions have been focused on the theory and not much work has been done to implement CP in actual classroom practice (Akbari, 2008; Davari, 2011). This way, CP fails to make explicit connections between its abstract philosophical concepts and its implications in actual classroom teaching (Usher & Edwards, 1994). In fact, critical pedagogues have been mostly involved in criticism and problematizing without providing practical solution for the problems they highlighted (Christensen & Aldridge, 2013). More importantly, the voice of the students who are supposed to play a substantial role in the development of curriculum content and even of materials (Crookes, 2012; Shor & Freire, 1987a; Wong, 2006) is rarely included in the research. Therefore, the analysis, discussions, and evaluations are not comprehensive, which has led to the lack of a solid body of the educational practices within this framework.

In this regard, Gore (1993) distinguishes between two approaches to CP; she describes one approach as contributing to 'pedagogical practice' represented by some key figures such as Freire and Shor who offered some suggestions to help other educators in practising CP, while the other approach, 'pedagogical project', was presented by scholars as Giroux and McLaren who articulated an abstract political vision which can be considered as 'critical educational theory' (Gore, 1993: 40 & 42). Gore's concern is the inapplicability of abstracted theories created by most advocates of CP, which imposes 'a requirement on teachers to do the work of empowering, (and) to be the agents of empowerment, without providing much in the way of tangible guidance for that work' (Gore, 2003: 343). Even within the former approach, what Freire publically shared, according to Matusov (2009), is no more than some sketches of his curriculum and provocations which he used for his pedagogical dialogues with his students. In fact, he did not provide any detailed ethnography of his dialogic practice or evaluation of his method, which makes it difficult to get a clear picture of his teaching method or to investigate mis/alignments between his theory of dialogue and practice.

Another criticism was raised by some authors such as Miedema and Wardekker (1999); according to the authors in the postmodern era, CP's preoccupation with emancipation and the

wrongs of society seems outdated for some reasons including the waning interest in Marxism as the building block of CP. However, critical emancipation in an evolving CP implies to achieve greater degrees of autonomy and human agency for people to gain power to control their lives in solidarity with justice-oriented community. This aim does not seem to have faded away completely any time in the history of humankind, however, it needs to be realised based on the current context in which the CP approach is applied (Kincheloe, 2004).

The other criticism of CP is that although CP asserts the inclusion of the voices of individuals and groups with cultural, gender, ethnic and economic differences, the main authors of CP have been dominantly white western men. This raised some issues mostly by feminists who believe this tradition excludes the voices and concerns of women. Moreover, being based on rationalism relying on empirical evidence, as some feminists state, CP excludes the women's logic which rely on other forms of verification such as experience, emotion and feeling. This purports the reliance on open dialogue and implies being another medium of oppression in spite of the claims of emancipation for all (Burbules & Berk, 1999). In the last two decades more female authors developed their voices in the field such as Cannella (1997), Delpit (1995), Greene (1995), Lather (1998, 2001) and Hooks (2000) among others; however, as Lather (2001: 184) argues, 'this is due not so much to the dominance of male authors in the field as it is to the masculinist voice of abstraction, universalization, and the rhetorical position of 'the one who knows,' what Ellsworth (1997) calls "The One with the 'Right' Story"'.

Some of the practitioners of CP who made an effort to incorporate its principles in classroom discourse report the positive effects of CP, such as the students' stronger engagement with curriculum and empowerment through dialogue, involvement in their communities and critiques of their cultural norms; however, they have also pointed out the shortcomings of the theoretical and ideological model including 'students' aversion to idealized concepts, teachers' limited understanding of the implementation of "critical" in their curricula, lack of support in adopting critical perspectives within the school site, as well as practitioners' skepticism of the "empowering" outcome in students' lives'(Sarroub & Quadros, 2015: 254). Breunig (2005: 120) also mentions some of the constraints of CP such as the 'lack of student preparation, institutional constraints, student resistance, and the fact that research is often valued over teaching in post-secondary institutions and student-centered teaching requires a lot of time'.

Despite the initial emphasis of CP on emancipatory and dialogic education, indoctrination is the great risk of applying CP but neither the issue nor the difficulties of managing it in the classroom have been well theorised in the critical pedagogy literature (Blackburn, 2000; Jeyaraj & Harland,

2016). In this regard, according to Biesta (1998: 476), the work of the educational philosophers, including critical pedagogues, can be considered as 'critical dogmatism', which is defined as 'any style of critique in which the critical operation consists of the application of a criterion' which can only be installed dogmatically. For example, critical pedagogues such as McLaren (1995) consider 'emancipation', i.e. recognising injustice and moving to change it, as the general criterion for the evaluation of educational theory and practice. This kind of operation is paradoxical; it is critical as it gives an evaluation of a specific state of affairs but it is dogmatic as the criterion itself is kept out of reach of the critical operation and is applied to this state of affairs from the outside. In a similar line of reasoning, CP was criticised for being inherently undemocratic (Ellsworth, 1989) and for indoctrinating, i.e. uncritical acceptance of ideas by the students and ideological imposition as it prescribes and insists on a particular ideology with overt political and social goals (Burbules & Berk, 1999; Darder et al., 2003; Mejía, 2004). Placing political relations at the centre of teaching and learning, according to Johnston (1999), falsifies the essential nature of education.

A similar concern is raised by Matusov (2009) who criticises the prioritization of social justice in Freire's version of dialogic critical pedagogy, which inevitably, despite the critical pedagogues' claims of the contrary, leads to totalitarianism. In fact, education should be an end in itself and not a means for other non-educational societal goals as socially desirable ends (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014). Therefore, engaging students in the analysis of social injustices and revolution as predetermined curricular endpoints basically contradicts the open-ended spirit of dialogue (Bakhtin, 1984) whereas the learners, such as peasants in Freire's literacy programs, might have created an entirely different endpoint (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

In a similar line of reasoning, McArthur (2010a, 2010b) questions the legitimacy of critical pedagogues asserting their own values and ideals over those of others, and the extent to which they argue for greater social justice for all or for their own particular image of social justice. It seems that CP is likely to become 'little more than "positive" political indoctrination, different in colour but not in kind from the "negative" variety—elitist, capitalist, technocratic, etc.—it is designed to replace' (Palmer & Emmons, 2004: 3). Therefore, as Blackburn (2000: 13) points out, the greatest risk of applying CP is that 'it can be used as a very subtle Trojan Horse, one which appears to be a gift to the poor, but can all too easily contain a hidden agenda'. Thus, to mitigate any risk of manipulation and indoctrination, social justice, as any other agendas, should be subordinated to critical examination of the self, life, and the world in a public discourse (Matusov & Lemke, 2015). This is crucial for critical pedagogues to scrutinise and revisit their teaching constantly to see which diversities or voices are silenced in the name of liberatory

pedagogy and what they are critical of, from what position, to what end (Elizabeth Ellsworth, 1989; Rocha-Schmid, 2010)

According to the findings of this project, a similar criticism is applicable to how the teacher practices his advocated teaching method in the class; the way he manages class interactions tends to be the indoctrination of a set of refined philosophical concepts, contradicts the basic features of dialogue and fails to fulfil the "liberation" that his teaching theory promises. In fact, in his version of CP, the critique of society and the social justice which CP promotes are replaced with a competitive, elitist, and individualistic celebration of the 'authenticity' and 'true self' as the basis of his advocated philosophical framework derived from the philosophy of existentialism.

Moreover, due to the banking educational background of the participants, the learners were unfamiliar with the basic principles of critical thinking and the requirements of dialogic interactions thus mostly appreciate the teacher's authoritative role and the little chance to talk that they were offered through class discussion sessions. This way, it was very unlikely for the teacher to grow a critical view toward his teaching method and modify his deviation from the basic features of a dialogic critical approach. This highlights the significance of critical examination and assessment of self-identified critical pedagogues personal theory and practice within this framework especially in banking educational contexts.

Class discourse analysis with a dialogic approach as conducted in this study could provide a suitable analytical framework for the teachers to critically assess their own and other's implementation of the approach in their class interactions. As CP and the class discourse within this approach have not been studied systematically on a large scale (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015), more analytical research is needed for the development of theoretical and practical ideas within this framework which provide a space for discussing, comparing and interrogating new perspectives. This is even more crucial in banking education where the key concepts of dialogic critical pedagogy are widely ignored and unpractised. This way, CP in both theory and practice can be developed ,which would give a sense of legitimacy to the application of this approach (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016).

2.4   CP and ELT

CP entered the field of second language teaching since the late 1980s when pragmatic attitude and communicative approaches mostly dominated language teaching (S. Canagarajah, 2005). From a CP perspective, language is not simply a means of communication but it is value-laden

and directly linked to culture. Therefore, it is crucial to become aware of the dominant and oppressive culture a language imposes (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010). Regarding EL, during the colonial era, it was used by colonisers to bring to the fore their own language and culture as superior, and control other countries' cultural expressions through cultural and linguistic invasion (Freire, 1985). In this sense, some scholars from a critical perspective to English and its spread worldwide believe in the dominating effect of the globalisation of English as a threat to other cultures. Theorists in foreign language teaching, such as Canagarajah(2007) and Pennycook (2006, 2007), discuss the political imposition of English as a foreign language and its interference with the vitality of local multilingualism due to the hegemonic status of English.

Applying this approach, educators in second language teaching make an effort to explore issues of power which are situated in language, and complex socio-historical and political aspects of language learning and teaching (Alptekin, 2002; Benesch, 2001; Canagarajah, 1999, 2005; Johnston, 1999; Morgan, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2007; Phillipson, 1997, 2009, 1992; Ramanathan, 2002). Therefore, CP, as an alternative approach to the mainstream pedagogy in teaching English as a second or foreign language (TESOL), questions the cultural and social relevance and appropriateness of the methods and materials produced by the Inner Circle countries where English is generally the first language including USA and UK (Kachru, 1992).

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006: 70), critical practice in language teaching is about recognising language not just as system but as ideology, and realising that language learning and teaching should create 'the cultural forms and interested knowledge that give meaning to the lived experiences of teachers and learners'. A CP approach to ELT pursues 'as joint goals the simultaneous development of English communicative abilities and the ability to apply them to developing a critical awareness of the world and the ability to act on it to improve matters' (Crookes & Lehner 1998: 320). This way, more than a means for communication, language is 'a practice that constructs, and is constructed by the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future' (Norton & Toohey, 2004: 1). Therefore, it is critical pedagogy practitioners' responsibility to focus on a critical awareness approach when teaching language (Siegel, 2006) and engage English language learners in larger ideological discourses to promote their agency and knowledge about how such a language influences their immediate reality and communities (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015).

The mainstreams of ELT mostly adopt a neutral stance and avoid controversial issues (Wallace, 2003) thus CP can be an effective approach to language education as it places socio-political, economic and ideological considerations high on the classroom agenda (Ford, 2009), and considers the possibility of change for both teachers and students by creating the context for critical awareness and action (Akbari, 2008). This approach suggests that simply acquiring language skills or communicative competence without considering socio-economic inequalities or political injustices may just result in maintaining the status quo or silencing the marginalized (Sedeghi & Ketab, 2009). Therefore, this perspective of language curriculum theory and instructional practice supports and improves teaching and the study of languages in ways that would promote social justice (Crookes, 2012).

A dialogic pedagogy approach to TESOL, according to Wong (2006), critically reflects on the learners' role, and aims to support the inclusion of their voices which have traditionally been excluded from the academic discourse. Moreover, teaching English should include decolonising ELT by helping learners to understand and accept cultural differences while training them to better know and appreciate their own cultural identity. Improving the dialogic nature of a class, learners are led to use their English skills for the betterment of their individual and social life. In fact, the development of dialogic relationship between teacher and learners and among the learners could create a social context where a new language so long possessed only by its native speakers becomes a language owned by and useful for the learners (Staton, 1991).

2.5   Summary and conclusion

This chapter was devoted to discuss the key concepts and main principles of CP including problem posing education, critical consciousness, empowerment, emancipation, CT and dialogue. The key concepts of the philosophy of existentialism which greatly influenced Freire in his conceptualisation of CP were also discussed. These concepts were explored to be the building blocks of the teacher's teaching philosophy and the philosophical framework he teaches through class discussion sessions in his designed course. Therefore, this chapter set the necessary background for discussing the teacher's teaching theory and practice within this framework in chapters 6 and 7.

The chapter also included the common criticisms of CP; CP was mainly criticised for the lack of enough practice of its key concepts which has led to the development of CP more as a teaching theory than practice (Akbari, 2008; Christensen & Aldridge, 2013; Davari, 2011; Gore, 1992, 1993). This highlights the requirement of critical pedagogues to not only theorise based on their

own contexts but also practise it in their educational settings. This also signifies the importance of the case under study that explores and analyses an Iranian teacher's effort in applying his approach to CP in designing and practising an ELL course. This is especially outstanding as the banking education is still dominant in the education system of Iran and the key features of problem posing education including CT and dialogue are mostly ignored.

The other criticism is the lack of detailed report, and comprehensive analysis and discussion of the application of CP by critical pedagogues. This has made it difficult to grow a critical appraisal viewpoint toward the practices of CP in the discourse of classes thus fails to set the necessary background to evaluate the teaching process and outcome. This highlights the necessity of not only theorising and practising but also providing class discourse analysis which would make it possible for critical pedagogues to evaluate and improve their own practices thus avoid the great risk of indoctrination and ideological imposition hidden in the application of this approach, the management of which has not yet been well theorised in the CP literature (Biesta, 1998; Blackburn, 2000; Burbules & Berk, 1999; Darder et al., 2003; Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Lemke, 2015; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014; McArthur, 2010a, 2010b; Mejía, 2004; Palmer & Emmons, 2004). It is even more crucial in banking education where dialogic critical pedagogy is unfamiliar and unpractised and application of this approach is considered as an innovation.

A comprehensive analysis including the analysis of the teacher's conception, the learners' viewpoints and class discourse could also provide practical suggestions for other critical pedagogues which would result in more theorising and practising of this pedagogical approach and develop a solid body of educational practices within this framework, the lack of which is still considered as the main criticism of CP. These confirm the importance of this project that applies a comprehensive analysis to not only explores how the teacher theorises but also investigate the application of his teaching method in the discourse of the class. This makes it possible to investigate how his theory and practice are or are not aligned, and to discuss the teaching process and outcome within a dialogic critical framework. Moreover, including the learners' viewpoints which have mostly been ignored in previous analyses makes the analysis and discussion more comprehensive.

Regarding the application of CP in ELT, the main concern is the dominating effect of the globalisation of English as a threat to other cultures. Therefore, the main aim of applying this approach to ELT is the critical awareness of the dominant and oppressive culture it tends to impose and to explore social relationship and issues of power which are situated in it (Alptekin,

2002; Benesch, 2001; Canagarajah, 1999, 2005; Morgan, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2007; Phillipson, 1992, 1997, 2009; Ramanathan, 2002). Therefore, teaching English with a dialogic critical pedagogy approach is more than teaching language skills to acquire communicative competence but also to develop a critical awareness of the world and the ability to act on it for the betterment of the individual and social life (Crookes & Lehner, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Sarroub & Quadros, 2015).

This approach also supports the inclusion of the learners' voices which have traditionally been excluded from academic discourse, and helps them to understand and accept cultural differences while training them to better know and appreciate their own cultural identity (Wong, 2006). Improving the dialogic nature of class discourse develops a social context where a new language so long possessed only by its native speakers becomes a language owned by and useful for them (Staton, 1991). Investigating the case under study, I also explore and discuss how the teacher's teaching theory in practice is, or is not, aligned with this framework.

3. Educational context in Iran

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the current education system and ELT in Iran to set the ground for understanding the context of my project, notably the classroom on which I conducted my research. I have been a student in this education system for 20 years and worked as an English teacher in state high schools for 12 years. This has given me insights and knowledge to be aware of the current state of education system and ELT in Iran, which is necessary to contextualise the case under study for a deep analysis and interpretation. In the three following sections, I introduce the education system of Iran and discuss ELT in Iran and the research done in ELT within the framework of CP. The chapter ends with a summary and conclusion.

3.2   The education system in Iran

Currently, education in Iran is divided into K-12 education (6 years primary school, 3 years junior high school and 3 years senior high school), and higher education (2 years associate degree, 4 years bachelor degree, 2 years master degree, and 4 years PhD). The Ministry of Education supervises the former and the latter is under supervision of Ministry of Science and Technology. Higher Council of Education, the Cabinet and the Islamic Parliament develop the educational rules and regulations in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The education system in Iran is mostly under the influence of the banking model of education (Freire, 1970) and suffers from the shortcomings of a transmission-based pedagogy. In such a context, as Kincheloe (2008: 4) states, 'all that counts is how much of the "infallible" standardized content is memorized by students', which is measured by the 'raison d'être of contemporary education- the high stake tests'. Such education systems which are based on 'top-down technical standards and the form of testing for retention of bits of data that they necessitate actually undermine the struggle for a rigorous, high quality, equitable, and democratic education' (Kincheloe, 2004: 115).

It is not far from expectation that, as many Iranian researchers acknowledge, CP and CT in the Iranian education system are absent and teaching is mostly an attempt to meet the requirements of examinations instead of cultivating students' thinking skills. Consequently, the

school textbooks contents are usually remembered until the final exams are over. This is mostly due to the fact that public education is under the total control of a central administration headed by the ministry of education that set out a fixed national curriculum which is designed not to broaden students' thoughts but to transfer loads of information about various disciplines (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2012; Sadeghi, 2008; Sedeghi & Ketab, 2009; Shakouri Masouleh & Ronaghifard Abkenar, 2012). Among the features of the Iranian educational system which may also hamper learning through 'problem posing education' (Freire, 1970) are crowded classes, limited class time, demanding work, lack of group work, and little space for free debate and discussion. Moreover, ignoring teaching CT in all levels including teacher training programs has resulted in teachers' lack of enough knowledge and experience to apply CT as an element of CP to their teaching methodology (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2012).

3.3   ELT in Iran

Regarding the state of EL in Iran, some scholars such as Beeman (1986) and Tollefson (1995) had predicted that the role of English in Iranian society after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 was likely to remain limited as long as the current political leadership dominates. In fact, since the Islamic Revolution, there has been continuous effort to oppose and eradicate influences of Western cultural, political, social and educational elements, including ELT/L due to the perceptions of parallelism between EL and the USA and UK (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Shomoosi & Marzban, 2010). While Iran's policy on ELT/L has been impeding the nationwide dissemination of the language (Hayati & Mashhadi, 2010), depending on the government in power, the level of hindrance English faced has fluctuated considerably (Riazi, 2005).

ELT/L has experienced extreme ups and downs especially after the advent of the Islamic Revolution since 1979 (Aghagolzadeh & Davari, 2014; Atai & Mazlum, 2013; Borjian, 2013; Dahmardeh, 2009; Hayati & Mashhadi, 2010). During the last decades, English has been considered simultaneously as the language of "enemies" i.e. the USA and UK by the state (Borjian, 2013) and as a necessary tool for progress by the society (Riazi, 2005). More recently, however, English has received special attention by society, and its status and position have been significantly changed due to the increasing criticism of the status quo and society's enthusiasm towards learning the language (Aghagolzadeh & Davari, 2012; Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015). Currently, English in Iran is regarded as an obvious necessity by society rather than just a school subject, which could act as a bridge between Iran and other communities internationally; hence, the dominant trend is toward more ELT/L (Aliakbari, 2002; Ardavani & Durrant, 2015; Davari &

Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Riazi, 2005; Sadeghi & Richards, 2016; Talebinezhad & Aliakbari, 2003; Zandian, 2015).

Currently, English as a foreign language is taught in state schools as a compulsory school subject in the national curriculum for seven years. English textbooks of state schools are monolingual but teachers heavily rely on the grammar translation method and the focus is on teaching vocabulary and grammar. However, English is taught much earlier in most private primary schools and even at pre-school levels mostly in large cities with more recent methods and textbooks. English has a significant status in higher education as well. Several universities in Iran, such as Tehran University, Shahid Beheshti University, and Al-zahra University to name some, offer English in independent fields of study such as English Language and Literature, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and English Translation, in which many learners graduate at BA, MA, and PhD levels every year (Talebinezhad & Sadeghi Beniss, 2005). Moreover, English is also one of the compulsory subjects in undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all fields of study and included in all undergraduate and postgraduate entrance examinations, which has made ELL as one of the main concerns of post graduate students in the country (Aghagolzadeh & Davari, 2014).

As stated in the national curriculum, the objectives of foreign language teaching are 'familiarizing learners with more vocabulary and basic grammar and acquiring linguistic skills' to enable learners 'to communicate with other nations and with human resources locally and universally'. It was also stated that students, at the end of the grade 12 after 7 years of studying English, are supposed to become an intermediate level English proficient user i.e. to be able to communicate, write short essays and comprehend academic texts (Translated from Negashte Sevvom, 2009: 60 & 110). However, the stated objectives have not been operationalised and there is still a lack of fit between the statements of policy from official bodies and their implementation in the educational system of the country (Mirhosseini & Khodakarami, 2015). In fact, what is offered to learners throughout the years they spend in the education system fails to meet, both culturally and linguistically, basic requirements to become competent users of English for their various intended purposes such as becoming English teachers or tour leaders and being able to get required grades in TOEFL or IELTS exams for postgraduate studies (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Jahangard, 2007; Khajavi & Abbasian, 2011; Riazi, 2005; Sadeghi & Richards, 2015).

The mentioned shortcomings of ELT/L are mainly due to the poor quality of the national English textbooks and the small number of hours allocated to English in the state school curriculum.

Moreover, this is partly ascribed to the dominant methodological approach to foreign language teaching in state schools and universities i.e. grammar translation method focusing on reading and grammatical points of the language, which cannot satisfy the students' need and desire to learn English communicatively (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Forouzani & Foroozandeh, 2015; Mazdayasna & Molaei, 2015; Pazhouhesh, 2014; Zandian, 2015).

This status quo of EL education has resulted in a general dissatisfaction among students, teachers, academics and officials (Kiani et al., 2011), in response to which private sector has been growing very fast where English courses are offered at various levels and for different age groups (Aghagolzadeh & Davari, 2014; Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Riazi, 2005; Talebinezhad & Sadeghi Beniss, 2005). English Learners find private institutions more favourable where English classes apply a more contemporary methodological approach such as communicative language teaching and base their work on recently updated textbooks such as New Interchange, New Headway, Fundamentals, Impact, Gold, etc. (Aghagolzadeh & Davari, 2012; Khajavi & Abbasian, 2011; Sadeghi & Richards, 2015).

Many Iranian English learners who look for opportunities in higher education, job promotion, migration or studying abroad, take IELTS, International English Language Testing System, which is widely used as a certificating device and claimed to be a reliable measure of English language proficiency (ELP) level by the organizations and educational centres that utilize it. In response to the need and desire of the learners especially in higher education to get the score needed in IELTS exams, private sections mostly in big cities offer IELTS preparation courses. Tehran University, the oldest and the most famous university in the capital of Iran, Tehran, also offers IELTS courses in its semi-private branch where the IELTS preparation course under study was held. More description of the context of the case under study is presented in section 4.4.

3.4   CP and ELT in Iran

CP is a new approach to ELT in the educational settings in Iran and it is still in an initial phase (Ghaemi & Piran, 2014; Safari & Pourhashemi, 2012). Recently, aligned with the widespread of ELT/L in Iran, Iranian researchers started to investigate ELT from various perspectives including CP mostly dealing with English linguistic imperialism with a focus on the nature and function of the ELT syllabus and materials. In this regard, some research has been done referring to the ideological, cultural, and political aspects of EL considering its role and function locally and globally. Their research includes some implications and hints to create counter-hegemonic materials by including global issues such as world peace, inequality and poverty along with

source culture to avoid total reliance on the target language. They also suggest to integrate local topics and real-life concerns in developing ELL materials in line with the overall actual experiences and needs of learners, which is mostly in common with communicative approach to ELT (Abdollahzadeh & Baniasad, 2010; Aghaei, 2009; Aghagolzadeh & Davari, 2012, 2014; Akbari, 2003, 2005, 2008; Baleghizadeh & Motahed, 2010; Birjandi & Meshkat, 2002; Davari, 2011; Erfani, 2012; Keshavarz & Akbari Malek, 2009; Mohseni & Karimi, 2012; Pishghadam & Naji, 2011; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2012a, 2012b; Rashidi & Safari, 2011; Sadeghi, 2005; Sadeghi Beniss, 2008).

For example, Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012a) state that the Iranian ELT professionals adopt positive attitudes towards the American culture and most of the Iranian learners still try to conform to Standard English, mainly American English, and consider it superior to other varieties and imitate it strictly as the prestige language. This would lead progressively, they warn, to deculturation, that is to say, subjugating the national, religious and historical identities of Iranian people. In response to this "obvious danger", the authors introduce an approach namely, *Iranian TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)*, as a successful assertion of Iranian local culture against the cultural and ideological domination of the West. They suggest that, first, Iranian professionals should outline the elements of the Iranian culture, history, religion, values, customs, etc. exclusively. Then, teams of native and non-native experts within the ELT field should design new English textbooks collaboratively. The authors' suggestions seem to be in line with the overall aim of applying CP to ELT as discussed in 2.4, which is also compatible with the state's political approach toward EL as the language of hegemony and imperialism.

As another example, Rashidi and Safari (2011) tried to develop a model for ELT material design based on the major tenets of CP such as the inclusion of generative themes derived from the learners' life situations, needs and interests to invoke discussion, basing the content of materials on Iranian culture, and taking into account the teacher's role as a co-learner and coordinator and learners' subjective role as decision makers. The authors believe that utilising the materials developed based on this model can help learners to both improve their English communicative abilities and develop a sense of critical consciousness of issues related to social structures to enable them to act upon them. The principles proposed by the author are purely abstract and like Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012a), the authors ignore the practicality of applying such a syllabus in the current education system of the country.

Two other researchers, Momenian and Shirazizadeh (2009), also influenced by CP, suggest to take into account the learners' first language and culture to break away from the traditional

methods of teaching dictated by native speakers. The authors also state that the recognition of the learners' experiences and daily problems gives them the chance to gain voice and reflect upon their experiences through different writing tasks as some preliminary steps towards empowerment and transformation. Including learners' culture and life concerns in the syllabus is mostly in a general consensus among CP educators but including learners' first language in writing skills was suggested by the authors without any justification.

Stressing the political role of ELT, Aghagolzadeh and Davari (2012) consider the cultural, socio-political and ideological impact of English and discuss the rationale of applying CP as an effective approach to ELT in Iran; first, they discuss the dominant anti-imperialistic ideology of the state during the recent decades after the Islamic revolution. Second, they state that the Islamic culture of the country is drastically different from Anglo-American culture dominant in mainstream ELT. Based on this justification, the authors strongly believe that CP is "certainly the best and the most suitable approach" to language education which places socio-political considerations high on the classroom agenda (Aghagolzadeh & Davari 2012: 977). CP, they assert, can not only prevent the negative effects of English spread such as imposing western cultural and ideological values, but also it can manage this spread and adapt it to Iranian social needs and interests. Seemingly, the authors, in line with the state's approach to EL, consider CP primarily as an anti-imperialistic approach and ignore the fact that socio-political considerations also include national and local issues of the students aiming at social transformation for a more just society. Moreover, one may wonder how CP influenced by Marxism which is explicitly in contradiction with Islam-based policies of the state is, according to the authors, "certainly the best and the most suitable approach".

Also concerned with CP, Akbari (2008) provides some suggestions for English teachers to transform their classes into more critical settings such as including more of the learners' real-life concerns, making them aware of the issues faced by marginalized groups and making use of their first language and local culture. The author's suggestions are hardly applicable to English classes in state schools due to many and various constraints such as limited time and rigid syllabus, however, English teachers in private institutes may be able to include some of the suggestions. Regarding the use of the first language, English classes in state schools and universities are already run in Farsi mostly with a grammar translation method. In private institutes which run their language classes monolingually, using the first language is strictly prohibited and regarded as deficiency thus the author's suggestion which was not supported by any justifications does not seem to find a place in private English institutes. It is also worth mentioning that the author ignored the fact that in today's globalising world, it is necessary to

enhance learners' intercultural awareness and also make them aware of global issues beside their local culture and national concerns.

In another research, Davari, Iranmehr and Erfani (2012) introduce and discuss briefly some implications of applying CP to EL classrooms in five categories: using first language as a source, basing teaching on learners' local culture, including real-life local and global concerns as teaching topics, developing local materials, and valuing non-native English speaking teacher. Despite the other research mentioned, here the authors consider both global and local concerns. However, like most of the other research discussed so far, they basically stress political issues regarding an anti-imperialistic view toward ELT and do not discuss how and to what extent these suggestions can be operationalised in the current educational system and the socio political status quo of the country. Considering the appreciation of non-native English teachers, it does not seem to be a critical issue as English teachers in Iran are rarely English native speakers thus there is no issue of preferring English native teachers by English learners in the country. Moreover, the authors developed a 10 item Likert-scale questionnaire based on the mentioned implications to investigate the Iranian ELT community's attitudes toward CP in ELT. They conducted the survey on 86 ELT professionals and university teachers throughout the country. The result of her study indicates that CP, in theory, tends to find a position among Iranian ELT professionals.

In another study, Safari and Pourhashemi (2012) conducted a qualitative study on 12 EL teachers of both genders in different institutes and state schools in Yazd, the capital of Yazd province in central part of Iran. Their aim was to explore some of the problems and constraints regarding applicability of CP in educational system of Iran. The teachers, as the authors simply mentioned without further explanation, became familiarised with the theories, core principles and pedagogical practices of CP through 16 hours of in-service training sessions. Then, through the use of journal writing, observation and semi-structured interviews, the authors tried to explore what teachers might face applying CP. Based on the qualitative analysis of the data, the authors presented some of the problems the participants raised regarding the application of CP in their context: the common lack of familiarity with the approach, shortage of fluent and competent teachers, inaccessibility to appropriate textbooks and instructional materials for both teachers and learners, resistance of school principals against any innovative approach, fossilized unequal power relationship between teacher and students, absence of critical thinking in education, and CP's being culturally and politically inappropriate for Iranian education.

The findings of Safari and Pourhashemi's (2012) qualitative case study, though of a small scale project, signify the challenges and difficulties teachers may have to deal with and the huge

amount of preparation needed for such an approach to be applied in the educational context of the country. Regarding the last theme, the authors do not discuss how and why CP is inappropriate for Iranian contexts, which is inconsistent with what Aghagolzadeh and Davari (2012) advocate regarding the appropriateness of applying CP as an anti-imperialistic approach in Iranian context.

So far, I have discussed the studies which provided some suggestions to apply CP or clarifying the status of CP among Iranian English teachers and scholars. There are a few Iranian educators who made an effort to implement the concepts of CP in their English classes as well. For example, Barjesteh, Alipour and Vaseghi (2013) investigate the effect of CP strategies on EFL learners' reading comprehension ability. They administered a pre-test and a post-test reading comprehension to two groups of BA sophomores majoring in English translation at Islamic Azad University. Each group consisted of thirty students, one of which was chosen as the 'non-critical group' and the other as the 'critical group'. A series of treatments were taught to the learners of the latter group during twelve sessions of instruction. The authors state that the instructions taught to the experiment group drew on the principles and practices based on guidelines and suggestions in application of CP in a classroom provided by Akbari (2008) and Kumaravadivelu (2001). However, they provided no further information about the content or the teaching method of the instructions. The quantitative analysis of the result of the tests showed that the instruction of the strategies had a significant effect on the reading comprehension of the learners in the experimental group.

In another study, Sadeghi (2008) criticised the current pedagogical context of ELT/L which usually detaches and isolates language from students' real needs, interests and objectives, and neglects local socio-cultural, political and linguistic aspects. She states that conventional language classrooms do not address socio-political issues such as social inequity, discrimination, violence, and poverty so they have no transformational effect on learners. She identified three main approaches to CP and tried to apply them to her EL class: first, she considered local situations and negotiated with students about teaching/learning; second, she addressed the issues of power, discourse and knowledge; finally, she tried to connect the content of students' lives and the larger context of their life through engaged dialogues.

This action research was conducted by Sadeghi (2008) in a private language institution in Bandar Abass, a city in the far south of Iran. The participants were 22 EFL learners, both male and female between 18-29 of age, from different educational backgrounds and ethnic cultures who participated in the author's 'chat course' as a series of discussion sessions to improve the

learners' general English proficiency and fluency. The course was run 90 minutes four times a week for three months. The author designed the course to acquaint students with issues of social justice and her overall purpose was to discover 'whether in a one-semester students experienced a change in their: a) definition of social justice, b) recognition of practices relevant to social justice in their organizations, and c) sense of responsibility for contributing to change in the distribution of justice' (: 282). She narrated the challenges she and the learners faced and struggled with, and how the learners reacted by engaging in discussions actively and becoming more critical and reflective about themselves and society surrounding them. This action research is one of a few examples of an attempt of an Iranian English teacher who welcomed possible challenges, and theorised and practised a CP approach in an ELL class.

In an ethnographic research with a qualitative approach, Ghahramani-Ghajar and Mirhosseini (2005) investigate how dialogue journal writing might provide an opportunity to bring CP and EFL education together in a productive way in the context of a critical literacy practice. They made use of informal interviews and more than 600 journal entries written by thirty 16-year-old male students in a private high school in Tehran throughout an academic year. The qualitative analysis of the data showed that writing dialogue journals provided the students with opportunities to express their voice, and to improve their critical self-reflective writing ability.

In another ethnographic research in the field of English for academic purpose in higher education, inspired by CP, Ghahramani-Ghajar, Mohammadi Doostdar, Abdolhamid, and Mirhosseini (2012) made an effort to step beyond predetermined content-based approach to university ELT. They investigated critical practices of teaching medical English in an Iranian university and illustrated a contextualized instance of enquiry-based language learning. They find the process of pursuing this approach very challenging for both teachers and learners but worthwhile for broadening the diversity of involvements with education as a real enquiry. They started with an initial student population of only 20 freshmen, gradually extending to English courses in the entire Faculty of Medicine in Tehran University during four years. They reported the practice of their study as follows:

- the linguistic micro elements are learned in a fully natural context of medical English with real medically and personally meaningful struggle with content rather than in dealing with de-contextualized static language samples;
- the language points that are learned are multi-layered and may help students become involved with language in its full capacity rather than at mere semantic or pragmatic word and structure level;

- language and its components are discovered by learners rather than spoon-fed to them (:278).

This ethnographic research is unique, especially with regard to the length and scope, in applying an approach to CP in the field of ELT/L in an academic setting in higher education in Iran. It is an example of an attempt in applying CP in the education system of the country despite the challenges, constraints and limitations. However, the research, like the three preceding research, did not provide details of the process, discourse analysis of the class discussions or the learners' viewpoints thus failed to provide the practical suggestions or the necessary ground for further analysis and discussion.

3.5 Summary and conclusion

In order to prepare the background for understanding the context of my project, this chapter was devoted to introduce and discuss briefly the educational context in Iran including the education system, ELT and CP in ELT. As discussed, the educational system of the country represents a top-down approach with a noticeable emphasis on authority and discipline. The ministry of education develops and distributes educational materials for all levels, and teachers are expected to organize classroom activities in a way to fulfil textbooks requirements. In fact, the education system of Iran is still under the traditional banking model of education i.e. lecture-dominant and exam-oriented, which also lacks any formal training of CT in schools and higher education. Regarding English, it is the compulsory subject in schools and university in almost all fields of study and prerequisite for fulfilling higher education. English is mainly taught with a grammar translation method in state schools and universities which does not fulfil making the learners competent EL users thus has resulted in enduring dissatisfaction among EL learners and teachers.

The underlying rationale of the national curriculum, including ELT/L, is 'to ensure a principled conformity, which is a tendency to reduce teachers to the status of specialized technicians who transmit a predetermined set of discrete information and instructional procedures through a teacher-proof method, and highly standardized tests' (Sedeghi & Ketab 2009: 53). Therefore, it is not surprising that in this context, dialogic critical pedagogy is neither supported by educational policymakers nor is it practised by teachers. The possible reasons could be top-down, centralised, exam-oriented approach to education, heavy textbooks, limited class time, crowded classes, conventional teacher-student relationship and fixed syllable. The other reason could be the absence of CT and dialogic education in the curriculum and in teacher training programs

which has resulted in the lack of necessary knowledge and skills of teachers. This makes them hardly capable, even if willing, to practice this approach in their classes (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2012; Mehrpour & Baharloo, 2015; Sadeghi, 2005; Sahragard, Razmjoo, & Baharloo, 2014; Shakouri Masouleh & Ronaghifard Abkenar, 2012; Zare-Behtash, Izadi & Rezaei, 2017).

In applying CP to ELT, as discussed in 2.4., the main focus is a critical awareness of the imperialistic aspect of English and the resistance to deculturation. In line with this, Iranian researchers mostly focused on English imperialism and hegemony and advocated counter-hegemonic materials. This is largely in agreement with the supported foreign policy of the government namely, "independency from East and West" and "anti-westernization". Moreover, the Iranian researchers advocated the socio-cultural awareness on national and global levels; however, they did not discuss how this critical awareness can be achieved regarding the current education system, which is supposed to lead to social transformation as the main aim of applying CP approach. The dominant political context in the country may make researchers ignore or avoid raising the concept of emancipation and social transformation for a more just society.

The aforementioned studies mostly focus on the theoretical aspect of CP, and when applied, with few exceptions, were adds-on or small-scale interventions. In fact, the education system of the country and the dominant ELT trend, especially in state schools and universities, provide very little room to practice this approach. Therefore, most suggestions seem to be idealistic with little, if any at all, practicality to be applied. Moreover, the rare examples of practising CP in ELT did not conduct various research instruments and their findings mostly included descriptive reports thus fail to provide practical suggestions or the necessary ground for further analysis and discussion. More importantly, the research did not include the learners' voice in evaluating the process and outcome of their interventions. More research is necessary to analyse and discuss the contextualisation and practice of CP in ELL classes in Iran to explore its practicality and effectiveness.

The course under study is unique, to my best knowledge, in claiming to apply a CP approach in developing a teaching theory, designing the syllabus and practising it in an ELL course in higher education institution in Iran. This is especially important regarding the current education system of Iran where banking education prevails, CP seems to be hardly practised and most research on this area is more on theory. As analysed and discussed in chapters 6 and 7, the teacher's main objective is improving CT skills through teaching philosophical concepts within discussion sessions. This way, he seems to address the need of postgraduate students to enhance both

their English proficiency and learning about CT. Moreover, he includes discussion as his main teaching method which can be considered as innovation comparing to lecturing sessions which are the dominant teaching method in educational settings in the country. Investigating this case could be a response to the common criticism of CP that is the lack of enough practice of its concepts. Moreover, this research provided a comprehensive analysis of the case utilising 6 various research instruments and two analytical frameworks to explore and evaluate how the teacher perceives, contextualises and practises his approach to CP in his designed ELL course. The result of this case study invite the teachers and the researchers who are interested in and inspired by CP to reconsider the conceptualisation and contextualisation of a dialogic critical approach especially in banking education systems, and realistically consider and critically deal with many and various constraints in order to move toward a liberatory transformation advocated by a CP approach.

4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

What follows presents the research methodology and describes in detail the procedures followed to conduct this case study. After outlining the research questions and main objectives, I discuss the research philosophy and case study as my chosen research method in the two following sections. Afterwards, I explain the pilot study and the amendments I made to my research method as a result of it. Next four sections are devoted to research setting, 6 research instruments, the validity of the research findings and the ethical approval. The chapter ends with a summary and conclusion.

4.2 Research questions and objective

The most difficult task of a researcher and probably the most important step to be taken in a research study is designing suitable questions which shape and direct the whole project (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014), enable researchers to achieve their aims and objectives, and are capable of being answered in the research setting (Guillham, 2000). Having this in mind, this case study with a qualitative approach generated four main questions to explore, analyse and discuss the teacher's conception of CP as his chosen approach to ELT, how he theorised based on his conception and how he put into practice his teaching theory in his designed ELL course. These are addressed firstly by answering the three following questions:

1. What is the teacher's perspective on the relevance, aims, and theoretical assumptions of CP in ELT?
2. How does the teacher believe CP in ELT should be put into pedagogic practice?
3. What kind of instructional strategies does the teacher actually use in his classrooms?

In order to answer the above research questions, I applied thematic analysis on semi-structured interviews with the teacher, audio recordings of the sessions throughout the course and my field notes. This prepared the ground to discuss his teaching theory and method within CP framework and then CP in ELT in general and in Iran in particular.

After I engaged with data analysis, 'dialogic discussion' was explored to be the teacher's stated main teaching method which is in line with the main teaching method in CP. After exploring the

class discourse, whole class discussion sessions were distinguished as the most frequent activity and the dominant class discourse quantitatively. Considering *dialogue* as the key concept of a CP-based pedagogy (Bartlett, 2005; Dysthe, 2011; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1994; Pollack & Kodikant, 2011; Roberts, 2000; Shor, 1980, 1992, 1993, Shor & Freire, 1987b, 1987a), I explored the role and importance of dialogue in whole class discussions as a CP teaching method in the discourse of this ELL classroom. To this end, the transcription of a sample of whole class discussions was used to explore its dialogic values based on Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue. This set the ground to further discuss the ways in which his conception informs classroom practice within the framework of dialogic critical pedagogy.

Moreover, exploring the role and importance of dialogue in the class discussions could not be comprehensive enough without including the learners' voice and exploring their points of view as they are the main participants in the discussions and the target audience of the teacher's intervention. Therefore, this project includes answering the following question:

4. How do the learners view the teacher's actual instructional strategies?

To answer the fourth research question, I thematically analysed the learners' viewpoints about the teacher's main teaching method namely whole class discussions, as they expressed in focus groups, questionnaires and their reflective diaries throughout the course. This helped me to further discuss the process and outcome of the teacher's main teaching method from the learners' viewpoints.

Addressing the stated research questions, this study is an attempt to offer a comprehensive analysis of the teaching philosophy, practice and outcome of applying an approach to dialogic critical pedagogy in the field of ELT by including the teacher's and learners' viewpoints, and applying 6 various research instruments and two analytical frameworks. A critical analysis and an in-depth understanding of the dynamics and dialogic patterns of class discourse can offer useful insights for critical pedagogues and other educators who may feel inspired by this study to re/evaluate their own practice and reflect on dialogic interactions in their own classrooms. In fact, critical pedagogues not only need to theorise and practice but also should apply an in-depth analysis to grow a critical view toward their own, and others' educational practices, thus would notice and avoid any deviations or contradictions in applying the basic concepts and main principles of a dialogic critical framework in their own contexts. This could pave the way to develop a reliable body of educational practices within the dialogic critical framework thus expand the territory of CP beyond an educational philosophy and project.

4.3   Research philosophy

Ontology, our belief about reality, and epistemology, our science or study about knowledge, are the foundations upon which the research, including methodology, methods and sources, are built (Richards, 2003). According to Grix (2010), it is of great importance for a researcher to set out clearly the interrelationship between his/her ontological position (what can be researched), link it to his/her epistemological position (what can be known about it), and his/her methodological approach (how to go about acquiring it). Having a clear and transparent knowledge of ontological and epistemological assumptions is crucial to understand the interrelationships of the key components of research, to avoid confusion when discussing theoretical debates and approaches to social phenomena, and to be able to recognise others', and defend one's own, positions (Grix, 2010; Mason, 2017).

The following figure (Grix, 2010: 68) shows the directional relationship between the key components of research:
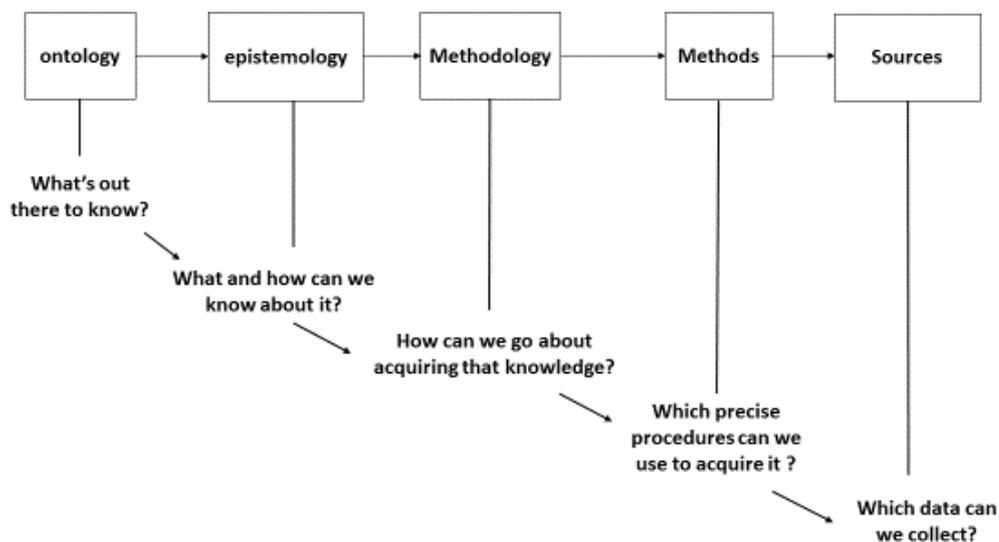
Here, I present the philosophical stance I adopted and how it directed me in designing the project and guided me to choose an appropriate methodology and methods to collect data.

Ontological claims and assumptions are made about social reality, and concerned with what we believe constitutes reality (Blaikie, 2010; Mason, 2017). In answering the question 'what is the nature of the phenomena, entities or social reality to be investigated', I have adopted an approach based on social *constructionism* which asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors. It implies that social phenomena

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and categories are not only produced through social interactions but that they are in a constant state of revision (Bryman, 2012). According to this position, knowledge is not something external to human beings available to be discovered through empirical methods; it is 'the product of negotiation and consensus among members of a discourse community'(Ward, 1994: 49).

This ontological viewpoint best suits the purpose of this case study, which made an attempt firstly to explore the teacher's perception and the way he theorises and practises his approach to CP in his designed ELL class; and second, to seek the learners' viewpoints toward the applied approach in this specific educational environment. Moreover, according to this notion of knowledge, language is not seen as a means to simply transfer thoughts and knowledge; rather language is a social, shared activity which constitutes the knowledge produced only through dialogue, negotiation and consensus in discourse (Gergen, 1999; Ward, 1994). Furthermore, according to social constructionism, thought is social in nature and thinking is an 'internalised version of conversation' and not a product of the mind per se (Ward, 1994: 52).Therefore, this approach is in line with socio-constructive approach to learning as the core concept of dialogic pedagogy that is the main pedagogical approach of CP, and is also the teacher's advocated instructional strategy in his English class, which I analyse through classroom discourse analysis in chapter 8.

Regarding epistemology, the theory of knowledge, it has also a great impact on research process, data collection and data analysis (Grix, 2010). According to Bryman (2012: 27), an epistemological issue deals with 'the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline'. In answering this question, I have adopted a view based on *interpretivism* that requires a strategy which 'respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and then requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action' (Bryman, 2012: 30). From an interpretivist perspective, my concerns were subjectivity, understanding, agency and various ways the participants constructed and experienced the social world (Denscombe, 2010), in this case the ELL class. Therefore, as a single case study, this research is concerned with particularisation rather than generalisation thus, it is mainly associated with interpretivist and qualitative approach (Gerring, 2006)

Adopting the interpretivist paradigm, I believe that social phenomena do not exist independently of a researcher's interpretations which inevitably affect the result of the study. In fact, qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive and subjective (Boyatzis, 1998), which means: 'the research outcome is ultimately the product of the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data, and it is the researcher who will choose from several alternative

interpretations possible for each data set' (Dörnyei, 2007: 38). Consequently, I was aware of the fact that I was not detached from the subject I studied; rather I was a part of the social reality, i.e. the English class being researched. Dealing with the unavoidable subjectivity, as a qualitative researcher, I made an attempt not to be constrained by predetermined theoretical notions or categorical analyses; rather, I scrutinised the data to understand the processes in this particular context. Adopting this approach, I believe, contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative enquiry (Patton, 2015).Therefore, I kept an open mind, analysing and re-analysing data continuously until I felt I did justice to the viewpoints of the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Guillham, 2000; Punch, 2013).

However, as Yin (2014) states, a case study may use a starting hypothesis which is verified, falsified or refined over the course of the research. Therefore, a case study 'benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis' (Yin, 2014: 17). In a similar line of reasoning, in conducting this qualitative case study research, I did not start from an atheoretical stance; I chose CP, the teacher's claimed approach in formulating his teaching philosophy and designing the course, as a conceptual framework to guide me in designing the research tools and in forming the thematic analysis of data. As Guillham (2000) stresses, however, I stayed open to any emergent themes and constantly challenged and scrutinized myself not to impose ideas onto the data.

As I mentioned in 1.1, I was a former student of the participant teacher's discussion course so I had an insider look toward the classroom discourse and his teaching method. This insider perspective and the shared educational background with the participants helped me to better understand the learners' view points and how they might experience the class process. However, during the data collection process, it was the first time that I experienced being neither a teacher nor a learner but an observer and a researcher. Observing the class for the whole course time i.e. three months, provided me with the time and insight to detach myself from my previous role as a former student and to develop a new approach, as an outsider, to the whole process of the teaching and learning. In fact, I had the chance to reconsider my whole educational background which greatly affected how I, as a learner, had considered the course as an effective praiseworthy innovation in applying a dialogic critical approach in a banking education context. This was my primary step to critically examine the data and analyse it accompanied with extensive study and consistent reflection.

4.4   Case study

The case study as one of the several forms of social science research has been gaining more recognition among researchers across various disciplines over the last three decades. This research strategy helps researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of phenomena (Yin, 2014), and to test views directly in relation to real-life events as they unfold in practice (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Qualitative case study was my preferred method as my research questions required an in-depth and extensive exploration of the class under research as a complex social phenomenon. It helped me to investigate the participants' perspective, and explain, analyse and discuss the process of the teacher's approach in practice through complete observation and analysis. I had no control over the behavioural events and I did not aim at any manipulation of the educational processes of the class. As an empirical inquiry, my case study embraced the complexity of the naturalistic setting and used a wide range of methods and sources of data (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Berg & Lune, 2012; Guillham, 2000; Richards, 2003; Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2014).`

The case study is defined as 'an intensive study of a single unit', which is 'observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time' for 'understanding a larger class of (similar) units' (Gerring, 2004: 342). In-depth case studies could be considered as a systematic production of exemplars which would increase the efficiency of scientific disciplines including social science. Context-dependent knowledge and experience lie at the centre of the case study not only as a research but also as a teaching and learning method for the fact that the case study entails the proximity to reality and generates the learning process for the researcher, which often constitutes a prerequisite for advanced understanding and achievement of new insights. In fact, experience with cases enables one to move from being a beginner to being an expert (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This signifies the importance of conducting more case studies considering different approaches to education including CP in order to explore further the practicality of their main concepts in various contexts, distinguish any possible shortcomings, deviations and barriers, and provide suggestions and guidance to improve.

As discussed in chapter 2 and further in the following chapter, CP places a great emphasis on a student-centred approach (Crookes, 2012; Shor & Freire, 1987a; Wong, 2006); in order to fulfil such an approach, it is the critical pedagogues' responsibility to contextualise the main concepts and to guide the students to actively participate in developing the syllabus. In managing the class interactions, it is also the teacher who should manage the communication to fulfil the different aspects of dialogue as discussed in 5.3. In fact, CP does not in itself constitute a method or set of

ideas; it is the individual teacher who needs to work through the micro-level pedagogical implications of the critical stance (Auerbach, 1998; Canagarajah, 2005; Johnston, 1999). The teacher's role is even more critical in banking education contexts where the students are most likely to be unaccustomed to a dialogic critical approach. Therefore, in analysing CP-based classroom practices, it is crucial to pay specific attention to the centrality of the teacher's role in managing and directing the syllabus toward being more dialogical and student-centred.

In conducting this case study, I made an attempt to present a comprehensive picture of the application of the teacher's approach to CP by triangulating the different sources of data; however, the main focus was the teacher as the key figure in directing the class in a "CP path" as his claimed approach; therefore, primarily, I investigated how he conceived CP, theorised and put into practice his teaching theory and method. In analysing the class discourse and the learners' viewpoints, the primary focus was on the teacher as well; how he managed the class interactions and how the learners' viewed his main teaching method in practice with a focus on his role. Therefore, this study can be considered as an *idiographic* or *intrinsic* case study which, according to Stake (2008: 121-122), was undertaken, first and last, to better understand this particular case in all its particularity and ordinariness and not 'because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem'. Therefore, unlike *nomothetic* case studies concerning with generalisation and more positivist approaches, the main concern of this qualitative single case study was particularization, associated with interpretivist approach. Guided by the main concepts of CP, the project aimed to analyse and interpret the case as a single historical event, which provides room for other analytical approach such as discourse analysis besides thick description (Gerring, 2006; Levy, 2008).

Conducting a case study on one single teacher in the field of social science is not uncommon. For instance, Van Veen, Sleegers and Van de Ven (2005) conducted a case study to understand how a Dutch secondary school teacher's identity was affected in the context of the educational reforms. In another qualitative single case study, Milner and Hoy (2003) investigated the sources of self-efficacy for an African American teacher in a suburban high school in the United States. The authors aimed to identify and interpret what encouraged the teacher's persistence in an unsupportive environment. The other example is Ankrum's (2007) doctoral thesis which is a single case study describing the nature of a second grade teacher's differentiated reading instruction in south western Pennsylvania. Similarly, Gablinkske's (2014) doctoral thesis explored the affective domain of teacher-student relationships in an elementary school of Rhode Island using a single case study design. As I discuss later in 4.8, the result of these single case studies might not be generalised; however, making sense of complex situations, and broadening

and deepening our understanding and analysis could compensate the lack of generalizability (Dörnyei, 2007). In fact, single case studies are not inferior to multiple case studies as the formers are 'multiple in most research efforts because ideas and evidence may be linked in many different ways' (Ragin, 1992: 225), set the ground for comparative analysis and produce a convincing and vivid case for a wide range of audiences (Dörnyei, 2007).

4.5   Pilot study

The pilot study was conducted from 2nd to 10th of January 2014 in order to familiarise myself with the context, and to review the research design and instruments for feasibility and improvement. To this end, I observed the three sessions of the course and I had planned to conduct video recording which could facilitate reviewing the class activities and interaction, however, I was permitted to just audio record the class so I decided to include more detailed field notes during data collection.

I also tested the two questionnaires in order to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaires (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). I made two appointments in the institute by the help of the teacher to try my Q1 and Q2 at the beginning and the end of the course respectively. The first appointment was the first session of the course suitable to try the first questionnaire. The teacher let me have the first hour of the class time. I started the session by introducing myself and my project and the aim of this pilot study. I offered to repeat myself in Farsi and they agreed so I explained the points in Farsi again. Then, I distributed the papers which took them 10 minutes to fill in and return. I noticed that nearly all of them were filled in Farsi so I concluded that it is quite essential to give the participants the option to fill the questionnaires in either language.

Regarding the second questionnaire, 30 of the learners who just finished the course were invited by the teacher, seven of which agreed to participate in the pilot study. I started the session by introducing myself and my project in English and the aim and objective of this pilot study. They understood me completely and their answer to my question whether they needed me to repeat myself in Farsi was negative. It took them 45 minutes to fill the questionnaire. Some of them asked me what CP means, revealing the fact that the concept is completely unfamiliar to them and this is confirmed by their negative answer to the related question in the questionnaire one, i.e. whether they were familiar with CP or received any training regarding CT skill. Despite the fact that technical terms should be avoided in questionnaires, I used CP and CT in order to be able to gain an understanding of their awareness of the terms, the definition and the use of the

concepts before and after being familiarized with them through the course time. Moreover, the answers to the questions 3 and 4 of the second questionnaire revealed that some of them have difficulty in remembering the articles and novels they read or the movies they watched. So I decided to make use of reflective diaries, i.e. the short slip at the end of each session for the learners to write their feeling and understanding of the session when their minds are still fresh. At the end of the both questionnaires, I asked the participants to comment on the questions. I also did the same orally. They said that the questions were clear and they had no difficulty to understand and answer.

During the pilot study, I also hold a meeting with the teacher as the key informant to seek his comments and to try my interview skills (Dörnyei, 2007). To benefit from a peer consultation, I also emailed the questionnaires to 3 PhD students in the faculty of modern languages of the University of Southampton, along with the research questions and the objectives of the study. I sought their comments on whether the questions were in line with the research questions and the objective of the study, whether the questions were clear and/or whether they have any suggestions to improve them. Based on their comments, I made some amendments in the form and content of some of the questions; for example, I changed some questions to open ended sentences to let the participants think and write more easily and I changed some yes/no questions to 'Wh'-questions to motivate the learners to write more. Moreover, I was suggested to provide a list of movies or articles in the related questions to ignite the learners' memories while others commented that remembering the movies, novels or articles could be a sign of their significance and effectiveness. I did not include the list of movies and articles as I decided to use the reflective diaries which would facilitate gaining the related data in each session.

4.6   Research setting

The course under study is an optional preparatory program for adults, mostly postgraduate students, whose aim is to improve their ELP levels for different purposes, mostly but not exclusively, for taking IELTS. The course length, number of learners, instructional materials, tasks and activities have been designed and practised by the teacher. The course was held 29 three-hour sessions in nearly three months. It was held on Saturdays, Mondays and Thursdays during summer term from 28th June to 22nd September 2014. The sessions were from 4:45 to 8 pm with a break around 6 pm for 15 minutes. The course syllabus, including activities and course materials, was designed and taught by the teacher with a CP approach as he advocates. The course materials were mostly pre- selected by the teacher and were introduced to the learners during in first session. A detailed description of the participants and the course design, including

instructional materials, assignments and class activities, are presented in the two following sub-sections.

4.6.1 Participants

The participants of this research are an English teacher and his learners in an optional ELL course called 'IELTS preparation'. I engaged in a purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, in choosing the participants of this study. Purposive sampling, also known as judgment, criterion-based, selective or subjective, is the most common sampling technique in qualitative research. It relies on the researcher's judgment in selecting the units (e.g., people, organisations, events, etc.) to be studied. The main objective of this kind of sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of the selected population, which enables the researcher to answer research questions. This kind of sampling is used when the researcher targets a particular group with no attempt to generalise, fully aware of the fact that it does not represent a wider population but itself (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2007; Ritchie, Lewis, Gilliam, Tennant, & Rahim, 2013).

Further in sampling the participants of this case study, I adopted two approaches: expert or key informant sampling and total population sampling. The former is used when the researcher aims to gather knowledge from individuals having particular expertise, and the latter is used to examine the entire population with relatively small size and a set of particular characteristics (Marshall, 1996). I adopted the former in selecting the teacher to acquire in-depth information about the chosen approach and underlying rationale, and the latter in selecting the learners to investigate their viewpoints about different aspects of the course.

The teacher is an MA holder in ELT in his mid-forties, having English teaching experience for about 20 years. The demographic data of the participant learners was gathered through the questionnaire 1 (see appendix 1). The learners included 5 men and 14 women aged 21 to 32 who were quite heterogeneous regarding their ELP levels, ranging from pre-intermediate to advance, with different majors and professions. Their ELP levels were what they estimated according to any exams or English courses they had taken before. In fact, despite what is common in English language institutes, to register and attend this course, the candidates were not interviewed nor did they need to present any English qualification.

Three of the female learners attended the course for the second time out of interest while the other learners took the course for the first time, most of whom were introduced to it by their friends or acquaintances who had attended the course previously. Thereby, they were informed by the former learners of the inclusion of non-textbook materials and whole class discussion

sessions in the syllabus. Only three of the learners registered for an IELTS preparation course without any prior introduction. Moreover, most of the learners had attended some other English courses in private institutes but they were not satisfied with their ELP levels and they desired to improve their English especially their speaking skill to get their desired grades in IELTS or similar tests. As most of them expressed in questionnaire 1, they had not heard about CP and had not had any formal training of CT or dialogic teaching prior to attending this course.

Three of the female learners who were English teachers in the same institute were assigned to teach which coincided with this course so they had to quit since the middle of the term. One of the female learners quit from 10th session for personal reasons and one of the male learners also decided not to attend the course from 20th session. Moreover, 5 students joined the class for the last ten sessions. These learners had attended the previous term of the same course and were suggested by the teacher to join this class as 10 of the learners of that course quit. Besides, some of the learners did not attend some sessions for personal reasons so the participants who attended in each session varied from 8 to 15.

4.6.2   Course design

The classroom where the course was held was a small room with 15 chairs, a whiteboard, a desk and a PC that was used to play the IELTS audio files for IELTS reading activities. Unlike the other classrooms in the institute, the class arrangement was different from the traditional style with teacher's desk and a whiteboard at the front and rows of chairs facing them. In this class, however, the chairs were arranged in a semi-horseshoe layout thus the learners faced each other. The next two photos show the class layout:

Picture 1: classroom layout

Picture 2: classroom layout

In the following 3 subsections, I introduce the outline of the syllabus and how it was carried out in the observed classroom, including instructional materials, tasks and activities. The main source of data is the field notes compiled by the researcher throughout classroom observation and the audio-recordings of 29 sessions.

4.6.2.1 Instructional materials

What follows is the list of the instructional materials designed by the teacher for this IELTS preparation course including an IELTS textbook, a collection of book chapters and articles, five movies and three novels as listed below:

- **Insight into IELTS, Student's Book by Vanessa Lakeman and Clare McDowell, Cambridge University Press;**

- **A pamphlet including a collection of book chapters and articles;**

During the course, the teacher specified ten texts from the pamphlet for the learners to read at home which are listed chronologically as follows:

1. The Day Language Came into My Life, Chapter 4: The story of my life (Keller, 1996)
2. A Table of Critical thinking vs Non-critical thinking (from an unidentified source)
3. What is Critical Thinking? (accessible from Dan Kurland's www.criticalreading.com)
4. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Chapter 3 (Freire, 1970)
5. Making Space, Spirituality and mental health (Leibrich, 2002)
6. You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (Tannen, 1990: 53-66)
7. Psychiatry and Spirituality at the End of Life: A Case Report (Holt, 2004)
8. Literacy: Reading the Word and the World (Freire and Macedo, 1987)
9. The Road Less Travelled, A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth, Chapter 1: Discipline (Scott Peck, 1978)
10. The Road Less Travelled, A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth, Chapter 2: Love Defined (Scott Peck, 1978)

The texts number 2 and 3 are about CT which is what the teacher considered "absolutely essential" for the learners to improve during the course (Int2). As discussed in 6.2.3, CT is what he considered as the origin of CP, the activating of which is his main educational objective. The texts number 1, 4 and 8 above focused on the teacher's teaching philosophy. Having two texts from Paulo Freire and two texts about CT and various activities devoted to them, signify the importance and the effect of the two disciplines on his teaching. In selecting the other texts, he adopted a thematic approach; they include the concepts he intended to teach such as spirituality, love and discipline which can be categorised under 'human basic values' as discussed in 6.2.4.

- **Movies:**
    1. Awakenings (initial release 1990, directed by Penny Marshall)
    2. My life (initial release 1993, directed by Bruce Joel Rubin)
    3. Cast Away (initial release 2000, directed by Robert Zemeckis)
    4. If Only (initial release 2004, directed by Gil Junger)
    5. The Legend of 1900 (initial release 1998, directed by Giuseppe Tornatore)

The above award winning movies are in EL; the first three are American, number 4 is British and the last one is Italian. The plot summaries of the movies are included in the <u>appendix 2</u>. The movies were not discussed regarding their plots, actors or directors but were used to set the ground to discuss the highlighted concepts. For example, in the movie My Life, they discussed the concept of 'authentic life' and the teacher's proposed dichotomy of 'being alive' vs. 'living' and how one can turn living 'a life' to living 'my life' (FN, 23/07/2014). As another example, in the movie Cast Away, 'castaway' as a concept was discussed including what 'castaway' as a psychological and mental state means and how one can recognise whether s/he is in a castaway in his inner life and how one can get out of it (FN, 21/08/2014).

- **Novels:**
    1. The Little Prince (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, 1943),
    2. The Old man and the Sea (Ernest Hemingway, 1951)
    3. Alchemist (Paulo Coelho, 1988)

Like the movies, the novels were selected to set the ground to discuss his proposed philosophical concepts dealing with different stages of "self-discovery". As the teacher explained in his interview 3, *'Little Prince'* is the story of a self-discovery for raising self-consciousness through exploring the inner world, *'The Alchemist'* is the story of self-exploration through exploring the outside world, and *'The old man and the sea'* deals with the philosophy of life.

4.6.2.2   Tasks

I categorised the tasks that the teacher assigned the learners to do at home based on the two types of the instructional materials as follows:

• IELTS-based tasks

-Reading, writing, listening modules of 'Insight into IELTS'

Regarding IELTS-based tasks, each session the teacher assigned some parts of the textbook for the learners to do at home and in the following sessions they checked the related activities in groups and class.

• Non-IELTS tasks:

-Reading:

-News

-Texts: short stories, novels, book chapters and articles

-Writing:

- Journal

-Watching suggested movies

Non-IELTS tasks included reading, writing and watching movies. Regarding reading, the learners were assigned to choose a piece of news and read it at home to tell its summary to the class. The teacher further explained that a piece of news could be taken from newspapers in English or anything interesting to them, which they wanted to share with others (FN, 28/06/2014). The learners were also assigned to read some book chapters and articles from the pamphlet given to them. The teacher assigned which article to read from the pamphlet as the class progressed. Later, the teacher introduced the three mentioned novels for the learners to read at home and then discussed the related themes in the class. The learners were also supposed to write 'journals' about the concepts they discussed and then read them in the class for him and other learners to comment on the contents. The more description of the tasks is provided in appendix 3.

4.6.2.3   Activities

This section outlines the variety of activities performed during the course time i.e. about 77 hours in 29 sessions which were held in two parts with a break in between. The sessions took between 105 minutes to 205 minutes as some sessions started later or ended sooner and the break times took longer. The teacher did not follow a regular schedule but he introduced the activities, tasks and materials in the first session and during the course he spontaneously decided what activity to perform and for how long. Thus, categorising the class activities required me to review my field notes and the audio recordings of 29 sessions, about 77 hours (see appendix 4 and appendix 5); I categorised the activities into 'IELTS-based' and 'Non-IELTS'; the former refers to the activities based on the aforementioned IELTS textbook, while the later refers to the activities based on non-IELTS materials. Then, I categorised these two in 'group' and 'whole class' activities as they were performed during the course. What follows is a brief outline of the activities as performed through the course:

```
                              •  Summary story telling
                              •  Journal reading
         •  Group activities
                                               •  Topical thematic
                              •  Group discussion
                                               •  Movie-based
Non-IELTS
activities
                              •  News sharing
                                                    •  Topical thematic
         •  Class activities  •  Journal reading    •  Movie-based
                              •  Whole class discussion  •  Text-based

         •  Group activities  •  Reading
IELTS-                        •  Writing
based
activities                    •  Reading
         •  Class activities  •  Listening
                              •  Writing
```
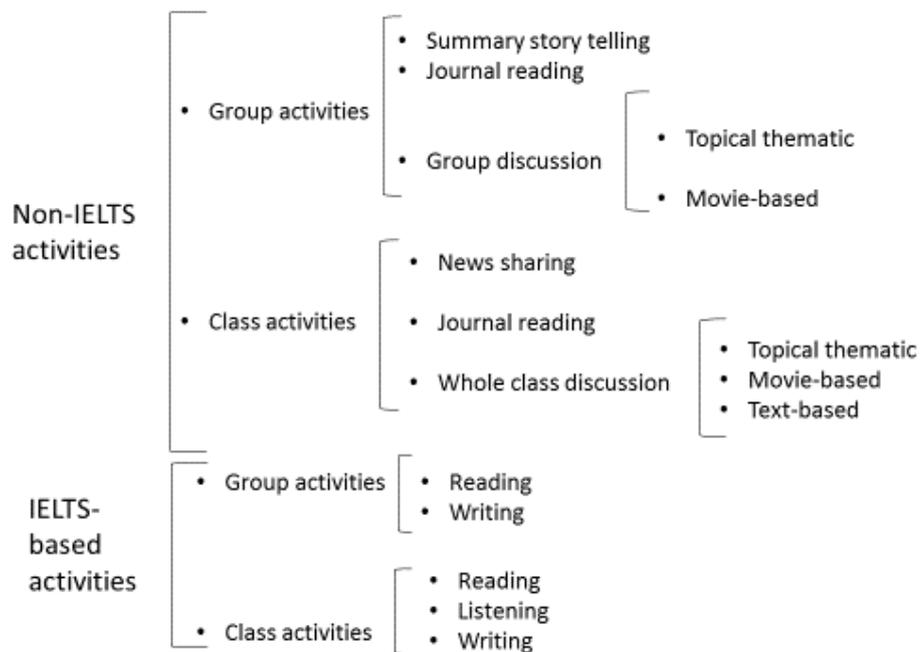
In <u>appendix 4</u>, I explained all the activities I observed and audio-recorded for about three months, accompanied with 14 tables including the materials used and the time devoted to the categorised activity. Moreover, in <u>appendix 5</u>, I provided a table of all the activities as they were performed throughout the course including the date, the number of the attendants, the performed activities and the time devoted to each activity in each session. These details guided me in the first level of sampling the class discourse as discussed in 8.2. Here, I just include the description of the whole class discussions which were the teacher's advocated teaching method and the dominant discourse of the course in order to set the ground to contextualise the discourse sample I analyse in chapter 8.

-   **Whole class discussion**

Whole class discussions were the most frequent activity and took most time of the whole class activities that is about 40 hours. All the discussion sessions can be recognised as thematic, during which some specific themes were discussed while the movies and texts were basically used to set the ground for discussing the teacher's proposed concepts; for the ease of description, I categorised whole class discussions to 'topical thematic', 'movie-based' and 'text-based' discussions.

Nine times during the course, the teacher assigned two of the learners to run the forthcoming movie-based or text-based discussions, which I referred to as learner-front. This activity included

the two assigned learners' oral presentation and class discussions, which usually followed by the teacher who took the floor and continued the discussions to elaborate the themes.

- **Topical thematic**

The teacher started each session by asking questions like 'what's up?', 'How is life with you?', 'talk to me', 'share your world' and the like. When the learners were reticent, he called them by their names one by one and asked them to talk about themselves. These greetings mostly followed by discussions initiated and directed by the teacher in line with and related to the highlighted concepts.

These discussions provided the basis for the movie-based and text-based discussions through which his intended concepts were elaborated and clarified. Many concepts that were taught during the course were introduced and defined during these discussion sessions. They also included many instances of referring back to the previously discussed themes or referring forward to the upcoming themes. Topical thematic discussions were the most frequent activity throughout the course. The time devoted to these discussion sessions varied between 5 to 110 minutes and the total time spent on this activity was about 17 hours and a half as outlined in the following table:

Greetings and whole class topical thematic discussions																													
Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Time	105	68	24	25	6	14	41	20	33	10	30	10	40	63	30	70	20	20	5	10	85	40	30	30	10	5	80	110	5
Count: 29/ Total time: 1039 minutes ≈ 17 hours and a half																													

Table 12: Greetings and whole class topical thematic discussions

- **Movie-based**

As mentioned, the learners were assigned to watch five movies namely *Awakening, If Only, My Life, Cast Away* and *The Legend of 1900*. This activity was performed 7 times, four of which were learner-front, and the time spent on them varied between 30 to 85 minutes. The movie-based discussions did not include critical appraisal of the movies per se. but they were used to set the ground for the themes, all of which related to the teacher's philosophy of authentic life and humanity. The learners and the teacher referred to the scenes of the movies as long as they were related to the highlighted concepts. The discussions mostly ended with the teacher's lecturing about the concepts and providing some related questions for them to think about and

get prepared for the following discussion sessions or to write a journal about it to be read in the later sessions in the class. In total, this activity took about 6 hours and a half as outlined in the following table:

Whole class movie-based discussions							
Session	6	11	12	15	18	19	27
Movie	If Only	My Life Learner-front	My life Learner-front	Cast Away Learner-front	Cast Away	Cast Away	Legend of 1900 Learner-front
Time	85	42	70	50	30	32	70
Count: 8/ Total time: 379 minutes ≈ 6 hours and a half							

Table 13: Whole class movie-based discussions

- **Text-based**

As outlined in 4.6.2, the teacher gave the learners a collection of several articles and book chapters. Each week he chose one text and asked them to read and think about it at home to discuss it later in the class. He chose the articles based on how the discussions went on in the class so neither all articles of the text collection nor the same articles are read and discussed in his IELTS course. As he clarified and emphasised in several sessions, the texts were to set a basis to discuss some concepts he highlighted when he introduced the text or through the questions with which he started and proceeded the discussions. Like movie-based discussions, text-based discussions were mostly concluded by the teacher's lecturing about the concepts, through which he clarified his proposed definitions of the highlighted concepts.

This activity performed 16 times, four of which were learner-front, and the total time spent on them varied between 15 to 95 minutes. In total, it took 15 hours as follows:

Whole class text-based discussions					
Session	3	5	6	7	9
Texts	The Day Language Came into My Life	CT	Chapter 3 Pedagogy of the Oppressed	Psychiatry and spirituality at the end of life Learner-front	Women and Men in Conversation'

Time	55	60	15	60	45

Whole class text-based discussions					
Session	10	11	13	17	20	21
Texts	CT learner-front	CT	CT	Literacy, reading the world and the word Learner-front	Literacy, reading the world and the world	Making Space, Spirituality and Mental Health' Learner-front
Time	72	24	25	60	30	80

Whole class text-based discussions						
Session	10	11	13	17	20	21
Texts	CT learner-front	CT	CT	Literacy, reading the world and the word Learner-front	Literacy, reading the world and the world	Making Space, Spirituality and Mental Health' Learner-front
Time	72	24	25	60	30	80

Whole class text-based discussions						
Session	22	23	24	25	28	29
Texts	Psychiatry and Spirituality at the End of Life	Little Prince	Discipline Learner-front	Little Prince	Love defined	Love defined
Time	67	70	85	60	95	65
Count: 16/ Total time: 968 minutes ≈ 16 hours						

Table 14: Whole class text-based discussion

The sample of class discussion analysed in chapter 8 is the learner-front, text-based discussion performed in session 10 for about 72 minutes, highlighted in the table above.

4.7   Research instruments

To create a full and deep examination of the case, case studies require multiple methods, the selection and combination of which depend on the case itself (Berg & Lune, 2012). Using more than one method of inquiry is referred to as triangulation i.e. 'a process in which the researcher uses two or more research methods to investigate the same phenomena' (Grix, 2010: 136), which improves the chances of getting more reliable data, minimises the chances of biased findings and clarifies meaning by identifying the various ways the case is being seen (Grix, 2010; Stake, 2008). Align the same line of reasoning, I applied six research instruments to collect data namely, class observations and audio-recordings, field notes, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires and the learners' reflective diaries. The following six sub-sections present an explanation of each research instrument and the rationale of their use.

4.7.1   Classroom observation and audio-recording

Observation offers researchers the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring
social situations, which provides more valid or authentic data than mediated or inferential
methods (Cohen et al., 2007). Observation is the most direct way of obtaining data from what
people actually do and not what they write or say they do, or what they do because they should.
It is not as easy as it may seem and could be fallible and highly selective thus discipline and effort
are needed for an accurate and balanced observation (Guillham, 2000).

In order to discover whether and how the teacher applies CP in his designed ELL course, the
main data collection method I applied was class observation which, as Morrison (1994) states,
enabled me to gather data on several settings: the physical setting such as the physical
environment of the class; the human setting such as the characteristics and behaviours of the
participant learners and teacher; the interactional setting such as the group activities and
interactions between the teacher and the learners and also among the learners; and the
programme setting such as the pedagogic styles and activities. In this sense, I adopted a semi
structured approach to observe the class to let key issues emerge from the observation rather
than me knowing in advance what those key issues would be (Cohen et al., 2007).

I observed the whole course including 29 sessions about 77 hours, long enough to grasp the
whole process and its complexity. As a qualitative researcher, as Cohen et al. (2007) assert, I
aimed to catch the dynamic nature of the pedagogical events and to seek teaching and learning
trends and patterns over the course time. Among many different ways which a researcher may
decide to observe, I mainly adopted a non-participant approach in order not to involve in the
activities and discussions to minimize the disturbance of the setting (Dörnyei, 2007). Being
aware that a qualitative researcher needs to be 'noninterventionist' (Stake, 1995: 44), I avoided
any interruption and focused on observation and taking notes of whatever could not be grasped
from the audio recordings. However, as Richards and Morse (2012) mention, like in most non-
experimental situations, observation without some participation was impossible as observers
could not entirely be either participants or nonparticipants but a mix of both; in some activities, I
was asked to join them in group activities which I accepted to build up a good rapport.
Moreover, during break time and before or after the class time, I engaged in informal chatting
and discussions with the learners, which helped me to gain a detailed insight of the events and
the learners' viewpoints in friendly, informal settings.

Observation is quick and easy but may not record all necessary details or as any observer, I
might be subject to bias thus would record what I saw rather than what actually happened in the

classroom. Therefore, in order to capture what really happened throughout the course, as Walsh (2011) advocates, I audio recorded the sessions which I transcribed fully or partially depending on the evidences I needed to provide for my analysis. I preferred video recording to record all actions and spoken interactions which could facilitate examining the class activities and further analysis but the institute did not give me the permission to do so. This made me include more detailed field notes during the course which I explain in the next subsection.

4.7.2   Researcher's field notes

Researchers in many fields especially in qualitative social research make use of field notes, also called as diaries, log books or journals, to record their daily observation in the fields (Altrichter & Holly, 2005). Field notes contain the results of observations and can be written both in and away from the situation (Cohen et al., 2007). My fieldwork includes 77 hour class observation; I took notes throughout the class time in order to keep track of the procedures and any other thing which may not be grasped from the audio recording. I added my own reflections, interpretation or simple analysis there in the class or soon after the class when I typed down my hand written notes at home. I also took pictures of the teacher's notes and drawings on the whiteboard, and added them to my notes later while typing them down. I also had a careful schedule for planning interview and focus group sessions in my field notes. My field notes helped me in reviewing the class procedures and the discussions, and in primary coding of the data. They also helped me in further analysis of the pedagogical practices of the teacher.

In my field notes, I not only recorded what was happening objectively but also at the same time made an effort to interpret and examine its meaning, and refine or substantiate those meaning (Stake, 1995). This way, I was as much a part of the research as participants and the data I gathered (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). In fact, 'in qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument' (Patton, 2002: 14) who, according to Guillham (2000) is selective by nature. Thus, I tried to be aware of any prejudices, i.e. my expectations, preconceptions, and preferences. I acknowledge that objectivity in the absolute sense may not be possible, however, I avoided immersing myself in an 'uncritical subjectivity' (Guillham, 2000: 28) and as Stake (1995) suggests, I remained patient, reflective and willing to see different or even contradictory views of what was happening.

4.7.3   Semi-structured interview

Exploring the teacher's teaching philosophy including his conception of CP and language and language learning perspective could be derived best by interviewing him. Thus, I made use of

semi-structured interview as the most important form of interviewing in case study research which can be the richest single source of data (Guillham, 2000).The flexibility of semi-structured interview made it a favourable and productive research tool, the prepared schedule of which 'is sufficiently open ended to enable the contents to be reordered, digressions and expansions to be made, new avenues to be included, and further probing to be undertaken' (Cohen et al., 2007: 182). Being aware that even one interview generates a huge amount of work to transcribe and analyse, as Guillham (2000) suggests, I reduced the number of interviews and their length to 200 minutes in four meetings.

I designed semi-structured interviews with the teacher as the key informant who designed the syllabus and taught the course. I made an effort to carefully develop a clear structure to make the interview natural and effective in gathering useful data; it consisted of 24 open questions in line with the aims and objectives of the research (see <u>appendix 6</u>). It was designed in English and consisted of 4 categories namely 'critical pedagogy', 'English language teaching', 'class procedure' and 'course materials'. I could conduct to interview the teacher in three meetings, nearly one hour each. I gave the questions to the teacher prior the meetings to let him familiarize himself with the questions as he himself preferred so. The questions were used as a guide and while the teacher was answering them some other questions emerged which I asked for more clarification. I audio-recorded the three interview sessions which I fully transcribed and thematically analysed. Moreover, near the end of the course, having some preliminary analysis of the class discourse based on my observation and field notes, I conducted another interview with the teacher to ask some further emergent questions which I found necessary to be clarified. This semi-structured interview consisted of 4 open questions and the interview took 20 minutes that was fully transcribed for thematic analysis (See <u>appendix 7</u>).

4.7.4   Questionnaire

Questionnaires (Qs) are one of the most widely used techniques in social research (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 2006). Although Qs usually do not have a primary place in qualitative case studies, they are considered as a suitable way of getting straightforward, fairly factual information (Guillham, 2000). Qs tend to be more reliable because of their anonymity, and are more economical than interviews in terms of time, money and the possibility of emailing them (Cohen et al., 2007). Qs of any type should be well constructed to be effective so their design and development are of great importance (Guillham, 2000).

Considering the mentioned advantages, I designed and adopted two Qs (see appendix 8 and appendix 9) as a supplementary method along with observation and audio recording. Both Qs were in open format questions, and in both English and Farsi to let the learners fill them in either language they feel more comfortable. In designing the two Qs, I avoided ambiguous, imprecise, complex or offensive questions, and made them not too long, as Blaxter et al. (2006) suggest. I tested both of them in the pilot study with two other groups of the same IELTS preparation course and also revised them by peer consultation. Based on the result and the feedback, I made some amendments in the format and content of the questions as described in section 4.3.

The first Q was given to the learners in the first session and to any new learners later on when they joined the class, which took no more than 20 minutes to be filled. It consisted of 15 questions which were designed to acquire demographic data of the learners and also some background information regarding their ELP levels, English learning history, the level of their acquaintance with the class and its process, and what they expected to gain from the course.

The second Q was developed based on the syllabus and the key concepts of CP, and consisted of 17 open questions. To seek the learners' viewpoints about the whole process of the course, I included two questions regarding the course materials such as movies and articles (questions number 2 and 3), the tasks such as journal writing (question number 4), and class discussions as the main class activity (questions number 5, 6, 7 and 8). I also sought their evaluation of the overall process of the class (questions number 11, 12 and 14), whether or not the course met their expectations (question number 15) and whether and how they found this course different from any other English courses they had attended (question number 9). I also included a question regarding the role of the teacher which is of great importance in CP (question number 13), CT as a key concept in CP (question number 10) and whether and how they may apply the skills they learned in this course to their individual or social life (question number 16) . Lastly, I asked them to add any comment about any issues (question number 17).

Comparing to Q1, the second one needed more time to answer so after talking to the learners and seeking their preference, I decided to email it to let them fill it in their own convenient time. We were in touch and they asked me their questions about how to fill it and I replied all; after one week, I had the filled questionnaire back from 8 out of 15 of the learners. Fortunately, I had more of the learners in focus groups so I did not lose much data regarding their opinions. Five participants filled the questionnaire in Farsi, which I translated to English, while the other participants filled it in English. I scrutinised the data from Q2 which covered many and various

aspects, however, the process of the data analysis required me to focus on the learners' viewpoints about the whole class discussions and the teacher's role in managing them.

4.7.5   Focus group discussions

People usually tend to ignore Qs or filled them without paying attention to details even if the questions are well designed, clear, short and easy; consequently, data quality or completeness may suffer (Guillham, 2000). This was the primary reason for me to conduct focus group discussions (FGs) to further explore the participants' subjective opinions, feelings and experiences, called 'insider meaning' or 'insider perspective' (Dörnyei, 2007:38). FG is defined as a 'research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. In essence, it is the researcher's interest that provides focus, whereas the data themselves come from the group interaction' (Morgan, 1997: 6). Although FGs are not natural settings, skilful facilitation and management of the researcher, usually called moderator or facilitator, can produce considerable amount of data in a short period of time (Cohen et al., 2007).

In social science, FGs are usually employed within a multi-method research design to clarify, extend or qualify findings produced by other methods (Silverman, 2015). Additionally, FGs offer the opportunity 'to interview a number of people at the same time, and to use the interaction between a group as a source of further insight' (Blaxter et al., 2006: 172). Moreover, FG is a popular method for qualitative researchers as it allows participants to probe each other's reasons for holding specific viewpoints, and to challenge and argue each other's views; consequently, this may produce more realistic accounts of what they think, and elicits a wide variety of various views about a particular issue (Bryman, 2012). FG is usually focused around a particular topic or set of issues, and based on the use of a schedule of questions. Considering the mentioned advantages, I preferred FGs over interview in order to have more participants in each meeting in a form of discussion. This way, I could hear their opinions in a less formal and more natural setting where they felt more comfortable to express their opinions. They were also motivated by each other's comments to participate and share their opinions more actively.

I designed 11 open questions in English and Farsi (see appendix 10), as a guide to run and direct the discussions; the questions were designed to be clear, short, open-ended, one-dimensional to evoke conversation as Krueger and Casey (2015) recommend. I explored whether and how the learners' primary motivation to attend this class was changed (questions number 1 and 2), their viewpoints regarding their way of learning English and critical thinking (questions number 3-7),

the instructional materials, tasks and activities (questions number 8-10), the overall evaluation of the process of the class (question number 11), the teacher's role (question number 12), and their future plan to continue the process of the class (question 13).

I conducted 2 FGs with the learners in the institute during the 5th and 10th weeks of the course which took about one hour each. During the break of session 10, I explained about FG and its aims then I asked to see who was willing to participate and when was convenient for them. Some of them agreed to participate but they were not sure whether they could manage to come. Thus, we started FG1 with 2 and FG2 with 5 of the learners then others joined and we continued with 6 and 8 of them respectively. I offered the participants to speak in English or Farsi in order to make sure their ELP level did not work as a barrier in expressing their ideas. Some of them preferred English and some others Farsi so the discussions were in both languages.

I audio-recorded the focus group discussion sessions, which were transcribed and translated later for qualitative thematic analysis. I used open ended questions about different aspects of the class and their learning process, and let them run the discussions among themselves while I was acting as a moderator. The qualitative data gathered from these discussions covered many and various aspects of the course, enriched the data gained from the questionnaires, and provided greater coverage of issues regarding their attitudes which resulted in generating themes derived from the insights of the group of the classmates. However, after I engaged with data analysis and narrowed down the focus of my study, I mainly focused on the learners' viewpoints about the class discussions and the teacher's role.

4.7.6   Learners' reflective diaries

As a case study researcher, I sought the various sources of evidence to get the best possible answer to my research questions. One of the aims of this project, as is usually the concern of case study researchers according to Guillham (2000), is to understand the process and the participants' views, feelings and thoughts. Based on the analysis of Q2 in pilot study, I concluded that mostly the respondents had difficulty to remember the topics discussed, or the movies they watched or the novels they read. This resulted in short answers to the related questions. Therefore, I decided to include what I called 'reflective diaries' to better trace the way the learners experienced the class activities and their learning process.

I provided pieces of paper (10 by 20 cm) with the date of each session and a space for the learners' names on the top. I distributed them at the end of each session when the learners'

minds were still fresh and they could express what they thought or felt about the practices and activities they had just done. I asked them to write their names and any immediate thoughts or feeling about the discussions or activities of that session. At around 8 pm, after nearly 3 hours intensive class activities, they were often tired and in hurry to leave. I explained that sharing their viewpoints, even as short as a phrase in either Farsi or English, was valuable and most appreciated. They usually spent couple of minutes to write their reflective diaries as short as a phrase or a paragraph in Farsi or English. As it is evident in chapter 9, RDs were a very rich source of data, which, triangulated with FGs, Qs, FNs and some transcribed excerpts from the audio recorded sessions, provided a comprehensive picture of the learners' viewpoints.

4.8   Validity of the research findings

The commonest criticisms of case studies are methodological rigour, the small participant sample and the lack of generalizability. With regards to the first point, the common view considers the case study as a 'free form' research which absolves the researcher from any kind of methodological considerations (Maoz, 2002); this prototypical view is mostly due to the lack of enough methodological guidelines (Yin, 2014); however, many contemporary case study practitioners have been making an attempt to clarify and develop the epistemological groundings and methodological techniques (Bennett & Elman, 2010). In fact, experienced case researchers may consider this critique as fallacious as it demonstrates a lack of knowledge of what is involved in the case study research; intensive, in-depth case studies have their own rigor, different but no less strict than the rigor of quantitative methods (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Regarding the second point i.e. small participant sample, it is true that qualitative results may not apply broadly; however, exploration of personal meaning or providing insights into phenomenon, which is the primary aim in any qualitative research, do not necessarily require large samples as quantitative research do (Dörnyei, 2007).

With regards to the external validity or generalisability, case studies are not primarily sampling research to understand other cases but to thoroughly understand that one specific case. Therefore, case study researchers are not basically after optimising the production of generalisation but particularisation i.e. understanding the particularity and uniqueness of the case under research; so strong commitment to generalise may even draw away the researcher's attention from the features important for understanding the case itself (Stake, 1995, 2008). However, qualitative researchers draw their own conclusions based on observations and other data which can be regarded as a form of generalisation or assertion drawn from the deep

understanding of the researcher based on personal experience and professional knowledge (Erickson, 1986 in Stake, 1995).

Additionally, qualitative research is exploratory in nature and considered as an effective way to explore new areas. Thus, making sense of complex situations, and broadening and deepening our understanding and analysis can compensate the lack of generalisability. Consequently, qualitative research report could consist of rich material to produce a convincing and vivid case for a wide range of audiences (Dörnyei, 2007). In fact, formal generalisation is not the only legitimate method of scientific inquiry but one of the various ways by which people can gain and accumulate knowledge. Thus, the lack of formal generalisation does not mean that the knowledge cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or in a society. Even intrinsic case studies which mainly focus on a single particular case can be as primary steps toward major generalisation in a field of study (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Qualitative case studies are also criticised for being subjective and tending to confirm or verify the researcher's preconceived notions. In fact, subjectivity and bias toward verification is general as pure objectivity is not possible especially when the goal is to measure intangible concepts which only exist because of their interpretability (Berg & Lune, 2012). It seems that qualitative case studies allow more room for the researcher's subjective and judgment than other methods (Flyvbjerg, 2006), however, applying some strategies helps to improve the validity and minimise the researcher's bias.

Dealing with the unavoidable subjectivity, I made an effort to minimise any misinterpretation as a result of personal understanding by the use of prolonged engagement (i.e. the whole course time), whole population sampling, triangulation of the sources (i.e. teachers and learners), and triangulation of six various methods (i.e. interview, observation, filed notes, audio recording, FGs, Qs and RDs) which were analysed by applying two analytical frameworks namely thematic analysis and class discourse analysis. Thus, I made an attempt to validate my observation by adopting routines of triangulation, i.e. applying different methodological stand points to acquire more reliable, valid and various construction of realities (Golafshani, 2003). Then, I tried to weave multiple sources of evidence into a descriptive account presenting a chain of evidence, i.e. each key element or link was supported by or related to evidence of different kinds (Yin, 2014).

One significant issue in conducting qualitative case studies which must be taken into careful consideration is dealing with substantial ethical risks (Piper & Simons, 2005; Simons, 2009), which I address in the following section.

4.9   Ethical approval

Ethics have a considerable impact on all forms of research especially when dealing with people. Ethical practice is often defined as 'doing no harm' to both participants and the researcher, but it can also be as 'doing good' i.e. to conduct research which benefits participants in positive ways (Piper & Simons, 2005). This case study might not benefit the participant learners but the result might help the participant teacher to gain an outsider view to his designed course and reconsider his teaching method in practice. Moreover, the findings could make a useful contribution to the field of ELL/T within the realm of CP and dialogic pedagogy in Iran and other countries.

All social research needs to consider a range of ethical issues 'around privacy, informed consent, anonymity, secrecy, being truthful and the desirability of the research' (Blaxter et al., 2006: 158). Regarding the participants, it is the researchers' responsibility 'to obtain consent, maintain confidentiality, and develop an atmosphere of mutual trust' (Corbin & Strauss, 2015: 13). In conducting this research, I followed the required procedures to meet the ethical rules and to guarantee participants' rights to the best of my ability. I met the ethical rules and regulations of the University of Southampton; I filled IRGA Form, Ethics Form, Risk Assessment Form and Research Protocol Form; after having them revised by my supervisors, I submitted them to ERGO (Ethics Research Governance Online), for ethical committee approval; I had them all approved.

In designing the questionnaires, interviews and focus groups questions, I avoided any sensitive or offensive topics. They all were revised by my supervisors. I also designed an appropriate information sheet and consent form, and submitted them to ERGO along with questionnaires and interview and focus group questions; I had them all approved by the ethical committee of the University of Southampton.

Firstly, I had the teacher to sign the consent form. Prior to data collection, he had agreed to let me observe and audio record the sessions and be interviewed by me. Later, during the first meeting with the learners, I introduced myself as a PhD student of the University of Southampton and explained to them the aims and objectives of the study and the process of my data collection; they were informed that I would audio record the sessions, would give them 2 questionnaires to fill, and would ask for volunteers to participate in focus group discussions. They wanted to know whether I would make any change in the course and I explained my role as a nonparticipant observer and confirmed that I would not change the class syllabus or procedures. However, I offered them any academic help or advice during the data collection period and afterwards. We made a good rapport from the first session, which resulted in their

being willing to cooperate in filling the questionnaires and taking part in the focus group discussions.

I gave the consent and information sheet forms to all the learners during the first meeting, let them read and ask their questions. I clarified some points, and had the forms signed. Additionally, I informed them that participation was not compulsory so that that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. At the beginning of all the interviews and focus groups, I again obtained permission from the participants to record the interviews on a digital recorder and confirmed that the recording would be kept securely and would be transcribed by myself. Regarding anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, I used pseudonyms for all of the participants. Moreover, the filled questionnaires and reflective diaries are kept in hard copies and I made sure to keep them in safe places and out of access but myself. Finally, audio recordings of the class, interviews and focus groups were stored in password safe files in a password safe laptop.

4.10   Summary and conclusion

This chapter introduced and explained the research methodology applied to conduct this project. The case under study is an IELTS preparation course program designed and practised by an Iranian English teacher with an approach to CP as the teacher's claim. The study offers a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the teaching philosophy, practice and outcome of applying the teacher's approach to CP by applying 6 various research instruments and including the teacher's and the learners' viewpoints. I conducted a pilot study to familiarise myself with the context, and to review the research design and the research tools for feasibility and improvement. As a result, I made some amendments to the structure of the questionnaires and decided to make a more detailed field notes. I also decided to make use of RDs which were proved to be a very rich source of data in deriving the learners' viewpoints.

This project with a qualitative approach explores the teacher's conception of CP as his chosen approach to ELT, how he theorised based on his conception and how he put into practice his teaching theory in his designed ELL course. This prepared the ground to discuss his teaching theory and method within CP framework and then CP in ELT in general and in Iran in particular. I also investigate the role and importance of dialogue in class discussions as the teacher's main teaching method and as the dominant discourse of the class. This way, I further evaluate the process and outcome of the course within the dialogic critical framework and investigate mis/alignment between the teachers' theory and practice. Lastly, in order to further investigate

the process and outcome of the teacher's main teaching method in practice, I included the learners' viewpoints as they expressed in FGs, Qs and their RDs throughout the course.

The participants were an experienced English teacher and 19 adult English learners in an IELTS preparation course offered as an optional ELL course in a semi private branch of Tehran University. The learners included 5 men and 14 women aging 21 to 32 with different ELP levels and various educational backgrounds and professions. The course was held for 29 three-hour sessions in nearly three months in summer 2014. The syllabus includes various instructional materials such as an IELTS textbook, a selection of book chapters and articles, novels and movies and their related tasks. Class activities include group and whole class IELTS-based and non IELTS-based activities. Non IELTS-based activities include journal reading, summary storytelling, news sharing and class discussions about the selected movies, novels and texts. Class discussions were the dominant class discourse some of which were run by the learners who were assigned by the teacher.

The data were collected through 6 research instruments including class observation and audio recording of the 29 sessions, researchers' field notes throughout the course, 4 semi-structured interviews with the teacher, two Qs, two FGs, and the learners' RDs during the course. The validity of the research findings were ensured through the use of prolonged engagement, whole population sampling, triangulation of the sources, and triangulation of six various methods which were analysed by applying two analytical frameworks namely thematic analysis and class discourse analysis which are discussed in the next chapter.

5. Analytical framework

5.1 Introduction

One of the major challenges of qualitative research is dealing with the analysis of the huge and rich qualitative data as there are still few well-established and widely accepted rules for analysing qualitative data (Bryman, 2012; Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Qualitative data analysis strategies have their own weakness and strength so no approach can be claimed to be better than the others thus how researchers analyse and present qualitative data 'should abide by the issue of fitness for purpose' (Cohen et al., 2007: 461). Moreover, qualitative research is an interpretive, dynamic, recursive and nonlinear process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell & Creswell, 2017), which necessitates the researchers to be open-minded and patient to avoid preconceptions in order to get most of the data through rigorous reviewing and refining (Blaxter et al., 2006).

In analysing my data, I made use of two analytical frameworks namely thematic analysis and class discourse analysis. The former was used for analysing my field notes, semi-structured interviews, and some excerpts of class discourse to investigate the teacher's teaching philosophy. The result was used to discuss the mis/alignments between his teaching theory and CP in general and then CP and ELT in particular. Thematic analysis was also used to analyse the learners' RDs, Qs and FGs to explore their viewpoints. This enabled further analysis and evaluation of the application of this approach from the learners' standpoints, which have been mostly ignored in the previous research within the field. The latter framework, class discourse analysis was applied to investigate the role and importance of dialogue in whole class discussions. The findings were used to explore how the teacher's theory and practice are or are not aligned and discuss the role and importance of dialogue in his main teaching method within the dialogic critical framework. The following two sections are devoted to discuss these two analytical frameworks.

5.2 Thematic analysis

The foundational method for, and one of the most common approaches to, qualitative data analysis is thematic analysis which offers core skills, is flexible enough to be used within different theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2012), and provides a rich and detailed

yet subtle and complex account of data (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Despite its popularity, however, thematic analysis is a poorly demarcated and rarely acknowledged qualitative analytic method. It lacks well-developed, clear and specified procedures, and there are still few specifications of the ingredients or steps of this type of analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2012). Theme identification is one of the most fundamental and mysterious tasks in qualitative research so that using different discovery techniques on the same set of data may result in a different set of themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In fact, the process of theme identification involves the researcher's judgements so it is her/his responsibility to make the process explicit and clear for readers to argue with her/his conclusions (Agar, 1980).

According to Joffe and Yardley (2004), there is a distinction in terms of what constitutes a theme: 'deductive', 'concept-driven' or 'theoretical' coding versus 'inductive' or 'data-driven' coding. The former refers to the theme drawn from the existing theoretical ideas that the researcher brings to the data, and 'allow researchers to replicate, extend or refute prior discoveries' (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 57). The latter, however, refers to the theme drawn from the raw information itself, not the researcher's or that of any theoretical presuppositions s/he might have. Inductive coding forces the researcher 'to pay close attention to what the respondent is actually saying and to construct codes that reflect their experience of the world' (Gibbs, 2007: 52). Conducting any qualitative research involves 'emotional, value-laden, and theoretical preconceptions, and worldviews' (Boyatzis, 1998: 8). Therefore, in the process of data analysis, no theme can be entirely data driven or inductive for the fact that the researcher's knowledge and preconceptions unavoidably affect the theme identification (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Nonetheless, as Thomas (2006) states, clear objectives and research questions limit the range of possible interpretations and results by focusing attention on specific aspects of the data.

Along the same line of reasoning, the themes of this research are not entirely predetermined or emergent but a mixture of the both namely concept-driven coding and data-driven coding. CP provided me some insight about, in Boyatzis' (1998: 10) words, 'what to be ready to "see"'. CP as the conceptual framework of my study led me to focus more on some aspects of the data without ignoring other potentially crucial aspects. Moreover, CP anchored the analytical claims that have been made, without which the thematic analysis would be limited to mere description and lacks sufficient interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, unlike purely deductive investigations, I did not aim to test specific hypothesis, theory, or model. Therefore, in the process of coding the data, I avoided to fit them into a pre-existing coding frame; rather, I scrutinised the data to discover emergent themes and examined the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations and adopted enough degree of cautiousness with regard to

imposing or reading into the data my own values, thoughts, feelings, ideology or theory (Braun & Clarke 2006). This was accomplished, following Boyatzis' (1998) suggestions, with disciplined observation and attention to details, and by developing explicit codes and establishing consistency of judgements. As a result of openness, ambiguity tolerance and patient perseverance, appropriate themes were formed out of voluminous qualitative data.

Following the steps suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2017), and Braun and Clarke (2006), I started by typing up field notes, arranging and sorting the Qs and the learners' RDs. Audio-recorded data including interviews and FGS were also transcribed to organize and prepare the data for analysis. Transcription, like all the other activities in the initial phase, was an interpretive act where meaning was created, and ideas and possible patterns were formed (Bird, 2005). In transcribing the interviews with the teacher, FGs and some parts of the class sessions which were thematically analysed, I applied *broad* transcription that captured the essence of what was said and the words themselves. I did not correct but I used pseudonyms for anonymity, and common punctuation to ease the reading. After sampling the class discussion for the purpose of class discourse analysis in chapter 8, I applied *narrow* transcription to the selected episode which includes finer details such as pauses and overlapping speech (Walsh, 2011). The transcription system applied for the selected episode is provided in <u>appendix 11</u>.

As mentioned, I offered the learners both English and Farsi in conducting FGs and in filling the Qs. Therefore, I translated the FGs which were conducted in Farsi and the Qs which were filled in Farsi. Wherever translation was used, it is mentioned in parentheses which followed the quotes. In quoting from RDs or Qs, I presented the selected excerpts without correcting or paraphrasing, and referred to their source in parenthesis followed by a number which indicates the related session as follows:

Session: S (S1: session1, S2: session 2,…)

Focus group discussion: FG (FG1: focus groups 1, FG2: focus group 2)

Reflective diary: RD (RD1: Reflective diary of session1, RD2: Reflective diary of session2,…)

Questionnaire: Q (Q1: questionnaire 1, Q2: questionnaire 2)

Interview: Int (Int1: interview 1, Int2: interview 2, Int3: interview 3)

In referring to the field notes (FN), I mentioned the date such as: (FN, 29/06/2014), which are traceable in the table of course activities as presented in appendix 5.

I read through the data several times rigorously to develop a general sense of the whole and to reflect on its overall meaning. After generating the initial codes and forming an initial thematic map, I sorted different codes into potential themes and collated all the relevant coded data

extracts within the identified themes. Next, I thought about the relationships between codes, between themes and between different levels of themes (main and sub-themes) to finalise the candidate themes. Then, I reviewed and refined the themes at the level of coded data extracts, and at the level of the entire data set to ascertain whether the finalised themes are meaningfully related to data set. I also coded any additional data that had been ignored in earlier stages. This reviewing and refining were repeated until the thematic map fit the data set. I had expected this challenge of re-coding and exploring new themes for I was aware that 'coding is an ongoing organic process' (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 91). The results of the thematic analysis developed chapters 6, 7 and 9 which answer research questions 1, 2 and 4.

5.3   Class discourse analysis with a dialogic approach

Pedagogical goals and language use are inseparable thus classroom activities and interaction patterns are inextricably linked. Better understanding of classroom interaction is central to effective teaching and it should be regarded as an essential step to improve teaching and learning (Seedhouse, 2004; Walsh, 2011). Classroom interaction is the core feature of a CP-based syllabus, which urges on dialogue as the dominant discourse of the class. As discussed in 2.2, in problem posing education, dialogue is the main concept and the principal educational means toward learners' empowerment and emancipation. Dialogic interaction, however, is beyond the interactional forms and should meet other criteria to be considered as truly dialogic and to have the emancipatory and empowering effect advocated in dialogic critical pedagogy.

After engagement with my data, 'dialogic discussion' was explored to be the teacher's advocated teaching method, and 'whole class discussion' as the dominant discourse of his course. In order to explore the role and importance of dialogue in class discussion sessions, I decided to apply class discourse analysis. However, class discourse analysis mostly involves analysing interactional form of the class discourse such as who speaks, how often, about what, to whom, for how long, and what discourse norms are established. The main advantage of considering the interactional form of dialogue is that dialogic structures can be easily translated into indicators, measures, norms and rules to make judgements about how interactional the event is and in what ways. However, focusing on the structural aspect of a dialogue is disadvantageous in that dialogic form is not always a good indicator of dialogic content, function or spirit (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). In fact, it is the quality of interaction in dialogic pedagogy that matters most (Alexander, 2008). Therefore, I made use of Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue one of which is interactional form. Through class discourse analysis of a sample of whole class discussion based on the six aforementioned approaches to dialogue, I

both explored the teacher's teaching theory in practice, and the role and importance of dialogue in his advocated instructional strategy, "conceptualisation", which he stated as 'his own modified version of CP'.

According to Lefstein and Snell (2014: 15), there are six interrelated approaches to dialogue each of which emphasises various aspects of communication, and aims towards the realisation of different purposes. The following table summarises these approaches to dialogue, with key questions, values and goals:

Dialogue as…	Key questions	Dialogic values	Educational goals	Indicative thinker
Interactional form	Who speaks, how often, about what, to whom, and for how long? What discourse norms are established?	Interactivity Participation Reciprocity	Ensuring equitable opportunity to participate	-
Interplay of voices	Which voices are heard and allowed? How are they interacting?	Voice	Developing and realizing voice	Mikhail Bakhtin
Critique	What stances toward knowledge are being taken? Which ideas are and are not subjected to critical examination?	Questioning Doubt Humility	Questioning commonly accepted doctrines Getting closer to the truth	Socrates
Thinking together	What is the quality of the thinking being articulated?	Reason Inquiry	Development of higher mental functions	Lev Vygotsky
Relationship	How are participants relating to one another? What identities and concerns do they make relevant?	Care Respect Inclusion Community	Realising humanity Fostering an inclusive, caring community	Martin Buber
Empowerment	How are power relations realised? Is everyone free to say what they please? Who benefits? How are	Autonomy Freedom	Empowerment Emancipation	Paulo Freire

	differences managed?	Democracy		

In the six following sections, I detail these six approaches to dialogue with a focus on teachers' role in managing class interactions.

5.3.1   Dialogue as interactional form

Dialogue, in its most common sense uses, is a form of interaction involving two or more interlocutors who freely exchange ideas, listen to one another, generate equal opportunities to participate, address one another's concerns and build upon one another's contributions (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). This kind of conversation is open-ended, involves turn-taking which is informed by interlocutors, and develops the relationships between them (Rule, 2015). The level of class interaction is a measurable evidence of learning as a social and dynamic process in which participants construct meaning collectively in the class (Walsh, 2011). However, as Burbules and Bruce (2001) assert, dialogue cannot be simply characterized as a particular pattern of question and answer among two or more people. In fact, many instances of pedagogical communicative relations might have this external form but are not dialogical in spirit or involvement while interactions that may not have this particular form can be authentically dialogic.

A language class should provide enough opportunity for learners to learn and practice how to listen and clarify meanings (Walsh, 2011). ELL classes are social contexts in their own right many features of which are determined by the ways teachers control conversations. In fact, it is the prime responsibility of teachers to create interaction-centred learning opportunities. The more equal roles, longer turns, more frequent topic changes, more overlaps, interruptions and pauses are evidences of how the teacher distributes the authority and provides a more dialogic, interactional learning discourse (Walsh, 2011). Considering the role that CP urges critical pedagogues to undertake, these strategies seem to actualise a more dialogic class where the participants interact with each other in co-creating a learning community in which all participants both provide and benefit from learning opportunities.

I investigate a sample of class discussion session to explore the interactional forms focusing on the features of the communicative classroom talk including extending learners' turn, generating content feedback and learner-initiated talk, asking open ended or referential questions to which the teacher does not know the answer, and avoiding lecturing, form-focused feedback and interruption (Matusov, 2009; Thornbury, 1996; Walsh, 2006, 2011), based on which the discourse analysis of section 8.3.1 is constructed.

5.3.2 Dialogue as interplay of voices

Language is basically dialogic: 'every utterance, every voice, every thought is related dialogically to the utterances, voices and thoughts to which they respond and to which they are addressed' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 16). This approach to dialogue is rooted in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) for whom 'to be means to communicate' (Bakhtin, 1984: 287) and 'to live means to participate in dialogue' (Bakhtin, 1984: 293). In this sense, humans engage in dialogue in many and various ways which manifest what it means to be human (Rule, 2015). In Bakhtinean sense of dialogue, human consciousness is dialogic and knowledge is created in the process of dialogic interaction by the people collectively searching for truth. This signifies the interdependence of consciousness of the self and the other which necessitates mutual reflection and mutual acceptance in and through dialogue (Rule, 2015).

Classroom dialogue is the basic method by means of which students' authentic voice, i.e. a unique voice capable of revealing to others 'the authentic perceptions, or "truth," of the student's experience' (Ward, 1994: 7), is articulated and encouraged (Shor, 1992). At the heart of dialogic pedagogy is the possibility of multiple voices in the classroom, 'of which the teacher's is merely one and is not necessarily dominant' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 63). Dialogic space is the context within which all voices are potential to emerge and inter-relate (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014). This space necessitates open-ended dialogue which involves asking questions, heeding, responding, agreeing, commenting and so forth. The recognition of voice and the reciprocity of voices are crucial to dialogue as dialogue is not possible without the interlocutors making room for the inclusion of voices of others. In other words, interlocutors should be allowed to develop their own views in their own ways (Rule, 2015).

Mercer's (2000) cumulative principle could be considered as a way of describing dialogue as the interplay of voices (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). 'Cumulative talk' is a reasoned debate which focuses on a specific theme aiming at establishing the truth. In cumulative talk, the speakers share information, build on each other's contributions and mutually support each other. Cumulative talk is more likely to be a non-competitive co-construction of a body of shared knowledge and understanding to support the shared views. In this kind of argument, there is little attempt to control, and 'language is used to build a joint identity, a shared, intersubjective perspective on the topic of conversation in which individual differences of perception or judgment are minimised' (Mercer, 2000: 102).

The primary goal of the argumentational aspect of dialogue is not to persuade but to socialise the students into professional discourse and to promote their 'unique professional voice'

(Matusov, 2009: 289). In this regard, Burke (1969 in Matusov, 2009) discussed various ranges of persuasion from unilateral manipulative, to mutual collaborative; even when persuasion is an honest, open minded and collaborative endeavour, as Matusov (2009: 290) states, when it is 'applied to its full potential strength by the much more knowledgeable instructor, it might unwillingly lead to brainwash of the students'. Therefore, learners should learn to participate in on-going debates rather than 'to be convinced (or repelled) by particular arguments presented by the instructor'.

Considering the role of dialogue in enabling learners' voice to be accessed and legitimated (Alexander, 2008) raises critical pedagogical questions such as: whose voice is heard and allowed in classroom discourse? Are dialogic discussions guided to learners' sharing their own thinking or reproduce authoritative discourse? (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 16), based on which the discourse analysis of section 8.3.2 is constructed.

5.3.3   Dialogue as critique

Socrates, the classical Greek philosopher credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy, is the first and the most famous practitioner of educational dialogue who was presented by his students, such as Plato and Xenophon, as the main speaker in series of dialogues (Kofman, 1998; Rule, 2015). Socratic dialogues, in which he discussed his method of dialoguing-philosophising-educating as methods of teaching, have been very inspirational and influential on modern pedagogy (Taylor, 1999). Socratic dialogues have traditionally been appreciated for enhancing CT, renewing interest in subjects, provoking students' thinking, and facilitating discovery learning (Matusov, 2009).

Socrates sought interlocutors and inquired into their ideas by questioning them at length and intensely scrutinising their ideas and commonly held beliefs. He clarified his purpose in dialogue in a key passage from Plato's *Gorgias* as 'to critique ideas – that is, to attempt to refute them – in order to move beyond false belief to ascertain truth' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 17). The essential feature of Socratic dialogic pedagogy is to reveal the internal contradictions in the students' thinking and to assist them to realize such contradictions through 'asking questions and refuting errors' (Cooper & Hutchinson, 1997: 1632). The aim of the Socratic dialogue is a shared act of understanding of what one knows or does not know (Rule, 2015). In this regard, Socratic teachers are not supposed to be the source of knowledge but facilitators in the process of active discovery by helping learners to reveal, or recollect, the knowledge and reason in their own thinking process (Matusov, 2009; Wong, 2006).

Socrates usually started his dialogues by posing a question such as 'what is justice?' to which the interlocutor would give a definition as a generalisation based on his own experience. Socrates continued questioning him to refine his answers until he became confused, moved from 'unconscious ignorance' to 'conscious ignorance', and then recognised new insights (Butts, 1955 in Wong, 2006: 43). The state of learners' perplexity out of realisation of their own ignorance is supposed to raise learners' curiosity and a need for knowledge that is, for Socrates, the initiation of learning the truth (Rule, 2015). He considers himself as a 'midwife' who helps his interlocutors to give birth to concepts and understanding in the dialogical process of reasoned argument leading to truth (Rule, 2015; Wong, 2006). In this regard, the awareness and humble acknowledgment of one's own ignorance is considered as wisdom (Wong, 2006).

Socratic dialogue assumes that interlocutors are willing to actively engage in dialogue and express what they claim to know. Thus, the interlocutors need to accept the responsibility of making an effort to cooperatively discover what is true through reasoning together in dialectical dialogues (Rule, 2015). This dialogical coming to an understanding is, according to (Gadamer 1991: 52), 'an unlimited willingness to justify and supply reasons for everything that is said'. This implies that dialogue is a public form of being with others in a community where knowledge claims are presented and disputed with other knowledge seekers, and may lead to the recognition that 'one does not know what one supposed one knew' (Rule, 2015: 12).

Socratic dialogic pedagogy can be applied in the context of contemporary education either as 'dialogical-democratic' or 'dialogic-autocratic' (Sarid, 2012: 937). The former as a method of questioning and facilitating interactive discussions makes an effort to develop critical engagement in a community of fellow learners leading to mutual understanding while the latter is authoritatively directive which pursues truth by exposing flaws in reasoning (Rule, 2015). In fact, Socratic dialogic method tends to be an elaborate format of leading investigation which prioritizes rational consensus and agreement among rational people through a free marketplace of ideas as 'a proxy for reaching the truth. When the rational consensus is reached, it sets a curricular endpoint for education' (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014: 8). This way, Socratic method could be a question-answer device for eliciting what is already known, and steering learners in a specific direction, which fails to conform to Bakhtin's idea of a true dialogue as an unending conversation (Alexander, 2008).

Similarly, Socratic dialogic method tends to be dialogic by the form but monologic by its essence as its primary concern is deepening learners' intellectual understanding about something with some curricular endpoints in mind. A series of questions-answers, usually initiated by the

teacher, structure the dialogic method and the teacher's voice is appropriated by the voices of learners (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014). Finally, Socratic dialogic pedagogy can be described as elitist in nature for the fact that the truth and power associated with it is rooted in the dialogic method of investigation; this implies that the ones who consider themselves as proficient in this method or are regarded as such by society could claim a position of superiority from where they tend to construct others as "deficient" and "ignorant", as stated in Plato's Republic, and in need of being educated (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014: 8). Applying such a pedagogical approach is likely to result in the teacher's manipulation of the learners' consciousness and intellectualism. However, the teacher's manipulation of the learners' subjectivities may also involve self-manipulation of the teacher's own consciousness as s/he may believe that her/his predetermined curricular endpoint is the only possible and logical outcome (Matusov, 2009).

Viewing dialogue as critique raises questions regarding the status of knowledge and conventional wisdom such as: 'What stances towards knowledge do participants adopt? (and) Which ideas are or are not open to critical examination? (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 17), based on which the discourse analysis of the section 8.3.3 is constructed.

5.3.4 Dialogue as thinking together

This approach to dialogue was developed by Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934), who studied the relationship between language, interaction, and thinking development. For Vygotsky, language as a symbolic tool plays a central role in development of consciousness and higher order thinking (Wong, 2006). This approach considers language as a means for thinking together, creating knowledge and understanding collectively through conflict, debate and cooperation (Mercer, 2000). Thus, language has a special function for *collective thinking*, which serves the practical and social needs of individuals and communities; language can be considered as a tool for carrying out joint intellectual activity i.e. thinking constructively and analytically together. As such, 'interthinking' is at the heart of human achievements most, if not all, of which are the products of creative collectives. Therefore, learning to use language to think together helps to develop collaborations more effectively (Mercer, 2000). Regarding this aspect of dialogue, dialogic pedagogy explores learners' thinking process and treats their contributions as stages in a continuous cognitive quest, which could improve learners' engagement, confidence, responsibility and independence (Alexander, 2008).

Vygotskyan idea about dialogue as thinking together supports Mercer's (2000) 'exploratory talk' through which 'partners engage critically but constructively with each other's idea' (Mercer, 2000: 98). Exploratory talk is a co-reasoning activity in which interlocutors are actively involved in dialogue by sharing their opinions, giving supporting reasons, offering alternatives, seeking each other's point of view, using questions to elicit the other's reasons, and make critical evaluations to reach joint understanding. In an exploratory talk, interlocutors also question their own assumptions and test the validity of their own views. Their main concern is not to protect their separate identities and interests but to explore the ways of jointly and rationally making sense to arrive the most useful interpretation in a committed but unselfish manner (Mercer, 2000). In this kind of argument, 'differences are treated explicitly, as matters of mutual exploration, reasoned evaluation and resolution' (Mercer, 2000: 102).

Viewing dialogue as thinking together opens up significant questions about classroom discourse including: 'What is the quality of the thinking articulated by participants? For example, how valid, clear and relevant are the arguments? (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 18), based on which the discourse analysis of the section 7.3.4 is constructed.

5.3.5   Dialogue as relationship

This notion of dialogue originates from the German philosopher and theologian, Martin Buber (1878-1965), who emphasised the significance of inclusive education that is 'experiencing the side of the learner so that you can relate to her (/him) better, understand her (/him) and be a better teacher' (Rule, 2015: 25). In this sense, dialogue is basically a relation which sustains over time through mutual 'concern, trust, respect, appreciation, affection, and hope' (Burbules, 1993: 41). So education as an inclusive relation links to the sense of communion of teaching and learning which is far from the assertion of power by the teacher over the learners but the affirmation of mutual relationship (Rule, 2015).

As Buber (1937 in Lefstein & Snell 2014) argues, people have two basic orientations toward others and the world: 'I-It' or instrumental, and 'I-Thou' or dialogic. To approach others instrumentally means to relate to others partially, and treat them as a means to fulfil one's own interests. This can be witnessed in 'exploitation and discrimination which dehumanise the other and transform the person into a thing to be experienced and used (Rule, 2015: 21). To approach others dialogically, however, is to enter into a relationship of respect, mutual concern and solidarity, which relates to both one's and others' whole beings. Buber further argues that although instrumental relations are unavoidable, one is not fully human without entering into 'I-

Thou relationship' in dialogue (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). In this sense, the genuine dialogue necessitates the establishment of a living mutual relation with others and the world (Rule, 2015).

This approach is in line with the egalitarian and democratic relationship that CP assert as necessary for a liberatory education, which according to Freire (1970), should reconcile the teacher-student contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students. In this regard, the authority of teachers does not simply exist for being a teacher but rather for offering and presenting a kind of knowledge and insight which may change the learners' identity. This is completely different from authoritarianism that ignores learners' subjectivity and simply deposit information in their mind bank (Kincheloe, 2004). To this end, teachers' authority should be democratically negotiated (Kanpol, 1998) so that the liberatory teachers need to be radically democratic, responsible and directive not *of the students* but *of the process*, and doing something not *to* the students but *with* them to create a just and fair system (Shor & Freire, 1987a).

Dialogue necessarily involves competition, argument, struggle to be heard, persuasion, and power relations. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to emotional and relational factors involved in a dialogue (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). In fact, investigating classroom interaction can reveal how the sense of community has been developed (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Community building as a way of learning together is basically a part of living together. If caring for others and for oneself extend to pedagogy, education becomes 'meaningful, ontological, communal, and contextual' for the participants (Matusov et al., 2013: 47). Moreover, learning to think critically is facilitated 'in the context of being socialised into warm human relationships and practices within the context of which we can feel safe and supported when we question and challenge' (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014: 11).

As discussed in the previous section, 'exploratory talk' is an effective use of language which can develop thinking community where mental resources of the leaners and the teacher focused on developing new knowledge and enhancing common understanding. By thinking together, the contextual knowledge is co-operatively created to achieve joint understanding which is negotiated and maintained by mutual effort (Mercer, 2000). Employing the notion of 'caring community' develops a harmonious, respectful, cooperative relationship among learners (Matusov et al., 2013) .

This approach to dialogue raises questions about the quality of relations between interlocutors such as how participants relate to one another, and to what extent are they accepting and caring

of one another? (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 18), based on which the discourse analysis of section 8.3.5 is constructed.

5.3.6   Dialogue as empowerment

A basic assumption underlying the other approaches to dialogue is participants' freely entering into dialogue with equal rights and opportunities (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). Thus, one of the unavoidable dimensions of dialogue is power relations which can either include and empower or exclude and oppress the interlocutors. Similarly, in teacher-student contexts as many other professional or workplace settings, interlocutors' roles are not equal and teachers are likely to have more knowledge and power than students and this asymmetrical roles affect the way class interactions progress (Walsh, 2011). The unequal power relations as a permanent feature of educational settings suggests real limits on the possibilities for empowerment in the classroom (Gore, 1998; Johnston, 1999). Although students can be more or less empowered by accepting more responsibility for their own learning, taking part in designing their own courses, and getting more meaningful and less competitive assignments, teachers still retain authority in the classroom (Johnston, 1999; Oyler, 1996) but should not transform authority to authoritarianism (Shor & Freire, 1987a). In fact, authority is not the teachers' property to be shared with the students but is a process that should be negotiated through true dialogue (Gore, 1998, 2003; Johnston, 1999; Usher & Edwards, 1994).

This notion of dialogue is associated with Paulo Freire (1921-1997) whose ideas about emancipatory dialogue within the context of emancipatory education have been influential in adult education (Rule, 2015). In Freirean pedagogy, learning is relational, and knowledge is produced in interaction (Bartlett, 2005). In fact, education should be an ongoing dialogical process, 'in which students and teachers share their experiences in a non-hierarchical manner' (Palmer & Emmons, 2004: 5), despite banking education where hierarchy is maintained in a teacher-centred class (Alam, 2013).

The knowledge learners bring to the dialogic encounter is key to their empowerment and critical consciousness. For dialogic teachers, being attentive to what learners say about their experience of learning is sine qua non; in this sense, the focus is not solely on learners talking about the subject matter in hand but on their viewpoint of the process of engaging with that subject matter; this stronger sense of voice is empowerment (Alexander, 2008). However, according to Steiner (2003), it is a required skill for dialogic teachers to keep a balance between enabling a dialogical space to empower learners, and directing the classroom towards educational goals. By

controlling the floor, a teacher is to keep the discussions focussed on the topic at hand, which narrows the learners' experience to the text and focuses their reflection. However, critical pedagogues should minimise their influence on students and be careful to ensure that their teaching allows free and independent thought (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016).

According to Matusov (2009: 5), a dialogic teacher is a learner in the classroom, who learns 'not only pedagogically – how to teach the students better, – but also learns the subject matter *with* the students'. To this end, the teacher should be ready to suspend the certainty of his or her own knowledge and re-examine it with the learners. Critical pedagogues as co-learners and coordinators (Rashidi & Safari, 2011) commit themselves to the democratic notion that students need to be empowered to make their own choices of beliefs based on the different perspectives they confront in school and society. In fact, this is a fundamental tenet of CP that teachers take a position and make it understandable to their students but they have no right to impose these positions to students (Kincheloe, 2004). Thus, the teacher is not the main performer, the gatekeeper of truth, the final authority of knowledge but a participant in learning and its principal facilitator (Matusov, 2007; 2009). This means that 'the participants' contributions are taken equally seriously by all and cannot be overruled by or reference away by any authority or powerful tradition' so that they can test ideas, values, and desires free from authoritative or uncritical traditional constraints (Matusov et al., 2013: 55).

A genuine dialogic education is far from 'skilful manipulation of leading a dialogic partner to the known endpoint or, at worst, violent imposition of the teacher's knowledge, skill, [and] attitude on the student' (Matusov, 2009: 3). As Matusov (2009) argues, authentic education is far from placing learners in a situation that makes learners end up in accepting one of the options as true; genuine education is rather about helping the learners to consider as many alternative options as possible from many diverse angles in order to make an informed decision or judgment in a free and informed way. If there is a predetermined endpoint set by teachers in a dialogic lesson, arrival to which should be treated as transitory, and open to be challenged, disagreed and changed (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

Human beings are born with conditioned freedom and only achieve relative freedom to the extent that they are taught in a way that frees, empowers and enables subjectivity to emerge (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014). Consequently, freely entering into dialogue in a class needs a safe, fertile, and supportive ground initiated by the teacher and co-constructed by learners. This also emphasises the contextual background, including educational, social, cultural, political and personal background of the interlocutors so far as '(w)hat appears to one person at one time as

a block to freedom may be a necessary structure for empowerment and gaining freedom for another' (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014: 6).

This approach to dialogue opens up fundamental questions about the realization and conduct of power relations such as: 'Who participates in directing the interaction? How is that direction accomplished? Who benefits from interactional norms? How free are participants to express themselves? How are disagreements managed?' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 19), based on which the discourse analysis of section 8.3.6 is constructed.

5.4   Summary and conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the two analytical frameworks I made use in analysing the huge amount of data gathered through conducting 6 various research instruments, dealing with which was the major challenge of this qualitative case study. Thematic analysis and class discourse analysis provided me suitable frameworks to answer the research questions. As I introduced and discussed in this chapter, the former was used for analysing field notes, semi-structured interviews, RDs, Qs and FGs while the latter was applied to the transcribed sample of whole class discussion based on Lefstein & Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue which provided me with a multi-perspective analytical framework to explore the role and importance of dialogue as the basis of a dialogic critical approach to teaching.

I present the findings by integrating analysis and discussions in the four following chapters namely 6, 7, 8 and 9 with regard to the four main research questions. Chapters 6 and 7 made an effort to answer the research questions 1 and 2, dealing with the teacher's teaching philosophy. Chapter 8 is an attempt to answer research question 3 dealing with exploring the role and importance of dialogue in a sample of class discussion as the teacher's advocated main teaching method and the dominant discourse of the class. Chapter 9 addresses research question 4 dealing with the learners' viewpoints about whole class discussions. Each chapter ends with discussion and conclusion to further discuss, integrate and conclude the issues explored. In chapter 10, a synopsis of the analysis and discussion is provided in three sections which answer the four research questions.

6.   The teacher's teaching philosophy

6.1   Introduction

Language teaching philosophy consists of understanding of language, and assumptions, theories and principles about language teaching and learning (Stevic, 1988 in Wong, 2006). In this chapter, I explore the teacher's teaching philosophy and analyse it based on the key concepts of CP as discussed in chapter 2, to explore whether and how his teaching theory is or is not in line with the key concepts of CP, and then to the field of ELT with a CP approach. The data source is mainly the four interviews with the teacher, and the selected episodes of the audio recorded class discussion sessions throughout the course. I also included complementary data from the field notes and the questionnaires wherever appropriate. The source of data and the number of the class sessions, interviews and questionnaires are accompanied each excerpt.

This chapter includes 4 main sections; following this introduction, the second section explores the teacher's approach to CP including his introduction to the concept, and his conception of the required qualification of critical pedagogues, CT and teacher-learner relationship. The third section is devoted to investigate his conception of language and his language learning approach. In these two sections, I refer back to the literature provided in chapter 2 to discuss the themes and in the last section I further discuss how his teaching philosophy is or is not in line with the key concepts of CP in general and then with CP and ELT in particular, as discussed in 2.2 and 2.4 respectively. I also discuss how his teaching philosophy is similar to or different from the research done on CP and ELT in Iran as discussed in 3.4.

6.2   The teacher's approach to CP

In this section, I explore how the teacher was introduced to and perceives CP. I also include his educational objectives and his conception of teacher-learner relationship which is of crucial importance in CP and greatly affects the quality of the teaching within the dialogic critical framework. I refer back to the literature provided in chapter 2 to discuss these themes.

6.2.1   Introduction to the concept

In order to develop a syllabus based on a theoretical framework such as CP, and to implement teaching a related skill like CT, it is crucial for teachers to be familiarised with the key concepts

and receive enough training to practice the related skills. As discussed in chapter 3, in the education system of Iran, there is little opportunity to receive any formal education about the principles of CT and CP (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2012; Sadeghi, 2008; Shakouri Masouleh & Ronaghifard Abkenar, 2012). This is reflected in Q1 in which all of the learners, 4 of which were EL teachers, stated that they had not heard about CP, and majority of them had not been familiarised to or received any formal training regarding CT prior to attending this course. Therefore, it is significant to investigate how the teacher was first introduced to and familiarised with CP.

The teacher explained his early concern as a basis for his getting interested in CP as follows:

> T: I have this question from the very beginning, from teenage life. I thought something is going wrong. Something is not correct in my education and my social life. I thought that people are so restricted and in cage in some prefabricated and stereotypical frameworks. I didn't like to be somehow in prison in the premade and predefined concepts without any challenge, without any redefinition, re-modification. I was really rebellion so it was my concern (Int1).

According to the excerpt, primarily as a student and as a citizen, he was dissatisfied with the education system and social life as being restricted and non-critical. He felt imprisoned and was determined to make a change. The origin of his dissatisfaction was his realising that there are some premade and predefined concepts that are not challenged to be 're-modified' and 'redefined'. Standing out against the source of this dissatisfaction is the building block of his intended instructional strategy, 'conceptualisation' or re/defining concepts, to which I return in 7.3. He further explained:

> T: When I entered university, with the help of one of my professors, Mrs X, I became familiar with the concept and I found it was what I was searching for. Critical pedagogy was within me from the very beginning and I think it is within everybody. Everybody enjoys going through pedagogical procedures in the family, society and schools and academic situations to be more critical, to be more challenging in order to modify a situation to be dynamic. So critical pedagogy was so familiar to me. When I entered the university, I thought it is exactly what I was searching for (Int2).

As stated in the excerpt, during his higher education, he was introduced to the concept of CP by one of his university teachers whom he mentioned once in the class as his 'best professor' (FN, 02/08/2014). The professor who introduced him to CP, had completed her PhD in Canada where she became familiar with CP and wrote her thesis related to it (FN, 07/08/2014). This could be an example of how universities act as cultural mediators that circulate and multiply knowledge internationally.

The teacher believes that CP is going through challenging pedagogical procedures toward being more 'critical and dynamic', which, he believes, is an innate inclination and interest common among people. This implies his supposition about learners' innate willingness to take part in the challenging process of the class to be more critical and to make a change. This conception is also reflected in other aspects of his teaching philosophy and theory to which I later in this chapter. Moreover, he believes that CP aims at modifying different aspects of social life including family, society and education. This signifies that he believes going through critical pedagogical practices in the class should make learners more critical, leading to some change outside the class in their personal and social life. This approach seems to be in line with the concept of praxis, the integration of reflection and action, and 'conscientisation', becoming critically conscious human beings for the betterment of individual and social life (Freire, 1970). Thus, his approach is, generally, in line with critical pedagogues' aiming at social transformation in the classrooms, in the society and in the world through education (Akbari, 2008; Freire, 1970; Pennycook, 1989; Sapp, 2000).

The teacher added that by doing more research, he got more interested and developed his study further:

> T: Later on, I double searched and I became so much interested and I expanded the territory of my study (Int2).

This indicates that even in an education system where there is little formal education about a subject, skill or field of study, individuals may be inspired in educational spaces and communities, and expand the scope of their knowledge by studying autonomously. Therefore, it is not far from reality that, following internal interests and concerns, individuals' efforts and autonomous studies may compensate the lack of formal training.

In interview 2, he stated that he was inspired by CP but he is not following its common trend as it is known worldwide:

> T: The way we use critical pedagogy is not entirely in line with critical pedagogy around the world. It is a bit different and the rest of the concepts are added while I was teaching during my career. Somehow I modified it. Critical pedagogy and this modification is very important for me. I may call it in future something else. I am not that much bound to this name actually but I use this (Int2).

According to the extract, the teacher was inspired by CP then he modified its concepts by adapting it to his local context. He made a distinction between this local variant and how 'critical pedagogy [is used] around the world'. Thereby, he asserted his alignment with the field of CP while at the same time, he claimed a particular, distinct place for his own modified method,

which he developed over the years within the context of higher education in Iran. Thus, while he subscribed to the general ideas and principles of CP, which he said were crucial for him, he did not exclude the possibility of giving a different name to his pedagogical approach in the future. Later, he called 'conceptualisation' as his 'modified version of CP' (Int4) which, as discussed in 7.3, is his main instructional strategy in managing the whole class discussion sessions.

The course was announced as 'IELTS preparation' without mentioning CP as the chosen approach or CT as its objective in its title. Learners mostly were introduced to this course through the former learners or they attended the course with no prior information about the applied approach (Q1). In session 2, the teacher mentioned that he had designed the course and selected the materials based on the key concepts of CP and CT. As discussed in the following section, he conceives CT as the origin of CP and all through the course he stressed on the former as the main objective of the course but he rarely referred to the latter. It seems that he tended not to use CP to avoid raising any controversial issues as it could be related to Marxism which is greatly prohibited regarding the ideological and political status quo of the country[1].

Similarly, as it is evident through this chapter, the philosophy of existentialism which influenced Freire is the building block of the teacher's teaching philosophy. However, he never mentioned existentialism or its key figures during the interviews or throughout the course. This also could be for avoiding any issue as the philosophy of existentialism is controversial regarding the Islamic philosophy advocated by the official religion of the country. To avoid mentioning the source of his proposed philosophy could affect the quality of dialogues in class discussions; as I discuss in chapter 8, not providing any reference to the philosophical concepts that he asked the learners to define through the discussion sessions would make the learners believe that the ideas are originally his and places him in a superior position like the teachers in banking education. It also distorts the dialogic nature of discussions for not providing the alternatives which is a necessary feature of the exploratory talk (Mercer, 2000).

One noticeable point in the above quote is the use of pronoun 'we' when he referred to him and his learners together using CP. This, in line with CP, would imply his distancing from the traditional role of a teacher by growing a sense of belonging to a community where the duality of teacher-learner was resolved and the authority was shared. This is also in line with the key criteria of dialogue namely relationship and empowerment as discussed in 5.3.5 and 5.3.6, which

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[1] Two years later after my data collection, the teacher founded his private language institute and announced adopting a 'modified critical pedagogy'.

I discuss more in 6.2.8. However, as I discuss later in chapters 8 and 9, the way he manages the discussion sessions is authoritative and directive, far from cooperative and dialogical.

6.2.2   Required qualification of critical pedagogues

Regarding required qualifications of critical pedagogues, the teacher stated:

> T: Being a critical thinker and being a teacher who wants to use critical pedagogy entails you to learn different disciplines and related courses of study. So I had to go through philosophy, physics and psychology. I was so much interested and my interest increased by multiplication while I studied different faculties. I felt empowered (Int2).

According to the above quote, the teacher believes that a critical pedagogue needs to be a critical thinker and study different disciplines such as philosophy, psychology and physics. For him, studying different fields is the source of empowerment for educators who want to apply a CP approach. This could be related to, as I discuss in 6.2.5, his conception of CT i.e. considering entities from different perspectives in order to develop logically-defined conceptual frameworks. Therefore, in his conception, studying different disciplines to develop multi-perspective view empowers educators in the process of 'conceptualisation' or 'meaning-making', which is his proposed instructional strategy to which section 7.3 is devoted. His knowledge and experience have resulted in teaching a set of integrated philosophical concepts through controlled discussion sessions.

Evidently, what he considers as a source of empowerment for critical pedagogues has a considerable effect on the charismatic role he plays in authoritatively managing, directing and controlling the class discussion sessions as analysed in chapter 8. In fact, his expertise in teaching his collection of predefined, complicated philosophical concepts along with his higher ELP level places him in a superior position far from being a student-teacher, problem-poser or facilitator as advocated in CP and also claimed by him as discussed in 6.2.8. In fact, as the analysis of the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9 also evidences, his teaching method could be considered more as indoctrination far from emancipatory, empowering, dialogic and critical. Noticeably, the learners with a banking educational background praised this highly dichotomous role, which represents their ideal of an all-knowing, authoritative teacher.

6.2.3   CT as the origin of CP

For the teacher, CP originates from CT:

> T: Critical pedagogy, as the name speaks for itself, comes from critical thinking as the essence of humanity. So by critical pedagogy I am trying to activate thinking (Int2).

In his conception, 'critical' in CP stands for CT which he considers as the essence of 'humanity'. This signifies the centrality of CT in his teaching philosophy activating of which is his educational objective. It seems that the teacher's conception of CP is in line with the key concepts of CP namely critical reflection and humanisation inspired by critical theory. However, his conception of CT and humanisation awaits more clarification as follows in the following themes.

The above extract implies his supposition of the passivity of CT in his learners in need to be activated. This supposition could be based on the fact that CT which needs training and practising is not included in the formal education in Iran so it is likely that the learners do not have any training regarding CT. According to Q1 and FGs, all of the learners stated that they did not have any formal training about CT prior to this course. Seemingly, the teacher aims to teach CT that is ignored in the education system of the country, which, as I explored in chapter 9, was appreciated by the learners. The learners' unfamiliarity with CP and having no training about the concept would affect their viewpoints regarding the inclusion of CT in this course and the teacher's authoritative role as discussed in chapter 9. In fact, having the banking educational background makes the learners less likely to grow a critical view toward the teaching method which is claimed to be based on critical thinking and dialogue.

6.2.4   CT for humanisation

All through the course, the teacher stressed that the process of the class would be to promote CT which is a process toward being a 'better human being':

> T: Critical thinking is very important for us to be a better human being. It is the essence of humanity. And what is the definition of better human being? When you go through critical thinking, you can define better human being (S1).

According to the above quote, the teacher aims to activate CT, 'the essence of humanity', to become a 'better human being' which learners are supposed to be able to define through CT process. Thus, by 'activating thinking' he aims to help people 'to live truly as human beings':

> T: To me critical pedagogy means helping people to live truly as a human being. So being a better human being and being able to live properly are actually two basic motives for me to go through critical pedagogy (Int2).

According to the quote, for him, CP helps people to live 'truly as human beings'; therefore, self-transformation for 'being a better human being' and living "properly" are what motivated him to apply CP in his English course. This reminds the primary focus of existentialism on moral principles to perceive the 'proper way' to live one's life (Flynn, 2006: 1), which requires particular self-discipline to become a certain kind of person (Hyslop-Margison, 2003).

In this regard, the teacher differentiates between two levels of thinking:

> T: We have two levels of thinking. Lower level of thinking and higher level of thinking both of which are for survival. Lower level of thinking guaranties your survival for everyday life, for example feeding yourself and your children and security. But we need another kind of survival which is specifically to human being and just distinguish us from animals. We have mental survival, scientific survival, emotional survival and humanistic survival. So I think critical pedagogy promises us empowering human being, to think critically and go for high level of survival, survival of human life, survival of human norms and ethics, survival of human thinking, science and endeavour (Int2).

According to the quote, he distinguishes between 'lower level of thinking' and 'higher level of thinking', both of which are necessary for human survival. The former is needed for satisfying biological needs of everyday life, which he referred to as 'lower level of survival', while the latter is required for the survival of what distinguishes humans from animals such as 'science', 'emotion', 'norms', 'ethics' and 'thinking'. This dichotomy of 'higher' and 'lower' level of survival and thinking is his proposed dichotomy between 'existence' vs. 'being' respectively, which constitutes the building block of the teacher's teaching philosophy and the conceptual framework that he teaches during the course. This is congruent with the concept of 'existence' and 'authenticity' which, as discussed in 2.2.2., are prominent in Sartre's existentialism and greatly influenced Freire and his conceptualisation of CP (Flynn, 2006).

As noted in the excerpt, he believes that CP aims at empowering human beings by promoting CT, which would result in the survival of humanistic aspects of humankind. In fact, his educational objective, as he asserted and I discuss through this chapter, is to activate learners' 'higher level of thinking' or CT to create an 'authentic life', which satisfies 'higher level of human survival'. What the teacher referred to as 'higher level of thinking' for the survival of different aspects of human life including norms and ethics reflects Giroux's (1994) argument as discussed in 2.2.3, that CT is a process in which knowledge should interact closely with human interests, norms, values and beliefs to guide one's life. This way, the teacher adopts a social collective view toward the function of CT for the survival of humanity or humanisation. However, unlike CP's emphasis on critical reflection about social and political issues, and action to make a more just, humanised world, his primary emphasis is on self-transformation and awareness of human basic values to live an authentic life. In this regard, he stated that 'the highest level of survival' is 'self-actualisation' based on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs:

> T: According to Maslow pyramid, highest level of survival is self-actualisation. I want to actualise myself. My self contains the highest level of conceptuality. I should be conceptual toward self, be more meaningful. Satisfaction is on the movement (S21).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology proposed by Abraham Maslow in his 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" in Psychological Review. As discussed in 6.2.1, he studied different fields including psychology the effect of which can be traced here in shaping his teaching philosophy. For the teacher, the 'highest level of survival' is the actualisation of 'self' which contains the highest level of conceptuality. Therefore, in his conception, moving toward conceptuality is the source of satisfaction as it helps one to actualise 'self' leading to more meaningful life. This way, he rationalised his proposed philosophy and teaching method as moving toward 'conceptualisation', which guides one's life toward actualisation of 'self' that brings about satisfaction. This is in line with the concept of liberation by Freire and Sartre i.e. questioning one's existence and continually pursue one's self-realisation (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010).

6.2.5   CT as the source of questioning

During session 1, he introduced CT as follows:

> T: Thinking is a penetrative movement into existence from different perspectives. For example, you see this. **He points to the desk**. You look at this. First you see and then you ignore. Just what it is and then forget about it, or you just force yourself to go through it. So what is this, how does it work? What is the function? What are the ingredients, elements? What is the mechanism? When you penetrate into it, automatically, naturally and organically questions are born (S1).

For him, thinking is a 'penetrative movement into existence' i.e. considering matters from different perspectives to explore their function, constitutive elements and attributes. Therefore, by thinking critically, one is supposed not to take anything for granted but to try to reflect about different aspects of matters including their functions, ingredients and mechanisms. This reflects criticality as a valued educational goal i.e. helping students to become 'more sceptical toward commonly accepted truisms' (Burbules & Berk, 1999: 45). This is also in line with Shor's (1992) definition of CP that advocates internalising a way of living in which one constantly questions the status quo in search for deeper meanings beneath the events and actions in all levels of personal and social life.

Thinking, as he stated, is supposed to give birth to questions 'naturally', 'automatically' and 'organically'. In other words, questions are 'inevitable result of thinking' (S14). In this respect, for him, 'questioning' is the main characteristic of CT:

> T: Critical thinkers question the answers, and question the questions (S14).

According to the above quote, CT consists of questioning not only the answers but also the questions. His notion is comparable with Paul's (1994) 'strong sense' CT which, as discussed in 2.2.3, advocates to incorporate the basics of logical analysis into a way of living by re-examining and questioning one's own assumptions, beliefs and viewpoints. Generally, this is in line with problem-posing education based on which critical dialogues should be led in the class (Shor, 1992).

Regarding the function of questioning as a result of CT, he considered questions as 'the best destroyers of fake layers' (S4). 'Fake layers', as he defined, are 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks that have been shaped 'uncritically' and 'illogically'. 'Fake layers' include 'stereotypes' and 'clichés', which are 'borrowed, copied or transferred from dominant voice or domesticating education system' (S13). 'Fake layers' seem to equate ignorance or 'false consciousness' which genuine education is responsible to address in order to initiate the process of liberation (Matusov, 2009: 79). Therefore, questioning as the natural result of CT could be considered as the first step toward critical consciousness and liberation.

Moreover, for the teacher, 'questioning', the 'natural' result of CT, is a way to move from 'parametric level' to 'conceptual level':

> T: When you question, you are actually going towards more concept. From parametric level you go to conceptuality (S14).

According to the excerpt, CT process as the 'penetrative movement' of questioning is a movement from 'parametric' level to 'conceptual' level. As I analyse in chapter 8, he initiates the discussions by asking the learners to define one of his highlighted philosophical concepts, which he considers as the first step to move toward conceptualisation.

He related this process to ELL which is the common interest and concern of the learners:

> T: For example, you want to learn English. You ask how should I learn English language? Then you ask more questions. What is English? What is learning? What is language? Why I learn English? So just a simple question, 'how can I learn English', you create some other questions, and this question develops more questions. This is a movement. So questions can help you to go towards more conceptuality (S14).

As he explained, from the question of 'how should I learn English', one can create more questions about EL and learning thus makes it more meaningful for oneself. This way, CT generates questions which are prerequisite for his main instructional strategy namely 'conceptualisation', which I discuss in 7.3.

6.2.6　　　CT for authentic life

Questions, as the teacher advocates, should turn into 'concerns', which he defined as follows:

> T: Concerns help us a lot in class procedure. So when you start thinking about something, questions actually will be born. When you link this question to your core concepts, it turns to concerns. So students with concerns. Concerns best fit in this class (Int4).

For him, questions as the natural result of thinking need to be linked to 'human core concepts' in order to turn to 'concerns' that is what he expects his learners to cultivate in themselves. He brought an example of how questions can turn to concerns in session 14, the summary of which follows; the question of 'how can I be rich' could lead to some other questions about the concept of richness and the ethically valid ways to become rich. Trying to answer this question with regard to human values such as 'honesty, generosity, bravery and curiosity', one creates more questions and may conclude that feeling rich or poor does not depend on the amount of money one has but to her/his personality which depends on how s/he feels and her/his ideological frameworks. Thus, by developing concerns, one may also consider morally valid ways to earn money and become rich. His conception of concern reminds the philosophy of existentialism, the primary focus of which is moral principles to perceive the "proper" way to live one's life (Flynn, 2006: 1).

In the next excerpt, he stated that the purpose of cultivating 'concerns' is to 'direct' one's life:

> T: Direction resides in concerns. Without direction, there is no movement. Question helps you to find the direction (S15).

So questions, are supposed to turn to 'concerns' by linking the questions to 'human core concepts', the main purpose of which is to 'direct' one's life to move toward more 'humanity'. In defining 'core concepts', he stated:

> T: You can define an entity by its core concepts. What if you remove these concepts from human beings? There is no human beings as plants (S15).

According to the excerpt, 'core concepts' are common characteristics of any entity based on which that entity can be defined. In his conception, 'human core concepts' are the attributes that define humanity, without which human beings lose their identity as human and turn to plants. He further explained:

> T: Human core concepts can define you as human beings like bravery, generosity, forgiveness, honesty, respect, meaning, loving, devotion, kindness. These are the concepts common among all human beings. If you bring all human beings together and try to extract the commonalities you will come up with some clear-cut concepts, when activated, humanity will be born (S14).

For him, 'human core concepts' are "clear-cut" concepts common to all human beings such as 'bravery', 'generosity' and 'forgiveness', which define 'humanity'. As the quote implies, in his conception, 'human core concepts' intrinsically exist within all human beings awaiting to be discovered and activated:

> T: We do not extract core concepts. They are there within. We just activate them (S16).

Innateness of human core concepts that need to be activated parallels the ideal of authenticity in existentialism which directs us to *realise* and *be* who we *already are*, that is 'the unique, definitive traits already there within' us (Guignon, 2004: 4). 'Being a unique human' is what he presupposes all learners want and what will satisfy them:

> T: You want to be a human being. This is what you want. Because this is an inner natural tendency. This is the ultimate desire for human beings. Nothing else can ever satisfy you except being a human being. Human being in your unique form. Human being that you define. Not something given to you (S19).

Thus, being a 'unique' human, as the main objective of CT in his conception, is what he believes all human beings desire and "the only" thing that satisfies them. To satisfy this 'ultimate inner desire', as he stated, one should create his own original definition of human being rather than following the others' definitions. This reminds the modern ideal of *authenticity* in existentialism which advocates self-ownership and self-direction as the most meaningful and worthwhile way of life through which one can achieve 'self-realization and self-fulfilment' as an authentic human being (Guignon, 2004: 6).

This is what he referred to as 'awakening' process and discussed as the focal concept of the movie 'awakening'. His proposed concept of 'awakening' seems to be in line with the concept of 'conscientisation' in CP. According to Freire (1972: 51), 'conscientisation' refers to the process of achieving a deepening awareness of the socio-cultural reality which shapes people's lives, and of their capacity to transform that reality. However, in the teacher's teaching philosophy this awareness initiates from self-awareness in line with the Socratic philosophical direction: 'Know Thyself', to which the history of western philosophy extends back (Flynn, 2006).

As it is evident in the next theme, there is a clear contradiction in his theory; for him CT is one of the 'human core concepts', activating and integrating of which generates humanity. These concepts are supposed to be defined cooperatively by individuals in the community of class, in order to make their original humanity. However, he provides a set of refined definitions for basic characteristic of CT to which the next section is devoted.

6.2.7   CT as defined steps

In defining CT, the teacher referred to 'logic' as 'the frame of reference' of CT based on which the process of CT can be defined:

> T: Everything should be defined based on a frame of reference. For critical thinking, the frame of reference is logic. This is a process not a state. Your logic can grow step-by-step (S10).

In his conception, logic is a process that grows step-by step to make a frame of reference based on which everything should be defined. Therefore, the process of defining concepts or his proposed 'conceptualisation' should be 'logical'. In this regard, 'logicality' is a 'ruler or a yardstick' of one's thinking (S11), which naturally generates the whole process of CT:

> T: When you are logical, other parts and the whole process are born organically (S13).

He defined logical process as six interrelated stages, which he referred to as 'steps of logic' namely, 'rationality', 'self-awareness', 'honesty', 'open-mindedness', 'discipline' and 'judgement'. These are the main characteristics of CT as mentioned in the article he assigned the learners to read and discuss in the class (see appendix 12). During sessions 10, 11 and 13, they discussed about CT during which he defined and elaborated these stages. As he stated, these stages are 'organically' interrelated as each stage is born from the preceding stage and gives birth to the next stage.

As he defined, the process of CT starts with 'rationality':

> T: Rationality is searching for evidence. The better you can see the evidence, the better logic you have (S10).

According to his definition, 'rationality', the first step of logic, is searching for 'evidence' to enhance one's logical frame of reference. He defined 'evidence' as follows:

> T: Evidence carries fractals and fractals have one basic function and that is giving direction to the main concepts (S10).

Thus, 'rationality' is searching for 'evidence' to find 'fractals' which directs one's life. For him, 'fractals are the highest level of conceptuality' (S16), which he defined as follows:

> T: Fractals are the most elemental meaningful unit, rule or pattern that can be applied recursively (S11).

In his definition, 'fractals' are the most basic unit that is meaningful and can be repeatedly applied. He stated that finding 'fractals' is empowering and liberating:

> T: Why we are searching for the evidence? Because in the evidence we find fractals and fractals can give you the freedom of creation. At every level, at every stage you can breed new things. If you put the fractals together, you can generate new things. If you get to the fractals,

you have freedom to create. By getting the fractals, you form your logic. And conclusion can be formed. Conclusion or definition or judgement. Going to fractals gives you the power to decide. Why we have problem with decision? Because we don't have fractals. So when you have fractals, you have the power to decide, to define, to judge (S11).

According to the above quote, finding fractals as the requisite of rationality 'gives one freedom to generate one's own version of definition' as they are 'the most elemental meaningful units that can be applied recursively' (S11 and S13). His conception of 'rationality' as the first step of the process of CT includes one's *freedom* to create one's own logic, and *empowerment* to decide, define, conclude and judge so that s/he becomes the *agent* of one's own decision, conclusion, definition and judgment.

'Rationality', as he defined, then, generates the second step that is 'self-awareness':

T: Then you go to self-awareness. Self-awareness means using the ruler of logic to measure yourself, to define yourself. Then I can understand who I am now based on the ruler of logic (S10).

Thus, forming one's logic based on the 'fractals' helps one to evaluate and define one's 'self' to understand 'who I really am'. This reminds Socrates' aphorism 'Know Thyself' which parallels the ideal of authenticity in existentialism which directs individuals to realise and be who they already are (Guignon, 2004). This also reminds the ideal of 'sincerity' in existentialism that according to Santoni (1995: 17) is 'to live self-consciously' or 'a life of honest self-awareness'. The teacher further explained:

T: But this is not enough. Because in this stage, I am at the being level. I can see, but I can't do anything. I am paralysed. I should take myself to a level that I can modify, redefine myself, recheck myself (S10).

Up to this stage of CT, as he stated, one can see and define oneself but s/he cannot "redefine" and "re-modify" her/himself as one is still in 'being' level and 'paralysed'; in order to be able to modify, one should go to the third stage of CT:

T: So self-awareness breeds honesty. I should take myself to existence through honesty. So honesty is a gate through which I can step into the existence. Without honesty, I will remain in the level of being. You can be a new me when you express. When you go to existence (S10).

In his definition, 'self-awareness' as the second stage of logic leads to 'honesty', which he defined as 'creatively express who you really are' (S13). For him, only through 'honest self-expression' one is able to upgrade one's life from 'being' level to 'existence' level in which one can modify oneself and become a 'new me'.

Here, the effect of Socratic philosophy and existentialism can be traced in his conception of CT. As discussed in 2.2.2, 'existence' level as the upgraded level of 'being', is the key concept in

existentialism which leads one to become a "certain" kind of person (Hyslop-Margison, 2003: 67). In fact, the process of '*Knowing Thyself*' sets the ground for '*Being Yourself*' which involves affirmation and acceptance of self by oneself and, through expressing it, by others (Fishman, 1985). According to the ideal of authenticity in existentialism, only by expressing one's true self, one can achieve 'self-realization and self-fulfilment' as an authentic human being (Guignon, 2004: 6).

'Self-expression' then leads to the other stages of CT:

> T: When you express, then you can go to open-mindedness and discipline and judgement (S10).

He defined 'open-mindedness' as follows:

> T: Open-mindedness means when I link my logic inside to universal logic (S13).

In his conception, 'open-mindedness', as the fourth step of logic that follows 'honest self-expression', is when one tries to link her/his own logic to 'universal logic'. This way, s/he expands the territory of CT beyond individuals to 'universal logic'. However, he did not explain what 'universal logic' is or how one can link his own logic with the 'universal logic'.

'Open-mindedness', then, is followed by 'discipline' as the fifth step of logic:

> T: Discipline means acting based on mental self-commitment and responsibility to devote your time and life by acting based on this (S13).

Thus, in developing CT, one is supposed to be committed to the process of logicality and act based on it in life. 'Discipline' then would lead to the last step of logic namely 'judgement', which he defined as 'manifestation of logic in day-to-day life' (S13), and as 'the highest level of thinking' (S2). This way, his proposed process of CT that starts from 'questioning' is supposed to lead to action in day-to-day life. Therefore, in his conception, CT should go beyond critical reflection and should also consist the element of action, which is in line with the concept of 'praxis' i.e. reflection and action which has the power to transform the world (Freire, 1970).

The last two defined stages of CT remind primary focus of existentialism on moral principles to perceive the "proper" way to live one's life (Flynn, 2006) which requires particular self-discipline to become a "certain" kind of person (Hyslop-Margison, 2003: 67) whose actions express a clearly defined identity as an evaluating agent (Calhoun, 1995). This is in line with the highest goal in human life according to the ideal of authenticity i.e. to *know* who we are and *be* that true self in our ways of being present in our relationships and practical activities (Guignon, 2004).

Regarding the last stage of CT, the teacher differentiates between 'judgment' as a result of CT and 'value judgement' or 'labelling' as an illogical inference:

> T: Everybody says it is bad but judgement is necessary and is different from value judgement. Value judgement is labelling, is when your judgement is not a result of steps of logic (S13).

He disapproves 'value judgments' or 'labelling' i.e. a judgment which 'is not a result of steps of logic'. Instead, he approves and advocates 'logical judgment ", of both oneself and others, as the manifestation of 'the highest level of critical thinking' (S28). This claim could have a great effect on the quality of dialogues in class discussions; as I discuss in chapter 8, by not providing any productive comments on the learners' contributions and not guiding them to cooperatively comment on each other, his comments tend to be 'labelling' than 'logical judgment'.

Regarding how 'logic', i.e. the frame of reference of CT, is developed in this course, he stated:

> T: I give my students all the logic of everything we choose in this class. For example, I tell I want you to do so because of this because of that. I give them the premise of every single statement (Int2).

In this quote, he claimed that he "gives all the logic of everything" and 'the premise of every single statement'. He shared his teaching philosophy with the learners, which is not common in similar English courses in the country. This would help his learners to accept his proposed viewpoint toward ELL, improve their willingness to take part in the demanding process of the class and fulfil the required tasks, however, as *the only provider* of the logic in the class, he tends to offer little opportunity, if any, for the learners to collaboratively practice his defined steps of logic in defining his highlighted philosophical concepts. This contradicts his proposed *"originality"* in defining human core concepts and as I discuss in chapters 8 and 9, it results in his authoritarian way of managing class discussion sessions, which is anti-dialogic and domesticating.

6.2.8 Teacher-learner relationship

Teacher-learner relationship is one of the key issues in dialogic critical pedagogy which greatly affects the quality of dialogue as discussed in 2.2.4, 5.3.5 and 5.3.6. Here, I explore the teacher's conception about the issue. In chapter 8, I explore the quality of relationships as an aspect of dialogue in the discourse of the class discussion and in chapter 9, I investigate the learners' viewpoints regarding the teacher's role and their relationships as a community. As it is evident in chapters 8 and 9, his authoritative role in controlling and directing the class discussion sessions contradicts what he stated as an egalitarian, transformational relationship between him and his learners claiming to empower them and make them autonomous and independent .

6.2.8.1   Egalitarian

In session 5, the teacher mentioned a point that reflects what Freire (1970) advocates regarding solving teacher-student dichotomy:

> T: Nobody can be just purely student or absolute teacher. So you are the student and teacher at the same time. I am teacher and student at the same time. We just learn from each other. Consider me as one of the students who just asks too many questions (S5).

According to the excerpt, he advocated an egalitarian viewpoint toward his role and a democratic space of class in which mutual learning and teaching happens for the fact that nobody could purely be either of them. This is in line with Freire's (1970) approach that education needs to reconcile the teacher-student contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students. This is compatible with the role and importance of dialogue as 'empowerment' which assumes participants' freely entering into dialogue with equal rights and opportunities (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). In chapter 8, I analyse his role in managing the class discussion and in chapter 9 I explore the learners' viewpoints in this regard.

6.2.8.2   Transformational

The teacher stated that his teaching has made a drastic change for him as a result of building a special relationship with his learners:

> T: I can't compare myself when I started teaching. Huge huge evolvement. When I transformed my living to my student. The only way you can transform the concepts is just to set a bridge between you and your students. I want that bridge and that bridge is living. The only bridge that can transform. The other bridge can just transfer not transform. When I set this bridge from myself and from my world to my students' world, to my students' self, actually this bridge is a two way. I can give lots of things to my students and at the same time I can receive many things from them. It is an exchange of the worlds. That can bridge the world of the teacher and students and I use it a lot. Now my world could be enriched through the concepts I received from my students' world. So I can see in myself a drastic change (Int2).

According to the excerpt, the teacher stated that he experienced 'huge evolvement' in himself since he started teaching. He considered this change as a result of setting an interactive relationship between his 'world and self' and his learners' 'worlds and selves'. He referred to this bridge as 'living' only through which one can transform, and not simply transfer, concepts. Therefore, his pedagogy, as he claims, involves a strong connection between his world and the world of his learners through which ideas exchange in both directions. Thus, the process of the class, as he stated, is beyond a one-way transference of concepts, rather, the class is a place where the dichotomy between him and the learners dissolves into the source of transformation for all by exchanging their worlds.

As discussed in 2.2.1, transformation of knowledge instead of one-way transference of information is what problem posing education advocates against banking education. In this sense, in dialogic pedagogy, according to Matusov (2009: 5), the teacher is supposed to learn 'not only pedagogically – how to teach the students better, – but also learns the subject matter *with* the students'. This would be ideal when the teacher is ready to suspend the certainty of her/his own knowledge and re-examine it with the learners (Matusov, 2009). Regarding the latter criteria, according to the above excerpt, he 'drastically' changed and enriched his world through the concepts he received from his learners. In analysing the class discourse and learners' viewpoints, I investigate whether there is any evidence of mutual learning of his proposed concepts with the learners as he claims.

Regarding 'living' as a bridge that he intends to set between his world and his learners', I found what he explained in S3 clarifying:

> T: The only active bridge or link between two people is living. When you live me and I live you, actually it is a bridge that can transform things to you. When you understand that somebody understands you and somebody can empathise with you, somebody is living you, actually so you feel secure (S3).

According to the excerpt, the teacher intends to build an 'active bridge' or link between him and his learners by showing that he understands them and cares about them to make them feel secure. Regarding pedagogical learning, according to my observations, the teacher provided chances for the learners to talk to him about their personal issues during greetings in the class or in his office during break time (FNs). Familiarizing himself with the learners' personal issues, interests, careers, family problems, he prompted them to engage more in class discussions. This helped the teacher to establish a good rapport and develop an intimacy between himself and his learners, which could make it easier for learners to trust and express their inner thoughts and feelings which he greatly emphasised in his language learning and teaching philosophy.

As discussed in 6.2.7, he considered 'self-expression' as the third step of logic and a requisite to upgrade one's life from 'being' level to 'existence' in which one is able to modify oneself and become 'a new authentic me'. Moreover, as discussed later in 6.3.1.2, he considers self-expression as the psychological definition of language on which he emphasised as the most important thing he wanted from his learners. Thus, a safe and friendly atmosphere as a result of a caring and friendly relationship could enhance learners' willingness to express their thoughts and feelings. This reminds the role and importance of dialogue as 'relationship' which advocates to approach others dialogically and not instrumentally. This means to enter into a dialogic or 'I-Thou' relationship of respect, mutual concern and solidarity and to relate to both one's and

others' whole beings to be fully human (Buber, 1937 in Lefstein & Snell, 2014). What the teacher referred to as 'living' his students reflects the genuine dialogue that necessitates the establishment of a living mutual relation with others and the world (Rule, 2015). According to the class discourse analysis of a sample of class discussion session in chapter 8 and the thematic analysis of the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9, his role is similar to an authoritarian, all-knowing teacher in monolingual lecturing class and does not satisfy the basic requirements of a non-hierarchical, dialogic relationship.

6.2.8.3　　Empowering

In explaining more about how he 'lives' his students, he stated:

> T: When you live somebody, means giving life to somebody, giving voice to somebody, giving power of generation to somebody in order to getting consciousness. I believe that living your students means first of all just giving them the chance to experience recreating their own moments in their life. When they do this they enjoy a lot, the highest level of enjoyment came from creation. And the highest level of creation is the creation of self (Int2).

According to the excerpt, a teacher's 'living' her/his students means giving voice to them and empowering them to generate their own unique and original version of life. As he stated, he provides his learners the chance to experience creating their 'self', which is 'the highest level of enjoyment'. For him, creation is the measurement tool to investigate whether someone is 'living' or is simply 'alive'; and the highest level of creation is the creation of self or making a 'new authentic me' (S10). Therefore, his pedagogical objective is to empower his students to create their true self by awakening them i.e. making them self-aware, and give them voice to express themselves. This is in line with his course objective as activating CT, the second and third steps of which are defined as 'self-awareness' and 'self-expression' as discussed in 6.2.7. Therefore, his conception of 'living' his learners, as he stated above, highlights the importance of the possibility of multiple voices in the classroom (Lefstein & Snell, 2014), the dialogic space within which all voices are potential to emerge and inter-relate (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014) and the cooperative construction of meaning in class (Walsh, 2011). However, as the discourse analysis of chapter 8 evidences, his class discussion sessions lack the basic requirements of an 'empowering' dialogic education that he advocates.

6.2.8.4　　Autonomous

The teacher asserted that the learners should be autonomous and absolutely independent from him in order to be original in creating different aspects of their life including their own version of English as a language to express their true 'self'. In this regard, he referred to Freire:

T: According to Paulo Freire, the best teacher is the teacher least needed in the class (Int4).

I did not find this quote in Freire's texts and I do not have this understanding from Freirean CP. As discussed in 5.3.5, the teacher-student dichotomy should be dissolved in a democratic and egalitarian relationship through which teachers and learners are critical agents in the cooperative act of knowing (Shor & Freire, 1987a). In this sense, critical pedagogues should be facilitators of the process of illuminating the reality along with the students but this does not mean they should be 'least needed'. In fact, teachers have different pedagogical knowledge and experience to operate in the process thus they play their unique, crucial roles.

The role of "the best teacher" that he advocated in the above quote seems contradictory to what he stated previously regarding giving his students 'all the logic of everything they "choose" in this class' (Int2). The contradiction is confirmed by the learners who, according to FGs and RDs discussed in chapter 9, considered him as 'the superior logic', 'the key figure in managing the discussions', 'without whom the class means nothing', which has resulted in the learners' dependency to the teacher.

In a similar sense regarding the learners' independency, the teacher quoted from Freire in session 20:

T: There is a nice sentence from Paulo Freire to his students: to follow me please stop following me. Means if you want to follow me, you should find your own way (S20).

I do not find this quote in Freire's texts; however, this seems to be in line with Freirean CP as an emancipatory education, which disapproves uncritically following any ideology for the fact that people are supposed to be the agents of their *praxis*, their own refection and action. Similarly, he advocated the learners' independency from the teacher to be original in their ideas i.e. 'be the origin' of their own ideas and 'create and re-create' their ideologies (S3). Therefore, when learners can generate their own version of life, they do not need to follow any one including their teacher; they are liberated i.e. they are empowered to create their own definitions and their own way of life. In other words, they can 'name' the world that is to change the world (Freire, 1970). This is also in line with the concept of agency in CP which, according to Shor (1992), means gaining critical awareness to transform lives, individually and collectively. In 7.3.4, I discuss his conception of liberation in details, and through discourse analysis in chapter 8, I explore his proposed liberating process of 'conceptualisation' in practice, which evidently contradicts his advocated teaching theory.

6.3 Language and language learning perspective

Understanding of language and language learning is among the constitutive parts of language teaching philosophy (Stevic, 1988 in Wong, 2006). Therefore, in order to further analyse the teacher's teaching philosophy, this section first discusses his conception of language and then his approach to language learning. The findings set the ground to further discuss his teaching philosophy regarding ELT within the dialogic critical framework.

6.3.1 Conception of language

The teacher conceives language as any means or channel by and through which one can express oneself:

> T: Language to me is a way that students can express self (Int2).

In his conception, any means through which one can express her/himself can be considered as language. The teacher provided an example to clarify his point:

> T: My mother has the language of cooking. It's her unique language. Something that she can express herself. For some time, my mother cannot cook. Ache all over the body. So that's why she gets a little bit depressed because she cannot express herself properly (S1).

According to the excerpt, any means, here cooking for his mother, through which one can express oneself, in his example maybe his mother's care and love for her family, could be her/his unique language. In his conception, when one is unable to express oneself, like her mother for being unwell for a while, s/he tends to get depressed which is the possible pathway to get oppressed as I discuss later in 6.3.1.2.

The first session when he was lecturing about his teaching theory, language learning philosophy and the course design, he defined language from different perspectives including sociological, psychological and philosophical perspectives, which I discuss in the three following themes.

6.3.1.1 Language for forming a community

The teacher defined language from sociological perspective as follows:

> T: So what is language sociologically? Language is a way that we communicate with each other, form a commune in order to survive at different levels. We need others for mental survival, emotional survival, scientific survival, spiritual survival (S1).

According to the above excerpt, the teacher considers sociological function of language as a means to communicate and collaborate to form a 'commune' to survive mentally, emotionally, scientifically and spiritually. This conception reflects the role of language in his pedagogy as a

tool to form a community for 'higher level of survival' that is the survival of humanistic aspects of human life including human basic values. As discussed in 6.2.4, in his conception, CT or 'higher level of thinking' is necessary for 'higher level of survival' or survival of humanity. This way, he integrated the function of CT and language, namely survival of human basic values, in his teaching philosophy.

It is noticeable that the teacher, most often, used the word 'commune' rather than community, team or group. As a noun, 'commune' means 'a group of people living together and sharing possessions and responsibilities', and as a verb means to 'share one's intimate thoughts or feelings with (someone or something), especially when the exchange is on a spiritual level' (Hobson, 2004: 82-83). Therefore, connotatively, the word 'commune', which the teacher used most often, suggests more intimacy for sharing thoughts and feelings that he considered as the third step of logic or the 'gate' to enter the world of 'existence' where one can modify oneself.

All through the course, he stressed on 'making a commune' to develop a sense of belonging and collaboration:

> T: You should get to know each other more. You are going to make a commune. Cooperate with others in learning. Believe that you are in a commune. Know each other. Care about each other. You should make a team here. And you try your best and you belong to the same commune. Don't ever try to act individually. What we wanna do, do together. Okay? Collaborative learning. We call it collaboration not competition (S1).

Despite what is common in the educational settings of the country in which students have to work competitively to enter higher education, he stressed on learning collaboratively by improving a sense of commitment and belonging to the class community. He put great emphasis on the learners' knowing each other and working together. He put it into practice by including various group works and pair presentations which are not common in educational settings in the country. These activities could enhance a sense of community and intimacy among the learners. This is in line with the stress placed by Dewey on learning in communities for the fact that learners are considered to be profoundly social thus educational practices should include participating in communities of learners (Altwerger, Edelsky, & Flores, 1989). This also reflects the concept of 'authenticity' as a social virtue in existentialism that cultivates a sense of belongingness to the wider social context that makes the authenticity possible (Guignon, 2004). Additionally, the constant critical self-examination emphasised in the class could be aided through expressing one's beliefs and opinions freely in a safe atmosphere of a community, which involves affirmation and acceptance of self by oneself and, through expressing it, by others (Fishman, 1985).

As mentioned, he emphasised on making a community to 'survive'; he clarified the point:

> T: Your friends will help you survive me. Because I am like desert for you. If you don't come together in a commune, you cannot be able to survive. You need to survive, actually. You have to come to existence. Very important. Survival is needed to make a new me. And you as a commune can survive this class. You should help each other. And commune doesn't mean you need to tell each other goody goody, you are good. You are nice. No. You should break through each other. It's serious. It's a real deal. Go through each other, and then just criticise each other, support each other in any way. You don't need to say well done. That's great. I am great. You are great. We are all okay. No. We are not searching for that kind of position (S1).

According to the above quote, the teacher considered himself as a 'desert' that the learners should come together to survive which is comparable to Socrates who considered himself as a 'midwife' who helped his interlocutors to give birth to concepts and understanding in the dialogical process of reasoned argument leading to truth (Rule, 2015; Wong, 2006). As discussed in chapter 8, his discussion management resembles Socrates as well.

The teacher insists on making a community for the learners to be able to survive the challenging process of the class in which he challenged the learners by criticising them and questioning them to break their "fake layers" i.e. their 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks, to set the ground for understanding new definitions of his proposed concepts. This, despite his claim about the egalitarian role of a teacher, implies that he does not consider himself belonging to the same community but a 'superior logic' whose interlocutors should come together and collaborate to survive the challenging dialogues he initiates and directs.

Moreover, according to the excerpt, he stressed that the learners should be responsive to each other's expressing themselves, as the third step of logic through which they enter the realm of existence where they can re-modify themselves and make a 'new me'. To this end, as he asserted, they should challenge and criticise each other rather than giving each other pleasing complements. Therefore, although he repeatedly emphasises on their making friends, caring about each other, collaborating and supporting each other, he stated that this collaboration should include criticism and challenge.

The teacher's sociological approach to language emphasises on the role of dialogue as 'relationship' as discussed in 5.3.5. In fact, community building is a way of learning together which is basically a part of living together and caring for others and for oneself which makes education meaningful, communal and contextual for the participants (Matusov et al., 2013). His emphasis on learners' developing a community is in line with creating a safe, caring and trustworthy atmosphere that helps one to feel free to express her/his inner thoughts and feelings and also be responsive to others expressing themselves. The idea of community firstly

suggests 'openness to, mutuality of, and commitment to the relationship' (Matusov et al., 2013: 41). Moreover, learning to think critically is facilitated 'in the context of being socialised into warm human relationships and practices within the context of which we can feel safe and supported when we question and challenge' (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014: 11).

Despite his emphasis all through the course on making the class as a cooperative community, according to the analysis and discussion of chapters 8 and 9, the class discussion sessions failed to provide a supportive atmosphere for the learners to freely express themselves, share their thoughts, and challenge and counter-challenge each other's contributions in order to make themselves understood. This could be as a result of the lack of basic features of dialogue in the class discussions such as relationship, critique, thinking together and interplay of voices.

6.3.1.2   Language for self-expression

The teacher defined language from psychological perspective as follows:

> T: the psychological definition of language. Language is to express yourself. Expressing yourself means bringing yourself from being level to existence level. Only at the level of the existence you are allowed, you are able to modify yourself, to redefine yourself, re-check yourself. If you want to change yourself, you should bring yourself to the level of existence so you make yourself a subject of your own discovery. You will define yourself so you know who you are (S1).

In his conception, from a psychological point of view, language is a means to express oneself. He believes that only through expressing one's real self, one can upgrade his life from 'being level' to 'existence level' in which one can 'modify, redefine, re-shape and re-establish' oneself to generate a 'new me'. As discussed in 6.2.7, a prerequisite for 'honest self-expression' as the third step of logic is 'rationality' and 'self-awareness'. This is entirely in line with the project of becoming authentic in the philosophy of existentialism that requires self-reflection and expression of one's true self in order to achieve 'self-realization and self-fulfilment' as an authentic human being (Guignon, 2004: 6).

For him, bringing English to existence level, i.e. expressing oneself in English, one can upgrade her/his English as well:

> T: If you bring your English language to existence level, you can upgrade it. You can modify it. But if you keep it at the level of being, nothing will happen. So expressing yourself is very important because gives you the chance to redefine yourself. That's why I want you express yourself, honestly and clearly. So that's why this is the first and the most important thing I want you to have in this class. And honesty means expressing who you truly are. This is the most important thing in this class (S1).

By expressing oneself, that is 'the most important thing' he wants from his learners, one finds the chance to upgrade her/his English to 'existence level' only through which s/he is enabled to modify her/his English along with redefining her/himself. This way, he integrated his conception of CT process, his philosophy of higher level of survival or 'existence', and his psychological approach to language and ELL. Furthermore, he believes this is generalizable:

> T: And I want you to make English your language to express yourself, make it your unique language. If you can do this, you can carry it over to other languages in your life. Do it in English, you can carry it over to other aspects of your life. I promise you can do this. You know you can generalise it (S1).

According to the above quote, one can make English her/his unique language by expressing oneself clearly and honestly in English; if the learners learn to express themselves in English, they can generate this ability to other languages in their life. As mentioned, in his conception, language is any means one can express oneself so if one gains her/his unique voice in English, s/he can gain voice in any other means s/he chooses to express her/himself such as art, science, cooking, walking, laughing, etc. This way, the learners are empowered to create a unique version of their life instead of being followers who live an unauthentic life. This is what existentialism defines as living an authentic life: acting in accordance with desires, motives, ideals or beliefs that are one's own, not others, and express who one really is (Jeffries, 2002; Varga & Guignon, 2014).

For him, failure to express oneself tends to end up in 'oppression'; he explained this process as follows:

> T: If you express who you are, you have the possibility to revise yourself, to check yourself, to redefine yourself. So if you do not do this, you will be supressed. You supress yourself. Supress means hold back and just block the way of expression. So if you do not express yourself, you have to supress and when you supress yourself, step by step you will repress yourself. It's a kind of passive process of having monologue inwardly. So monologue is a passive process here with impression toward yourself. You are imprisoned within your own ego boundary which is not good. You should be able to find a way out. So repression means to keep you inside. So when you have this repression then what happens? Depression. It's a kind of stoppage. If I do not express myself, I will be depressed. And when you are depressed, the point is you will be totally impressed. Impressed means people put their mark on you. I mean people with dominant voice, dominant culture. They will impress their own ideas on you. So you will be impressed so easily. Mass media can impress on you. As a result, you will be oppressed. You will be kept under undue power, under injustice, you won't be able to feel liberated, you will be domesticated (S1).

As he explains in the excerpt, 'self-expression' provides the opportunity for people to revise and redefine themselves. Failure to express oneself, firstly, will result in 'suppression', i.e. 'blocking

the way of expression', and then in 'repression', i.e. having 'passive inward monologue'. This leads to being imprisoned in one's ego boundaries. This 'repression' will result in stoppage or 'depression', which makes one more likely to be 'impressed' by the dominant voice and culture. This way, one would tend to be domesticated by the dominant ideas such as propaganda of mass media. As a result of 'depression', one would be 'oppressed' by undue power and injustice. Therefore, as he stated, 'honest self-expression' as 'the third step of logic' is anti-oppressive as it liberates learners from the cycle of 'suppression', 'repression', 'impression', 'depression' and 'oppression'.

Moreover, through self-expression in a friendly space of the community of class, one would be prepared to practice it outside the class and by generating this ability to all other aspects of one's life, as he asserts, one can change his way of living thus what they learn in the class is supposed to make a change outside the class. This is in line with the concept of *praxis* and humanisation (Freire, 1970).

6.3.1.3   Language as a vehicle of thought

The teacher explained his other approach to language from philosophical aspect; he states that philosophy means 'love (for) reasoning':

> T: Philosophy means love reasoning. Everybody loves reasoning. You don't like reasoning? Finding the reason for everything? You are all philosophers. You all love reasoning. You enjoy finding reason for everything (S1).

For him, philosophy means love for reasoning which is what all humans naturally desire and enjoy. This reminds what is assumed in Socratic dialogues i.e. interlocutors' willingness to actively engage in dialogue and express what they claim to know (Rule, 2015). This dialogical coming to an understanding is, according to (Gadamer, 1991: 52), 'an unlimited willingness to justify and supply reasons for everything that is said'. This, as discussed in chapter 8, is the discussion norm set by the teacher i.e. during whole class discussions, the learners should define any concepts they use in their attempts to define the teacher's proposed concepts, otherwise, their proposed definitions are discarded as invalid. Moreover, the mentioned assumption in Socratic dialogue implies that dialogue is a public form of being with others in a community where knowledge claims are presented and disputed with other knowledge seekers (Rule, 2015). Therefore, the teacher's conception of language from philosophical approach is compatible with his conception of sociological function of language as discussed in 6.3.1.1.

He defines language from philosophical perspective as follows:

> T: Language is vocalised or expressed thought. Means your language is your thought. When you are faking a language, you are not honest. It is not your language. Real language represents your thought (S1).

He refers to the philosophical definition of language as 'the vocalised or expressed thought'. This way, he equated one's language with one's thought when it is expressed. For him, one is not honest and is 'faking' a language when her/his language does not represent his thinking. According to his conception, language and thought are directly related thus improving one's thinking in English, her/his English would be improved as well:

> T: if language is the vocalised thought, thought and language is in direct proportional relationship. If you want to improve your language, you should improve your thought in that language (S1).

In this sense, he states that learning English is not the main goal of the class; rather, English is a means to express one's thought:

> T: English is an excuse to us. Our concern is language, which is a channel, a way, a process that can help me to express my thoughts (Int2).

For him, the process of his class is the activation of the learners' thinking through expressing their thoughts in English as a result of which both their thinking and EL would be improved. Noticeably, the teacher referred to his approach to language as "*our* concern", which implies that he took it for granted that the learners would accept his approach and would use English as "an excuse" to express their thoughts. This way, the title of the course seems to be deceiving as it is not an 'IELTS preparation course' but teaching the teacher's philosophy in English, the by-product of which is supposed to be the 'natural' and 'organic' improvement of the learners' English, which is rather promising but an unverified claim; I will discuss this point further in the next section.

Moreover, for him, without logic or CT, there is no thinking:

> T: Without logic, there is no thought. When you cannot express your logic, that logic does not exist for you, so there is no thinking (S13).

In his conception, inability to express one's logic means the lack of thinking; in other words, logic needs to be expressed otherwise, it does not 'exist'. Thus, if one wants to improve one's thinking, s/he should be able to express it to upgrade it to 'existence' level. This way, he integrated his philosophy of authenticity with his three approaches to language as his educational objective: to express (i.e. psychological perspective) one's logical thoughts (i.e. philosophical perspective) in a community of committed interlocutors (i.e. sociological

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perspective) in order to upgrade one's 'being' to 'existence' only through which one is able to modify oneself and generate an 'authentic me'.

6.3.2 Language learning perspective

In the 3 following themes, I explore the teacher's language learning perspective to prepare the ground for discussing his ELT within dialogic critical framework.

6.3.2.1 Creation of meaning

As mentioned previously in 6.2.3, the dichotomy between 'being', or 'lower level of survival' vs. 'existence' or 'higher level of survival' is the basis of the teacher's teaching philosophy and the focal concept of the teacher's conceptual framework he intends to teach through whole class discussion sessions. This dichotomy was the first theme he raised in the first session and asked the learners to think about to discuss during the following sessions. During the second session, after the learners discussed his proposed dichotomy in groups, he clarified his own conception and definition. He stated that 'living' is the origin of learning:

> T: Living breeds learning, gives birth to everything. If we cannot live, how can we live for example English? How can we live love? (S2).

In his conception, the only valid way to learn a language i.e. any means by which one can express her/himself, is to 'live' that language. He further explained:

> T: Living is actually a kind of active process and I am the agent of this process. Means I live. I am doing something. So I am the agent or the doer of the process. But I am alive, it's a kind of state, standing still. What is that doing? That act? That act is creation. I am creating my moments. I am recreating meanings. So this is my life created by me (S2).

According to the excerpt, the teacher considers 'I am living' as an active process in which 'I' am the 'agent' and 'creator' of my own life while in 'I am alive', I am passive in a 'standing still' state when there is no modification and improvement. According to the teacher's definition, 'living' is the continuous process of creating and recreating of meaning that resides in every moment of one's life. Therefore, when one learns to 'live' instead of 'being alive', s/he is empowered to become the 'creator' or the 'agent' of a meaningful life rather than being a follower.

He further explained that in order to 'live English', they should 'think' and 'feel' in English:

> T: So when you think in English and you feel in English you have the chance to live English. So feel the language. Do not use the language like a robot. Cry in English. Be angry in English. So do whatever you do in English. It means give your life to English. Originate your own language. OK? I want you to learn language this way not because you want to pass IELTS exam. And this is a chance to be somebody different, to be somebody more original (S1).

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He asked the learners to use English to express their feelings and thoughts in their actual day-to-day life. This way, English should be their specific language to reflect their unique life created by themselves. 'Living' English would provide them the opportunity to gain their voice, to redefine their own conceptual frameworks and to create 'a new me' which is original. He further explained:

> T: Creation is the ruler. If you want to see whether you live or you are just alive, see if you are creating your moment in whatever you're doing. Just check it. Or you are copying it because somebody can see it and somebody can be pleased with it. That's not living (S2).

The yardstick of 'living', for him, is creating everything one does, feels and thinks rather than being a follower for the sake of pleasing others. 'Being alive' in the teacher's proposed dichotomy means that one does not originate her/his own way of life and follows the status quo dictated by dominant authorities. 'Being alive' could be seen as the lack of authenticity which in Sartre's view is considered to be in bad faith i.e. a kind of self-deception and avoidance mechanism to escape personal responsibility (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010) by simply going with the flow. This is what critical pedagogues disapprove and aim to eradicate. Therefore, upgrade one's life to 'living' instead of 'being alive' is in line with overall aim of CP as an empowering education. The teacher further explains:

> T: Creation doesn't mean you should create something so extraordinary, philosophical abstract, so complicated. No. When you're talking, just express who you really are. I can create my own walking, laughing, smiling, watching, eating, cooking, studying, learning, whatever. When I create those things, means I create and recreate parts of myself. Then step-by-step I will be original. Means I am the origin of my own thinking, my own listening, my own cooking, my own happiness and sadness. I'm not copying my sadness from some stereotypical things. I will be original (S2).

Creation, in his sense, can be accomplished in day to day life thus one can be *original* in, i.e. *be the origin o*f, all aspects of her/his life such as thinking, talking, studying, walking, cooking, eating or even smiling through which one expresses her/himself. This way, 'living' or 'existence' is the continuous process of (re)creating one's reflections and actions. In other words, 'living' is being the agent of one's own *praxis* in various aspects of one's everyday life.

In his conception, the process of the class is the recreation of meaning:

> T: We believe that in this class moments are loaded by huge huge amount of meaning. So when you recreate that meaning residing in that moment, gives you lots of understanding about life (Int2).

He believes that the moments in his class are loaded by "huge huge" amount of "recreated" meaning which provides deeper understanding about life; this continuous process of

"recreation" of meaning in his class is what he referred to as 'conceptualisation', which I will discuss in details in section 7.3 as the teacher's instructional strategy applied in class discussions.

Regarding the themes the teacher brought to discussion, they can be considered as topical themes that Shor (1992) suggests for generating dialogic discussions in class. Unlike generative themes advocated by Freire (1970), topical themes are the materials not generated from students' speech but brought to discussion by the teacher. Topical themes suggested by Shor (1992) is a social question of key significance locally, nationally or globally, however, the topical themes brought to discussion by the teacher were the philosophical concepts drawn from his advocated philosophical framework consisting of what he referred to as 'human core concepts' such as CT, honesty, love, discipline, spirituality and self-discovery to name a few, which he taught through class discussion sessions. He called the process of teaching concepts in his course 'conceptualisation' to which the section 7.3 in the next chapter is devoted.

6.3.2.2   Originality

For him, the evidence of 'living English' is having 'living words':

> T: words should be defined and re-defined by you. It should express you as a human being so this word is a living word. This is the evidence of your living English. This is the fractal for the living word that can be applied recursively (S2).

As he explained in the above quote, in order to change a word to a 'living' word, it should be re/defined by 'me'. This originality is 'the fractal' of learning to 'live English' which had the generative power for the fact that it can be applied recursively i.e. it can be applied to any other language one chooses to express oneself. Thus, this process of 'living' English develops a sense of belonging:

> T: Give your life to English and this language will be your own version of language not your teacher's version because it reflects your life. It is not supposed to be your teacher's language. It is supposed to be your own language. Your English. Do not copy. Be original (S1).

When the learners learn to be original, i.e. be the origin of, their self-expression in English, they would 'live English' i.e. express their original thoughts and feelings in English. This way, they do not follow or copy the transferred version of the teacher's English, rather, they transform English thus they will be the agent and creator of their own unique version of English; they develop a sense of ownership so they upgrade English to 'My' English along with upgrading one's life from living 'a life' to living 'MY life', which was the highlighted theme of the movie 'My life' they discussed in sessions 11th and 12th.

According to him, the word is 'My' word if it is defined by me and defines me; if I generate the word and that word generates a 'new me'; it would be original if I am the origin of the word and it originates me. Then, I am the agent, the creator of the word. This way, this is me who name 'My word' in order to change 'My world' (FNs, 23/07/2014, 26/07/2014). This resonates Freire's 'reading the word and the world' and his conception of a 'true word' as the essence of a 'true dialogue' which has the transformative power (Freire, 1970). Thus, 'living English' necessitates learners' creating their own 'living' words which liberates them to create their authentic life expressing who they really are. Therefore, the liberating power of a 'living word' as the building block of 'living English' resides in one's originality to define it. However, as the discourse analysis in chapter 8 explores, it is the teacher who provides the refined definition of his proposed or highlighted concepts as the final answers and there is no evidence of "originality" or cooperatively defining the concepts.

6.3.2.3   Transformation of motivation

For him, in order to create one's unique version of English, one needs to transform one's motivation. In session 2, the teacher clarified how one could become the creator of one's 'original' life:

> T: So the point is how can I get to that originality? How can I get to that creation? First of all, I should want. Where this sense of wanting comes from? We have different sources for sense of wanting. If it comes from data or information, it is weak sense of wanting and doesn't stay long. But if comes from knowledge and wisdom, it is strong sense of wanting (S2).

In his conception, any human action is the result of a sense of wanting. In this regard, he differentiates between 'weak' and 'strong' sense of wanting. He provides the definition of these two terms in session 2 which I summarised as follows: 'weak sense of wanting' is a reaction to 'data', which he defines as 'fragmented bits and pieces of given things', or reaction to 'information' i.e. 'data when they are linked and connected'. 'Reaction to data and information' generates 'weak sense of wanting' which does not last long. 'Strong sense of wanting', however, is a reaction to 'knowledge' or 'personalised information' i.e. 'when one adds one's life to information', and 'wisdom' i.e. 'when one uses one's knowledge for the betterment of life in general for example life in one's family and friends or life of people in one's city, country, in the world or the whole universe' (S2).

He then explained that if they want to 'live English' and be the creator of their own unique version of English, first they should develop a 'strong' sense of wanting':

T: If you attend this class because of passing IELTS or job promotion, this is just discreet data dangling in the air. Or to learn English to speak to people in English so it is information again. It is not enough. You have chosen weak sense of wanting. Try to just upgrade yourself. Try to add English to life and then change it to knowledge or even wisdom. Use English to upgrade life in your class. Then you will be wise. So your reaction will be strong. Your sense of wanting will be strong and this is very important for conscious decision and creation. It can be right now. At this moment you can be wise. Now you can start being conscious about your knowledge and betterment of life of your class then you will be wise. Now are you wise? Do you consider your classmates as a part of your community? To serve them? To help them? To live for them? (S2).

In his conception, wanting to learn English in order 'to take IELTS' or to be able to speak in English or learning English for the sake of learning English is a 'weak sense of wanting' which he disapproved. Instead, he invited them to upgrade their sense of wanting and use English to modify themselves, become a new person and be at the service of betterment of life of the community of their classmates. This way, 'living English' entails creating one's own version of English so the learners need to upgrade their sense of wanting from learning English for IELTS to using their knowledge for the betterment of the life of their classmates i.e. developing a sense of belonging to a 'commune' in which all have the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings freely and honestly. This way, they cooperatively upgrade their lives from 'being' to 'existence' so they can modify themselves toward more humanity. As I discuss in chapter 9, the learners mostly seemed to align themselves with this stated objective of the course as the basic requirement of involving in the class process.

6.4   Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed and discussed the teacher's advocated teaching philosophy including his understanding of language, and assumptions, theories and principles about language teaching and learning (Stevic, 1988 in Wong, 2006). This set the ground to discuss the teacher's teaching theory within the field of CP and ELT, and then to discuss his theory in practice based on the different aspects of dialogue in whole class discussion as the dominant discourse and as the main teaching method in CP in chapter 8. This background is also necessary for discussing and evaluating his main teaching method in practice with regard to the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9.

CP as 'a way of 'doing' learning and teaching' (Canagarajah, 2005: 932), necessiates critical pedagogues to develop a clear teaching philosophy in order to theorise and practice based on the features and requiremnets of their own contexts. How self-identified critical pedagogues understand CP plays a major role in implementing the approach in their classroom. In fact, not

having a clear conception of CP and its principles and purposes such as '*critical*' or its '*justice oriented -intent*' (Breuing, 2011:*2)* would result in 'floundering' in their actual classroom practice of 'critical praxis', reverting back to the type of transmission-based pedagogy, and translating their emancipatory intentions to oppressive practices (Ruiz & Fernández-Balboa, 2005: 258). As discussed in this chapter, the teacher articulated his teaching philosophy in the interviews and during the course especially the first session when he explained his teaching philosophy, course design, and the process and desired outcome of the course. However, as the analysis in chapters 8 and 9 shows, articulating clear definitions of the principle does not guarantee the congruency between his teaching method and how he actually practices it in the classroom.

Throughout the course, while teaching his proposed philosophical concepts, he highlighted how they are interrelated with his teaching philosophy and ELL. In fact, his teaching philosophy is integrated with the philosophy he teaches through whole class discussion sessions, which is a distinctively different method from other ELL courses aiming at developing language skills. Having a distinctive organized teaching philosophy, as Goodyear and Allchin (1998) state, provides stability, continuity, and long-term guidance, which help teachers to remain focused on their pedagogical objectives, and improve the effect they have on students and on their own learning. Moreover, sharing teaching philosophy with learners is beneficial as it could enhance learners' willingness to fulfil the required tasks and motivate them to engage in class activities (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998). This could be one of the reasons why most of the learners developed a positive view toward the teacher and the process of the class, and aligned themselves with the stated objectives of the course, as explored and discussed in chapter 9. In fact, the teacher's refined philosophical concepts accompanied by non-textbook materials through strongly controlled interactional sessions captivated the learners who were totally accustomed to exam-oriented, monolingual lecturing classes based on heavy textbooks.

Although there is little opportunity in the education system of the country to receive any formal training regarding CP and CT, the teacher was first introduced to CP by one of his English professors in the university. Following his interest and concern, he studied more about CP, CT and different fields of study such as physics, psychology and philosophy. This way, he grew a multi-perspective view which he considered as a source of empowerment for educators. He then contextualised, designed and modified this ELL course through years of teaching English in higher education in different institutes. Evidently, his knowledge and experience resulted in a refined philosophical framework that he teaches through controlled whole class discussion sessions and places him in a superior all-knowing position far from a student-teacher.

The main concern of the teacher to apply CP is to 'survive' the humanistic aspects of human life which necessitates activating CT which is his specified objective of his designed ELL course. As he defined, CT consists of 6 interrelated steps to build a logical frame of reference to judge oneself and others, and decide based one one's judgement as the highest level of CT. Moreover, he considered 'wisdom' as 'the highest level of humanity' which he defined as 'using one's knowledge for the betterment of human life in general'. This way, he adopted a social collective view toward the outcome of CT which is in line with the primary aim of CP i.e. the betterment of human life or humanisation.

In his defined process of logicality, one is supposed to reach to 'self-awareness' which should lead one to gain voice to express one's thoughts and feelings. This would provide her/him the opportunity to modify oneself toward living an authentic life. Evidently, the building blocks of his teaching philosophy are in common with the main concepts of the philosophy of existentialism that affected Freire in his conceptualisation of CP. However, he never mentioned existentialism or its key figures which could be due to avoiding any problems regarding the political and ideological restraints of the government. This could affect the quality of dialogues in class discussions; as I discuss in chapter 8, this places him in a superior position closer to an all-knowing teacher in a traditional banking education, which makes the teacher-student relations more dichotomous.

Primarily, his conception of CT as the origin of CP is contradictory as it promises liberation but at the same time it advocates a certain style of thinking as he provided a refined definition of steps of logic as the only valid frame of reference. In fact, according to the class discourse analysis in chapter 8, his advocated "conceptualisation" turns out to be teaching a set of predefined philosophical concepts. Moreover, his interpretation of basic features of CT based on authenticity could raise similar questions regarding the ideal of authenticity such as: what exactly is the "self" one is supposed to be true to?, what does it include or exclude?, and how can one distinguish whether one's deepest and most personal thoughts and desires are actually her/his to be embraced and expressed, or rather they are a product of social and historical conditions that need to be called into question, be worked over and replaced? This ambiguity tends to result in confusion and despair thus cannot be a guiding ideal for one's life as a trustworthy basis of CT (Guignon, 2004). As I discuss this point further in chapters 8 and 9, this could also lead the learners to totally rely on the teacher's judgment about what they express as being either 'honest' and 'original' or 'fake' and 'cliché' thus belonging to 'their fake layers' in need to be destroyed. This would result in the learners' total reliance and dependency to the teacher, which is more domesticating than empowering and liberating.

Moreover, expressing one's thoughts in the community of learners, in line with his definition of CT, is what the teacher considered as the main function of ELL in his class. For him, enhancing self-expression is an anti-oppressive process as it liberates learners from being impressed by the dominant voice and culture, the potential pathways to oppression. This is in line with CT discipline that strives for the students' achievement of a significant degree of self-sufficiency i.e. liberation from the unwarranted and undesirable control of unjustified beliefs' (Siegel, 1988). Moreover, his insistence on self-expression reminds the concept of 'voice' in dialogic pedagogy that supports the inclusion of the learners' voices which have traditionally been excluded from academic discourse (Wong, 2006). As discussed in 5.3.2, at the heart of dialogic pedagogy is the possibility of multiple voices in the community of class where all voices are potential to emerge and interplayed thus interlocutors are allowed to develop their own views in their own ways (Lefstein & Snell, 2014; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014; Rule, 2015). Whether and how this was practised in the discourse of the class is discussed through discourse analysis of a sample of whole class discussion in chapter 8. As it is evident in chapter 8, his classroom practice greatly contradicts his teaching philosophy and basically is a means of indoctrination of his predefined philosophical framework, which would make the process of the class far from liberatory and empowering.

Regarding the teacher-student relationship which is of crucial significance in CP and greatly affects the quality of dialogue of class discourse, the teacher claims an egalitarian approach and advocates a cooperative and friendly atmosphere where dichotomy of teacher-student resolves and mutual learning and teaching happens. This reminds the role and importance of dialogue as 'empowerment' which assumes participants' freely entering into dialogue with equal rights and opportunities (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). Moreover, he believes that educators should set an interactive relationship between their 'world and self' and their learners', to transform, and not simply transfer, concepts. To do this, he advocates showing the learners that he understands them and cares about them to make them feel secure to express themselves. Moreover, he emphasises on the learners' independency from the teacher to be original in their ideas. In fact, far from being followers, the process of the class is supposed to liberate them as they are empowered to create their own conceptual framework and their own way of life. In chapters 8 and 9, I explore the teacher's authoritarian role in directing and controlling the class discussions and how the learners view it. Evidently, the way he controls and directs the class discussions contradicts the basic features of dialogue and turns to be rather domesticating; misleading enough, however, to captivate the learners who are educated in a totally monolingual banking education.

According to the literature as discussed in 2.4, applying CP to language education places socio-political considerations high on the classroom agenda (Ford, 2009). Therefore, the main aim of implementation of CP to ELT is to create a context for critical awareness for English learners and teachers to investigate underlying socio-political issues and cultural values in order to take action to transform and improve (Akbari, 2008; Rashidi & Safari, 2011). The teacher's advocated teaching philosophy seems to adopt a socio-political view toward education that is to set against the domesticating education and society; however, he primarily highlights self-transformation rather than explicitly targeting socio-political aspects. This less explicit political stand seems to be more enduring regarding the autocratic government of the country which does not seem to allow or tolerate any critical movements contradictory to the ideological and political status quo.

Moreover, in applying CP to ELT, as discussed in 2.4., the main focus is raising critical awareness of the imperialistic aspect of English and resisting deculturation by exploring the issues of power which are situated in language, and the complex socio-historical and political aspects of language learning and teaching (Alptekin, 2002; Benesch, 2001; Canagarajah, 1999, 2005; Morgan, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2007; Phillipson, 1992, 1997, 2009; Ramanathan, 2002). In line with this and with the desirable policies of the government in power, Iranian researchers mostly focus on English imperialism and hegemony and advocated counter-hegemonic materials by including global issues such as world peace, inequality and poverty along with source culture to avoid total reliance on the target language. In this course, however, the teacher did not consider EL as a possible means of deculturation or hegemony, rather English was considered as an opportunity for learners to express their thoughts in the community of the class to generate their authenticity. As he states, English as a new language can facilitate the process of breaking their old frames of concepts and build a new logically defined conceptual frameworks based on which they would critically and consciously judge and decide. As he advocates, along with expressing their thoughts and feelings in English, their English would be naturally improved as well, which is rather fascinating for an "IELTS preparation" course but an unverified claim.

Moreover, the teacher's syllabus including the selection of materials and the topics he brought to discussion do not comply with Iranian researchers in the field of CP and ELT. Besides the IELTS textbook, he included English texts and movies which were used to set the ground for discussing his proposed philosophical themes. These are in disagreement with Iranian researchers' emphasis on developing and using counter-hegemonic materials. Regarding the themes of the discussions, they can be considered as topical themes brought to discussion by the teacher which were the philosophical concepts drawn from his philosophical framework consisting of

what he referred to as 'human core concepts' such as honesty, love and spirituality to name a few. These themes are not in line with the suggested themes by the Iranian researchers, such as world peace, inequality and poverty or Iranian cultures which are compatible with the themes Shor (1992) suggests which are social questions of key significance locally, nationally or globally. In the next chapter I explore the teacher's advocated teaching method and instructional strategy.

7. The teacher's advocated teaching method and instructional strategy

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I analyse and discuss the teacher's main teaching method and instructional strategy, namely 'dialogic discussion' and 'conceptualisation' respectively, as the teacher advocated and justified in the interviews and in the class. This sets the ground to evaluate his teaching method and instructional strategy in practice through the discourse analysis of a sample of whole class discussions in chapter 8.

7.2 "Dialogic discussion"

In the first session, the teacher asserted that "dialogic discussion" is 'the best' teaching method. In this regard, he referred to Plato and explained:

> T: Plato believed that the best way you can teach somebody is having dialogue, not just giving a lecture but dialogic process of teaching and learning (S1).

In the above excerpt, the teacher referred to Plato, one of the Socrates' students whose dialogues are among the most comprehensive accounts of Socrates (Kofman, 1998). According to the excerpt, the teacher disapproved 'lecturing' and advocated dialogic teaching and learning as 'the best' teaching method. His emphasis on 'dialogic process' reflects the concept of dialogue in dialogic pedagogy which, as discussed in 2.2.4 , should guide and be the yardstick of all pedagogical actions and designs (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014). The teacher clarified further in interview 3:

> T: Plato believes that learning happens in the best way possible when they talk together and challenge each other and you cannot teach anything. You just can trigger people to remember what they already know (Int3).

The teacher believes that "dialogic discussions" in which people 'talk together and challenge' each other's ideas are the best way to learn. This conception is congruent with dialogic process of learning through which teachers and learners critically interrogate the topic of study by expressing and listening to multiple voices and points of view (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). I further investigate the effect of Socratic dialogue and questioning on his instructional strategy in the following chapter.

In the excerpt, he referred to Socratic epistemology i.e. any search is a 'recollection (anamnesis) of what the eternal soul in each human already knows'. This implies that learning is the development of ideas buried deep in the soul thus when an idea is learned, it is basically just recalled (Matusov, 2009: 15). This idea is also reflected in the teacher's conception of 'human core concepts', which, as discussed in 6.2.4, are the pillars of his philosophical framework including CT and humanity. This epistemology had a significant effect on the teacher's teaching method to which I return in the following section in which I explore the governing strategy of his class discussion namely "conceptualisation".

In line with his emphasis on "dialogic discussion", whole class discussions were the most frequent activity and most time of the course was spent on this activity. This could be considered as innovation regarding the lecturing classes which are norm in the educational settings in the country. However, according to the literature, the genre of discourse cannot authenticate its dialogicity or its lack of it. In fact, a highly interactive and conversational class might be quite monologic (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014). Investigating the role and importance of dialogue in a sample of whole class discussions is the subject of chapter 8; as I analyse and discuss in chapter 8, his class discussion discourse lacks the basic features of dialogue and contradicts his advocated instructional strategy, 'conceptualisation', which I discuss in the next section.

7.3 "Conceptualisation"

As discussed in chapter 6, 'human core concepts' play the major role in the teacher's teaching philosophy as the learners are supposed to re/define them to be able to discover and activate them in themselves to create their own 'unique', 'authentic' version of 'human beings'. To this end, he introduced his main instructional strategy as 'conceptualisation' which is what he declared as 'his modified version of CP' (Int2).

'Conceptualisation', according to vocabulary.com, means 'inventing or contriving an idea or explanation and formulating it mentally'. As the definition suggests, 'conceptualisation' involves creating, formulating, explaining and understanding concepts. This seems similar to teaching concepts which basically involves learning specific concepts which may also involves the development of logical reasoning and CT. By introducing 'conceptualisation' as his 'modified version of CP', he seems to differentiate between 'conceptualisation' and teaching concepts, which I explored further through the 6 following themes.

7.3.1 Governing norm of class discussions

As the teacher stated in his interview, 'meaning-making' or defining concepts cooperatively is the discussion norm:

> T: This is the way we handle everything in this class. We define everything. Conceptualisation. Meaning-making (Int2).

Like Socrates, he initiated discussions by asking the learners to define a concept at hand and continuously reminded them of this governing rule of discussions:

> T: Just tell me something that you can define. I am so tired of cliché (S12).

During whole class discussion sessions, the learners either voluntarily engaged in dialogue with him to offer their definitions or the teacher called them by name to share their opinions. If the teacher disapproved their offered definitions, which happened most often, they were considered as invalid for being 'cliché' or 'stereotypes' thus as a part of their 'fake layers' in need to be destroyed to set the ground for his offered definitions. This can also be traced back to Socrates whose purpose to dialogue was an attempt to make the interlocutors doubt their own beliefs, and refute their ideas 'in order 'to move beyond false belief to ascertain truth' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 17).

As the leading rule of discussions, failure to define something means the lack of realisation. In fact, in his conception:

> T: When you cannot define something, that something does not exist for you. By defining something, you bring it to existence; you make it real. You realise it. You modify it (S14).

In his conception, one's inability to define a concept equates its non-existence in one's world of words. Defining a concept upgrades it to the 'existence' level in which it can be '*real'ised* i.e. to become 'real'. By defining a word, as he advocated, it enters the realm of 'existence' so it can be modified and upgraded to a new definition. Here, he related 'conceptualisation' to his proposed dichotomy of 'being' vs 'existence' which, as discussed in 6.2.6, is considered as the only fertile ground for growth, improvement and modification. Thus, 'conceptualisation' of 'human core concepts' is his proposed humanisation, which leads one to enter the realm of 'higher level of survival', 'existence' or 'authenticity'.

Furthermore, in line with his Socratic epistemology, the teacher believes that 'conceptualisation', like CT, 'philosophy' and 'humanity' as discussed in the previous chapter, is human inner natural tendency:

> T: We all have tendency toward conceptualisation (S16).

This reminds Socratic dialogue in which the interlocutors are supposed to have 'an unlimited willingness to justify and supply reasons for everything that is said' (Gadamer, 1991: 52). This supposition implies that if a learner is not willing to "conceptualise", "philosophise" or "think logically" along the way he advocates, her/his natural tendency is distorted thus needs to be rectified. This conception tends to result in presupposing that all learners are willing to take part in the challenging process of upgrading their lives to "authentic" lives which, as he stated, is the "only" way that satisfies their natural desires to be original human beings. This could be rooted in and intensified by his Socratic epistemology that when he teaches 'human core concepts' in fact he makes the learners to recall them as these concepts are already there within, awaiting to be activated. This, along with his emphasis on self-transformation to create an authentic life, tends to be authoritatively directive (Rule, 2015) and 'dialogic autocratic' (Sarid, 2012: 937). This is confirmed through discourse analysis of a sample of class discussion in chapter 8 and thematic analysis of the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9.

Moreover, the teacher claimed that '*we* define everything', like how he claimed in 'doing CP' in class, which is in accordance with the active role the students should play as advocated in dialogic critical pedagogy (Crookes, 2012; Shor & Freire, 1987a). Thus, regarding his emphasis on dialogic education and making the class as a community, his proposed 'conceptualisation' is expected to involve dialogic interactions through which definitions are collaboratively created. Moreover, as I explore and discuss further in this section, his proposed process of 'conceptualisation' is supposed to include learning the logical process of definition as a transferable and generalizable skill, which he considers as a cooperative process of empowerment and liberation. However, as the class discourse analysis in chapter 8 evidences, the way he manages the interactions in class discussion sessions greatly contradicts his advocated 'conceptualisation' as he neither motivates nor allows the generation of collaborative definitions. In fact, his class discussion sessions are hardly more than highly controlled question-answer interactions to reach to his refined definitions. Actually, he engages the learners in a *pseudo-dialogic* space by asking them to define his preselected concepts without letting their voices to interplay, and rejecting their answers without providing any useful comments or practical suggestions. Therefore, the learners do not play an active role in managing the discussions; thus, his teaching is far from liberating and empowering.

7.3.2   "The secret of language learning"

The teacher stated that 'conceptualisation' is "the secret of language learning"; in session 3, he explained this point referring to Helen Keller's autobiographical book namely 'the day language

came to my life', in which the author narrated how she, as a deaf and dumb child, started realising language by the help of her tutor, Ann Sullivan. Chapter 5 of the book, titled 'the story of my life' (see appendix 13), was among the texts the learners were assigned to read at home and discussed in class (FN, 03/07/2014). The teacher explained:

> T: There is a secret for learning a language. Change object into concept. This is not just English or Farsi. It can be art, physics, mathematics. If you just can move up from parametric level to conceptual level then you can get the secret of language. You can learn the language very quickly (S3).

According to the excerpt, changing 'objects' to 'concepts' or moving from 'parametric level' to 'conceptual level' is 'the secret of language learning', which facilitates learning a language i.e. any means by which one can express her/himself including any human faculties such as 'art, physics and mathematics'.

For the teacher, the first step to move from 'parametric level' to 'conceptual level' is to extract the core features. In this regard, he believes that 'conceptualisation' has different levels:

> T: There are different levels of conceptualisation. When you define something, first you should extract the basic features. For example, you want to define a table: flat surface plus legs to put stuffs on. You want to go beyond this, deeper levels of conceptualisation. Is all definition of this table just flat surface and legs? No. Go ahead and you conceptualise it more. Different aspects of it, the physical shape of it, the purpose, the material. The deeper you go, the more links you find, the more conceptual it is, the more meaningful it becomes (S16).

According to the excerpt, in defining a concept, first the basic features of it should be extracted. For example, in defining a table, the basic features are 'a flat surface and legs to put stuffs on'. Deeper levels of conceptualisation can be reached through considering the table from as many perspectives as possible and finding links between them. Consequently, the more aspects one considers something from and the more links one can find between them, the more meaningful it becomes. Thus, the process of 'conceptualisation' is the process of 'searching the links':

> T: Concepts are formed when you search for meaning. When you define something, you search for links. The meaning of meaning is link (S16).

Thus, in order to conceptualise one should search for the links which firstly necessitates thinking critically i.e. to consider a concept from different perspectives to develop a multi-perspective view as he advocated and discussed in 6.2.5. Then, by finding the links between those aspects, the concept becomes meaningful. In the next theme, I explore further how the process of 'conceptualisation' necessitates his proposed CT.

7.3.3 A logical process

The basic requirement in defining a concept is following his defined '6 steps of logic' as discussed in 6.2.7:

> T: conceptuality is a logical process. You cannot make something conceptual without logic (S16).

Therefore, the requisite of 'conceptualisation' is CT, which starts with 'rationality' i.e. looking for 'evidence' to find 'fractals':

> T: Conceptualisation is searching for evidence and find the fractals, which have direction as their basis. Fractals are the highest level of conceptuality. By asking questions, you can find fractals (S16).

According to the above quote, the process of 'conceptualisation' entails his defined process of CT i.e. considering something from different perspectives which gives birth to questions looking for 'fractals'. As discussed 6.2.7, he defined 'fractal' as 'the most elemental meaningful unit, rule or pattern that can be applied recursively' (S11). Consequently, if one can follow 6 steps of logic in the process of defining concepts, s/he is free to create her/his "own version of everything":

> T: If you get the conceptual process or logical process, you will be free to create your own version of everything (S16).

This is what he considered as empowering and liberating process of the process of 'conceptualisation', which I explore more in the next two themes.

7.3.4 A liberatory process

The process of 'conceptualisation', according to the teacher, 'frees' people from parametric life:

> T: When you move toward conceptualisation, frees you from heavy burden of redundancies of parametric life. All of the unnecessary parts will be discarded and you move to core concepts. You don't need to carry anything and you are free. So you can create your own version of anything (S16).

'Conceptualisation' is supposed to free people from parametric levels by eradicating the heavy burden of the imposed 'ill-defined' concepts. In other words, 'conceptualisation' aims to destroy the 'fake layers' through questioning as the natural result of CT to get close to 'core concepts'. This seems to be compatible with the main tenet of CT that strives for making the students self-sufficient i.e. liberated from 'the unwarranted and undesirable control of unjustified beliefs' (Siegel, 1988: 58).

In his conception, 'conceptualisation' is liberation:

> T: conceptualisation is liberation. It is more than freedom. It has three different features. Conceptualisation gives birth to freedom, generation, and generalisation. Means you have the power to generate whatever you want and to generalise it. You can carry it to some other aspects. It is within you. Conceptuality can be a part of your living system. You should conceptualise everything and this conceptualisation should be made by you (S1).

According to the excerpt, his proposed 'conceptualisation' has three basic features: 'freedom, generation and generalisation'. It 'frees' people from parametric life and empowers them to 'generate' their own unique version of concepts and 'generalise' this ability to all other aspects of their life. Thus, 'conceptualisation' can be applied to learning any language one chooses in her/his life to express her/himself. Hence, 'conceptualisation' liberates and empowers people to be the agent of their unique language(s) by which they gain voice to express themselves and resist oppression.

As he highlighted in the excerpt, the process of 'conceptualisation' should be developed by oneself. Thus, the liberating feature of 'conceptualisation' depends on the originality of definitions. In class, this originality necessitates the co-creation of definitions in the community of learners through 'dialogic discussions', as he declared: '*we* define everything'. However, as I explore in chapter 8, how his asserted 'conceptualisation' is practised in the discourse of whole class discussions is far from 'liberating' as how he manages class interactions contradicts the basic features of dialogue including the 'co-creation' of definitions.

Furthermore, the teacher believes that 'conceptualisation' in English is easier than in the learners' first language, Farsi, for the fact that they have 'framed conceptual frameworks' in their first language which 'imprisoned' them:

> T: The concepts in their mother tongue Farsi were established and difficult to change but English as a new language gave us this opportunity to redefine so it is easier to go through un-learning and re-learning in a new language, here English (Int1).

According to the excerpt, learners' 'fake layers', i.e. 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks, in their first language were established and difficult to break. However, through a new language, here English, it is easier to go through the process of 'un-learning' i.e. breaking the 'fake layers', and 're-learning' i.e. establishing new logically-defined conceptual frameworks. In the first session, he explained this point:

> T: The point is when you detach from Farsi, when you come to English, you feel freedom. You won't be framed. You are framed now in Farsi. Framed. Imprisoned. I want you to break the frame and come out and feel free and experience yourself again. It's a new chance to redefine yourself again. This is a chance. Do not lose it (S1).

For him, 'conceptualisation' in English gave the learners a new chance to 'break the frame' and redefine themselves. To do this, they should "detach" themselves from Farsi and 'feel free' in English where they were not 'framed' or 'imprisoned'. In line with this, he strictly prohibited them to switch to Farsi in class, and placed emphasis on using only monolingual English dictionaries, and never watching the movies with Farsi subtitles. So English was the only language they were allowed to use for doing their tasks at home or performing the activities in the class. As he emphasised all through the course, the learners were supposed to learn how to 'live' English that is 'to think' and 'to feel' in English and 'to honestly express themselves' in the community of the class. In the first session, he was asked by one of the learners that how they could 'detach' from Farsi and 'think in English'. He stated that class activities and assignments were designed to help them in this regard, so they "*just*" need to rely on the process and follow his instructions (FN, 28/06/2014).

7.3.5   A challenging process

The teacher clarified from the first session that 'conceptualisation' as a self-transformational process would be very challenging which necessitates courage:

> **T**: The process is very challenging and you need to be brave to face and survive. This is how you break your fake layers and transformed (S1).

This challenge of 'breaking one's fake layers' reminds the demand placed on the seeker of authenticity which, according to Guignon (2004), is quite strict as it requires dramatic and often painful transformation of one's self through critical self-examination of her/his own opinions, assumptions, beliefs, and ideas (Fishman, 1985). Regarding all the rewards the learners are assured to acquire by trusting and following his teaching method, including 'making a new me' and 'living an authentic life', the by-product of which is the natural improvement of their English, any challenge seems to be more a fascinating adventure than a painful process. In chapter 9, I discuss how the learners figure out and deal with this 'challenging' process of class discussions.

7.3.6   A humanising process

He believes that by 'conceptualising human core concepts', one is empowered to create one's 'own version of humanity:

> T: If you can get the concept of humanity, you can recreate your own version of humanity. You will be a new human being which is created by you yourself (S29).

In defining humanity, based on his definition, firstly 'human core concepts' should be extracted and defined which enables one to generate one's own version of humanity, which as discussed previously, in his conception, is 'the ultimate desire' of human beings and 'the only' thing that would satisfy them. In this regard, he conceives 'humanity' as 'the integration of 'human core concepts':

> T: Humanity is the integration of human core concepts. If you activate them, if you integrate them and link them to different aspects of your life, you are in the realm of humanity (S19).

Thus, an 'authentic' human being is the one who creates one's own unique version of humanity by discovering, activating and integrating 'human core concepts' and linking them to different aspects of one's life, which he referred to as 'human faculties' such as 'social', 'emotional' and 'educational' faculties. This is also the process of turning questions to 'concerns' as discussed before in 6.2.5 and 6.2.6: through questioning which is the natural result of CT, and linking them to 'human core concepts', one develops 'concerns' that direct one's life toward 'humanity'. Therefore, humanising process of 'conceptualisation' basically depends on the originality of the definitions of human core concepts, which, as I explored in the following chapter, is an unaccomplished claim.

7.4   Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed and discussed the teacher's main teaching method and instructional strategy namely 'dialogic discussion' and 'conceptualisation' respectively. This prepared the necessary background to further discuss his theory in practice based on the different aspects of dialogue in whole class discussion as the dominant discourse of the course and as the main teaching method in CP in chapter 8. This background is also necessary for discussing and evaluating his main teaching method in practice with regard to the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9.

In applying 'dialogic discussion' as his main teaching method, he was inspired by Socratic dialogue which he considered as 'the best teaching method'. Socratic epistemology is evident in developing his teaching method; for him, 'conceptualisation' or philosophising is human inner natural tendency and 'human core concepts' are within all human beings. Thus, when he teaches 'human core concepts' in fact he makes the learners recall them as these concepts are already there within waiting to be activated. This tends to lead the process of 'conceptualisation' to indoctrination. This also implies that if learners are not willing to 'conceptualise', 'philosophise' or 'think critically', their inner natural tendency is distorted thus needs to be rectified. In fact,

engaging the learners in learning his collection of philosophical concepts as predetermined curricular endpoints basically contradicts the open-ended spirit of dialogue as the learners may not be willing to transform their motivation from learning English for taking IELTS to self-transformation to live an authentic life.

The governing norm of class discussions is what he called 'conceptualisation' as his 'modified version of CP'. 'Conceptualisation' was developed based on his original concern to find a way to liberate people from 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks imposed by authorities and society. He considered these frameworks as 'fake layers' which should be destroyed through questioning as the natural result of CT, and then be replaced by logically defined concepts. He considered the challenging process of 'conceptualisation' as liberation as it *free*s people from the parametric level and empowers them to *generate* their own definition and *generalise* this ability to all aspects of their life.

Moreover, for him 'conceptualisation' is humanisation through which learners are supposed to create their own unique version of humanity by discovering, activating and integrating 'human core concepts' and linking them to different aspects of their life such as 'social', 'emotional' and 'educational' faculties. His promised liberation and humanisation entail the originality of definitions i.e. the definitions should be cooperatively created through dialogues in the community of learners in the class. He also believes that 'conceptualisation' is facilitated through English, as the learners conceptual frameworks have not been established in the new language thus it is easier to go through breaking the 'ill-defined' concepts and replacing them with logically defined ones. Thus, he placed emphasis on monolingual process of learning English and all class activities and assignments are performed in English. This is incongruent with some Iranian researchers who support including the learners' first language in ELL classes as a sign of empowerment and resistance against linguistic imperialism (Akbari, 2008; Davari et al, 2012; Momenian & Shirazizadeh, 2009). The next chapter is devoted to explore, analyse and discuss his main instructional strategy in classroom practice through class discourse analysis of a sample of whole class discussion.

8. Dialogic values of whole class discussions

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to investigate the teacher's main teaching method, as discussed in the previous chapter, in class discourse to explore the role and importance of dialogue as the key feature of a dialogic critical approach to teaching. To this end, I employed Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue to analyse a sample which provides an example of how 'conceptualisation' – stated as the governing norm of class discussions by the teacher – took place in whole class discussion sessions. I have selected one episode which is particularly relevant to understand how one of the key concepts of the teacher's proposed conceptual framework is defined for the first time.

This chapter consists of four main sections. The first section includes the sampling and selection of the focal episode and provides its transcription and description to prepare the ground for in-depth analysis. In the second section, I analyse and discuss the dialogic features of the focal episode, including interactional form, interplay of voices, critique, thinking together, relationships and empowerment, as discussed in 5.3. I end up this chapter by discussion and conclusion which integrates and summarises the issues explored.

8.2 Sampling

As discussed in 7.2, 'dialogic discussion' is the teacher's stated main teaching method aligned with which whole class discussions were the most frequent activity and most of the course time was devoted to them. Therefore, quantitatively, the whole class discussion was the dominant type of discursive genre throughout classroom interaction time. It was also the time during which most of the learners were involved, so it can be considered as the most interactional whole class activity. Moreover, as I discuss in chapter 9, according to the learners' viewpoints expressed in Q2 and FGs, whole class discussions were considered as the most effective and useful activity which made this course different from any other English courses they had attended. Consequently, I limited my sampling to whole class discussions, which occurred 51 times during 29 sessions as briefly described in 4.4.2.3 and outlined in a table provided in appendix 5.

As introduced in 4.6.2.3, I categorised the whole class discussions in three types regarding the themes of the discussions namely topical thematic, movie-based and text-based, during which one or several themes highlighted by the teacher were discussed. I transcribed many segments of whole class discussion sessions with a focus on those episodes during which the teacher's proposed concepts were defined for the first time. After scrutinising these episodes, I found a similar dialogic pattern governing the process of defining the concepts. Due to the word limit, I needed to limit my sampling to one episode providing a clear and concise example, which stands for 6 other samples analysed across the whole data sample.

The discussion session from which the selected episode is drawn took place in the second part of the session 10 after the break for 72 minutes, in which 11 of the learners attended. This activity included a whole class discussion based on a five-page text on CT and critical reading, which was one of the articles of the course reading collection as outlined in 4.6.2.1. The text, provided in the appendix 12, includes 6 basic characteristics of CT which the teacher referred to as 6 steps of logic namely, 'rationality', 'self-awareness', 'honesty', 'open mindedness', 'discipline' and 'judgment', which I discussed in 6.2.7 as the basis of his conception of CT. This episode was selected as it presents a clear example of how the concept of 'evidence' is defined for the first time. This concept, in terms of the teacher's CP philosophy, can be regarded a significant curricular step forward.

Two female learners, Shila and Parisa, were assigned by the teacher in the previous session to prepare themselves to lead the discussion about the assigned article. Shila was a former learner of the same course who had taken the course two years before and was repeating it out of interest while Parisa was taking the course for the first time, being introduced to it by a former learner (Q1). As they agreed between themselves, Shila prepared to present the first half of the article and Parisa the second half. During the break, they divided the whiteboard in two halves vertically and wrote on each side for their presentation. The session started with Shila and continued by Parisa, which took about 37 minutes. When they finished, they returned to their seats, the teacher went to the front and ran the session for about 35 minutes (FN, 21/07/2014).

In appendix 15, the selected class discussion session is introduced in six segments for the ease of description, and I briefly described them to give a general picture of the process of the discussion session by referring to the corresponding lines in the transcription presented in the appendix 14. The selected episode is the second segment, lines 61 to 145, through which the concept of 'evidence' was defined for the first time and 6 out of 11 attendants involved. In this episode, Shila, the first presenter, was talking about 'open-mindedness' as one of the

characteristics of CT according to the article. The teacher interrupted her by asking what she meant by 'evidence' that she just mentioned as a requisite for 'rationality' according to the article. Here, I provide the transcription of the focal episode followed by a thick description to set the ground for the following analysis. The transcription system of the focal episode is provided in appendix 11.

8.2.1 Transcription

| 61 | Shila: I shouldn't decide by emotion and for this reason I really need evidence to have reason |
| 62 | so evidence is more important than this |

| 63 | T: = what do you mean by evidence? Define evidence |

| 64 | Shila: evidence … for example |

| 65 | T: = maybe Parisa can share |

66	Parisa: (2) for evidence we can say that for being a rational … we need some steps of logic so
67	here we can say that … if you are going to decide about something … we are supposed to see
68	that situation from different aspects and then according to … to … let's say advantages or
69	disadvantages of that decision-making … we can just say this is right to do or not right

| 70 | T: = okay |

| 71 | Shila: (2) and for this evidence |

| 72 | T: = of course she didn't define evidence |

| 73 | Shila: = can I define evidence? For example … I say somebody is angry and I have some |
| 74 | evidence |

| 75 | T: = who? |

| 76 | Shila: for example my mother is angry…you say why I say to you because |

| 77 | T: = and I'm getting angry as well you know |

| 78 | Shila: yeah? |

| 79 | **Learners laugh** |

| 80 | T: because of this fragmented … |

| 81 | Shila: = fragmented? Just because of fragmented or because of my … |

| 82 | T: no you are good but actually you are supposed to manage the discussion together stop the |
| 83 | others and the whole process care about others talk to them your own is good |

| 84 | Shila: and (2) |

| 85 | T: your mom is angry |

| 86 | Shila: yeah … you … you ask me why I think so I give you some evidence… for example my |
| 87 | mom doesn't … doesn't speak to me or it acts |

88	T: = define evidence!
89	Shila: evidence?
90	T: define it
91	Shila: evidence (2) it's hard you know
92	T: = yeah I know it's hard … Parisa define it!
93	Parisa: (2) all the facts that you see for something is evidence
94	Taha: [what is fact?]
95	T: [yeah]
96	Parisa: [for example] for example … when somebody is struggling there is an struggle in his or
97	her mind … he should be untidy … he may not concentrate on his way of doing something … in
98	that case you can say that his mind is not calm it is an evidence that
99	T: = so you are giving me instances of evidence not definition of evidence get it? these are
100	instances examples
101	Parisa: = yeah, examples
102	T: = I want definition can you give me the definition of evidence? do you have definition for
103	evidence? definition for evidence? definition for evidence? from now on this is the way okay
104	go on!
105	Parisa: evidence (3)
106	T: Ali! evidence!
107	Ali: (2) materials that tells us about some evident … material that tell … tell about the evident
108	T: = tells about evidence?
109	Ali: evident! something that happened
110	T: =something that?
111	Ali: material that tell about … tells us about something that happened
112	T: = the materials tell us?
113	Ali: materials tell us … give us
114	T: = how can they tell us?
115	Ali: = gives us knowledge you know information … inform us of something that happened
116	before …
117	T: what else?...
118	Sara: some fractals that we can
119	T: = what is fractal?
120	Sara: = let me just finish first

121   T: = no what first fractal means?

122   Sara: … that something to broken and we try to find … to see if … wait … to see if we can see
123   any links between evidence

124   T: =no! so when you don't know what is fractal you can't use it in a sentence you know

125   Roya: = can we say it is something integrated?

126   T: = something?

127   Roya: = I'm talking about evidence … integrated information not separated one … we have to
128   join the speech in order to give meaning to whatever we are saying

129   T: = do you remember we said something to look for evidence? … concept in a paragraph?...
130   supporting sentences and main idea? …

131   Mary: yeah supporting sentences to find evidence for our main idea

132   T: = evidence gives us direction to [the main idea]

133   Roya: [direction]

134   T: = giving us direction to the main idea move this way move that way move this way move
135   this way … evidence contains direction directions are under fractals that she couldn't define
136   yet you know … she will define later on of course but she uses that… so fractals contain… or
137   just they carry fractal … sorry … evidence carry fractal and fractals have one basic function and
138   that is direction showing us direction so evidence shows us the direction to the main concept
139   … the concept of your mother being angry… your mother was angry … maybe yesterday and
140   the evidence was the movement for example she has from her facial expression your mother
141   being angry could be evident because of the direction of some bits and pieces around that can
142   direct you towards your mother being angry … so evidence is something that shows you
143   [direction]

144   Taha: [direction]

145   T: the concept … okay… go ahead

8.2.2   Description

In the episode, Shila, the first presenter, was talking about 'open-mindedness' as one of the

characteristics of CT according to the article (Lines 61-62). The teacher interrupted her by asking

what she meant by 'evidence' that she just mentioned, followed by his command: 'define

evidence!' (Line 63). As soon as she started to reply (Line 64), the teacher interrupted her again

by addressing her partner, Parisa, to define the term (Line 65): 'maybe Parisa can share'. Parisa

had an extended turn to share her definition (Lines 66-69), which was followed by the teacher's

'Okay' (Line 70). Shila considered this as approval thus started to continue but she was

interrupted by the teacher who clarified: 'of course she didn't define evidence' (Line 72). Then,

Shila volunteered to define 'evidence' (Line 73). She started with an example: 'for example, I say somebody is angry and I have some evidence' (Lines 73-74). The teacher interrupted her again and asked: 'who?' (Line 75). This question made Shila to make her example more concrete: 'for example, my mother is angry you say why and I say to you because' (Line 76). He interrupted her again and said: 'and I'm getting angry as well, you know' (Line 77). Shila exclaimed which followed by the learners laughter (Line 79).

In order to clarify this, I need to refer to segment 1; early in her presentation, the teacher interrupted Shila to ask how they prepared themselves for the presentation (Line 37). Shila answered that they divided the article to two halves (line 40). The teacher criticised them: 'you are supposed to talk together harmonise the condition not mechanically dividing it in two parts like an apple half for you half from me' (Lines 46-48). Here in this episode, the teacher again made a hint to show his disapproval of their 'fragmented' presentation (Line 80). Shila sought clarification to make sure his criticism is about their presentation or her (Line 81). The teacher explained that he was not satisfied with how they were presenting as he expected them to engage others rather than simply lecturing (line 82-83).

Then, the teacher guided Shila to continue: 'your mom is angry' (Line 85). Shila continued (Lines 86-87), but he interrupted her again: 'define evidence' (Line 88), which signified his disapproval. Shila expressed that defining 'evidence' is difficult (line 91). The teacher affirmed: 'I know it's hard' (Line 92), and then again called Parisa, giving her one more chance to define the term. Parisa answered in one sentence 'all the facts that you see for something is evidence' (Lines 93). Taha asked: 'what is fact' (Line 94), which was confirmed by the teacher's 'yeah' (Line 95) but she ignored the question and continued with an example (Lines 96-98). The teacher interrupted her and explained that she was giving an example rather than defining the term (Lines 99-100). Parisa accepted his remark: 'yeah examples' (Line 101).

Then, the teacher repeated his question addressing other learners: 'I want definition. Can you give me the definition of evidence? Do you have definition for evidence? Definition for evidence? Definition for evidence?' (Lines 102-104). Then, he emphasised: 'from now on this is the way okay go on' (Lines 102-104). While Parisa seemed thinking, the teacher called Ali to define 'evidence' (Line 106). When Ali was answering, he questioned him by repeating some phrases of his utterance such as 'tells about evidence?' (Line 108), 'something that?' (Line 110), and 'the materials tell us?' (Line 112). Finally, by asking 'how they can tell us' (Line 114), he showed his disapproval. Ali tried to clarify by rephrasing but he passed his definition by saying: 'what else?' (Line 117).

Sara started to offer her definition: 'some fractals that we can' (Line 118). He interrupted her immediately by asking: 'what is fractal?' (Line 119). Sara insisted to finish her sentence (Line 120) but he refused and insisted that she first needed to define 'fractal' that she just used in her sentence (Line 121). She tried to define the term 'fractal' (Lines 122-123) but the teacher did not accept her definition: 'so when you don't know what is fractal you can't use it in a sentence you know' (Line 124).

Roya started to offer her definition in a form of questioning: 'can we say something integrated?' (Line 125). The teacher asked for clarification: 'something?' (Line 126). Roya clarified that she was giving a definition for 'evidence' and not 'fractal' (Line 127). Then, she had an extended turn to explain what she meant (Lines 127-128). The teacher interrupted her by asking whether she remembered the activities they had done while doing IELTS writing in which they practised looking for supporting sentences and main ideas (Lines 129-130). Roya repeated him to show that she remembered the activity (Line 131). Then, the teacher revealed his definition 'evidence gives us direction to the main idea' (Line 132). Afterwards, in an extended turn, he explained more by repeating and rephrasing (Lines 134-143). Then, he asked Shila to continue her presentation (Line 145).

8.3 Analysis

In the six following sections, I analyse and discuss the selected episode based on Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue as discussed in 5.3.

8.3.1 Interactional form

The main focus of this part of the discourse analysis, as discussed in 5.3.1, is the features of the communicative classroom talk such as extending learners' turn, generating content feedback and learner-initiated talk, asking open ended or referential questions, and avoiding lecturing, form-focused feedback and interruption (Matusov, 2009; Thornbury, 1996; Walsh, 2006, 2011).

In this episode, more than half of the attendees (6 out of 11 of the learners) were engaged thus the distribution of talk in the episode is different from a common traditional lecturing class; however, the discussion was still, for the most part, dominated by the teacher. Highlighting all his turns on the transcript (29 turns and 43 lines out of 59 turns and 84 lines of the transcript) shows that his contributions were more frequent, longer and more elaborate than the contributions of the other 6 interlocutors. This signifies the teacher's dominating style in directing the discussion; however, interactional forms do not necessarily confirm degrading,

silencing or de-proving other participants' voice. This is the recognition and the reciprocity of voices that are crucial to dialogue as dialogue is not possible without the interlocutors making room for the inclusion of voices of others and developing their own views in their own ways (Rule, 2015).This point is explored and analysed in the following section.

The teacher initiated the dialogue by interrupting Shila and asking her to define 'evidence' that she just used in her speech. This leading question to define the term, mostly in the form of command which he repeated throughout the episode addressing other learners, tended not to be open or authentic as he obviously had a refined answer that he revealed and elaborated at the end (Line 132 and Lines 134-143). Nearly all other questions were raised by him in his dialogues with the learners which ended with his disapproval of their answers. Some of the questions such as the ones he asked Ali by repeating a part of his statement in lines 108 and 110 could be considered as a way to extend Ali's turn for clarifying what he meant. The only question raised by the learners was when Taha asked Parisa 'what is fact' (Line 94), to which the teacher showed his agreement: 'yeah' (Line 95), however, it was not followed up any further.

The learners also had some extended turns such as lines 66-69, 86-87, 96-98, 107, 111, 115-116, 122-123, and 127-128, which were all in response to the teacher's question to define the concept. Regarding the use of feedback, none of them were form-focused regarding grammatical mistakes or pronunciation; however, they were all evaluative based on whether or not the learners' answers fit in with the refined definition of the concept which the teacher revealed in Line 132 and elaborated in lines 134-143. Moreover, the dialogues were just between the teacher and the learners and did not extend among the learners. The management of the turns were all controlled by the teacher who called the learners to engage in dialogue with him (such as in Lines 65, 92 and 106), interrupted them frequently (such as in Lines 63, 72, 75, 77, 88, 99, 108, 110, 112, 114, 119, 124 and 129) and stopped the dialogue with one interlocutor whenever he wanted and started dialogue with another (such as in Lines 65, 106, and 117).

8.3.2   Interplay of voices

In this section, according to the dialogic value discussed in 5.3.2, I investigate the selected episode to explore whose voice was heard and allowed in classroom discourse, whose voice was actually expressed, and whether dialogic discussions were guided to reproduce authoritative discourse or the learners' sharing their own thinking (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). I also examine the episode in light of the features of Mercer's (2000) cumulative talk.

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In this episode, the teacher drew in the learners to the discussion by calling them by name to define the term. This could be regarded compatible with his great emphasis on self-expression through which one can upgrade his language to 'existence' level to be able to modify and improve. However, he did not invite the learners to comment on each other's answers and all the dialogues were between him and the learners and did not extend among the learners. Thus, the learners seemed to be offered a chance to raise their voice but their voice were not interplayed. There is one instance in which Taha intervened to ask Parisa to define 'fact' that she just used in defining 'evidence' in the second chance the teacher offered her. The question was in line with the teacher's established norm of the discussion: 'what is fact' which was confirmed by the teacher: 'yeah'. However, it did not generate more discussion but it implied that Parisa's definition is potential to be invalid as she used a concept that needed definition.

Furthermore, the teacher's main question was not authentic as he had the definition of 'evidence' which he revealed first in Line 132 and then elaborated in Lines 134-143. This led the teacher to retain absolute control over the answers and therefore over the direction of the interactions (Alexander, 2008). It seems that his first question and the following questions that he interrupted the learners to ask were to make the learners aware of their inability to get close to his intended definition. He crossed all the answers as they were not close to his own definition and then he presented his definition following a clue from Roya who was a former learner of his. Thus, the learners' attempts to express their opinions were directed toward his predetermined endpoint. This way, their ideas were blocked and hindered, and their voice was not cultivated.

It is not just the types of questions but the answers to those questions which help us to understand whether the class culture is more or less dialogic. Generally, the teacher's answers and comments place him in an all-knowing position, closer to the traditional role assigned to teachers in traditional banking education. Evidently, he had the authoritative voice, who questioned, mostly in the form of command, interrupted, evaluated and finally provided his prepared definition of the concept as the final answer.

Moreover, his comments did not provoke further questions and did not challenge learners' thinking and reasoning (Alexander, 2008). Consequently, the interactions in this episode do not seem to comply with Mercer's (2000) principles of cumulative talk in which the speakers are supposed to share information, build on each other's contributions and mutually support each other to cooperatively construct a body of shared knowledge and understanding to support the shared views. Consequently, contrary to the teacher's claim, 'we define everything' (Int2,

discussed in 7.3.1), he was the one who defined the term so that the definition was not cooperatively created through an authentic dialogic discussion.

Finally, as discussed in 5.3.2, the primary goal of the argumentational aspect of dialogue is not to persuade but to socialise the learners into professional discourse, and to promote their unique professional voice (Matusov, 2009). Far from being supportive and collaborative, the teacher's *unilateral manipulative* (Burke, 1969 in Matusov, 2009) management of the interactions tends to brainwash the learners as they do not lead to participate in on-going debates but to be simply convinced or repelled in highly controlled interactions directed by the teacher who is in much higher ELP level, and experts in presenting his selected predefined philosophical concepts. This provides nearly no opportunity for the learners to develop and improve their unique voice.

8.3.3   Critique

In this section, according to the dialogic value discussed in 5.3.3, I analyse the selected episode having the following questions in mind: 'what stances towards knowledge do participants adopt, and which ideas are or are not open to critical examination? (Lefstein & Snell 2014: 17).

In developing 'dialogic discussion' as the teacher's main teaching method, as he asserted, he was inspired by Socrates similar to whom, he initiated the dialogue by asking the first presenter to define the term that she just used in her talk referring to the text. This initial question which was repeated throughout the episode took the form of command to define the term. This core question, aligned with his stated norm of discussions, did not meet the criteria of authentic questioning for the fact that, based on his responses to the learners' contributions, he appeared to have definitive, prepared, refined answer in mind which he revealed at the end. Therefore, unlike Socrates who claimed that he did not know the answer to his proposed question and aimed to find it out through the dialogue with his interlocutor, the teacher evidently had the definition of the concept he asked the learners to define. Evidently, his Socratic dialogic method tends to be dialogic by form but monologic by essence as its primary concern is deepening the learners' understanding of the highlighted concept through series of questions-answers (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

As it is evident all through the following instances from the episode, the learners' contributions and ideas were not open to critical examination; Parisa's extended turn to define 'evidence' (Lines 66-69) followed by the teacher's 'Okey' (Line 70), which was misinterpreted by Shila as approval so she started to continue her presentation (Line 71). When she used 'evidence' again, the teacher interrupted her and clarified that he did not approve Parisa' definition (Line 72).

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However, he did not provide any reason why her definition was not valid nor did he ask others to comment on her proposed definition.

When Shila was offering her definition through an example (Lines 86-87), the teacher interrupted her by a command: 'define evidence' (Line 88), which signified he did not approve her definition. Shila seemed to surrender by admitting that defining the term is difficult (Line 91) which was approved by the teacher, 'I know it's hard' (Line 92). This way, he emphasised on the challenging process of definition but again he did not provide any explanation or guidance nor did he invite others to comment on Shila's offered definition.

He called Parisa and offered her another chance to define the term: 'Parisa! define it' (Line 92). When she was answering, Taha asked, 'what is fact' (Line 94) that she just used in her sentence. The teacher seemed to agree by saying 'yeah' (Line 95). Parisa ignored or did not hear Taha's question and continued by giving an example (Lines 96-98). Then, the teacher interrupted her and commented on the second part of her talk as being simply an example and not a definition (Lines 99-100). Parisa agreed that she was giving an example (Lines 101). However, he did not comment on her first definition, did not use Taha's question to generate more discussion, and did not invite others to comment on Parisa's contribution. Even his comment tends not to be valid as in the process of defining a concepts one of the various instructional models is inductive (example to rule) vs deductive (rule to example). Thus, Parisa's and Shila's examples could have been guided to construct the definition.

Then, the teacher addressed others to define the term and repeated his question (Lines 102-104). He reminded them of the governing rule of the discussion: 'from now on this is the way' (Line 103), which meant they would be questioned to define any term they used in their talk and need be prepared to give refined definitions. Again, he did not provide any guidance. While Parisa seemed to reflect on a possible answer, the teacher called Ali to define the term (Lines 106). When Ali was answering, he was interrupted four times by the teacher who questioned him by repeating some parts of his statements. The first two seemed to seek clarification, 'tells about evidence?' (Lines 108), 'something that?' (Lines 110) but the next two, 'the material tells us?' (Lines 112), 'how they can tell us' (Line 114), implied that he did not approve his offered definition. Finally, he passed his definition by inviting others, 'what else' (Line 117), without further explanation or inviting others to comment.

Sara, the former student who was repeating the course out of interest, started to offer her definition (Line 118) but immediately was interrupted by the teacher (Line 119) in the middle of her first sentence to define 'fractal' that she just used. Sara insisted, 'let me just finish first' (Line

120), but the teacher refused by persisting that she needed to define 'fractal' first (Line 121). This way, he again insisted on his established norm that each word one uses, one should be able to define it otherwise the offered definition is not valid. Sara tried to define the term but her definition did not seem to satisfy the teacher.

In fact, 'fractal' is one of the closely related concepts to 'evidence' that the teacher used in defining the term later in lines 137-138: 'evidence carries fractals and fractals have one basic function and that is giving direction to the main concepts'. Sara seemed to be introduced to the concept and was familiarised with it previously in the same course she had taken so she used the term but she was not quick enough to reproduce the teacher's refined definition. The teacher mentioned in lines 135-136: 'directions are under fractals that she could not define yet. She will define later on of course'. This confirms that the teacher had a set of predefined concepts that the discussions were managed to reach, and that he expected the learners to be able to reproduce his refined definitions. As I discuss in chapter 9, the learners became aware of and accepted the purpose of this so-called IELTS preparation course as teaching a set of integrated, predefined philosophical concepts in English. This is similar to banking education which aims at transference of information rather than transforming knowledge. In fact, having an endpoint, according to Matusov (2009), is basically anti-dialogic.

Roya, another former student of his, entered in dialogue by offering her definition which was not discussed but directed by a question regarding a reading activity of the IELTS textbook that they did in session 8 (FN, 14,07,2014). Using a clue from Roya's attempt to define the term, he revealed his definition in Line 142 and then elaborated it by repeating and rephrasing. He made use of Shila's personalised example i.e. her mother's being angry; however, he did not include any of the points offered by other learners. When he finished his proposed definition, he invited Shila to continue her presentation.

As it is evident, the questions were all asked by the teacher except for one when Taha asked Parisa 'what is fact' (Line 94). Even though the question was based on the governing role of the discussion as it inquired about "definitions", it was not picked up and did not generate any further discussion. Furthermore, the teacher questioned and evaluated the learners' contributions without providing any reasoning for why he accepted or rejected their particular contributions. There was one exception when he explained that Shila's and Parisa' attempts to define evidence were examples and not definitions. Basically, his comments were not informative, diagnostic or constructive thus failed to deliver a judgment substantively and with clear explanation, on which the learners could build (Alexander, 2008). He neither guided them

to generate a definition nor did he engage the learners to critique each other's and his own finalised answer. When he revealed his definition he did not ask for the learners' ideas or comments which signified that his offered definition was not one of several possible alternatives, but the final answer. Moreover, after he defined the term, he did not explain how he arrived at this definition, but left the process in the complete dark. Furthermore, neither did he ask the students to confirm their understanding of the concept nor did he invite them to comment or further discuss his definition.

8.3.4 Thinking together

In this section, according to the dialogic value discussed in 5.3.4, I analyse the selected episode bearing in mind how valid, clear and relevant were the arguments in light of the features of Mercer's (2000) exploratory talk.

In this episode, the learners did not seem to be offered a space to critically engage with each other's definitions or the one offered by the teacher. The teacher challenged their opinions so far as refuting their definitions without letting them challenge each other or counter-challenge him. The definitions offered by the learners were not considered or discussed as possible alternatives and did not generate exchange or arguments. All the attempts which students made to undertake in this direction were immediately or very soon interrupted and discontinued by the teacher. It was solely the questions asked by the teacher which led the dialogues to his intended definition. In all cases the teacher closely monitored the process, having the ready-made answer in mind that he aimed to impart and pass on to the learners. Therefore, even if there was a form of dialogue observable in the classroom between the teacher and the learners, it did not provide a fertile ground for the learners to argue cooperatively, build on each other's ideas or to generate a definition stemming from their own reflection.

From the analysis, it appears clearly that the teacher intended to shepherd the learners towards his predetermined, 'correct' answer. He did not give reasons or guided them except once when he refused a part of Parisa' answer saying that it was not a proper definition but an example. While the learners made an effort to engage critically with some of his verbal input, it became apparent that such behaviours did not lead to constructive development. Rather, perpetuating a very specific and predefined view of the concept blocked the generation of new definitions, concepts or ideas. This way, exchanges were not chained into coherent lines of enquiry and left stranded and disconnected. Thus, dialogues failed to be productive and purposeful as the teacher did not engage with the answers to be reflected upon, discussed and argued (Alexander,

2008). He authoritatively crossed the proposed definitions and offered his refined definition not as an alternative but as the final answer which he drilled through repetition and rephrasing at the end and later after the presenters finished and the following sessions to assure the learners internalisation (FN, 21/07/2014, 23/07/2014).

8.3.5 Relationship

In the discussion session under closer examination here, according to the dialogic value discussed in 5.3.5, I analyse the selected episode focusing on the quality of relations between interlocutors to explore how participants relate to one another, and to what extent they were accepting and caring of one another (Lefstein & Snell, 2014).

In this whole class discussion session, Shila and Parisa were assigned to run the discussion about CT together. The teacher criticised them for not preparing it together and later for not engaging others. According to my field notes, when the presenters were talking, all others were carefully listening and following the discussions. However, as it is evident in the selected episode, after intervening in the presentation, he did not offer the learners any chance to interact with each other and all interactions occurred between him and the learners and did not extend among the learners. Thus, despite his emphasis, he did not provide a proper example of a cooperative dialogue aiming to create new knowledge and communal understanding.

He played the central role in managing and directing the interaction; he assumed a privileged role with regard to knowing the answer to the questions he posed and blocked any alternative in an authoritarian manner instead of making an effort to build a critical community aiming at mutual understanding (Rule, 2015). This contradicts what his asserted 'conceptualisation' promises i.e. cooperative creation of definitions. In fact, directing class discussions to steer interactions with specific educational goal in view, aiming to reach a predefined point and prioritising the pursuit of truth can be considered as 'dialogic-autocratic' (Sarid, 2012: 937), authoritatively directive (Rule, 2015) and anti- dialogic (Matusov, 2009).This could be due to his reliance on Socratic dialogues which, according to Matusov (2009), are elitist in nature and basically tend to use dialogic interactional format for deepening learners' intellectual understanding about something with some curricular endpoints in mind which makes the discussions monologic by essence (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

Despite what the teacher claims as an egalitarian teacher-learner relationship as discussed in 6.2.8, it is not evident that he is a learner among the learners as he does not seem to be open to re-learn his highlighted concept with the learners. As a consequence, the learners mostly tended

to incorporate this feeling of inferiority in knowledge and expertise compared to the teacher in their level of ELP and/or their familiarity and capacity of defining the complicated philosophical concepts that the teacher introduced to them throughout the course. Moreover, the teacher was rather experienced and skilful in managing the discussions through several years of teaching his carefully selected concepts so he was an authoritative knower. Thus, the discussions progressed based on the learners' acceptance of the teacher's superiority rather than on an agreement or cooperative learning. Therefore, the relationship between the teacher and the learners does not tend to be egalitarian and democratic as the teacher advocates (see 6.2.8.1). Generally, his role in managing class discussions is closer to the traditional role of a teacher as all knower and authoritative rather than a learner among the learners or as Freirean CP suggests: a student- teacher.

8.3.6   Empowerment

In this section, according to the dialogic value discussed in 5.3.6, I make an attempt to explore the realization and conduct of power relations such as: 'Who participates in directing the interaction? How is that direction accomplished? Who benefits from interactional norms? How free are participants to express themselves? How are disagreements managed?' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 19).

As discussed so far, the central norm which was set by the teacher to monitor discussions was: any concept that one used in expressing one's opinion, s/he had to be able to define. In his conception this means that, 'when you cannot define something that something does not exist for you' (S14). Thus, failure to define the teacher's highlighted concepts expels one from the discussion. Moreover, this was the teacher who accepted or rejected the offered definitions as the authoritative knower or as he stated, 'the provider of all the logic' (Int2) in the class, which places him in the superior position. Additionally, he was the provider of the conceptual framework consisting of a set of pre-defined, refined concepts, which he referred to as 'human core concepts', supported by his collection of movies and articles. Bear in mind that he is in advanced level of English proficiency and is an experienced teacher who has been teaching these concepts through discussion sessions for years. This offers him a superior authority in comparison to the learners with considerably lower ELP levels, who are also accustomed to the banking model of education and with very little experience, if any, in dialogic discussion especially in English. Therefore, his voice is dominant and the learners' voice is, at best, used to re-voice his.

Evidently, the teacher authoritatively controlled the floor and directed the discussion to his refined definition as the final answer. For example, he interrupted the presenters and the learners whenever he wanted (such as in Lines 63, 72, 75, 77, 88, 99, 108, 110, 112, 114, 119, 124 and 129), called them to engage in a dialogue with him to offer their definitions (such as in Lines 65, 106, and 117), evaluated their contributions (Lines 72, 99, 112, 114 and 124), and excluded them from dialogue (Lines 65, 117 and 124). He spoke after almost every learner's contributions, which suggests that all of the learners' contributions were mediated by him and were limited to answering to his question which did not extend into discussion among others. After he disapproved all the answers without providing any reason, he presented his own refined definition not as an alternative but as the final answer without opening his definition for any comment. In fact, the dialogue was initiated by his command to define the term and finalised by his extended turn through which he revealed the answer to his primary question. All the strategies that he applied led to put in place a system of very strong monitoring and tight control which granted him all the power to direct interaction and assume full authority over what counted as a valuable outcome of discussion.

As discussed previously in 6.2.8.3 in the teacher's conception of empowerment, the learners are supposed to be empowered to generate new definitions cooperatively to be able to generate it to all other aspects of their lives. However, as the example of defining 'evidence' in this episode evidenced, the learners were forced by the teacher into a position where they were brought to either confess that the task was being too difficult so that they were unable to respond to the teacher's request, or to surrender and keep silent not replying to the teacher's disapproval at all. The learners were neither offered a space to comment on the definitions shared by other learners or the one proposed by the teacher, nor was their understanding of his refined definition checked. Thus, contrary to what he claimed, 'we define everything' (Int2), there is no evidence of cooperative generation of definition that the learners are supposed to learn and generalise to any other 'languages' they choose to express themselves, which the teacher advocated as 'true liberation'.

Similar to Socratic dialogic method which is elitist in nature as the truth and power associated with it is rooted in the dialogic method of investigation, the teacher who considers himself as proficient in dialogic method and are regarded as such by the learners could claim a position of superiority from where they tend to construct others as "deficient" and "ignorant", and in need of being educated (Matusov & Miyazaki 2014: 8). His insistence of 'breaking the learners' fake layers' and his expecting the learners to trust his unjustified judgments seem to be rooted from his conception of Socratic teaching method which in practice is far from a critical engagement in

a community of fellow learners leading to common understanding (Rule, 2015). Consequently, the dialogues in this episode were not authentic as authentic dialogues necessitate equality among teacher and learners and should provide an opportunity for the learners to reconsider what they know and what they do not know, and to understand that existing thoughts are redefined and new knowledge are created cooperatively (Shor & Freire, 1987a). Applying such a pedagogical approach tends to manipulate the learners' consciousness and intellectualism. However, the teacher's manipulation of the learners' subjectivities may also involve self-manipulation of his own consciousness as he may believe that his predetermined curricular endpoint is the only possible and logical outcome (Matusov, 2009). This signifies the necessity of comprehensive analysis of the class discourse for the teachers who apply a dialogic critical approach to analyse and evaluate the dialogicity of their teaching method in classroom practice.

8.4   Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter, class discourse analysis with a dialogic approach was applied to a sample of whole class discussions through which a concept highlighted by the teacher was defined for the first time. Regarding the interactional form of the dialogues in the selected episode, the interactions were mainly dominated by the teacher; highlighting his turns on the transcript reveals that he had the longest and most elaborate contributions; it was him who initiated the dialogue, raised the questions, spoke after almost every contribution of the learners, mediated all their talk, interrupted them to take the floor, decided when to move on to the next person and finalised the dialogues.

Evidently, the dialogues fail to meet the dialogic criteria of reciprocity and critique for the fact that although the learners were offered a chance to define the concept, their contributions– in every single case we have seen - did not satisfy the teacher and were refuted without providing any reason. The learners were called to share their ideas but the alternative viewpoints were ignored or rejected by him. Therefore, the learners did not find a chance to display a critical stance toward knowledge as there is no evidence of their building upon the preceding utterances or their voices joining to create new ideas. In fact, the utterances were passed and their contributions were interrupted, which mostly implied his disapproving their offered definitions as they did not fit in his refined definition. This way, his comments silenced the learners; their ideas were blocked and hindered so their voice did not find a chance to develop. Finally, he picked a clue raised by one of the learners to shepherd them towards his predetermined definition, which suggests that he tended to orchestrate the others' voice to

appropriate his own. In fact, his questions aimed to highlight his learners' inability to get close to the 'proper' definition and finally led the dialogue to ascertain his refined one.

As discussed in 6.2.7, he asserted that 'judgement' is the highest level of thinking, while disapproved 'value judgment' or 'labelling' i.e. any judgment that is not as a result of following the steps of logic as he defined. In managing the class discussions, he seemed to expect the learners to take it for granted that his comments about their contributions were based on the steps of logic thus should be considered as unquestionably valid judgments. In class discussions, one could hear him saying: 'you are just hiding behind your fake layers', 'you are defensive', 'you are playing a game', 'you are just quoting', 'you are not honest', 'you fear to face yourself', 'you are running away from yourself', 'you are fooling yourself', 'this is self-deceiving', 'this is cliché, not your own idea', and the like (FNs, 03/07/2014, 10/07/2014, 02/08/2014, 07/08/2014, 01/09/2014). One may raise a valid question: how these comments can be considered as 'logical judgments' and not 'labelling'. I discuss further the teacher's judgmental role and how the learners view it in chapter 9.

Despite the teacher's emphasis on making the class a community of cooperative learners in which they are supposed to committedly share their ideas and challenge and criticise each other, there is no evidence of co-creation of meaning or thinking together in the process of defining his proposed concept. Firstly, it was the teacher who established the major norm of discussion i.e. to define any concepts he put forward for discussions. Second, the concepts were introduced and supported by his proposed instructional materials which, as he stated, was gathered carefully through many years studying and teaching. Third, he possessed a higher ELP level and was more experienced in managing discussions through years of practising. These place him in the position of a privileged knower rather than a learner among the learners in the community of the class as he claimed. In fact, the questions he asked, the comments he gave, the answer he provided for his own question place him closer to the traditional authoritarian role assigned to teachers in banking education.

As discussed in 6.2.4, in dialogic pedagogy, the major goal of argumentation is not persuasion but socialization of the learners into professional discourse and the promotion of their unique voice. When persuasion is applied to its full potential strength by a much more knowledgeable instructor, it might lead to the learners' being convinced or repelled by particular arguments presented by the instructor (Matusov, 2009). In the analysed episode, the interactions were managed to persuade, at its best, the learners to accept and/or understand the refined definitions of the teacher's highlighted concept. This way, 'dialogue' was used as a question-

answer device for eliciting what was already known, and steering the learners in the teacher's intended direction. Consequently, the discussion fails to conform to Bakhtin's idea of a true dialogue as an unending conversation (Alexander, 2008). Not providing any opportunity for the learners to raise and develop their voice, the discussion was even more monologic than lecturing as dialogue was misused used as a means to better transference of the teacher's refined definitions through pseudo-dialogic interactions (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014).

Moreover, as discussed in 7.3.4, in theory, 'conceptualisation' was asserted to be 'liberating' as it is supposed to provide, borrowing the teacher's terminology, the power of 'freedom' from 'ill-defined' concepts, 'generating' new definitions and 'generalising' this skill to any other 'languages' the learners choose to express themselves in life. However, in practice, 'conceptualisation' does not satisfy its purpose; the first step of his proposed process of CT that the teacher referred to as 'breaking the fake layers' mostly includes the teacher's command to define his highlighted concepts and refuting the learners' contributions as they did not match his refined definitions. Regarding the 'generation' of new definition, the discussions provide little chance for the learners to learn how to define the proposed concepts and there is no evidence of the generation of any new definitions. Consequently, the learners may learn to question taken for granted ideas but they do not learn to generate new definitions thus unable to generalise it. Thereby, the discussions tend to end up in more confusion and perplexity rather than empowerment and agency. This is confirmed through the thematic analysis of the learners' viewpoints in the following chapter.

9. Learners' viewpoints on class discussions

9.1 Introduction

As described in 4.7, to investigate the learners' viewpoints, I made use of three research instruments namely 2 questionnaires (Qs), 2 focus group interviews (FGs) and their reflective diaries (RDs) throughout the course. I scrutinised the data carefully and explored various interesting points. However, according to my research questions, the primary focus of my case study is on the teacher's conceptualisation and practice while the learners' viewpoints are complementary to shed light on how they experienced the course and how they felt about the teaching. Their views were then triangulated with data I gathered from the teacher on his ideas about teaching and the desired outcomes of the course. In line with this focus, I concentrated mainly on the learners' viewpoints on the whole class discussions as the teacher's main teaching method and as analysed in the previous chapter. What follows is the result of the thematic analysis of the data gathered through the three aforementioned instruments with regard to the dialogic values of class discussions as analysed in chapter 8 based on Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue. As I mentioned in 5.2, in quoting from RDs or Qs, the referred excerpts are the exact words of the participants and I did not correct nor did I add punctuation. I also made use of my field notes and short excerpts of class discourse whenever appropriate. In the 9 following sections, I analyse the relevant themes to then summarise and conclude in the last section.

9.2 Communal preference

As discussed in 7.2, 'dialogic discussion' was the teacher's main teaching method and as outlined in 4.4.2, whole class discussions were the dominant discourse of the class. The learners expressed their common preference for discussion sessions during FG2 in agreement with Shila's suggestion:

> **Shila**: Now we know how to work on the IELTS tasks. Don't we? We can do them at home but we cannot discuss like this somewhere else (FG2, translated).

As Shila suggested, they learned about IELTS activities so they could do them at home but they could not have a similar kind of discussion elsewhere. They all agreed on asking the teacher to

exclude IELTS related activities in order to allocate more time to have discussion sessions (FN, 30/08/2014). This shows that although majority of the learners, according to Q1, primarily took part in this course to improve their English to take required marks in IELTS, they all preferred to have discussions rather than working on IELTS related activities. In 22nd session, they raised their request but the teacher disagreed and told them that they needed to keep balance between 'conceptual level' and 'parametric level' i.e. 'conceptualisation' through discussions and 'IELTS-based activities', respectively. The learners seemed to accept his justification as they did not insist any more (FN, 01/09/2014). However, the last three sessions were mostly spent on discussions rather than doing IELTS-based activities, during which the teacher revealed the last pieces of his conceptual jigsaw puzzle (FNs, 15/09/2014, 10/06/2014, and 11/10/2014).

Similarly, according to Q2, FGs, and RDs, all of the learners stated that the inclusion of discussion sessions was what mainly differentiated this course from any other courses they had attended, and they found the whole class discussions the most useful and effective activity. For example, Hamid wrote in his RD23:

> **Hamid**: today the first of the class was boring but when we started to discuss about another conception matter, little Prince, I felt pleased in order to new things come to my life (RD23).

The first part of the session 23rd was spent on IELTS reading and listening activities (FN, 09/04/2014), which Hamid found boring as he wrote in his RD. However, the second part of the session after the break, during which they discussed the novel 'little prince', he was satisfied with being familiarised with 'new things', supposedly new concepts regarding 'self-discovery' and 'self-consciousness', which the teacher brought to the discussion as the main themes of the novel 'little prince' (FN, 09/04/2014).

As Hamid stated, one of the main reasons for the learners' communal preference to have discussion sessions was due to the effective concept teaching and learning new concepts. For example, Sadaf wrote in her RD13:

> **Sadaf:** Every session I understand new things about some subjects and it is interesting (RD13).

So, what she found interesting about the discussion sessions was learning new themes that the teacher brought to discussions. Similarly, Shila wrote in her Q2:

> **Shila**: I think the best part of the course was the master's conclusion and his speeches about concepts (Q2).

For Shila, the best part of the course was when the "*master*" concluded the discussions by revealing and explaining his refined definitions. Taha also stated a similar point in his Q2:

> **Taha:** I think those parts that doctor talks about his theories are the best part and very meaningful for me (Q2).

For Taha, like Shila, the most meaningful part of the course was "the *doctor's*", talking about his teaching philosophy. As discussed in chapter 6, the teacher articulated his teaching philosophy throughout the course; when he was teaching his proposed philosophical concepts, he highlighted how they are interrelated with his teaching philosophy and ELL. In fact, his teaching philosophy is integrated with the philosophy he teaches through discussion sessions which is a distinctively different method from other ELL courses aiming at developing language skills. This could be one of the reasons the learners preferred discussion sessions as an effective teaching method for the fact that having a distinctive organized teaching philosophy, as Goodyear and Allchin (1998) state, improve the effect the teacher had on the learners, enhance their willingness to fulfil the required tasks and motivate them to engage in class activities.

This viewpoint was confirmed through the following themes and implies that what made this class different for the learners was the skilful teaching of interesting themes by the knowledgeable teacher through controlled interactional sessions.

9.3   A new experience

As I stated in 1.1, what primarily motivated me to start this project was the fact that the class was my first introduction to CT and it was the first time I experienced class discussion sessions as the main part of the syllabus. Being accustomed to a banking model of education which is dominated by lecturing and lacks any formal CT training and practising, I, like many of my classmates, found the discussion sessions innovative and effective. Therefore, it was not far from my expectation that almost all of the participant learners of this project found this English course different from any other English courses they had attended as they expressed in Q2, FGs and RDs. For example, Sara stated that this course was:

> **Sara**: totally different, totally meaningful, completely a brand new thing (Q2).

For Sara, an English teacher who was attending the course for the second time out of interest, this course was completely different from any other English courses she had attended. She also wrote in her RD3:

> **Sara:** I am very much happy to attend this class because this class is nothing like other classes. I am very much eager to learn new concepts that help me make myself, a redefined version of me (RD3).

As Sara was familiar with the teaching method and objectives of the course, she was willing and ready to learn new concepts and make a 'redefined version' of herself, which is entirely in concord with the teacher's stated aim of the course i.e. 'making a new me'. Hamid also expressed a positive viewpoint toward discussion in his Q2:

> **Hamid**: Actually, the discussions were new for me and very attractive. When I faced with these kind of matters I mostly overlooked them and passed but after attending I found out how these topics are vital and I can say that they are necessary like as air for human. They are fascinating and as a matter of fact they have been changing my sight through the life (Q2).

According to the quote, Hamid found discussions as a part of syllabus 'new' and 'very attractive' as the 'fascinating' topics they discussed in class made him aware of the matters he used to fail to notice in life. The concepts he learned changed his viewpoint which he considered 'vital' and 'necessary like air for human'. Similarly, Nasim wrote in her Q2:

> **Nasim**: the course was above my expectations. It was really better than I thought (Q2).

Nasim wrote in her Q1 that she took the course primarily to improve her English speaking and attended the course without any prior information about the teaching method. Thereby the course, as she stated in the above quote, exceeded her expectation. This positive view is due to discussion sessions as she stated in her Q2:

> **Nasim**: Discussions were really good and challenging and the subjects were so deep. I remember the discussion about little prince after which I burst into tears after the class because of some concepts which were new and inspiring for me (Q2).

She admired the discussions for being challenging, through which they engaged in very 'deep', seemingly complicated philosophical, themes. She mentioned the novel 'little prince' which affected her greatly by learning 'inspiring' concepts regarding 'self-discovery' as the focal concept in discussing the novel (FN, 11/09/2014). Roya also praised the discussions in FG2:

> **Roya**: I loved everything. I enjoyed all parts but I love the discussions and the topics most (FG2).

Roya, like Sara, was attending the course for the second time out of interest. As she stated, she enjoyed the course design and practice, however, she enjoyed discussions and the themes more than any other activity. The other learner, Sadaf, shared a similar positive view; she told in FG1 that she neither experienced nor heard about any English courses with a similar approach. She found this kind of educational approach 'necessary' for every one's day to day life which can affect their professional life as well:

> **Sadaf**: I think that this kind of class is necessary for each person. I mean it is necessary for general life then it can effect on professional life (FG1, translated).

The quote above implies that Sadaf considered the function of this IELTS preparation course more than simply teaching English but something that is necessary for both general and professional life of people. As she wrote in Q1, she expected to improve her English to be able to acquire the required mark in IELTS, but according to what she wrote in her Q2, the class exceeded her expectation and changed it:

> **Sadaf**: The class is more than my expectation and some of my cheap expectation changed to valuable expectation as living (Q2).

What she referred to her 'cheap expectation' seems to be 'getting the required grade in IELTS' as she wrote in her Q1, which was changed to 'valuable expectation' that is to reflect on what it means to 'live' or 'exist' as the building block of the teacher's teaching philosophy and the core concept he teaches. As discussed in 6.3.2, the learners were expected to change their 'weak sense of wanting', namely taking IELTS, to a 'strong sense of wanting 'that is to create one's authentic life and be at the service of others. This way, Sadaf seems to re-voice the teacher.

Samira also shared a positive view toward the course as he wrote in her Q2:

> **Samira**: actually it appeared beyond my expectation. I came for English but it presented me the life! The most vital thing I needed! (Q2).

According to the quote and as she also wrote in her Q1, Samira took this course to improve her English, however, she learned a new way of living which she considered 'the most vital thing'. She also stated in Q2:

> **Samira**: Here we were learning the life through English but the previouses were just about learning English (Q2).

For her, other English courses that he had attended only taught English language, but in this course, they learned 'life' through English. This is in line with the teacher's philosophy of 'higher level of survival' and 'living' versus 'lower level of survival' or 'being alive'. Shila mentioned a similar point:

> **Shila**: this class was very different. It had a structure and taught special concepts. I mean it tried to teach philosophy of life in body of English learning (Q2).

For her, the course was an attempt to teach the philosophy of life in English. In other words, the course aims to teach predetermined philosophical concepts in English within a structured framework rather than only teaching grammatical points and vocabulary. In a similar sense, Marjan wrote in her Q2 that the 'efficiency' of the discussions exceeded her expectation:

Marjan: the discussions and their efficiency was more than I expected (Q2).

As Marjan wrote in her Q1, she started learning English since she was 9 years old, and attended many English courses in different institutes since then. She took part in this course to practice more and prepare herself for IELTS (Q1). According to the excerpt above, the discussions exceeded her expectation though, as she wrote in Q2, she did not participate in discussions very much and she was mostly a listener. She also wrote in Q2 that the most useful part of the course for her was 'learning so many new concepts and methods of living'. This, similar to Shila's and Nasim's views, also implies that the efficiency of the discussions, which exceeded her expectations, is due to her learning new concepts and a new way of life. This is the point majority of the learners also stated which I explore through the next theme.

9.4   Integrated philosophical themes

Evidently, the learners became aware of and accepted the purpose of this English course as teaching a set of philosophical concepts in English. Majority of the students stated that a set of interrelated concepts supported by movies and articles made the discussion sessions meaningful and interesting. For example, Sadaf explained her positive experience of class discussion in Q2:

> **Sadaf**: I think all of the subjects that we have read, learnt and discussed about them are very important and useful and we can't cut any of them. Also management of them is very important during the time. For example we couldn't learn about love if we did not know what is the meaning of life. I think all of the subjects and discussion are in a direction that this direction generates a lot of new directions and destroy some of old ways (Q2).

Sadaf mentioned some factors which made the discussions meaningful for her; the concepts, all of which she found interrelated, useful and important, were taught skilfully by the teacher who directed the discussions in a way to 'destroy' their previous directions and 'generate many new directions'. Thus, in line with the teacher's assertions, she believes that a set of interrelated themes and their skilful management by the teacher broke what the teacher referred to as their 'fake layers' and generated new 'directions', which is a remembrance of the teacher's definition of CT. In the example she provided, she clearly repeated the teacher who stated 'when you do not know how to live, how you can live English? How can you live love? You can't' (S1).

Most of the learners supported Sadaf's opinion in that the themes of discussions were meaningfully integrated, which helped them to understand the teacher's proposed concepts. For example, Shila wrote in her Q2:

> **Shila**: I think subjects and discussions were categorized very well and all of them follow the same goal. I think that goal was human being and existence (Q2).

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Shila, who was also repeating the course out of interest like Sara and Roya, believes that the topics and the way they were managed made them follow 'the same goal' i.e. moving toward being more human by upgrading one's life to 'existence'. This signifies that she, like Sadaf, was aware of, and also admired, the existing of a predefined philosophical framework which had carefully set and skilfully managed by the teacher. Similarly Sara wrote in her Q2:

> **Sara**: The subjects were chosen in a wise way, I couldn't see through it first, but now I see the point, and I really see the effect in my life (Q2).

Sara admired the intelligent selection of the topics, which she could not realise first but she found out at last and it had a great effect on her life. Parisa also wrote in her Q2:

> **Parisa**: I found the topics very purposeful and the steps very wisely scheduled and ordered. If they were not like that, the acceptance couldn't take place (Q2).

Parisa, like Sara, believed that topics were purposefully selected and presented in a skilful order and schedule that set the ground for their 'acceptance'. Evidently, the learners were aware that there was a set of defined concepts and that the discussions were directed to lead them to 'accept' those definitions. As the other clear evidence, in FG2, Saman told:

> **Saman:** we saw Sara carried her sister's notebook which has all the definitions. She was cheating. She ruined the discussions this way. We reported this to Ostad[2] and I guess he asked her not to bring it with her any more (FG2, translated).

Sara was the former student of the same course and her sister also had taken part in the same course previously (Q1). As Saman raised his dissatisfaction in FG2, he and other learners found out that Sara carried her sister's notebook which included her class notes about the concepts as defined by the teacher. Saman believed that having the definitions was 'cheating' as it 'ruined' the discussions. In fact, according to my field notes and class observation, Sara was usually quick to provide the answers close to the teacher's intended definitions. This, as the learners' were dissatisfied with, made them lose the chance to offer their own definitions and discuss more for the fact that the discussions were continued as long as to reach to the teacher's intended definitions which were terminated point of dialogues. What supports this analysis is that, as the teacher announced, learners are allowed to repeat the course just once and only after at least a year gap. Seemingly, the learners need a long enough gap so their memories are not fresh to provide the answers quickly which makes the question-answer part of the discussion sessions short. Moreover, repeating the course more than once makes learners too familiar to the

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[2] This is a title used for university teachers meaning 'professor' or 'master'.

defined concepts, which makes the question-answer strategy for developing discussion sessions ineffective.

Having a set of interrelated themes could be a possible reason why the teacher constantly placed an emphasis on the learners' not missing one single session as there are a set of interrelated concepts upon which the scheduled discussions are organised thus by missing any session, it would be difficult for the absences to follow the upcoming discussions. This is similar to traditional classes that aim to teach a predetermined set of concepts albeit, rather than pure lecturing sessions based on textbooks, carefully selected philosophical concepts were taught through controlled question-answer discourse and were supported by non-textbook materials. This seems to satisfy most of the learners who were accustomed to lecturing sessions based on text books; however, having a predetermined goal in mind to which the dialogues are directed makes the interactions no more dialogic than monologic lecturing. In fact, using dialogue as a means for better transmission of knowledge or deepening learners' understanding and acceptance of predefined concepts makes teaching even more excessively monologic (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

9.5   Complicated and confusing

Despite the learners' common preference for discussions, they usually found the concepts very challenging and difficult to follow; for example, Hamid wrote in his RD in session 24:

> **Hamid**: the matter of today class was heavy and I couldn't catch the concept of this important matter and questions remain (RD24).

During session 24 at the end of which Hamid wrote the above RD, they discussed about 'discipline', the first chapter of the book 'The Road Less Travelled' by Scott Peck (1978) (FN, 08/09/2014), which Hamid found 'important' but 'heavy' and difficult to understand so his questions remained unanswered. Likewise, Shila in the same session found the discussion complicated which made her confused:

> **Shila**: The discussion was very complicated. I am really confused (RD24).

Similarly, Samira felt confused and tired in session 11 after they discussed the movie 'My life':

> **Samira**: I am confused and tired (RD11).

'My life' is a 1993 American movie, about a seemingly successful man who was diagnosed with cancer and given four months to live, not even enough time to see his first child's birth. He made a video diary, hoping to pass along some wisdom to his future child. Along the way, he

discovered a lot about himself. In the class, the teacher discussed the process of transforming living 'A life' to living 'My life' that is his proposed dichotomy between 'being alive' and 'living' as discussed in 6.2.6. Samira, as she wrote in her RD, found the concept confusing which made her feel tired.

Similarly, Sara wrote in her RD18 after they discussed the movie 'castaway':

> **Sara**: very confused, feeling terrible (RD18).

The movie was discussed in 4 sessions namely sessions 13, 15, 18 and 19. 'Cast away' is a 2000 American epic survival drama about an obsessively punctual FedEx executive who was stranded on an uninhabited island after his plane crashed in the South Pacific. The film depicts his attempts to survive on the island using remnants of his plane's cargo. Upon returning to civilization after 5 years, he found out that he had long been given up for dead. In the class, the teacher defined 'cast away' as a psychological state when one loses 'self' and 'the power of creation'. In order to get out of the 'cast away', one needs to 'conceptualise' to acquire the power of 're-creating self' (FN, 18/08/2014).

Sara, being familiar with the concept as she was repeating the course, after 3 sessions discussing the concept, still she felt confused. Similarly, she wrote in her RD7:

> **Sara:** what we discussed in this session was the concept of truth, I feel unable, unable to grasp, I don't and didn't understand, I understood the words but I didn't get the concepts (RD7).

As Sara wrote in her RD, she could not understand the complicated philosophical concept of 'truth' which the teacher defined and explained in session 7. Taha also expressed his confusion in his RD at the end of session 21st when they discussed 'spirituality' which the teacher defined as 'going beyond time and space' (FN, 30/08/2014).:

> **Taha:** I think I should live. I wanna cry, how how how how how how how (RD21).

As discussed in chapter 6, 'Living' or 'existence' is the focal concept in the teacher's philosophical framework, which he brought to discussion since the first session. As Taha stated, he knew he 'should live' but he felt confused and still wondered how. This suggests that the teacher taught them a pre-defined, convincing philosophical framework but hardly provided them with any concrete practical suggestions to put it in action.

It is noteworthy that although the learners' found the concepts and discussions very complicated and confusing, they preferred discussions over all other activities. This could be as a result of the teacher's emphasis on the challenging process of 'conceptualisation' which, as discussed in

7.3.5, is the basic feature of activating CT which necessitates 'breaking one's fake layers' aiming at 'self-transformation' and 'living an authentic life'. This reminds of the demand placed on the seeker of authenticity which, according to Guignon (2004), is quite strict as it requires dramatic and often painful transformation of one's self through critical self-examination of her/his own opinions, assumptions, beliefs, and ideas (Fishman, 1985).

9.6   CT as the main objective

The other aspect that most of the learners were satisfied with was the inclusion of teaching CT in the syllabus. For example, Ali wrote in his RD at the end of session 5 when they had the first discussion session on the skill on CT:

> **Ali**: we had interesting idea about critical thinking that is the basic purpose of this course (RD5).

During session 5, they were introduced to the six steps of logic which Ali found interesting and recognised as the 'basic purpose' of this ELL course in line with the teacher's assertion. Similarly, Sara wrote in her Q2:

> **Sara**: I have heard the term critical thinking before a lot, but now it seems totally different. I now know what it really means and this made a real difference. Before it was just a word, a term to me (Q2).

For Sara, prior to this course, she had heard about CT but it was only 'a term' for her. During the course, she understood 'what it means' which made a 'real' difference for her. Similarly, Taha wrote in Q2:

> **Taha**: The discussions and subjects have chosen by doctor in order to push us toward process of thinking and this thinking is the basement for next steps. Discussions want to redefine the established regulations in our mind (Q2).

For him, the subjects and the related discussions have been 'chosen' by the teacher to 'push' them toward thinking as the basis of the other steps supposedly 'the six defined steps of logic'. He believes that the discussions aimed at redefining their established ways of thinking, which is also in line with the teacher's emphasis regarding 'breaking their fake layers' and 'generating new logical definitions' which direct their lives toward authenticity.

Hamid shared his viewpoint regarding CT in his Q2 as follows:

> **Hamid**: I think each person's life is defined by his manner of thinking and now I understand that the critical thinking can help me to define the most beautiful world for myself. Through thinking critically we can improve our important faculty like logic, discipline, commitment… which are so so vital for life (Q2).

In the quote above, Hamid stated that one's way of thinking is the criterion for evaluating one's life. He emphasised on the significance of CT in life that could help him to define 'the most beautiful world' for himself. For him, CT could improve 'important' and 'vital' faculties such as logic, discipline and commitment, which were among the concepts that the teacher highlighted and defined through discussion sessions. Regarding CT, Sadaf wrote in her Q2:

> **Sadaf**: I learnt a lot and it was cause of wondering for me that I did not know how much it could help me during my past life. I think each person will be critical thinker for the better life because of the main steps that it has, such as self-awareness that a lot of people cannot do this during their life (Q2).

Sadaf wondered how different her life could be if she had learnt about CT before. For her, CT helps people to have a better life as it consists of different steps such as self-awareness that many people cannot apply in their life. As discussed in 6.2.7, 'self-awareness', was defined as the second step of logic which would give birth to 'honest self-expression' as the only gate to 'existence' in which one could find a chance to upgrade one's life. Sadaf seems to re-voice the teacher that CT is 'humanisation' i.e. to improve the quality of life for all. This is the same point Azita wrote in her RD10:

> **Azita**: Critical thinking→ better human being (RD10).

Similarly, Sadaf also wrote in her RD14 when the teacher repeated and reviewed 6 steps of logic:

> **Sadaf**: I learnt a lot about logical thinking and the way of living that is grateful for me (RD14).

Sadaf was satisfied with learning about logical thinking and 'the way of living'. However, as Marjan wrote in her Q2, what they learnt was, most likely, a set of definitions without knowing how to put it into practice:

> **Marjan**: I learned how to first question everything and see if I can understand the very basic features of them and how to really live a life although I don't know how to do it completely (Q2).

What Marjan wrote in her Q2, is the definition of CT as the teacher explained and drilled all through the course, which I discussed in 6.2.7. In fact, the learners seemed not to remember the rather complicated steps of logic as defined by the teacher and simply grasp the core message of the refined philosophical definitions. As another evidence, Ana wrote in her RD6:

> **Ana**: I could never be loved and loved someone unless I know who I am and what I want. The big big question is how can I understand myself and know what I want. I don't know how to live (RD6).

In session 6 at the end of which Ana wrote the above RD, they discussed the movie 'if only' through which the teacher raised the concept of 'love' as one of his proposed 'human core concepts'. The above quote shows that Ana related the concept of 'love' to herself and questioned the possibility of a mutual love without knowing herself and her desires. She seems to re-voice the teacher that one must know how to live in order to be able to truly love and be loved (FN, 10/07/2014). Thus, the discussion session made Ana think of knowing herself and her desires better to be able to live and love in line with the teacher's defined steps of logic including self-awareness but she was still unable to know how. This is a remembrance of the ideal of authenticity which is deeply rooted in our inherited collective common sense but it is not clear what it exactly means or implies. In fact, what one finds within oneself could be a complex psychological state which is mostly transient and causes more confusion and despair thus cannot be a guiding ideal for one's life (Guignon, 2004).

9.7   Self-expression

The learners mostly expressed their concern regarding 'self-expression' in line with the teacher's emphasis on 'honest self-expression'. Evidently, 'self-expression' was commonly accepted as a requirement of engaging in discussions. For example, Ana wrote in her RD11:

> **Ana**: I must try to be honest with myself and express myself (RD11).

Ana seems to re-voice the teacher that, as he defined the steps of logic in session 11, in order to know oneself, one should be 'honest' and express oneself by means of which one enters the realm of existence where one finds the possibility to re-modify oneself. In a similar sense, Roya considered engaging in discussions as a necessary part of the process of 'living' the class:

> **Roya**: In order to live the class you need to be a part of discussions (Q2).

'Living' English was defined as 'thinking' and 'feeling' in English and 'honestly expressing' one's thought in the community of the class. For Roya, in line with the teacher's emphasis, engagement in discussion was requisite for 'living' the class. In fact, the learners need to be responsive to the teacher's questions of defining the concepts, which is how dialogues proceed. Similarly, in answering this question that how much they could express their thought and feeling in the class, Sara wrote in Q2:

> **Sara**: I believe myself one of the most participating. I expressed myself as much as needed I think, to a great extent (Q2).

Sara, who was an English teacher and was attending the course for the second time (Q2), seemed to be satisfied with her self-expression during the discussions. Being in advanced ELP level and familiar with the process of the class (Q1) may help her to fulfil the required process of the discussions. Taha, who also was in advanced ELP level, answered the same question as follows:

> **Taha**: Very much because I want to (Q2).

Taha was an active learner in the class who attended all the sessions and actively took part in the class activities including class discussions (FNs). He was introduced to the course by one of the former learners and was eager to actively engage in the process of 'learning to live' as he wrote in his Q1. The above quote implies that, as he believes, the class provided the suitable space to express oneself for the ones who were willing to do so like he himself. Hamid also expressed a positive view as he wrote in Q2:

> **Hamid**: the class was the only place I could see my true me and express myself (Q2).

Hamid was in intermediate ELP level and introduced to the course by a former learner (Q1). He, like Taha, actively engaged in all class activities and did not miss a single session (FNs). He admired the class as the 'only' place he could 'see' and 'express' his 'true self'. This is in line with what the teacher advocated as the second and third steps of logic namely 'self-awareness' and 'honest self-expression', respectively. Highlighting the class as the 'only' place he could find a chance to express himself implies the rarity of the opportunities in the banking educational settings for learners to raise their voice. Therefore, they appreciate even a restricted question-answer discourse through which they were given a limited chance to talk.

Nasim, who was in upper intermediate ELP level (Q1), stated in FG2:

> **Nasim**: I am not a good speaker and because of my low self-confidence I hardly speak in groups. Sometimes he called me by name and asked some questions therefore I had to reply (FG2).

Nasim had not been familiar with the process of the class and took the course to prepare herself for IELTS (Q1). As she said in FG2, she was usually shy and unwilling to talk in public and what made her talk was the teacher's calling her by name so she had to reply. As discussed in the previous chapter, naming the learners to define the terms was the teacher's Socratic strategy to draw the learners in dialogue with him. Nasim also wrote in her Q2:

Nasim: I was open to new knowledge I was being given and the class was open to my presence and my ideas. This was an enjoyable encounter. This rarely happened in other classes (Q2).

As she expressed, she felt free to have a voice to express her ideas, however, what she said implies that the "new knowledge", supposedly the teacher's proposed definitions, were not co-created but 'given' to them. Therefore, she appreciated the open space she found to share her ideas, which is the opportunity she could hardly find in other educational settings, however, her voice, like others, did not contribute to the creation of new knowledge.

Similarly, Marjan, who participated as a student with upper-intermediate ELP level (Q1), wrote in Q2:

Marjan: over time I got better in telling my opinions and discussing with the others but even that was I guess about 20% of my abilities in sharing (Q2).

According to her quote, like Nasim, Marjan improved expressing her ideas through discussions, but, in her view, she could have contributed much more, and only could involve 20 per cent of her capacity of sharing and contributing ideas. This means that in comparison to other educational settings which were dominated by lecturing and there is little opportunity to express one's opinion, this course presented a tangible change and improvement.

Sadaf, who was in intermediate ELP level (Q2), shared a similar point:

Sadaf: As I said before, I was not good in expressing my self during my life. If I want to count it 30% -40% that is good for beginning. Normally I think about them more and I shared them with some of my classmates later outside the class (Q2).

As she mentioned in this quote and also said in FG2, she was shy and unwilling to express herself. She estimated her self-expression during the discussions about 30 to 40 per cent which she considered as a good start. As she stated, she usually thought more and shared her thoughts with her classmates outside the class. This implies that Sadaf did not find enough space to share her ideas in the class but she did so later with her classmates outside the class. This could show the formation of a community of learners through which she could further express her ideas. I return to this point in the next section.

Shila also expressed her progress in expressing herself in her RD7:

Shila: It was the first time I did what I was afraid of. I was afraid of sitting in front of my classmates and be committed and say my real opinion. I took this course before but I was not ready to do this. Now I am happy that I took one step forward. I am here to face my fears (RD7).

Shila, who was attending the course for the second time and was in upper-intermediate ELP level (Q1), stated that for the first time in her life she faced her fears of expressing her real opinion in front of the others, which she could not do the first time she took the course. She thought that the first time she was not ready but this time that she was aware of the process of the course, she decided to feel committed to overcome her fear and express herself. Similarly, Sara who also was repeating the course said in FG2:

> **Sara**: First I was totally doubtful about how and if it's going to be of any use or any different from every other thing I had gone through. The first time I took the course, I was so stubborn and I resisted any change. This time I was ready to face my true self and committedly be open to new concepts and change (FG2).

As mentioned, Sara was an English teacher and in advanced ELP level. She was repeating the course and was familiar with the teaching method and course objective; as she wrote in her Q1, this time she did not take the course to improve her English but to 'improve her quality of life' in line with the teacher's stated aim of the course. This time she was ready to be committedly 'open to new concepts and change'. However, she was still doubtful whether the course could fulfil what it promised.

Regarding Sara and Shila, possibly a more open teacher encouraging and inviting the students opinions' in a less confining way, would have helped this process to unfold more quickly. As they were repeating the course, they both seem to accommodate themselves to the teacher's limiting frame and style which necessitated them to be open to accept his definitions and less resistant to change. This signifies the importance of the teacher's role in managing the discussion to which I return in section 9.9.

Finally, it was not just the learners with relatively good speaking ability that were satisfied with their development in terms of self-expression. Saman, who was in pre-intermediate level and could hardly speak during the first sessions, told in FG2:

> **Saman**: As you all witnessed, I had a lot of difficulty to speak in English so it has been more challenging for me to get along with the process of the class but this forced me to progress fast. I love to discuss so when we discuss in the class I do my best to engage in the discussions and express myself and this helps me to activate and make use of all my English knowledge (FG1, translated).

For Saman, it was very difficult to engage in the discussions and express himself due to his lower level of ELP and weakness in English speaking ability. As he wrote in his RDs during the first ten sessions, he became 'confused', 'tired', 'bored', 'hopeless' as he could not understand the others and could not engage in the discussions. This even made him think of quitting the course as

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being too difficult for him; during break time in session 11th, he raised this issue with the teacher who assured him that if he continued trying to cope with the process and did the assignments studiously, he would improve considerably (FN, 23/07/2014). According to the excerpt above, Saman's enthusiasm to discuss motivated him to try harder and progress faster in making use of his English knowledge. As I discuss in the next theme, he considered his classmates' help and support as the most effective factor in his improvement.

9.8   Community of the class

In line with the teacher's emphasis on making the class as a cooperative community, some of the learners considered the class atmosphere caring, intimate and supportive which improved their self-expression. For example, Roya wrote in her RD23:

> **Roya:** learning to have a real commune, expressing myself, changing the base of thinking were the elementary result of the class that should continue forever (RD23).

For Roya, in addition to 'self-expression' and changing her way of thinking, learning to develop a community is the result of this course that, she believed, should not be stopped. Therefore, she believed that they needed to extend their community beyond the class during the course. Nasim also shared a positive view toward the class atmosphere in Q2:

> **Nasim**: I am shy and unwilling to speak in groups. But the class was so intimate that I started to open up and talk freely (but not much) after 3 or 4 sessions (Q2).

As she stated, she had not been satisfied with her speaking in public as a result of her shyness. However, the intimacy she felt in the class helped her to 'open up' and express herself after couple of sessions. 'Open up' was one of the repeatedly used imperative phrases by the teacher during the discussions when he asked the learners to express themselves to make their opinions and ideas available to others (FNs). What she mentioned in parenthesis emphasise her not completely feeling free to express herself which could be due to the teacher's role in managing the class discussions to which I return in the next section.

Saman raised a considerable point in his RD6:

> **Saman:** I feel terrible. I can speak in English better outside the class. Here I lose the words. My English is the weakest in the class. I feel my classmates look down on me and this embarrassed me a lot. I try not to care and just look forward (RD6, translated).

 Saman, as mentioned before, could hardly engage in discussion during the first ten sessions due to his low level of ELP. His lower ELP level embarrassed him and made him feel less confident to engage in the discussions. However, he seemed to feel different as the sessions proceeded:

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> **Saman**: I did my best to express myself. It seems I am improving. My classmates help me and let me to talk (RD12, translated).

As he stated in his RD12, his classmates helped him by offering him some space to talk so he felt empowered and could improve. Near the end of the course he wrote in his RD26:

> **Saman**: I couldn't speak at all at the beginning but in this session after 25 sessions, I could analyse the movie with the help of my friends and this was a very pleasant feeling and a great success for me (RD26, translated).

In session 26th, he and Taha ran the discussion about the movie 'the legend of 1900' (FN, 13/09/2014). For Saman who started the course with low ability to speak English, being able to run the discussion with the help of Taha was considered a great improvement and very satisfactory. So, for him the course bridged the gap and allowed his language and personality development in parallel.

My class observation and FNs support the above remarks as the learners made an attempt to build up a friendly intimate relationship together; in some sessions, some of the learners when they were called by the teacher to talk, they stated that they already talked enough and preferred to listen to others who had been silent (FN, 07/07/2012). This could be seen as a strategy by the learners to make the class atmosphere democratic. Moreover, they were in touch and when one of them was late or absent they called her/him to make sure s/he was fine (FN, 14/08/2012). They also made some gathering outside the class at weekends to sit together in a park or Café, or go mountain climbing during which they talked more about the assigned movies, texts or the concepts of the class discussions (FN, 11/09/2012). Overall, it seems that the learners were willing to develop a friendly community in and outside the class. However, there are some instances that contradict this sense of community. For instance, Hamid raised his concern in his Q2 regarding participating in discussion as follows:

> **Hamid:** First of all I was a conservative person but day to day the class taught me to be inclusive person mean that to participate more in but there was a small problem for me when I wanted to do that, I thought maybe others can't understand me (Q2).

Despite his being conservative, as he mentioned, he was gradually convinced to participate in the discussions in line with the teacher's emphasis all through the course. However, he was hesitant to express his ideas as he was unsure of being understood. This suggests that the class could not provide a supportive atmosphere for him to freely express himself and share his thoughts with others. It could be an evidence of the lack of exploratory talk in class discussions

as they were not offered a space to challenge and counter-challenge each other's contributions in order to make themselves understood.

Sara raised another issue in this regard as she wrote in her RD3:

> **Sara:** What I'm not satisfied with my classmates. I think they are very much in an attempt to impress others. I hope they stop that and instead start seeing themselves wholly. In that way I could help them and they could help me (RD3).

As Sara stated above, she was rather unhappy about a certain sense of competition that resigned in the class. She thought that the other learners needed to stop being competitive to impress others and start instead the process of self-awareness in order to help themselves and others. She continued feeling the same as she wrote in her RD the following session:

> **Sara:** I am not pleased with my classmates still, I hope they start digging to their depth sooner (RD4).

She seemed to expect the other learners to be as enthusiastic as her who was repeating the course, to 'dig to their depth' in line with the stated objective of the course i.e. to improve their self-awareness. In her RD14, she clearly mentioned her deep dissatisfaction:

> **Sara:** The class is not a safe atmosphere. Ana, Mina and Hoda seem very distracting to me and I feel very uncomfortable and I didn't want to participate in their discussion (RD15).

During session 15 at the end of which Sara wrote the above RD, Ana and Hoda ran the discussion about the movie Cast away (FN, 07/08/2014). Ana, Mina and Hoda were close friends and taught English in the same institute where the course was held. They were all in advanced ELP levels like Sara who was also an English teacher in another institute (Q1 and Q2). Despite the teacher's emphasis on making a cooperative community, there seemed a competitive atmosphere existed between Sara and them. Hoda also wrote in her RD15:

> **Hoda**: what if we could understand each other in class and we love each other and don't put ourselves separate of others? (RD15)

It seems that Hoda referred to Sara who refused getting involved in their discussions and had an unfriendly behaviour towards them. Ana, Mina and Hoda did not attend the course soon after this session as they were assigned to teach some courses which coincided with this course. Since then, Sara did not raise any similar concern in her RDs as the other learners did not seem to be able to compete with her for she was both in advanced ELP level and familiar enough with the concepts as she was repeating the course. However, her final RD signifies that she did not feel being in a community with other learners as well:

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> **Sara:** I doubt being in a commune. The prerequisite of being in a commune like feeling helpful is missing. So I am not sure about whether or not I want to be in this commune. Also I personally didn't have any enthusiasm to shape this commune I didn't try (RD29).

As Sara clearly stated in the quote above, she could not fulfil what the teacher emphasised as making a cooperative community. She did not want to be a part of a cooperative community as she felt there was not a sense of helpfulness in the class. This could be the result of the lack of basic features of dialogue in the class discussions such as relationship, critique, thinking together and interplay of voices as discussed in the previous chapter. Even Taha who was actively participated in the class activities and all of his RDs included his appraisal of the teacher and the process of the class, wrote in his last RD:

> Taha: I am looking for a real commune. I don't think it gonna survive, I don't want it. The class is commune but not for survive. I want to start thinking on my own. And I don't want to be in it any more (RD29).

In the quote above, Taha referred to the teacher's conception of 'commune' that is for 'survival of humanistic aspects of human beings' (S1), as discussed in 6.3.1.1. He raised his disagreement of the necessity of being in this community to 'survive'; rather, he wanted to 'start thinking'. It signifies that he did not find an opportunity to practice thinking critically in the class. This also confirms that class discussions did not provide them a suitable space to think together and critique.

9.9   Teacher's role

As discussed in 5.3.5, resolving the teacher-student dichotomy is of paramount significance in CP with a dialogic approach to teaching and learning as it greatly affects the role and importance of dialogue in class interactions. In the next three following themes, I explore the learners' viewpoints regarding the teacher's role with a focus on the management of the class discussions.

9.9.1   Superior role model

Mostly, the learners think of the teacher as a superior role model closer to the traditional role of teachers in banking education; for example, Sara raised a point in Q2 that implies the superior role of the teacher:

> **Sara**: He is the superior logic of the class. In the process of learning, I constantly checked my logic with his, and I see how I'm moving to bridge the gap (Q2).

For Sara, the teacher is 'the superior logic' with whom she constantly checks hers to modify and improve. This reminds the teacher's assertion that he provides 'all the logic' in the class. Apparently, she, who was repeating the course, considered the teacher as a role model toward which she aims to 'bridge the gap'. This tends to hinder growing a critical stand toward the teacher's "logically defined" concepts. In a similar sense, Taha wrote in his RD19:

> Taha: I want to organize my distributed mind. How sweet is the process of learning like the way doctor does (RD19).

He felt the need to organise his thoughts in line with the process of learning advocated by the teacher. Thus, like Sara, he admired him as a role model. Sadaf also highly admired the teacher as a role model:

> **Sadaf**: I am thankful of doctor because he taught me some valuable things for rest of my life and he is one of the most worthiest teacher of my life. He is like a father that show us the true way of living and we all love him (Q2).

In the quote above, Sadaf expressed her satisfaction of learning 'valuable things', and her admiration of him as a 'father' and highly respectable teacher for showing them the 'true way of living'. In a similar sense, Hamid appreciated the great effect the teacher had on his life:

> **Hamid**: Here is not enough space for admiring the director who came to my life and helped me to change myself. It was great luck for me to find this great teacher.

Hamid revered the teacher's role as a 'director' who helped him to change himself. Saman shared a similar admiring view toward the teacher:

> **Saman**: I really admire doctor. He is unbelievably knowledgeable. You can fully trust in what he says. The best parts of discussions are when he lectures. Wow. Mind-blowing (FG3, translated).

Saman appreciated the teacher for his being very 'knowledgeable' which is what the teacher, as discussed in 6.2.1, considered as a source of empowerment for critical pedagogues. Saman, according to the above quote, trusted whatever the teacher said including the teacher's lectures which he considered as the best part of each discussion session. This 'mind-blowing' quality of the teacher's lecturing which consisted of revealing and elaborating the definitions of his proposed philosophical concepts, makes the definitions less likely to be considered as alternatives but the undefeatable finalised answers. This role places the teacher in an all-knowing superior position closer to the traditional role of the teachers in banking education which is still dominant in the country. This role does not seem to abide the criteria of student-teacher role supported by CP in which teachers are also students; this is also contrary to the role

of a dialogic teacher urged by the teacher as being a student among students and 'least needed' in the class. Thus, it contradicts the egalitarian teacher-learner relationship as he claimed.

As it is evident in the above quotes, the learners welcomed this authoritative role which signifies their conception of the ideal role of a teacher which , regarding their banking education background, is not far from expectation; another example is what Shila wrote in her Q2:

> **Shila**: Doctor was very serious in teaching and forced us to be active and really live English (Q2).

For Shila, the teacher was 'very serious' and 'forced' them to be 'active' and to 'really live' English i.e. to feel, think and express themselves in English. It seems that the call to "living" English, after all, is a motivational strategy to make the learners talk and use the language. They seem to comply with the requisite feature of the process of the discussions as Parisa wrote in her Q2:

> **Parisa**: Though sometimes the first greetings in every session was kind of difficult questions to me, I think it was my problem not his. But sometimes I am still shocked by his not caring about other's feelings. Gradually I knew it was part of the plan as a bitter pill to swallow (Q2).

It seems that Parisa found some of the teacher's questions which, as Shila mentioned, aimed to 'force' them to express themselves, 'kind of difficult' as he did not seem to care about asking harsh questions that might hurt one's feelings. However, she convinced herself that 'it is a part of the plan as a bitter pill to swallow', or in the teacher's word: 'a desert that they should survive' (S1). This reminds the teacher's emphasis that the process of self-inspection and 'breaking the fake layers' 'is very challenging and you need to be brave' (S1). This reflects the demand placed on the seeker of authenticity in existentialism which, according to Guignon (2004), is quite strict as it requires continuous self-inspection to find out one's exact feelings, perceptions and desires within one's field of consciousness. This is also in line with Socratic motto, '*Know Thyself'*, which requires dramatic and often painful transformation of one's self through critical self-examination of her/his own opinions, assumptions, beliefs, and ideas. Thus, the learners seemed to accept that they need to welcome the painful challenge in order to acquire self-awareness as a primary step of CT as the teacher defined for them.

One noticeable point in most of the above quotes is the use of the title 'doctor' for the teacher though he did not have the degree. In higher education settings in Iran, university teachers are most often called by the students or their colleagues by their academic title namely 'doctor', or 'Ostad' accompanied with their family names, or just by the title, as a sign of respect. For the same reason, the learners called the teacher so as evidently they developed a reverence for him.

Moreover, in higher education, like all other official settings, it is common for students to be called by their family names but in this class the teacher called them by their first names and the learners, following him, called each other so. Being called by their first names offered a more intimate relationship; however, the teacher did not offer them to call him by his first name so he seems to prefer the established superior role of a traditional teacher rather than a learner among other learners as advocated in CP and as he himself asserted.

In answering the last question of Q2 seeking any more comments the learners would like to add, Marjan raised a crucial point:

> **Marjan**: in my opinion the teacher should provide more detail or reference for the topics (Q2)

According to the quote above, she believed that the teacher should have provided references to the topics of discussions. In fact, the teacher seemed to offer the philosophical concepts he taught as originally his. As evidence, at the end of the first session, Ali asked the teacher:

> **Ali**: I want to know whether there is any background to the subject matters in this class. I mean whether we can find them somewhere else or they are originally yours?

> **T**: I hope it can be found somewhere else but I myself have not found it yet.

Evidently, Ali sought for the sources where they could find the basis of the teacher's proposed philosophical framework for further study and being prepared for discussion sessions. The teacher's answer to his question implies that the concepts he teaches throughout the course are originally his. This is hardly acceptable as any philosophical framework unavoidably has a background even though it may be transformed through interpretation and analysis. As I discussed in chapter 6, the philosophical concepts taught in this course are very close to the main concepts of existentialism while the teacher never mentioned existentialism or its key figures. Firstly, to avoid clarifying the basis of the philosophical framework he teaches is misleading and dishonest. Second, this could have a great effect on the quality of the discussions as he did not provide any alternatives to his proposed concepts nor did he show how he developed his proposed definitions. This tends to place him in a superior position in discussions and make the learners less likely to be able to challenge the teacher's refined definitions.

In this regard, I bring an extract from the class discourse which signifies how the teacher assigned himself a superior role. In session 26 when the learners were working on their writing module of the IELTS textbook dealing with the statistics part of a graph, Sassan expressed his idea about mathematics:

> **Sassan**: I love mathematics. Mathematics is the language of the world

T: Cheating sir, I have heard this sentence before

Sassan: yeah yeah this is not mine. I read it somewhere

T: Ok so you should bring the reference. When you say something which is not yours you have to mention the reference. Of course I myself always bring lots of quotes without referencing. You know. I just forget (Session26).

In this excerpt, when Sassan expressed his love for mathematics, he used a sentence similar to a famous quote 'mathematics is the language in which God has written the universe' by Galileo Galilei, the Italian astronomer and physicist (1564 -1642). The teacher criticised Sassan for not mentioning the reference while he was admitting that he did the same as he "just forgets". In fact, in session 26, nearly the end of the course, he was asking Sassan to follow the rule he himself rarely followed. This signifies his supposing a superior role for himself as he is exempt to follow the very basic rule of plagiarism for which he criticised Sassan. This also implies that by not referencing, he would make the learners believe that the ideas are originally his thus he distorts the dialogic nature of discussions for not providing the alternatives which is a necessary feature of exploratory talk (Mercer, 2000).

It seems that this superior role model resulted in the learners' dependency on the teacher despite his emphasis on the contrary; for example, Sara wrote in her RD5:

> **Sara:** I feel dependant, I thought before that I had gained some understanding, but now I doubt it. I don't know. I feel confused (RD5).

As she stated in the above quote, she supposed that she reached some level of understanding, as she was repeating the course, but she still felt dependant and confused. Similarly, Hamid wrote in his Q2 after they finished the course:

> **Hamid**: I want to say although the class says you have to make your life yourself but I think I need it forever (Q2).

Hamid re-voiced the teacher that they need to make their original life themselves but he found himself in a complete need to continue being in the class. Similarly, Roya who was repeating the course raised a similar concern:

> **Roya**: although this class is for understanding how to think not what to think but I really scare of losing this class yet (RD15).

Roya also re-voiced the teacher's motto that they should learn 'how to think and not what to think'; in session 15 at the end of which Roya wrote the above RD, the teacher stated the above statement and referred to this proverbial wisdom that 'if you want to save a man from hunger,

don't give him a fish but teach him to fish' (FN, 08/07/2014). However, Roya still felt completely dependent as she did not seem to have an opportunity to learn 'how' to think even not during the second time she repeated the course. She also wrote in her later RD:

> **Roya:** I mentioned before this class has already addicted me. I don't know when I can be independent of it (RD18).

She again expressed her dependency on the class wondering how she could develop her independency. Near the end of the course, she had the same concern:

> **Roya**: I feel miserable when I am far from the class. Besides all of the daily's business, now it's the most important necessity for me (RD27).

As Roya wrote in her RD, she developed a deep dependency on the class. This signifies that although she, like Sara, was repeating the course and supposedly for the last time as the learners are not allowed to take the course more than two times as the teacher asserts, the course could not develop their independency contrary to what his teaching method promises. It seems that the process of the class makes the learners doubt and question their 'ill-defined' concepts, and then leaves them even more confused and dependant as the process of the discussions does not empower them to generate their own definitions or learn to do so.

9.9.2 Directive

The learners mostly expressed their satisfaction with how the teacher directed the discussions. For example, Marjan wrote in her Q2:

> **Marjan**: Doctor was able to keep the direction of the discussions in the way it had to be and prevented digressions (Q2).

For Marjan, the teacher could direct the discussions so that they did not deviate from its purpose. It seems that she subscribed to the principle that there was just one correct direction to follow and that was the teacher's. In this regard, Hamid shared a similar viewpoint:

> **Hamid**: Managing this class is a huge job that no one can administrate in such way (Q2).

Hamid praised the teacher for skilfully managing the discussions that, he believed, a few people may be able to fulfil. Similarly, Taha shared his viewpoint regarding the teacher's role as follows:

> **Taha**: in the process of learning, doctor has played very important role. He both problematizes and clarifies (Q2).

For him, the teacher played a very significant role as he both 'problematized' and 'clarified'. The former reminds the role of a teacher in a problem posing education; however, the latter implies that the teacher is the provider of the answers as well. This confirms the process of defining the

concepts as analysed in chapter 8; the teacher asked the learners to define a concept and they were given a chance to offer their definitions but their proposed definitions were usually rejected or directed to reach to the teacher's refined answer. Thus, it is the teacher who manages contributions and turns so directs the discussions to his predefined end; therefore, the learners are offered little chance, if any, to contribute in the process of defining concepts. This contradicts what his teaching theory and instructional strategy advocate.

Likewise, Roya wrote in her Q2:

> **Roya**: the process of the discussions was unified. Every step and every material were used to shape that unity and to show the direction (Q2).

For Roya, the selection of the instructional materials and the management of the discussions were 'unified' and 'integral' to show them the direction. This statement contradicts the role of liberatory teachers pedagogy who need to be radically democratic, responsible and directive, not of the students but of the process, and doing something not *to* the students but *with* them to create a just and fair system (Shor & Freire, 1987a). According to the learners' viewpoints, the teacher's role was more likely to be the former rather than the latter albeit the learners seemed to be satisfied and grateful for being directed. This also contradicts the teacher-student relationship as the teacher asserts, namely empowering and autonomous as discussed in 6.2.8.

At the end of Q2, I asked the learners whether they would like to share anything else. What Taha wrote I found appropriate to raise here:

> **Taha:** this class is for the people who want to change. What about others? (Q2).

The main aim and objective of the course, as stated by the teacher, is to help learners upgrade their motivation from learning English for getting required marks in IELTS to living an authentic life and making a 'new me', which he considered as an inner natural tendency awaiting to be activated (S16, S19). This, as Taha's above quote implies, is for the learners who are willing to change. What if a learners does not want to change. The teacher's insistence on self-transformation tends to lead the discussions to ideological imposition. This is the point I discuss more in the following theme.

9.9.3   Judgemental

One of the main aims of the learners to attend this course, according to FGs and Q2, was to improve their speaking skill which is examined in IELTS and they could not improve enough through the previous English courses they had attended. Class discussions offered them some

space to talk which as discussed in 9.7 satisfied the learners comparing to their banking educational background. However 'honest self-expression' as emphasised by the teacher, was meant to be beyond the simple sharing of opinions about a concept at hand. They were judged by the teacher whether they were 'honest' or they were 'faking their ideas' and 'hiding behind their fake layers' in need to be 'destroyed' (S14). Some of the learners seemed to accept and welcome this behaviour as a part of the process of becoming 'self-aware'. For example, Sadaf stated that through discussing with the teacher, they became aware of the faults in their thinking:

> **Sadaf**: when we discussed with him all of us understand some wrongs thinking that we had and all the time he is cause of deeply thinking (Q2).

The above quote implies that through dialogue 'with him', rather than discussing together, 'all' of them realised some faults in their thinking and were made think 'deeply'. Sadaf's viewpoint seems to be in line with the teacher's stated aim i.e. 'to activate' the learners' thinking and break their 'ill-defined' frameworks. This resembles Socratic dialogue through which Socrates continued questioning his interlocutor until he became confused, moved from 'unconscious ignorance' to 'conscious ignorance', and then recognised new insights (Butts, 1955 in Wong, 2006: 43). In this regard, the awareness and humble acknowledgment of one's own ignorance is considered wisdom (Wong, 2006).

However, some of the learners did not seem to be in agreement with Sadaf; for example, Parisa wrote in her RD28:

> **Parisa**: He as always convicted me of escaping of some part of life but I'm not escaping. I knew he was going to say go on by being conceptual. I think he gives his ideas like this to make the impression. That was Ok (RD8).

Parisa mentioned her being judged by the teacher of 'escaping' instead of confronting her life problems during the discussions in session 28. She expressed her dissatisfaction of this comment and his common repetitive advice of being more conceptual. Although she felt treated unfairly in these situations, she recognised this behaviour as a strategy to ultimately motivate the students to think. It seems that the learners noticed this strict behaviour but they accepted it as a part of the 'challenging' process of 'self-transformation' and 'conceptualisation' as stressed by the teacher. For example, in FG2, Saman said:

> **Saman:** Ostad is usually so strict with Ali. Isn't he? If I were him, I would quit
>
> **Roya:** No. I think Ali is so stubborn and resists changing. In fact, Ostad helps him this way to break his fake layers and transform. This is his favour to Ali

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Taha: Yes, it's true. I wish Doctor challenges me as strictly. I am so eager to face myself more

According to the above short extract from FG3, Saman expressed his wondering about the strict behaviour of the teacher with Ali. While Roya, who was repeating the course and was familiar with the teaching method, stated that this is an effective strategy by the teacher to help Ali, who is 'stubborn and resists change', with 'breaking his fake layers'. Taha agreed and expressed his willingness to be 'challenged' by the teacher to 'face himself'. Evidently, the learners believed, in line with the teacher's emphasis, that his judgmental behaviour is a necessary part of the teacher's proposed challenging process of self-transformation.

Ali, who was mentioned in the above excerpt, raised his dissatisfaction regarding the teacher's judgmental comments in FG2:

> **Ali:** I used to engage in discussions and I enjoyed it. Then I preferred to keep quiet and just listen to others. The teacher constantly misjudges me. When I refer to other authors, he labels me of repeating other thinkers and not thinking on my own or hiding behind my fake layers. It is not true. I studied other philosophers and I believe in some of their ideologies. I just do not understand why I have to accept his ideology? (FG2)

Ali was in upper-intermediate ELP level, and registered on the course without any prior introduction to the teacher's approach or method. As he also wrote in his Q1, he took the course for improving his English to take the required degree for PhD entrance exam. He willingly engaged in discussions and activities and as he mentioned in the above quote, he enjoyed it. However, after a while he avoided to engage in class discussions as a result of his being misjudged by the teacher. As he stated, when he expressed his opinions referring to other authors, the teacher labelled him of 'not thinking on his own', 'hiding behind his fake layers', or 'faking the idea' (FNs,03/07/2014, 23/07/2014, 07/08/2014). This way, he preferred to keep silent. This could be the reason he quit the course after session 20. More importantly, these kinds of judgment may make the learners avoid referring to authors as they would be labelled as 'faking' their ideas. This is strongly misleading as it may lead to plagiarism.

Here, in order to further clarify the judgmental role of the teacher, I bring a short extract of the class discourse in session 12 when the teacher asked Sara to define a term that he had defined in previous sessions. She presented the refine definition. Ali then asked:

> **Ali:** I do not know how you can recognise who is talking cliché and who is original? She is exactly repeating your definition. When I quote from others you label me as just repeating others but when she repeats you, she is fine?
>
> **T**: because she repeats what she understands

Ali: how do you know she does but I don't?

T: This is beyond your thinking power. Maybe once you can understand if you do your best of course

Ali: yeah maybe! Just maybe!

This short extract shows that the teacher had a set of refined definitions that he taught and expected the learners to reproduce. It is also evident that the teacher's judgments, contrary to his claims, were not based on critical justification as he silenced Ali offensively instead of providing a suitable space to discuss and clarify. This highlights his authoritarian role similar to a traditional teacher's in a banking education and signifies the dichotomy of teacher-student relationship.

Sassan also raised a similar concern in his last session RD:

> **Sassan**: during the first sessions, I believed this class was totally different and would help me to break the frames, and think critically. In fact it did break our old frames but replaced it with another frame that is his conceptual framework. I audio recorded the sessions and I listened to them several times at home to better understand the concepts. First, I really think the way discussions were managed was not democratic but dictatorial. His voice was always superior and we were labelled and silenced as hiding behind our fake layers or just repeating cliché, without providing reasons. Second, his definitions are so refined that I cannot think of any better and this is what makes his definitions unbeatable. In fact, he seems not to tolerate any alternative. Thus, although the discussions and the topics were so interesting and new, I do not think I am willing to attend in his discussion course as I am not willing to be imprisoned in another framework no matter how logically it was defined. I learned a lot and I am grateful but I do not tolerate this method any more (RD29, translated).

Sassan, as he wrote in his last RD, used to be satisfied with the process of the class discussions which helped him to 'break the frames'. Thus, he seemed to be happy with this process as long as it helped him to notice his 'old' frames of thinking. However, like Ali, he expressed his dissatisfaction about the discussion management for being far from 'democratic'. He believes that the process of the discussions broke their old frameworks of their minds but then replaced them by the teacher's defined framework rather than cultivating a free space for them to think and raise their authentic voice. For him, the teacher's voice was always dominant and alternative ideas were silenced by being labelled without enough reasoning or justification. He also believed that the teacher's definitions of the concepts are so strong that does not allow any alternatives. These are the reason why he decided not to attend in the teacher's other discussion course as he was not willing to be framed in another framework as static as the one he had learnt to question during the course. He stated that he appreciated many things he learned through the course but for him this method is another type of imprisonment which he

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would not stand. Sassan's opinion mainly supports the analysis of class discourse and signifies that the management of the discussions is far from democratic and empowering despite what the teacher's teaching philosophy advocates and contrary to the stated aim of his teaching method and instructional strategy.

9.10   Discussion and conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the learners' viewpoints on the whole class discussions as the teacher's main teaching method in line with the CP approach he adopted. To this end, I conducted thematic analysis to the data gathered from 2 Qs, 2 FGs, the learners' RDs, my FNs and short excerpts of class discourse. The findings shed more light on the teacher's teaching method in practice which signifies the significance of including the learners' voice in developing a comprehensive account of a teaching within a dialogic critical framework.

Generally, almost all of the learners found this English course different from any other courses they had attended. Although they attended this course primarily for improving their English and preparing themselves for IELTS, they preferred class discussion over all IELTS-based activities and found it the most useful and effective activity. Therefore, there was a feeling of being exposed to an innovative learning model and space, despite the very directive, authoritarian manner it was monitored by the teacher. Considering their banking educational background, it is not far from expectation that they developed a positive viewpoint toward class discussion as a new experience. Noticeably , their common preference to have discussion sessions and their enthusiasm to learn more about CT show their willingness to participate in an innovative approach far from banking education. This signifies the necessity of applying a dialogic critical approach in different fields of study by educators especially in banking education where the learners would actively participate and welcome the innovative alternative to develop and improve.

What made the discussion sessions meaningful and interesting for them was the effective teaching of a set of integrated philosophical themes. They were aware of and admired the existence of a predefined and integrated philosophical concepts that the discussions were directed to teach. This confirms that the teacher has a set of predefined philosophical concepts which he teaches through question-answer sessions, which clearly contradicts what his teaching theory claims i.e. co-creation of definitions through dialogic discussions. Topical themes could be brought to discussions by the teacher for critical investigation as Shor (1992) suggests but those

themes must also be open to rejection or amendment by students. In fact, having a predetermined curricular end point makes dialogic discussions no less monologic than lecturing (Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014) as having a dialogic approach to teaching is supposed to create a learning community where, together with learners, knowledge is co-created or at least dialogically shared and cooperatively understood (Dysthe, 2011).

As the learners expressed in Q2 and FGs, speaking skill was what they sought after to improve so whole class discussions were desirable for them through which they were offered a chance to talk and improve their speaking as a required skill in IELTS. Some of them were satisfied with their improvement to express themselves regardless of their ELP levels or their prior familiarity with the process of the course. In fact, in comparison with banking education, in which lecturing is the dominant teaching method and rarely allow learners' voice to raise, this course seemed to provide some space for the learners through question-answer discourse to share their opinions. However, self-expression was not necessarily less domesticating and failed to develop real dialogic discussions as the interlocutors' voices were not allowed to interplay to generate novel ideas (Lefstein & Snell, 2014; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014; Mercer, 2000; Rule, 2015).

Moreover, the learners' recognised and appreciated inclusion of CT skills in the syllabus as the main objective of the course, however, what most of them recalled from the discussions on CT was the main message of living an authentic life, bypassing the rather complex procedures the teacher defined based on his interpretation of basic characteristics of CT. In fact, the teacher never explained his proposed steps of logic in concrete operation or how he used them when reaching to his proposed definitions. As the learners had no prior training on CT, teaching the basic concepts of CT is necessary, however, not knowing how to actualise it in one's day to day life makes the skill disintegrated. In this sense, CT as it is taught in this course seems to be what Paul (1994) considers as 'weak' sense CT for it simply involves, at best, learning the teacher's interpretation of some basic features of CT as a set of defined concepts. It contradicts the teacher's conception of CT which was compatible with Paul's (1994) 'strong' sense CT, as discussed in 6.2.5.

As discussed in 6.3.1.1, throughout the course the teacher placed a great emphasis on making the class a cooperative community which affects the quality of dialogic interactions in class as it could develop a harmonious, respectful, caring relationship among learners (Matusov et al., 2013). In line with this, the teacher adopted some strategies such as the spatial arrangement of the class and including group work activities and peer presentation. Regarding the spatial arrangement of the classroom, the chairs were arranged in a semi-horseshoe layout thus the

learners faced each other, which facilitates the eye contact that is prerequisite for the whole class discussion. Comparing to a teacher's standing or sitting at the front while learners' sitting in ordered rows which is the norm elsewhere in the educational setting across the country, the semi-horseshoe seating arrangement sends out a friendlier and more egalitarian message of all participants' being on an equal footing. This influences the nature of the relationships that develop between the teacher and the learners during classroom discourse (Lefstein & Snell, 2014). Moreover, group work activities and peer-presentation which are not common in educational settings in the country could also develop intimacy and cooperation among the learners in which the learners learn to listen to each other and encourage each other to participate and share ideas (Alexander, 2008). Moreover, the teacher called them by their first names and, following him, the learners called them so; this is not norm in other official or educational stings Iran. This also could add to the sense of intimacy and friendship the learners may feel during the discussion sessions.

Some of the learners found the class atmosphere caring, supportive and friendly which helped them to improve expressing themselves in line with the teacher's emphasis. They were also willing to develop their community in and outside the class. However, some of the learners expressed their dissatisfaction of the competitive atmosphere of the class and their fear to be misunderstood which may be as a result of the lack of basic features of dialogue in the class discussions such as relationship, thinking together, critique and interplay of voices, as discussed in the previous chapter.

At the heart of dialogic pedagogy is the possibility of multiple voices in the classroom, 'of which the teacher's is merely one and is not necessarily dominant' (Lefstein & Snell, 2014: 63). In fact, a critical pedagogue, as discussed in 2.5.4, needs to take a position and make it understandable to the learners but s/he has no right to impose this position on them (Kincheloe, 2004). Thus, the teacher is not supposed to be the main performer, the gatekeeper of truth, the final authority of knowledge but a participant in learning and its principal facilitator. Following similar line of reasoning, as discussed in 6.2.8, the teacher emphasised on the learner's independency from him as in his conception 'the best teacher is the least needed in the class' (Int4). He also stated that the learners should consider him as a learner among themselves. However, the learners mostly regarded him as a superior role model, directive and judgmental, closer to the traditional teachers, which resulted in their dependency to him as followers rather than becoming self-directing and autonomous.

Although most of the learners accepted and praised his superior role and his management of class discussions, some of them disapproved of the authoritative role the teacher played in governing the class discussions and in labelling students without providing any reasonable justification which was also evident in discourse analysis of class discussion provided in chapter 8. Some also critiqued his insistence on his own defined conceptual framework which he regarded as the only possible answer by disregarding all the alternatives offered by the learners as 'fake layers'. Such behaviour seems to generate a kind of dialogue in which an endpoint is known in advance and tends to maintain certain voices and generate person-ideas (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014).

According to some of the learners' viewpoints such as Sassan's and Ali's, the teacher's proposed version of CP or 'conceptualisation' could not satisfy the 'liberation' it promises. It could make the learners aware of their 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks but it failed to empower them to generate new logically defined framework which was supposed to enable them to generalise it to all aspects of their lives. It is noteworthy that the learners' viewpoints are affected by their contextual background, including educational, social, cultural, political and personal so far as '(w)hat appears to one person as a block to freedom may be a necessary structure for empowerment and gaining freedom for another' (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014: 6). Therefore, what may seem to Taha, Sara, Sadaf, and Hamid as empowering and liberating was regarded as domesticating by Parisa, Ali and Sassan although they, more or less, shared a similar educational, social, cultural and political background. It could be as a result of the different personal backgrounds and the complexity of individuals as unique human beings. In fact, what a teacher intends is not necessarily what s/he could put into practice and what the learners would experience and take away, and the teacher's manipulation of the learners' subjectivities may also involve self-manipulation of his own consciousness (Matusov, 2009).This further highlights the critical pedagogues' responsibility to constantly reconsider and analyse their teaching method and practice to understand the consequences of their behaviour for the individuals they teach as there are multiple ways of conceiving and "living" a CP experience - as done by the teacher and the learners.

10. Conclusion

Synthesising the previous chapters, this last chapter formulates answers to the research questions, followed by a discussion about the limitations of this study, the contribution it makes to the current research and recommendations for the development of further research in this area of study.

10.1   Research findings

This section includes the answers to the main research questions and its two sub-questions posed in chapter 1. They are repeated at the beginning of each section followed by a synopsis of the findings relevant to each question, as analysed and discussed in detail in the four preceding chapters.

10.1.1   Research questions 1 and 2

1.   What is the teacher's perspective on the relevance, aims, and theoretical assumptions of CP in ELT?

2.   How does the teacher believe CP in ELT should be put into pedagogic practice?

This qualitative case study made an attempt to investigate how an Iranian English teacher perceives and practises an approach to CP in a higher education context in Iran. To answer these two questions, I explored the teacher's teaching philosophy including his particular theoretical standpoint considering CP and ELT/L in chapters 6 and 7 by conducting thematic analysis of the teacher's interviews, my field notes throughout the course and the audio recordings of the class. This set the ground to discuss his teaching philosophy and method within the framework of dialogic critical pedagogy, and with regard to the application of this approach to ELT in general and in Iran in particular. This also prepared the ground for an in-depth-exploration of his teaching method as it was put in practice in a series of ELL class, designed and taught by him. This in-depth-exploration was achieved through discourse analysis of a sample of class discussion in chapter 8, and thematic analysis of the learners' viewpoints in chapter 9.

In the teacher's conception, CP originates from CT, the activation of which is his declared educational aim when setting out to design his ELL course. The process of CT, according to the

teacher, necessitates questioning the learners' 'ill-defined' concepts, which is supposed to lead them to generate their own logically defined conceptual frameworks. This conception reflects criticality as a valued educational goal: 'to help students become more sceptical toward commonly accepted truisms' (Burbules & Berk, 1999: 45). This is also in line with Shor's (1992) definition of CP that advocates internalising a way of living in which one constantly questions the status quo in search for deeper meanings beneath the events and actions at all levels of personal and social life. This also reminds the philosophy of existentialism which focuses on the individual's pursuit of meaning (Flynn, 2006). However, as the analysis of classroom interaction has revealed, the teacher's approach towards implementing CT is mainly based on his own interpretation of basic features of CT. The definitions established by the teacher do not involve the learners and leave them basically without an opportunity to engage with political thinking, as suggested by CP advocates, or with analytical thinking, as claimed by traditional CT scholars (Burbules & Berk, 1999).

The primary steps into a process of CT, as the teacher envisages it, are to improve 'self-awareness' and 'honest self-expression' of the learners. This is in line with the ideal of 'sincerity', a close concept to authenticity in existentialism, that is 'a life of honest self-awareness' (Santoni, 1995: 17), which necessitates knowing one's true self and expressing it in one's relationships and actions to achieve self-realization and self-fulfilment as an authentic human being (Guignon, 2004). His insistence on self-awareness and self-transformation is in line with the critical theorist' emphasis on personality formation and self-realisation as the primary aim of education (Miedema & Wardekker, 1999) and as necessary for the advancement of the emancipatory function of knowledge (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016). However, authenticity is basically an ambiguous tenet (Guignon, 2004), thus it seems difficult to establish reliable criteria as the basis of CT and logical judgment.

Moreover, in his conception, knowing one's true 'self' is prerequisite for developing one's ability to express oneself and to gain a voice, which would liberate from being impressed by the voice of dominant culture, as a potential pathway to oppression. Therefore, his teaching promises *liberation,* i.e. freedom from 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks, *self -transformation*, i.e. exploring, activating and integrating the defined human basic values including CT, and *empowerment,* i.e. the co-creation of new logically defined conceptual frameworks which are established through dialogue by members of a community of cooperative learners. Therefore, his teaching targets ideological framework of the learners rather than directly targeting the socio-political aspects of society to eradicate the oppressive elements as emphasised in CP. However, the learners are supposed to learn living an authentic life which might lead to

conscious decisions and judgments to create a better world for oneself and others which can be considered, theoretically, in line with the ideal of humanisation.

In his conception, language is both a social collective phenomenon, i.e. a means to form a community, and an individual phenomenon, i.e. to express one's thoughts as a prerequisite for modifying oneself. In fact, learning English is not the primary aim of his designed ELL course but it is supposed to be the natural by-product of one's ability to express one's thoughts. Therefore, using English as a means to express one's thought in the community of learners, the learners' English is supposed to be naturally improved. I created a simile to further clarify his educational objective: one can strengthen one's *feet muscles* (*English and thinking*) as a result of *mountain climbing* (*expressing one's thought in English*) toward the *peak* (an *authentic me*). Whether this claim is supported by any evidence is beyond this project.

The analysis evidenced that the teacher's teaching tends not to meet the basic criteria of Freirean problem-posing education which 'relies upon dialogue and critical consciousness, democratic teacher-student relationships, the co-creation of knowledge through interaction, and a curriculum grounded in students' interests and experiences' (Bartlett, 2008: 2). Firstly, in line with the teacher's insistence on dialogue as the best teaching method, whole class discussions were the dominant discourse of the course. As he stated, he was inspired by Socrates in practising dialogue which is supposed to provide 'critique' as one of the basic dialogic features of discussion. However, his class discussions turned to be "*pseudo dialogic*" which means they consisted mostly of question-answer interactions which were strongly controlled by the teacher leading to uncritical transference of his defined philosophical concepts, thus, mostly lacking the required criteria of dialogue as suggested by Lefstein and Snell (2014). Second, instead of building social and political awareness, the process he suggests aims to strengthen primarily critical consciousness as self-awareness which is being achieved by tackling and working on the learners' 'ill-defined' conceptual frameworks which the teacher aims to change. Third, as the analysis of classroom interaction has revealed, his role as a teacher reassembles far more an approach of banking education than an egalitarian democratic approach, despite his stated claims and self-expressed commitment to be working towards the latter. Fourth, class discussions, contrary to his claim, did not include co-creation of definitions and proposed concepts, over which he claimed full and non-divisible authority. Finally, the learners played no role in developing the syllabus, including course materials, discussion themes, and class activities as they were pre-planned and monitored in great detail by the teacher.

The teacher's approach to ELT has little in common with the general approach critical pedagogues adopt to ELT; according to the literature, the main aim of applying CP to ELT is to explore social relationship and issues of power surrounding English, and raising a critical awareness of the dominant and oppressive culture that the globalisation of English tends to impose. Therefore, besides teaching language skills to acquire communicative competence, this approach aims to help English language learners to understand and accept cultural differences (Wong, 2006) and train them to better realise and appreciate their own cultural identity, social surroundings, histories, and the possibilities for change (Norton & Toohey, 2004), and to ultimately develop a more just society (Crookes, 2012). The teacher, however, adopted a completely different approach and considered the English language as an opportunity for learners to build a new, logically defined conceptual framework, as he considered their existing conceptual frameworks in their mother tongue are already firmly established and, thus, difficult to change. As the study shows, it turns out that such an approach, conducted in a language in which learners are not (yet) highly competent, can potentially bear the risk of pronounced indoctrination, especially when learners are confronted with complicated philosophical concepts that are not easy to grasp in a language one is very familiar with and even more difficult to argue, rationalise and defend in a second language.

Similarly, from a theoretical standpoint, the case under study is hardly in consistence with the suggestions made by Iranian researchers in the field of ELT with a CP approach. As discussed in chapter 3, the Iranian researchers mostly regarded CP as an approach to set against the imperialistic aspect of the English language, so they advocate to design and use locally produced materials. Contrary to this, class discussions as analysed in this study did not include any criticism of the imperialistic aspect attached to the globalisation of English. Rather, English was regarded as a new language and an opportunity for learners to re/define their ideological framework and improve their thinking skill. Moreover, the course materials were not locally produced materials but a selection of non-Iranian movies and texts which were used to set the ground for discussing a set of interrelated philosophical concepts as the building blocks of the teacher's philosophical framework. Therefore, the discussion themes are not 'generative themes' which are drawn from the students' life experiences nor 'topical themes' which are social questions of key significance locally, nationally or globally (Freire, 1970; Shor, 1992). In a similar sense, the teacher's proposed themes are not in line with the suggested themes by the Iranian researchers, such as world peace, inequality and poverty or Iranian cultures. Furthermore, the teacher's emphasis a monolingual syllabus is in contrast with some of the Iranian researchers who advocate including Farsi in English courses as a source of empowerment

and resistance against 'linguistic imperialism' (Akbari, 2008; Davari et al., 2012; Momenian & Shirazizadeh, 2009).

Comparing the context of this study to the few examples where ELL courses were coupled within a CP approach in Iran, this IELTS preparation course occupies a unique position, as for its course design and its underlying teaching philosophy. The teacher seems to be eclectic in the sense that his designed syllabus includes a range of different non-textbook based materials such as English movies and texts. In addition, he designed a set of varied tasks and activities which makes his syllabus more dynamic compared to lecture-dominant, teacher-front and textbook-based syllabi which are common in the education system of Iran, including ELL courses. Although he included an IELTS textbook and related activities which are geared towards preparing learners for the IELTS exam and getting the required marks, the course was, primarily, about teaching a collection of pre-selected philosophical concepts imparted through question-answer sessions that were strongly controlled by the teacher and for which he used entirely and uniquely the English language. In practice, he hardly fulfilled what his theory claimed to unfold as a liberating effect of his pedagogy which he assumed to be a modified version of CP, a claim which will be addressed further in the next section and with the next research question.

10.1.2   Research question 3

3.   What kind of instructional strategies does the teacher actually use in his classrooms?

The third research question deals with exploring how the teacher discursively constructs his teaching method in classroom interaction. To this end, I investigated the role and importance of dialogue in whole class discussions as the dominant form of discourse and teaching method, according to the teacher's individual pedagogical design and in accordance with the principles of CP more broadly (Bartlett, 2005; Dysthe, 2011; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1994; Pollack & Kodikant, 2011; Roberts, 2000; Shor, 1980, 1992, 1993, Shor & Freire, 1987b, 1987a). In chapter 8, I applied classroom discourse analysis to analyse a sample of whole class discussions using Lefstein and Snell's (2014) six approaches to dialogue. I did this to make sense of dialogue as a key concept in dialogic critical pedagogy and how it was used in the context of my study. Following this approach provided me with a critical multi-perspective analysis and an in-depth understanding of dynamics and patterns of dialogic class discourse which can offer useful insights for critical pedagogues and other educators who may feel inspired by this study to re/evaluate their own practice and reflect on dialogic interactions in their own classrooms.

According to the results of in-depth-analysis which I conducted on one episode in chapter 8, but which are in line with the results of the analysis I conducted on a much larger sample, there emerged a similar pattern governing whole class discussions in the teacher's ELL class. The pattern I found is similar to how Socrates initiated his dialogues, which is that the teacher starts the discussions by asking the learners to define his proposed philosophical themes. In doing this, he calls individual learners by their names thereby drawing them one by one into a dialogue. This could be, in principle, a useful first step to provide a suitable space for the learners to raise their voice and share their thoughts. However, more detailed, in-depth-exploration evidenced that there was no interplay or mutual engagement between the learners' voices which would have enabled the emergence and building of more discussions. Instead, the classroom interaction – framed by the teacher as dialogue – resembled more as 'box ticking exercise' whereby the teacher checked to what extent the definitions offered by the learners fitted with the teacher's own definitions. In this way and without making space for the interlocutors' voices to interplay and different ideas to flourish, discussions could not satisfy the basic requirements of a dialogic discussion, thus they could not be considered as empowering or enhancing the learners' voice.

'Conceptualisation' as his proposed instructional strategy in managing the class discussions, was defined as the process of cooperatively creating new 'logical' definitions of the teacher's proposed philosophical concepts. In practice, however, it turned out to be concept teaching through question-answer sessions. From the analysis, it is evident that the teacher searches in the learners' answers for his predefined concepts, or what Shulman & Sherin (2004) call 'big ideas', which can be collected from his 'leading questions' (Brown, 1997) through which he unilaterally directs the discussions. In fact, after questioning and refuting the learners' contributions as a sign of their inability to define the highlighted concepts, he provided them with his refined definitions not as alternatives but as final answers which are his curricular endpoints (Matusov et al., 2013). In this way, dialogue is used as a means to facilitate transmission of his own predetermined philosophical concepts. This makes discussions lose their quality as true dialogues, in fact they become anti-dialogic and authoritarian (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014).

Moreover, what makes the class discussions less dialogic is the fact that the teacher neither offers alternatives nor permits alternatives to raise. In fact, he did not provide how he himself arrived at his refined definitions of very specific pre-selected philosophical concepts, nor did he refer to other authors. For instance, though authenticity as the pillar of his philosophical framework has much in common with existentialism, he never mentioned the philosophy, its key

figures or how his own interpretations and conceptions were similar to or different from theirs. Even the materials he assigned were mostly accompanied by his own refined interpretation of the highlighted concepts that were part of his well-structured teaching preconceived concepts. Indeed, they set the background for a well-rehearsed, closely monitored progression process which the teacher had developed and adjusted through his experience of many years. The class discourse analysis also evidences that the management of the class discussions silenced the learners thus did not allow any alternatives to raise and be discussed.

It is evident that the role of the teacher in managing the class discussions, contrary to his claim and despite what is expected from a critical pedagogue, is closer to the traditional role of the teachers' in banking education. It is him who established the governing norm of the discussions i.e. the interlocutors should be ready to give a 'proper' definition of any highlighted concept or any term they use in their talk, and it is him who discards or confirms the learners' contributions without providing justifications. This places him in a position superior to his learners and provides him with the power to interrupts, ask questions and be the master and manager of all interactions. Far from being a facilitator, during whole class discussions, he remains expert number one, asks answer-known questions, and does not seem to have anything puzzling or wondering in the subject matter (Matusov et al., 2013). In fact, he asks the learners to define the concepts but their answers make no difference to his intended philosophical framework.

Apparently, the teacher was in a much higher ELP level than his learners, and, as he said, he carefully collected the supporting materials, and was equipped with years of practising his method in his classes, thus he is highly professional in delivering his predefined concepts. Therefore, he did not belong to the community of learners, and his conceptual framework could not be challenged by the learners who were in lower ELP levels and unaccustomed to taking the floor and affirming their positions effectively in discussions, due to their experience of banking education during their years of schooling and university education. Beside these factors, as evident in discourse analysis of class discussions, he tended to silence any possible alternative ideas in class and did not allow *exploratory* or *cumulative* talks (Mercer, 2000) to develop and flourish.

Consequently, discussions mainly lack the basic features of dialogue and contradict the main feature of his promised liberation i.e. the co-creation of meaning in a cooperative community. Therefore, class discussions could not fulfil his asserted liberation i.e. freedom to generate new definitions which would then enable students to transfer this ability to redefine concepts

relevant in their lives. In practice, class discussions aimed to eradicate the learners' conceptual frameworks, and then replace them with the teacher's pre-defined conceptual framework as the only legitimate framework in which learners were permitted to think and discuss. In fact, when dialogue is used in a way such as seen in the context under study here, to set a shared consensus, communal agreement or collective acceptance, it is always based on 'authoritative discourse' and invites pedagogical violence and/or pedagogical manipulation (Matusov, 2009; Matusov & von Duyke, 2010).

This raises the question, whether the teacher was unaware of the hidden risk of indoctrination which lies in applying an approach in the way he did; or, if he was aware of the risk, why he was unable or unwilling to prevent or actively counter it. To answer that question is impossible and amounts to speculation rather than certainty. However, what this research is able to show is that there is an important gap and heavy tension between the teacher's discourse and self-declared aims of teaching and his actual teaching practice and its impact on classroom interaction and students' participation. Here, it can be noticed that, aiming strongly for curricular goals, he tends to overemphasise authenticity and self-transformation as aspects of personal development that are inspired by the philosophy of existentialism. In fact, having a pre-conceived, strictly defined conceptual framework on which he insists strongly, excludes the possibility of implementing a dialogic teaching approach. Noticeably, in his version of CP, the critique of society which CP promotes is replaced with a competitive, elitist, and individualistic celebration of the 'true self', in which the teacher is elevated to an all-knowing superior position.

Moreover, his use of Socratic dialogue as a question-answer device for steering the learners in his predetermined specific direction fails to conform to Bakhtin's idea of a true dialogue as an unending conversation (Alexander, 2008). Therefore, it can be said that his teaching creates a "*pseudo-dialogic*" space in discussions which makes his teaching anti-dialogic and leads to an effect of domesticating learners, as dialogue was used as a means to transmit his pre-conceived concepts more effectively and to implement the learners' acceptance with stronger impact (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014). However, the teacher's manipulation of the learners' subjectivities may also involve self-manipulation of his own consciousness as he may believe that his predetermined curricular endpoint is the only possible and logical outcome (Matusov, 2009) of the teaching process. This highlights the significance and urgency for critical pedagogues' to develop a self-reflective attitude and to observe their own practice and the consequences of their teaching with great care and awareness, specifically with regard to the power relations involved.

10.1.3   Research question 4

4.   How do the learners view the teacher's actual instructional strategies?

In order to further discuss and evaluate the teacher's main teaching method in practice, I explored the learners' viewpoints about the class discussions with regard to the role and importance of dialogue in class interactions with a focus on the teacher's role. This research question was addressed in chapter 9 by adopting thematic analysis to the learners' FG discussions, Qs and RDs they developed throughout the course. I also made use of some excerpts of class discourse whenever appropriate.

All of the learners shared the educational experience of a banking model which is dominated by information transfer through lecturing and using textbooks largely disintegrated from their day to day life. The majority of the learners had no prior knowledge about CT and had never come across the term prior to attending this course. They mostly had learned English as a foreign language in schools following a grammar-translation method, or in private language learning institutes mainly following skill-based methods. Almost all of the learners were dissatisfied with their previous learning of English and therefore open to a new approach. Given their background and previous experience, there were some features of the course to which the learners felt attracted and which they experienced as new, innovative and satisfactory. Regarding social forms of learning they felt attracted by group work, peer presentations and the general feature of whole class discussion, all of which are mostly absent from Iranian teaching practice in schools and higher education. The other feature which is also widely uncommon in the Iranian education system was the use of non-textbook based materials, such as movies and novels. Consequently, these were considered as innovations and appreciated by the learners.

Almost all of the learners stated that this course was completely different from all other English courses they had attended before. Class discussions stood out in this picture as the most frequent activity which the learners preferred over all other class activities since it provided them with a chance to talk – a rare opportunity in other educational settings in Iran. In line with the teacher's emphasis on self-expression, they made an attempt to engage in class discussions, and there is some evidence that it encouraged the learners to share their ideas. They were generally satisfied with the ways in which their self-expression improved, regardless of their ELP levels, personality or prior familiarity with the teaching method. However, the more they were familiarised with the teaching method, the more they were willing to go along with the teacher's controlled way of managing class discussions; they became more and more receptive to his

ideological imposition as a way of self-transformation. Noticeably, their common preference to have discussion sessions and their enthusiasm to learn more about CT show their willingness to participate in an innovative approach far from banking education. This signifies the necessity of applying a dialogic critical approach in different fields of study by educators in banking education where the learners would actively participate and welcome the innovative alternative to develop and improve.

In line with the teacher's emphasis on making the class as a "commune", he adopted some strategies such as the semi-horseshoe layout of the class, including group work activities and peer presentation, and calling them by their first names which are not common in educational settings in the country could develop intimacy and cooperation among the learners in which the learners learn to listen to each other and encourage each other to participate and share ideas (Alexander, 2008). According to the learners' viewpoints, some of them felt that the class could provide an intimate atmosphere where they learned from each other and could express their feelings and thoughts. However, there are some instances in which some of them expressed their dissatisfaction with an atmosphere in the class they described as competitive where a sense of cooperation was missing and where they were afraid of being misunderstood. This could be read as resulting from a lack of the basic features of dialogue in class discussions such as thinking together, interplay of voices and critique.

Most of the learners stated that the course exceeded their primary expectation which was to improve their level of English to succeed in the IELTS test or for a job promotion. Mostly, they stated that their primary motivation, in line with the teacher's emphasis, had changed from learning English for IELTS to 'living' English, which meant for them to express themselves in English in order to modify and improve their 'selves' on an individual level. Their viewpoints were in line with those of the teacher's and his stated aims of the course. However, it is possible and even likely that their views were echoing those of the teacher's as a direct result of the pedagogy and teaching they experienced. While the learners recognised the inclusion of CT skills in the syllabus and appreciated it as the main objective of the course, they strikingly echo the teacher's interpretation of CT. It is noticeable that what the learners most recalled from the discussions on CT was the main message of living an authentic life. Though, they acquired that notion bypassing the rather complex procedures and conceptual notions the teacher had presented to them in class and whole class discussion. While he seemingly failed to explain his complex ideas in a transparent and comprehensive way, the learners still found the exercise and opportunity to exchange with others interesting and rewarding. The majority of the learners also did not seem to mind that their viewpoints were refuted by the teacher and their contributions

labelled as invalid in front of their classmates. In fact, in line with the teacher's emphasis, they would regard it as a necessary process of 'breaking their fake layers' to lay the ground for new "logically defined" concepts.

As the learners had no prior training of CT, there is no doubt that learning the basic concepts of CT was necessary. However, not knowing how to apply this knowledge to daily life situations devalues the skill and puts a big question mark to CP theory which claims this ability to transfer as a major goal of CP. This echoes the critique of some scholars who point out that instruction of thinking skills should not only enhance the learners' ability to analyse arguments and critically evaluate knowledge, but that it should also provide them with strategies for personal enlightenment and emancipation from biases, prejudices and predispositions (Giroux, 1994; Kaplan, 1994; Langsdorf, 1994; Paul, 1994; Warren, 1994). In this regard, CT as it is taught in this course seems to be closer to what Paul (1994) considers as 'weak' sense CT as it simply involves, at its best, learning the teacher's interpretation of some basic features of CT as a set of defined concepts that are then to be reproduced as a sign of understanding and learning.

Regarding the teacher's role, the learners' perception of him is closer to the traditional role-model of an all-knowing teacher who skilfully directs the question-answer sessions. The learners also considered him as the legitimate gatekeeper of his proposed logic and the final authority of defining preselected philosophical concepts rather than a co-learner and coordinator. They therefore did neither expect him to act as a critical pedagogue whose role is to manage dialogue in a democratic fashion in class, nor did they mind, at least the large majority of the learners, the way in which he actually managed the classroom. Mostly, they praised him as a role model for being knowledgeable, authoritative and directive. This may suggest that their conception of an ideal teacher and teaching method is very much the result of the experience of banking education to which the new ELT classroom was a refreshing alternative. However, some of the learners developed a critical viewpoint regarding the teacher and started challenging his behaviour, particularly in classroom discussion. In particular, they took issue with his way of posing judgment on the learners and imposing his authority, refusing justification or explanation why he was judging people in a certain way. Consequently, these learners experienced his teaching as contrary to what he was advocating, namely an egalitarian, autonomous and empowering teacher-student relationship.

How the learners experience and view the teaching is influenced by their contextual background, including educational, social, cultural, political and personal. In this context, we

need to consider that '(w)hat appears to one person at one time as a block to freedom may be a necessary structure for empowerment and gaining freedom for another' (Matusov & Wegerif, 2014: 6). Therefore, what may seem to some of the learners as empowering and liberating was regarded as domesticating and disempowering by others, despite their relative similarity in educational, social, cultural and political background. These different perceptions could reside in different personal backgrounds and the complexity of individuals as unique human beings.

CP is context-specific which means not only in different times and places but also 'even in one location at one time, various critical pedagogies are possible'(Monchinski, 2008) as 'all description of critical pedagogy –like knowledge in general-are shaped by those who devised them and the values they hold' (Kincheloe, 2004: 7). This further highlights the critical pedagogues' responsibility to constantly reconsider and analyse their teaching method and practice to understand the consequences of their behaviour for the individuals they teach as there are multiple ways of conceiving and "living" a CP experience - as done by the teacher and the learners. In fact, what a teacher intends is not necessarily what s/he could put into practice and what the learners would experience and take away. In fact, the teacher's manipulation of the learners' subjectivities may also involve self-manipulation of his own consciousness (Matusov, 2009).

Considering CP as 'an ambitious entity that seeks nothing less than a form of educational adventurism that takes us where nobody's gone before' (Kincheloe, 2004: 4), it is critical pedagogues' responsibility not to deviate from the key concepts of the approach by careful examination and serious inspection into their own practice, especially in banking education where critical dialogic pedagogy is an innovation, and is unpractised.

10.2   Contributions

This project is unique in exploring, analysing and discussing the conceptualisation and practice of an approach to CP in an ELT context in higher education. This case is especially important due to the lack of enough practices of this approach in general, and in Iran in particular due to the fact that in the Iranian education system lecturing still prevails as the dominant teaching method, and pedagogical key concepts of CP including dialogue and CT are widely ignored. More importantly, the few practices of this approach mostly fail to provide a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of its process and outcome. By using 6 various research instruments and two analytical frameworks, I explored one teacher's particular theoretical and pedagogical standpoint considering CP and ELT to then investigate the mis/alignments between the teacher's

theory and practice, mis/alignments between his theory and practice with regard to the key concepts of CP, CP approach to ELT in general, and CP approach to ELT in Iran in particular.

The findings signify that beside a need for theorising and practising CP, it is also necessary to develop a multi-perspective analysis of the classroom discourse within a dialogic critical framework. While indoctrination and ideological imposition have been pointed to as the hidden dimensions of applying CP (Biesta, 1998; Burbules & Berk, 1999; Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003; Matusov, 2009; Matusov & Wegerif, 2014; Matusov & Miyazaki, 2014; Mejía, 2004), their unfolding in practice is still under-theorised. A comprehensive analysis enables critical pedagogues to develop a critical stance towards their own personal theories and educational practice, and to raise awareness for the risk of imposing one's views on others while believing in one's own strong commitment to dialogue and dialogic knowledge construction. By laying open the workings and mechanisms of these dimensions, both CP theory and practice can develop in parallel thus adds to the work on how CP is implemented and carried out in actual classrooms, the lack of which is still considered as the main criticism of CP (Akbari, 2008; Christensen & Aldridge, 2013; Davari, 2011; Gore, 1992, 1993).

This case study also highlights the inclusion of the learners' voice and viewpoints as they are considered to play an active role in developing CP practices and outcomes in collaboration with the teachers. In analysing the learners' viewpoints, as this project pointed out, it is crucial to consider the educational context of the study for the fact that how the learners experience CP practices as an emancipatory and empowering education is greatly influenced by their educational background. In the educational settings where the learners are accustomed to a banking model of education and have no formal training or practice of CT skills, it is less likely for them to grow a critical viewpoint towards the teaching, which tends to result in the teachers' misconception of the efficiency and outcomes of their teaching. This further highlights the significance of critical pedagogues' analysing their teaching method and practice to grow a reliable account of their teaching, to notice any shortcomings and deviations, and to do their bests to improve.

10.3   Limitations and recommendations

Not everything about a case as a complex social phenomenon can be explored and understood so each researcher has a strategic decision to make (Stake, 2008). I believe there are many points worth investigating further regarding the case under this study. Some of these, to which I

could not do justice in the present thesis, are a complete analysis of the teaching materials used by the focus teacher, other classroom settings and learning arrangements particularly those pertaining to IELTS-related activities, as well as the role and importance of other activities such as journal readings and small group activities. Another point worth further investigation is whether and in what ways ELP levels or critical thinking ability of the learners progressed during the course. Moreover, regarding the class discourse, further aspects could be explored in more detail, such as different features of the teacher's talk and the role and importance of dialogue in other class activities. Additionally, the analysis and discussion of the social, political and cultural aspects of applying this approach focusing on social change could provide useful insights. Analysis of these aspects of the course could provide useful suggestions for English teachers and researchers alike, interested in the dynamics of classroom discourse, social roles and power relations.

It is also worth mentioning that while I was studying the different approach to dialogue, specifically regarding 'dialogue as empowerment' dealing with power relations, I found out that critical language awareness (CLA) is a closely related field as it pays special attention to the social aspect of language especially the relationship between language and power (Fairclough, 1999, 2013; Wallace, 1999, 2013). I believe that in analysing classroom discourse with a dialogic critical approach, CLA could also be used as a suitable theoretical and analytical framework to investigate further the nature of the teacher-student relationship and the discourse features involved. I also believe that CLA could be considered as a significant aspect of critical awareness that English language teachers with a critical dialogic approach aim to raise in the learners in their English language learning courses.

While this study adds an original piece to existing research on applying an approach to CP in an ELT context in Iran, its findings cannot be generalised beyond the context of this particular study. However, this study calls on the urgent need to expand this field of study in both theory and practice. Bearing in mind that ELL is a common concern among students in higher education while there is a common sense of dissatisfaction with the efficiency of the dominant trend of ELT in Iran, I believe that there is scope to apply this approach to ELT especially with regard to the inclusion of dialogic class discussion and CT. However, regarding the dominant banking education and the socio-political status quo, more practices of this approach and more analytical research are needed to investigate the applicability, suitability and efficiency of this approach to ELT/L in Iran.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Demographic data of the participant learners

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Educational background	Profession	English language proficiency (ELP)
1. Mona	32	F	Master in organizational management	Staff manager	Intermediate
2. Shila	28	F	BS	-	Upper Intermediate
3. Saman	32	M	Bachelor in Agriculture	Businessman	Pre Intermediate
4. Nasim	25	F	Bachelor in Physics	-	Intermediate
5. Ali	24	M	Bachelor in Criminal law	Master Student	Intermediate
6. Parisa	30	F	Master in linguistics	researcher	Advanced
7. Taha	25	M	Bachelor in civil engineering	High school Teacher assistant	Intermediate
8. Sara	30	F	Master in ELT	English teacher	Advanced
9. Hoda	30	F	Master in ELT	English teacher	Advanced
10. Mina	30	F	Bachelor in ELT	English teacher	Advanced
11. Roya	30	F	Bachelor in Polymer Engineering	Researcher	Upper Intermediate
12. Ana	26	F	Master in ELT	English teacher	Advanced
13. Azita	29	F	Master in Counselling	Counsellor	Upper Intermediate
14. Sadaf	24	F	Master in architecture	Student	Upper Intermediate
15. Marjan	21	F	BA	Student	Intermediate
16. Hamid	27	M	BS	Student	Intermediate
17. Sassan	30	F	BS	Employee	Intermediate

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Educational background	Profession	English language proficiency (ELP)
18. Shima	31	M	MS	Engineer	Pre Intermediate
19. Samira	30	F	BS	Telecommunication staff	Intermediate

Appendix 2: Summary of the movie plots

Title	Release date:	Nationality	Summary of the plot
Awakenings	1990	American	Based on a true story of a doctor's extraordinary work in the 1960s with a group of catatonic patients he finds languishing in a Bronx hospital. Speculating that their rigidity may be akin to an extreme form of Parkinsonism, he seeks permission from his sceptical superiors to treat them with L-dopa, a drug that was used to treat Parkinson's disease at the time.
If Only	2004	British	A romantic fantasy film in which a man tries to avert destiny when he gets an opportunity to relive the day his lover died in a car accident.
My life	1993	American	A seemingly successful life of a man is turned upside-down when he is diagnosed with cancer and given four months to live , not even enough time to see his first child's birth. To cleanse himself of demons in his remaining days, he makes a video diary, hoping to pass along some wisdom to his future child. Along the way, he discovers a lot about himself.
Castaway	2000	American	An obsessively punctual FedEx executive stranded on an uninhabited island after his plane crashes in the South Pacific. The film depicts his attempts to survive on the island using remnants of his plane's cargo. Upon returning to civilization, he learns that he has long been given up for dead.
The Legend of 1900	1998	Italian	On New Year's Day 1900, a crewmember on an ocean liner, finds a deserted infant and decides to adopt him, nicknaming him "1900." As an adult, the eccentric 1900 grows into a remarkable musician aboard the boat. Rumours of his brilliant piano playing eventually reach the shore, and his friend believes that success surely awaits 1900 on land. The only problem, however, is that the enigmatic pianist is loath to embrace life away from the ship.

Appendix 3: Description of the tasks

o IELTS-based tasks

As a part of the course assignments, the learners were asked to do the reading, writing and listening module units of the textbook namely 'Insight into IELTS' at home to be prepared to do the related activities in the class, which is described in appendix 4. The writing module of the textbook 'Insight into IELTS' required the learners to write a summary of at least 150 words in response to a particular graph (bar, line or pie graph), table, chart, or process as included in IELTS writing task 1(academic). The teacher asked the learners to do the related task of each unit at home to be prepared to perform the related activity in the class. Regarding the listening activity of the textbook 'Insight into IELTS', the learners were asked to listen to the audio tracks of each unit at least 10 times at home, then answer the questions, and finally transcribe it and bring it to the class to do the related activity.

o Non-IELTS tasks

Non-IELTS tasks consist of watching movies and two skills namely reading and writing as follows:

-Reading:

    -News

    -Texts: short stories, book chapters and articles, novels

Reading news and short stories chosen by the learners, and book chapters, articles and novels assigned by the teacher were included in the course assignment. The learners were supposed to read a piece of news at home to tell its summary to the class. The teacher further explained that a piece of news could be taken from English newspapers or anything interesting to them, which they wanted to share with others. The learners were also supposed to read some book chapters and articles from the pamphlet given to them. The teacher assigned which article to read from the pamphlet as the class progressed. These texts were used to set the ground for discussing his intended concepts and not analysing or discussing the texts per se. During the course, the teacher specified ten texts from the pamphlet for the learners to read at home which are listed chronologically as follows:

1.   The Day Language Came into My Life, Chapter 4: The story of my life: (Keller, 1996)

2.   A Table of Critical thinking vs Non-critical thinking (from an unidentified source)

3. What is Critical Thinking? (accessible from Dan Kurland's www.criticalreading.com)

4. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Chapter 3 (Freire, 1970)

5. Making Space, Spirituality and mental health (Leibrich, 2002)

6. You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (Tannen, 1990: 53-66)

7. Psychiatry and Spirituality at the End of Life: A Case Report (Holt, 2004)

8. Literacy: Reading the Word and the World (Freire and Macedo, 1987)

9. The Road Less Travelled, A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth, Chapter 1: Discipline (Scott Peck, 1978)

10. The Road Less Travelled, A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth, Chapter 2: Love Defined (Scott Peck, 1978)

The texts number 2 and 3 are about CT which is what the teacher considered "absolutely essential" for the learners to improve during the course (Interview2). As explored his teaching philosophy in chapter 6, CT is what he considered as the origin of CP and is the building block of his teaching theory. As mentioned, there is no formal education on CT in the education system of the country. Thus, as expected, it was the first time for most of the learners to be formally introduced to the principles of CT (Questionnaire1). How often and which activities devoted to these two texts are presented appendices 4 and 5.

Short stories and novels were included in the assigned tasks as well. Introducing this task in the first session, he explained they could choose the simplified novels which are available in 6 stages from pre-intermediate to advanced levels. He emphasised that even the learners with advanced ELP level in the class would rather start with stage 3 for the fact that reading literature is not simply for acquiring English knowledge but to tuning with the music of the language.

-Writing:

-Dialogic journal

The teacher introduced and emphasised on journal writing as one of the main tasks. First, he introduced this activity as writing on any preferred topic by the learners and giving them to him to read and comment. However, what actually happened during the course was his asking them to write journals on the themes discussed during movie-based or text-based discussions and read them aloud in class for him and their classmates to comment.

-Watching suggested movies

Regarding the other task namely watching the movies, he suggested the following award winning movies during the course, and stated that they should be watched at least three times at home to discuss them in the class:

1. Awakenings (initial release 1990, directed by Penny Marshall)
2. My life (initial release 1993, directed by Bruce Joel Rubin)
3. Cast Away (initial release 2000, directed by Robert Zemeckis)
4. If Only (initial release 2004, directed by Gil Junger)
5. The Legend of 1900 (initial release 1998, directed by Giuseppe Tornatore)

   The plot summaries of the movies are included in the <u>appendix 2</u>.

These assigned movies are in English language; the first three are American, number 4 is British and the last one is Italian. Like the novels in the syllabus, the movies were not discussed per se i.e. they were not evaluated regarding their plots, actors or directors. The movies were used to set the ground to discuss philosophical concepts highlighted by him. For example, in the movie 'My life', they discussed the concept of 'authentic life' and how one can turn living 'a life' to living 'my life'. This is a discussion relating to the teacher's advocated dichotomy of 'being alive' vs. 'living'. As another example, in the movie 'Cast Away', 'castaway' as a concept was discussed including what castaway means and how one can recognise whether s/he is in a castaway in his inner life and how can get out of it.

Appendix 4: Description of class activities

This appendix includes the description of the variety of activities performed during the course time, about 77 hours in 29 sessions. I categorised the class activities into 'IELTS-based' and 'Non-IELTS'; the former refers to the activities based on the aforementioned IELTS textbook, while the later refers to the activities based on non-IELTS materials. Then, I categorised these two in 'group' and 'whole class' activities as they were performed during the course. The main data source is the field notes and the audio recordings of the whole course i.e. 29 sessions. The course was announced to be hold from 4: 30 to 8 pm with a break in between. The sessions were hold in two parts with a break in between but the start and finish times and breaks length varied thus the sessions took between 105 minutes to 205 minutes depending on the start time, break length and class activities. In appendix 4 I provided a table of all the activities I observed and audio-recorded for three months including the date, number of the students attended the session, the activities performed and the time devoted to each activity. What follows is the brief outline of the activities as performed through the course:
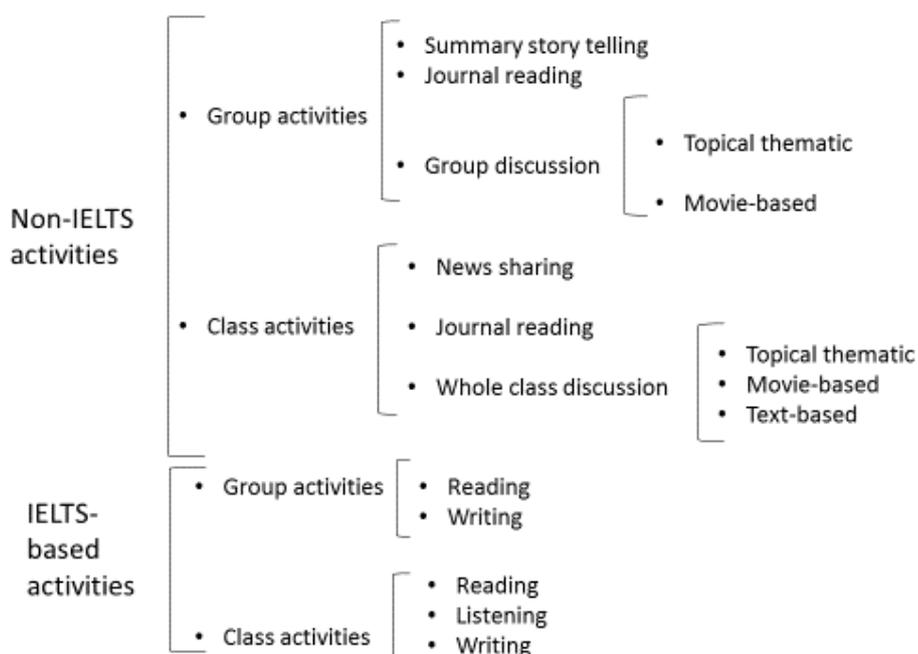
In the next two subsections, I describe IELTS-based and then Non-IELTS activities. They include a description of each activity followed by a table including the related sessions and the time devoted to them. These details guided me in the first level of sampling the class discourse in order to investigate the dialogic values of the class discourse.

o   **IELTS-based activities**

In this section, I describe the activities which were performed based on the 'Insight into IELTS' textbook.
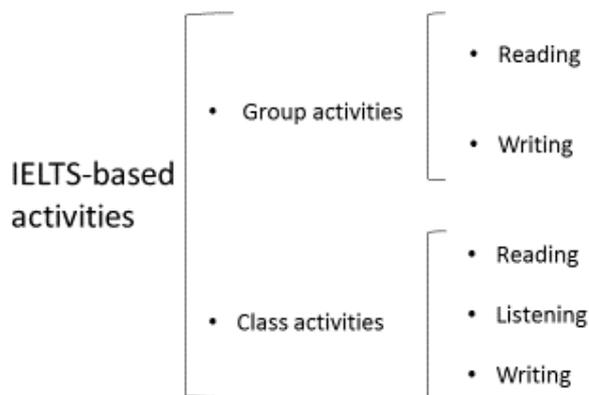
-   **Group activities**

•   **Group IELTS Reading**

During six sessions, namely 13, 14, 16, 20, 21 and 27, the learners performed reading and writing activities of the IELTS textbook in groups. Regarding reading, the learners practised reading activities of the textbook in groups twice in sessions 13 and 20. They were supposed to read together the text and find the gist or headings of the paragraphs. Then, one of each group read their suggested headings or gist of the paragraphs to the class. In total, this activity took one hour and twenty minutes as shown in the following table:

Group IELTS Reading		
Session	13	20
Time	60 minutes	20 minutes
Count: 2/ Total Time: 80 minutes ≈ 1 hour and twenty minutes		

Table 1: Group IELTS Reading

•   **Group IELTS writing**

Regarding the writing activity, the learners were assigned to do the writing units of the textbook at home. During 4 sessions, they were asked to form groups of three or four, read their writings to the group, commented on each other's, and chose one among them. Then, the selected ones read her/his writing to the class followed by other groups' and the teacher' commenting on it. Then, the teacher asked them to rewrite it at home based on the comments. This activity took

between 30 to 40 minutes and in total about 3 hours and a quarter as shown in the following table:

Group IELTS Writing			
Session	14	16	21	26
Time	80 minutes	40 minutes	30 minutes	40 minutes
count:4/ Total Time: 190 minutes ≈ 3 hours and a quarter			

Table 2: Groups IELTS Writing

- **Whole class activities**
- **IELTS listening**

Besides doing IELTS activities in groups, they were performed in whole class as well. Regarding the listening module of the textbook, the learners were assigned to listen to the audio tracks of each unit of the textbook at home and transcribe it. In class, he played the audio tracks and asked them to listen with their book closed. While the audio tracks were playing, he wrote some of the words of the audio speech on the white board. When the tracks were finished, he explained the meaning, different parts of speech of the words and some related grammatical points. Afterwards, he played audio files again, paused after each phrase or sentence, and asked the learners to recite each extract. Sometimes, he explained the related grammatical points, corrected their pronunciation, asked them to chorus the word, and explained more about the pronunciation, intonation, and stress pattern of some words. This activity performed 10 times and the time spent on them varied between 30 to 80 minutes. In total, it took 10 hours as outlined in the following table:

Class Activity: IELTS Listening									
Session	4	5	7	8	11	15	17	18	23	25
Time	80	63	65	43	60	30	30	80	35	80
Count:10/ Total Time: 566 minutes ≈ 10 hours									

Table 3: IELTS Listening

- **IELTS Reading**

Regarding the reading module, the learners were supposed to do the academic reading task of the textbook at home. In the class, they did quiet reading, paragraph by paragraph in thirty seconds, in order to give the gist of the paragraph or suggest a heading for the paragraph in a

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sentence or a phrase. After suggesting their gist or headings, one of the learners read the paragraph aloud followed by the teacher's reading the paragraph and explaining the meaning and the pronunciation of some words, punctuation rules and related grammatical points. This activity performed 10 times and the time spent on them varied between 30 to 80 minutes. In total, it took about 10 hours as outlined in the following table:

Class Activity: IELTS Reading										
Session	8	10	12	13	17	19	20	23	24	26
Time	75	80	105	60	50	75	40	30	60	20
Count: 10/ Total time: 595 minutes ≈ 10 hours										

Table 4: IELTS Reading

- **IELTS Writing**

Regarding the writing module, the learners were assigned to do the academic writing task of the textbook, which required them to write a summary of at least 150 words in response to a particular graph (bar, line or pie graph), table, chart, or process. In the class, they read their writings one by one, the teacher corrected their grammatical mistakes and suggested some points regarding their writing style or the content, and asked them to rewrite it later at home. This activity performed 6 times and the time spent varied between 10 to 45 minutes. In total, it took about 2 hours and a half as outlined in the following table:

Class Activity: IELTS writing						
Session	14	16	22	25	26	27
Time	35	45	30	15	25	10
Count: 6/ Total time: 160 minutes ≈ 2 hours and a half						

Table 5: IELTS Writing

o **Non-IELTS activities**

Non-IELTS activities, which the teacher refers to as authentic activities, are those activities involving the mentioned instructional materials, section 10.3, other than the IELTS textbook. These activities were performed both in groups and the whole class. An outline of Non-IELTS activities are presented in the following diagram:

Non-IELTS activities

- Group activities
  - Summary story telling
  - Journal reading
  - Group discussion
    - Topical thematic
    - Movie-based

- Class activities
  - News sharing
  - Journal reading
  - Whole class discussion
    - Topical thematic
    - Movie-based
    - Text-based
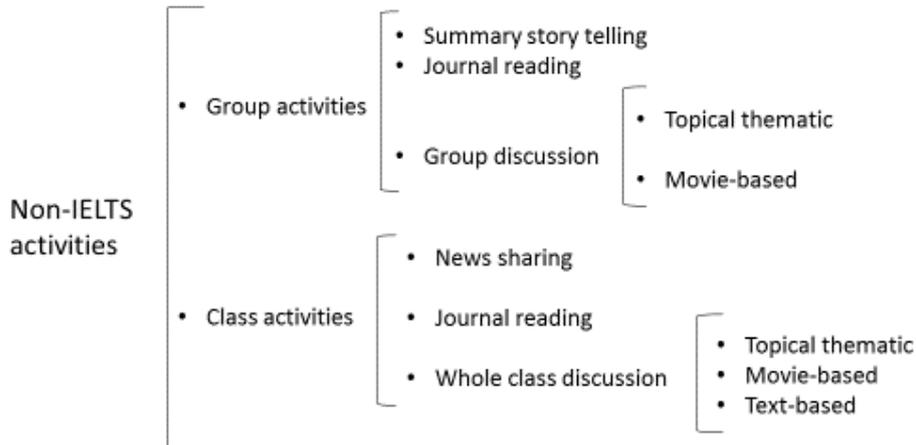
- **Group activities**

Regarding group activities, the learners were assigned to do three types of activities in groups of three or four, including group discussions about themes and movies the teacher assigned, telling summary of the stories the learners chose and read at home, and reading the journals they had written about the themes they had discussed in the class. Group activities were not regular or pre-informed but spontaneous; the teacher asked the learners to rearrange the chairs and sit in groups of three or four, and explained what he wanted them to do. When they were doing the task, sometimes he left the class and returned after the assigned time; some other times, he stayed in the class, went from circle to circle, stood beside each group, listened to them, interrupted them to ask some questions, explained some points, reminded them to keep the time, and answered their questions. He arranged the groups so that each time the learners had different mates. Group activities took 10.5 hours of the whole course time i.e. 77 hours. What follows is a description of each of these activities.

- **Group Summary story-telling**

One of the group activities performed during the course was telling the summary of the stories the learners had chosen and read at home. The first time when they were asked to perform this group activity, the teacher explained that each person should tell the summary of her/his story in 3 minutes to the group. Then, the group mates should evaluate him/her based on three criteria: firstly and most importantly verbal and non-verbal communication, second fluency and last accuracy. The criteria the teacher set for the learners to evaluate each other prioritises

communication and fluency rather than accuracy which is in line with WLA, discussed in 6.1, which emphasises meaning making rather than accuracy (Moats, 2007).

The one who got the highest mark from the group mates would tell her/his story summary to the class which were followed by other group members' comments and questions to which s/he and her/his group mates would be responsive. This group activity performed 4 times and the time spent on them varied between 20 to 40 minutes. In total time, spent on this activity was about 2 hours as shown in the following table:

Group Summary story telling				
Session	3	6	9	20
Time	25 minutes	25 minutes	20 minutes	40 minutes
Number of Sessions: 4/ Total Time: 110 minutes ≈ 2 hours				

Table 6: Group Summary Story telling

- **Group Journal reading**

The teacher asked the learners to write journals on the themes discussed in the class at home and read them in groups. This group activity performed twice in session 4 about the movie 'Awakening' and the text 'the day language came into my life. In total, it took about one hour as shown in the following table:

Group Journal Reading		
Session	4	4
Subject	Awakening	The Day Language Came into my Life
Time	30 minutes	35 minutes
Count: 2/ Total Time: 65 minutes ≈ 1 hour		

Table 7: Group Journal Reading

- **Group discussion**

During four sessions, the teacher asked the learners to sit in groups of four or three to discuss about topics he suggested or introduced in the previous sessions, or movies they were supposed to watch. Then, spokespersons were chosen by the group mates based on the criteria the teacher set, i.e. first and most important, communicative competence, then fluency and lastly accuracy. The chosen ones shared the summary of their group discussion on behalf of the group back to the whole class. The time he set for group discussions varied between 10 to 15 minutes

but mostly they took longer as the learners asked for more time, or he decided to let them go on with their discussions.

The first session, the teacher introduced the topic *living vs being alive* and asked the learners to think about it during the week in order to discuss it in the class. In the second session after break, he asked them to sit in the groups of four to share their ideas about the topic. It took 40 minutes and then he asked one from each group to tell the summary of the group discussion to the whole class. He assigned 3 minutes but they asked for more time and he extended it to 5 minutes. This took around 18 minutes, which followed by 22 minutes class discussion. During the session 6, he asked them to sit in groups of three to evaluate their progress in the class, which took the last 35 minutes of the second part of the class. Thinking about one's own process of learning and sharing them with the learners could be considered as a part of higher order thinking.

This group activity performed twice which took about 1 hour and a half as shown in the following table:

Group topical thematic discussion		
Session	2	6
Theme	Living vs. being alive	Self-evaluation in the process of the class
Time	58 minutes	35 minutes
Count: 2/ Total time: 93 minutes ≈ 1 hour and a half		

Table 8: Group topical thematic discussion

During the second part of the sessions 3 and 9, the learners were asked to sit in groups of three or four to discuss the movies *Awakenings* and *My life* respectively. During the session 3, after a group summary telling for 25 minutes, he asked them to reform the groups by exchanging the members and set the time for 10 minutes to discuss about the movie *Awakenings* while one of the group mates should take the responsibility to take notes of the discussion. Then, one of each group told the summary of their discussion to the class which took 25 minutes of the rest of the session.

During the session 9, after the group summary telling, the learners were asked to reform the groups by exchanging the members to discuss about the movie '*My life*', which took 30 minutes. Then, the chosen spokespersons told the summary of the group discussion to the class in about

5 minutes which took last 15 minutes of the session. This group activity performed twice, 1 hour and a half in total, as shown in the following table:

Group Movie-based discussion		
Session	3	9
Movies	Awakenings	My life
Time	45 minutes	45 minutes
Count: 2/ total time: 90 minutes ≈ 1hour and a half		

Table 9: Group Movie-based discussion

- **Whole class activities**

Three types activities were performed during the course namely news sharing, journal reading and whole class discussions which I describe as follows:

- **News sharing**

One of the activities the teacher assigned was sharing the summary of the news the learners chose based on their own interest, and read at home. This activity was performed four times during sessions 2, 3, 5 and 6 after greeting and topical thematic discussions. The learners either volunteered to tell their news or were called by the teacher. The teacher asked them to share the summary of the news in 3 minutes. This activity took between nearly 1 to 3 minutes for each learner. While students gave their news, the teacher wrote some words taken from their talk on the board. After each learner finished, the teacher reviewed the words he wrote on the board, explained their meaning, and added more explanations including parts of speech, pronunciations, and grammatical points. Overall, this activity took between 22 to 28 minutes. The total time spent on this activity was about one hour and a half as shown in the following table:

News Sharing				
Session	2	3	5	6
Time	22 minutes	23 minutes	28 minutes	26 minutes
Count: 4/ Total Time: 99 minutes ≈ 1 hour and a half				

Table 10: News Sharing

- **Journal reading**

The teacher asked the learners to write journals on the themes discussed in the class at home. In later sessions, they either volunteered or were called by the teacher to read their journals in the class. This activity was performed 7 times during the sessions 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 19 and 20 in various parts of the sessions namely after greetings and topical thematic discussions, sharing news, IELTS reading or listening activities, or after the break. It took between nearly 2 to 12 minutes for each to read their journals. Sometimes, he interrupted them to ask a question but mostly he deferred his comments until they finished reading.

The time devoted to this activity varied between 6 to 55 minutes and the total time spent on this activity was about 3 hours and a half as shown in the following table:

Class journal reading				
Session	5	8	10	11
Subject	Critical thinking	psychiatry and spirituality at the end of life	Reading the world and the word'	Critical thinking
Time	30	26	10	42

Class journal reading			
Session	13	19	20
Subject	My Life	Cast Away	Reading the world and the word
Time	55	6	24
Count: 7/ Total time: 193 minutes ≈ 3 hours and a half			

Table 11: Class journal reading

- **Whole class discussion**

Whole class discussions were the most frequent activity and took most time of the whole class activities, namely 38 hours and a half. The following three sections are devoted to describe whole class discussions, which categorised as topical thematic, movie-based and text-based discussions. 9 times during the course, the teacher assigned two learners to prepare to run the forthcoming movie-based or text-based discussions. I referred to these sessions as learner-front which included the two assigned learners' oral presentation and class discussions. These learner-front discussions usually were followed by the teacher who took the floor and continued the

discussions to elaborate the themes. All discussions can be recognised as thematic, during which some specific themes were discussed while movies and texts were used as a basis to set the ground for discussing the themes that were basically philosophical concepts drawn from the teacher's intended philosophical-conceptual framework. The discussion sessions were directed to elaborate the focal concept of authentic life.

- **Topical thematic**

The teacher started each session by asking questions like 'what's up?', 'How is life with you?', 'talk to me', 'share your world' and the like. When the learners were reticent, he called them one by one and asked them to talk about themselves. In line with the teacher's emphasis on self-expression, greetings were spaces that the learners were motivated to talk and express themselves. This also met the learners need and desire to improve their speaking skill as they expressed in FGs and Q1. These greetings mostly followed by discussions initiated and directed by the teacher in line with and related to his considered conceptual framework.

These discussions provided the basis for the movie-based and text-based discussions through which his intended concepts were elaborated and clarified. Many concepts that were taught during the course were introduced and defined during these discussions. They also included many instances of referring back to previously discussed themes and referring forward to upcoming themes. Topical thematic discussions were the most frequent activity throughout the course. The time devoted to these discussions varied between 5 to 110 minutes and the total time spent on this activity was 17 hours and a half as outlined in the following table:

Greetings and whole class topical thematic discussions																													
Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Time	105	68	24	25	6	14	41	20	33	10	30	10	40	63	30	70	20	20	5	10	85	40	30	30	10	5	80	110	5
Count: 29/ Total time: 1039 minutes ≈ 17 hours and a half																													

Table 12: Greetings and whole class topical thematic discussions

- **Movie-based**

As mentioned, the learners were assigned to watch five movies namely *Awakening, If Only, My Life, Cast Away* and *The Legend of 1900*. This activity performed 7 times, four of which were learner-front, and the time spent on them varied between 30 to 85 minutes. As mentioned, movie-based discussions did not include critical appraisal of the movies per se. but they were

used to set the ground for some focal themes, all of which related to the teacher's philosophy of authentic life and humanity. However, the learners and the teacher referred to the scenes of the movies as long as they were related to the highlighted concepts. The discussions mostly ended with the teacher's lecturing about the concepts and providing some related questions for them to think about and get prepared for following discussions. In total, this activity took about 6 hours and a half as outlined in the following table:

Whole class movie-based discussions							
Session	6	11	12	15	18	19	27
Movie	If Only	My Life Learner-front	My life Learner-front	Cast Away Learner-front	Cast Away	Cast Away	Legend of 1900 Learner-front
Time	85	42	70	50	30	32	70
Count: 8/ Total time: 379 minutes ≈ 6 hours and a half							

Table 13: Whole class movie-based discussions

- **Text-based**

As it was described in 4.6.2, the teacher gave the learners a collection of several articles and book chapters. Each week he chose one text and asked them to read and think about it at home to discuss it later in the class. He chose the articles based on how the discussions went on in the class so neither all articles of the text collection nor the same articles are read and discussed in his IELTS course. As he clarified and emphasised in several sessions, the texts were to set a basis to discuss some concepts he highlighted when he introduced the text or through the questions with which he started and proceeded the discussions. Like movie-based discussions, text-based discussions were mostly concluded by the teacher's lecturing about the concepts, through which he clarified his proposed definitions of the highlighted concepts.

This activity performed 16 times, four of which were learner-front, and the total time spent on them varied between 15 to 95 minutes. In total it took 15 hours as follows:

Whole class text-based discussions					
Session	3	5	6	7	9

Texts	The Day Language Came into My Life	CT	Chapter 3 Pedagogy of the Oppressed	Psychiatry and spirituality at the end of life Learner-front	Women and Men in Conversation'
Time	55	60	15	60	45

Whole class text-based discussions						
Session	10	11	13	17	20	21
Texts	CT learner-front	CT	CT	Literacy, reading the world and the word Learner-front	Literacy, reading the world and the world	Making Space, Spirituality and Mental Health' Learner-front
Time	72	24	25	60	30	80

Whole class text-based discussions							
Session	22	23	24		25	28	29
Texts	Psychiatry and Spirituality at the End of Life	Little Prince	Discipline Learner-front		Little Prince	Love defined	Love defined
Time	67	70	85		60	95	65
Count: 16/ Total time: 968 minutes ≈ 16 hours							

Table 14: Whole class text-based discussion

Appendix 5: Table of course activities

S	Date ../../2014	No. Students	Class activities	Time in minutes
1	Sat. 28/06	15	Introducing my project, distributing the consent form, information sheet and the first questionnaire	20
			Break	
			-Greetings and teacher's introducing the course design, the learners introduced themselves	105
			-learners ask their questions about the activities and tasks	10
				Total:135
2	Mon. 30 /06	11	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	68
			-News Summary	22
			Break	
			-Group discussion: *Are you living or are you alive?*	58
				Total: 148
3	Thur. 3 /07	10	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	24
			-News summary	23
			-Whole class Discussion: *The day language came into my life*	55
			Break	
			-Group summary storytelling	25
			-Group discussion: *Awakening*	45
				Total:172
4	Sat.	12 + one guest	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	25

				-IELTS Listening	80
				Break	
				-Group journal reading: *Awakening* and *The day language came into my life*	65
					Total:170
5	Mon. 7 /07	11		-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	6
				-News summary	28
				-Class journal reading: *Critical Thinking*	30
				-Whole class discussion: *Critical Thinking*	60
				Break	
				-IELTS listening	63
					Total: 187
6	Thur. 10 /07	11		- Greetings and topical thematic discussion	14
				- News summary	26
				- Whole class discussion: *If only*	85
				Break	
				-Whole class Discussion: Chapter 3 Pedagogy of the Oppressed	15
				- Group summary storytelling	25
				- Group discussion: Self-judging the process of the class	35
					Total: 200
7	Sat. 12 /07	12		-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	41
				-IELTS Listening	65
				- IELTS Reading	15
				Break	
				-Whole class discussion: *Psychiatry and Spirituality*, Learner-front	60
					Total: 181
8	Mon. 14 /07	12		-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	20
				-IELTS Reading	75

			Break	
			-IELTS Listening	43
			-Class Journal reading: *Psychiatry and Spirituality*	26
				Total: 164
9	Thur. 17 /07	9	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	33
			-Whole class discussion: You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation	45
			Break	
			-Group Summary storytelling	20
			-Group Discussion: *My life*	45
				Total: 143
10	Mon. 21 /07	11	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	10
			-IELTS reading	80
			-Class Journal Reading: *Literacy, reading the world and the word*	10
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Critical thinking*, Learner-front	72
				Total: 172
11	Thur. 23 /07	12	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	30
			-IELTS Listening	60
			-Class Journal Reading: *Critical thinking*	42
			- Whole class discussion: *Critical thinking*	24
			Break	
			-Whole class discuss: *My life,* Learner-front	42
				Total: 198
12	Sat. 26 /07	14	-Greetings	10

			-IELTS Reading	105
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *My life*, Learner-front	70
				Total: 185
13	Sat. 2 /08	9+ one guest	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	40
			-Whole class discussion: *Castaway*	10
			-Class Journal Reading: *My life*	55
			-Whole Class discussion: *Critical thinking*	25
			Break	
			-Group *IELTS reading*	60
				Total: 180
14	Mon. 4 /08	11	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	63
			- IELTS Writing	35
			Break	
			-Group IELTS Writing	80
				Total: 178
15	Thur. 7 /08	11	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	30
			-IELTS Listening	30
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Castaway*, Learner-front	50
				Total: 110
16	Thur. 14 /08	9	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	70
			Break	
			- IELTS writing	45
			-Group IELTS writing	40
				Total: 155
17	Sat.	10	-Greetings and topical thematic	20

			discussion	
	16 /08		-IELTS Listening	30
			-IELTS Reading	50
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Literacy reading the world and the word,* Learner-front	60
				Total: 160
18	Mon. 18 /08	8	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	20
			-IELTS Listening	80
			Break	
			- Class Journal Reading: Castaway	10
			-Whole class Discussion: Castaway	28
				Total: 138
19	Thur. 21 /08	8	-Greetings	5
			-IELTS Reading	75
			Break	
			-Class Journal reading: *Castaway*	6
			-Whole class discussion: *Cast away*	32
				Total: 118
20	Sat. 23 /08	10+ 2 students joined from another class + former student as guest	-Greetings and new students introducing themselves	10
			-Group summery storytelling	40
			- Group IELTS Reading	20
			-IELTS Reading	40
			Break	
			-Class Journal Reading: *Literacy, reading the world and the word*	24
			-Whole class discussion: *Literacy, reading the world and the word*	30
				Total: 164
21	Sat.	11+ one guest	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	85

			- Group IELTS Writing	30
	30 /08		*Break*	
			-Whole class discussion: *Making Space, Spirituality and Mental Health,* Learner-front	80
				Total: 195
22	Mon. 1 /09	12 + one guest	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	40
			-IELTS Writing	30
			Break	
			- Whole class discussion: *Psychiatry and Spirituality at the End of Life*	67
				Total: 137
23	Thur. 4 /09	10	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	30
			-IELTS Reading	30
			-IELTS Listening	35
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Little Prince*	70
				Total: 165
24	Mon. 8 /09	13	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	30
			-IELTS Reading	60
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Discipline*, learner-front	85
				Total: 175
25	Thur. 11 /09	12	-Greetings and topical thematic discussions	10
			-IELTS Listening	80
			-IELTS Writing	15
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Little Prince*	60

				Total: 165
26	Sat. 13 /09	15	-Greetings	5
			-IELTS Writing	10
			Topical thematic discussion	15
			-Group IELTS Writing	40
			-IELTS Reading	20
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *The Legend of 1900 ,* Learner-front	70
				Total: 160
27	Mon. 15 /09	14	-Greetings and topical thematic discussion	80
			-IELTS Writing	10
			Break	
			-topical thematic discussion	70
				Total: 160
28	Thu. 06/10	8+ 2 guests	-Greeting and topical thematic discussion: Self-judgement	110
			Break	
			-Whole class discussion: *Love-defined*, Learner-front	95
				Total: 205
29	Tue. 11/10	12 + 3 former students as guests	-Greetings	5m
			-Whole class discussion: *Love-defined*	65
			Break	
			-Topical thematic discussion	90
				Total: 160
Total time of the whole course: 4662 minutes ≈ 77 hours				

Appendix 6: Semi structured interview with the teacher (1)

Critical pedagogy

1. How did you become familiar with and interested in CP?

2. What does critical pedagogy mean to you?

3. In what ways do you believe you are applying CP in your classes?

4. What are the main strategies you use in class?

5. Has your personality as an educator evolved through the years of teaching? How?

6. What qualifications do you consider for teacher-student relationship?

7. How did you choose the topics you proposed for discussions?

8. Would you say that your teaching method could be used beyond your context? How?

9. Are you open to any changes in the syllabus suggested by learners? Have you made any changes based on the feedback you got so far?

10. What factors do you consider as limitations or barriers to apply CP in your classes?

English language teaching:

1. How would you describe the role of language in CP?

2. What do you mean by integral learning of English or 'living' English?

3. How do you consider the teaching of language and the four skills, i.e. writing, reading, listening and speaking?

Class procedure:

1. What are the qualifications the learners need to attend your IELTS preparation course regarding for example age, English proficiency level, etc.?

2. How does the students' langue learning improve?

3. What are the aims and objectives of the course?

4. How do you track your students' improvements?

5. How do you deal with their difficulties or weak points?

6. How do you motivate them to participate in class activities?

7. How do you comment on their journals?

Course materials:

1. How did you design the syllabus? For example, how did you decide on the topics, the movies, and articles as course materials? What are the rationales behind choosing them?

2. Would you say that your designed syllabus has evolved/changed over time?

3. What do you mean by authentic materials?

4. Are there any possible changes you may want to apply to your syllabus?

Appendix 7: Semi structured interview with the teacher (2)

1. Please explain a little more about the concept of community? How important is it in your class and how do you manage to make a 'commune', borrowing your own words, in your class?

2. Please explain more about this statement of yours : «conceptuality breeds freedom, generation and generalisation»? Where is this originated from?

3. As I observe, not all novels or articles were covered through the course. Whether and how may this affect your stated objective of the course ?

4. During the 24th session, the learners asked you to ignore the IELTS course book activities and devote more time to non-IELTS activities but you refused. Why?

Appendix 8: First questionnaire

Dear all,

Please fill in the questionnaire below. Questions are available in both languages, English and Farsi; please complete the questionnaire in your preferred language.

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Educational background:
5. Profession:
6. English language proficiency level:

    Pre intermediate   intermediate   upper intermediate   advance
7. Have you attended any English classes before? When and how long?
8. Have you ever studied or attended a class about critical thinking?
9. Have you ever studied about or attended any class based on critical pedagogy?
10. Were you the teacher's student before? Name the course.
11. How did you know about this course? (exp. by his former student)
12. Have you been interviewed by the teacher prior the course? How did you find it?
13. Have you been familiarised with the concept of critical pedagogy before attending the class? How?
14. What is your motivation to attend this class?
15. What do you expect to gain from this class?

<div align="center">Many thanks and good luck</div>

<div dir="rtl">

1.نام:

2.سن:

3.جنسیت:

4.سابقه ی تحصیلی:

5.شغل:

6.سطح زبان انگلیسی:

</div>

7. آیا پیش از این در کلاس آموزش زبان انگلیسی دیگری شرکت داشته اید؟ چه زمانی و چه مدت؟

8. آیا سابقا شاگرد این معلم بوده اید؟ چه کلاسی؟

9. آیا تاکنون در کلاسی تحت عنوان تفکر نقاد شرکت داشته اید یا در این خصوص مطالعه ای داشته اید؟

10. آیا تاکنون در کلاسی بر اساس آموزش نقاد شرکت کرده اید یا در این خصوص مطالعه ای داشته اید؟

11. چگونه با این کلاس آشنا شدید؟ (بطور مثال از طریق فردی که این کلاس را شرکت کرده باشد یا طریق دیگری)

12.آیا پیش از شروع کلاس مصاحبه شدید؟ آن را چگونه ارزیابی میکنید؟

13.آیا پیش از شروع کلاسها با روال کلاس و اصول تفکرو آموزش نقاد آشنایی پیدا کردید؟چگونه؟

14انگیزه ی شما برای شرکت در این کلاس چیست؟

15.از شرکت در این کلاس چه انتظاری دارید؟

با امتنان از تک تک شما و آرزوی موفقیت و بهروزی

Appendix 9: Second questionnaire

Dear all,

Please fill in the questionnaire below. Questions are available in both languages English and Farsi; please complete the questionnaire in your preferred language.

1. Name :
2. How do you evaluate the articles you read and discussed in the class?
3. How do you evaluate the movies you watched and discussed in the class?
4. What did you learn from writing journals and comments you received?
5. How do you evaluate the discussions and the subjects you discussed in the class?
6. How much did you participate in the discussions?
7. How much could you express your feelings or thoughts in the class?
8. What were the factors affecting your participation?
9. How did you find this class different from the previous English courses you attended?
10. What did you learn regarding critical thinking?
11. What did you find the most useful part of the class?
12. What did you find the least useful part of the class?
13. How do you evaluate the role of educator in the class?
14. How do you evaluate the overall procedure of the class?
15. How much the class meet your expectations?
16. Do you think you may apply what you learned here in your individual or professional life? How?
17. Is there ANYTHING you wish to add here?

Many thanks and good luck

1.نام

2. بحث ها و موضوعات مورد بحث در کلاس را چگونه اریابی میکنید؟

3.رمانهای مورد مطالعه و بحث در کلاس را چگونه ارزیابی میکنید؟

4.فیلمهای مورد مشاهده و بحث در کلاس را چگونه ارزیابی میکنید؟

5.نقش استاد را در کلاس چگونه ارزیابی میکنید؟

6.روال کلی کلاس را چگونه ارزیابی میکنید؟

7.تا چه اندازه در بحث ها مشارکت داشتید؟

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8.چه عواملی در شرکت شما در بحث ها دخیل بود؟

9.تا چه اندازه توانستید افکار و احساستان را در کلاس مطرح کنید؟

10.ازنوشتن جورنال و نظراتی که روی آنها داده شد چه آموختید؟

11.تا چه اندازه آنچه در کلاس آموختید در زندگی شخصی یا حرفه ایتان به کار خواهید بست؟ چگونه؟

12این کلاس را تا چه اندازه و چگونه از کلاسهای آموزش انگلیسی که شرکت داشته اید متفاوت میبینید؟

13در رابطه با تفکر نقاد چه آموختید؟

14مفیدترین بخش کلاس از دید شما کدامست؟

15کدام بخش را کم فایده تر یافتید؟

16تا چه اندازه کلاس انتظارات شما را برآورده کرد؟

17چه پیشنهادی برای بهبودی کلاس دارید؟

18هر نظر و پیشنهاد و حرف دیگری دارید لطفا بیان کنید.

با امتنان از تک تک شما و آرزوی موفقیت و بهروزی

Appendix 10: Focus group discussion with the learners

1. What were your objectives to attend this class?
2. Have your motivations changed through this time? How? Why?
3. How do you feel about your English now?
4. What capabilities did you gain or enhance during the class?
5. Whether and how your critical thinking ability was improved?
6. What did you find unpleasant, bothering or hindering during the process in the class or outside of the class?
7. What could be beneficial to be included in the class?
8. Which of the tasks did you find more useful?
9. Which of the activities did you find more useful?
10. Which of the instructional materials did you find more useful?
11. Was this class different from any other English classes you had attended? How?
12. How do you find the role of the teacher?
13. What is your future plan to continue this process?

Appendix 11: Transcription system of the focal episode

In transcribing the interviews, focus groups and some excerpt of the sessions, I applied *broad* transcription that captured the essence of what was said and the words themselves. I did not correct but I used the participants' pseudonyms for the purpose of anonymity and common punctuation to ease the reading. After sampling the class discussion for the purpose of class discourse analysis in chapter 8, I applied *narrow* transcription to the focal episode which includes finer details such as pauses and overlapping speech.

The transcription system of the focal episode is adapted from van Lier (1988) and Johnson (1995) (in Walsh 2011: appendix B). Language has not been corrected and participant learners' pseudonyms were used.

T: - the participant teacher

LL: - several learners at once or the whole class

/ok/ok/ok/   - overlapping or simultaneous utterances by more than one learner

[do you understand?]

[I see]   - overlap between teacher and learner

=   - turn continues, or one turn follows another without any pause

. . . .   - pause of one second or less marked by three periods.

(4)   - silence; length given in seconds

?   - rising intonation- question or other

!   - emphatic speech: falling intonation

((4))   - unintelligible 4 seconds a stretch of unintelligible speech with the length given in seconds

Paul, Peter   - capitals are only used for proper nouns

Teacher organises groups   - editor's comments in bold type

Appendix 12: CT text as an instructional material

This text as a part of instructional material selected by the teacher was taken from

http://www.criticalreading.com/critical_thinking.htm

- **What is Critical Thinking?**

No one always acts purely objectively and rationally. We connive for selfish interests. We gossip, boast, exaggerate, and equivocate. It is "only human" to wish to validate our prior knowledge, to vindicate our prior decisions, or to sustain our earlier beliefs. In the process of satisfying our ego, however, we can often deny ourselves intellectual growth and opportunity. We may not always want to apply critical thinking skills, but we should have those skills available to be employed when needed.

Critical thinking includes a complex combination of skills. Among the main characteristics are the following:

Rationality

We are thinking critically when we

- rely on reason rather than emotion,

- require evidence, ignore no known evidence, and follow evidence where it leads, and

- are concerned more with finding the best explanation than being right analyzing apparent confusion and asking questions.

Self-awareness

We are thinking critically when we

- weigh the influences of motives and bias, and

- recognize our own assumptions, prejudices, biases, or point of view.

Honesty

We are thinking critically when we recognize emotional impulses, selfish motives, nefarious purposes, or other modes of self-deception.

Open-mindedness

We are thinking critically when we

- evaluate all reasonable inferences

- consider a variety of possible viewpoints or perspectives,

- remain open to alternative interpretations

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- accept a new explanation, model, or paradigm because it explains the evidence better, is simpler, or has fewer inconsistencies or covers more data

- accept new priorities in response to a reevaluation of the evidence or reassessment of our real interests, and

- do not reject unpopular views out of hand.

Discipline

We are thinking critically when we

- are precise, meticulous, comprehensive, and exhaustive

- resist manipulation and irrational appeals, and

- avoid snap judgments

Judgment

We are thinking critically when we

- recognize the relevance and/or merit of alternative assumptions and perspectives

- recognize the extent and weight of evidence

In sum,

- Critical thinkers are by nature **sceptical**. They approach texts with the same skepticism and suspicion as they approach spoken remarks.

- Critical thinkers are **active**, not passive. They ask questions and analyze. They consciously apply tactics and strategies to uncover meaning or assure their understanding.

- Critical thinkers do not take an egotistical view of the world. They are **open** to new ideas and perspectives. They are willing to challenge their beliefs and investigate competing evidence.

Critical thinking enables us to recognize a wide range of subjective analyses of otherwise objective data, and to evaluate how well each analysis might meet our needs. Facts may be facts, but how we interpret them may vary.

By contrast, passive, non-critical thinkers take a simplistic view of the world.

- They see things in black and white, as either-or, rather than recognizing a variety of possible understanding.

- They see questions as yes or no with no subtleties.

- They fail to see linkages and complexities.

- They fail to recognize related elements.

Non-critical thinkers take an egotistical view of the world

- They take *their* facts as the only relevant ones.

- They take *their own* perspective as the only sensible one.
- They take *their goal* as the only valid one.

We can distinguish between critical reading and critical thinking in the following way:

- Critical *reading* is a technique for discovering information and ideas within a text.
- Critical *thinking* is a technique for evaluating information and ideas, for deciding what to accept and believe.

Critical reading refers to a careful, active, reflective, analytic reading. Critical thinking involves reflecting on the validity of what you have read in light of our prior knowledge and understanding of the world.

For example, consider the following (somewhat humorous) sentence from a student essay:

Parents are buying expensive cars for their kids to destroy them.

As the terms are used here, critical reading is concerned with figuring out whether, within the context of the text as a whole, "them " refers to the parents, the kids, or the cars, and whether the text supports that practice. Critical thinking would come into play when deciding whether the chosen meaning was indeed true, and whether or not you, as the reader, should support that practice.

By these definitions, critical reading would appear to come before critical thinking: Only once we have fully understood a text (critical reading) can we truly evaluate its assertions (critical thinking).

The Two Together in Harmony

In actual practice, critical reading and critical thinking work together.

Critical thinking allows us to monitor our understanding as we read. If we sense that assertions are ridiculous or irresponsible (critical thinking), we examine the text more closely to test our understanding (critical reading).

Conversely, critical thinking depends on critical reading. You can think critically about a text (critical thinking), after all, only if you have understood it (critical reading). We may choose to accept or reject a presentation, but we must know why. We have a responsibility to ourselves, as well as to others, to isolate the real issues of agreement or disagreement. Only then can we understand and respect other people's views. To recognize and understand those views, we must read critically.

The Usefulness of the Distinction

If critical thinking and critical reading are so closely linked, why is this still a useful distinction?

The usefulness of the distinction lies in its reminder that we must read each text on its own merits, not imposing our prior knowledge or views on it. While we must evaluate ideas as we

read, we must not distort the meaning within a text. We must not allow ourselves to force a text to say what we would otherwise like it to say—or we will never learn anything new!

Reading Critically: How Well Does The Text Do What It Does

We can think of a writer as having taken on a job. No matter what the topic, certain tasks must be done:

- a specific topic must be addressed
- terms must be clearly defined
- evidence must be presented
- common knowledge must be accounted for
- exceptions must be explained
- causes must be shown to precede effects and to be capable of the effect
- conclusions must be shown to follow logically from earlier arguments and evidence

As critical readers and writers, we want to assure ourselves that these tasks have been completed in a complete, comprehensive, and consistent manner. Only once we have determined that a text is consistent and coherent can we then begin to evaluate whether or not to accept the assertions and conclusions.

Thinking Critically: Evaluating the Evidence

Reading to see what a text says may suffice when the goal is to learn specific information or to understand someone else's ideas. But we usually read with other purposes. We need to solve problems, build roads, write legislation, or design an advertising campaign. We must evaluate what we have read and integrate that understanding with our prior understanding of the world. We must decide what to accept as true and useful.

As readers, we want to accept as fact only that which is actually true. To evaluate a conclusion, we must evaluate the evidence upon which that conclusion is based. We do not want just any information; we want reliable information. To assess the validity of remarks within a text, we must go outside a text and bring to bear outside knowledge and standard.

'Appendix 13: The Story of My Life' by Helen Keller

Chapter IV of the book 'The day language came to my life' available in
http://www.afb.org/MyLife/book.asp?ch=P1Ch4

The most important day I remember in all my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it connects. It was the third of March, 1887, three months before I was seven years old.

On the afternoon of that eventful day, I stood on the porch, dumb, expectant. I guessed vaguely from my mother's signs and from the hurrying to and fro in the house that something unusual was about to happen, so I went to the door and waited on the steps. The afternoon sun penetrated the mass of honeysuckle that covered the porch, and fell on my upturned face. My fingers lingered almost unconsciously on the familiar leaves and blossoms which had just come forth to greet the sweet southern spring. I did not know what the future held of marvel or surprise for me. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle.

Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding-line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbour was. "Light! give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

I felt approaching footsteps. I stretched out my hand as I supposed to my mother. Someone took it, and I was caught up and held close in the arms of her who had come to reveal all things to me, and, more than all things else, to love me.

The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. The little blind children at the Perkins Institution had sent it and Laura Bridgman had dressed it; but I did not know this until afterward. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelled into my hand the word "d-o-l-l." I was at once interested in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded in making the letters correctly I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride.

Running downstairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed; I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learned to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words, among them *pin*, *hat*, *cup* and a few verbs like *sit*, *stand* and *walk*. But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

One day, while I was playing with my new doll, Miss Sullivan put my big rag doll into my lap also, spelled "d-o-l-l" and tried to make me understand that "d-o-l-l" applied to both. Earlier in the day we had had a tussle over the words "m-u-g" and "w-a-t-e-r." Miss Sullivan had tried to impress it upon me that "m-u-g" is *mug* and that "w-a-t-e-r" is *water*, but I persisted in confounding the two. In despair she had dropped the subject for the time, only to renew it at the first opportunity. I became impatient at her repeated attempts and, seizing the new doll, I dashed it upon the floor. I was keenly delighted when I felt the fragments of the broken doll at my feet. Neither sorrow nor regret followed my passionate outburst. I had not loved the doll. In the still, dark world in which I lived there was no strong sentiment or tenderness. I felt my teacher sweep the fragments to one side of the hearth, and I had a sense of satisfaction that the cause of my discomfort was removed. She brought me my hat, and I knew I was going out into the warm sunshine. This thought, if a wordless sensation may be called a thought, made me hop and skip with pleasure.

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word *water*, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten--a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me. On entering the door I remembered the doll I had broken. I felt my way to the hearth and picked up the pieces. I tried vainly to put

them together. Then my eyes filled with tears; for I realized what I had done, and for the first time I felt repentance and sorrow.

I learned a great many new words that day. I do not remember what they all were; but I do know that *mother, father, sister, teacher* were among them--words that were to make the world blossom for me, "like Aaron's rod, with flowers." It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of that eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come.

Appendix 14: Transcription of the class discussion on Critical thinking, 10th session

1   Parisa: we are united

2   T: yeah, be united. Be together. You know, to survive

3   Shila: you know. There isn't enough space to write everything

4   T: okay. Start with the wall!

5   Shila: what?

6   T: write on the wall

7   Shila: I will, if you

8   T: No. I'm kidding. Okay. Go ahead

9   Shila: we have to do? Okay. I was reading about what is critical thinking and I think what does
10   it mean exactly. One thing that first come to my mind was open mindness. And I start with
11   open-mindness. You know. Imagine it's my world. And it outside world. Real world. Everything
12   wants to come to my world with all linkage, all definition and matter. Something wants to,
13   wants to get into my mind, to my world. So what should I do? I should accept without any
14   thinking? Or no. It's, it's wrong. I should have some discipline to do something before, before
15   accept something. First, I wanna talk about open-mindness. What does it mean exactly? I think
16   open-mindness means I should see everything, each things, from many aspects. I shouldn't
17   ignore any reasonable explanation for one thing. And I should evaluate. Evaluate is an
18   important part of open-mindness. I should evaluate whatever, whatever comes to, you know,
19   reasonable influences. And, and one more thing

20   T: **snaps** Shila!

21   Shila: uhum

22   T: Talk for us

23   Shila: I couldn't focus on, you know

24   T: whatever. Whatever. Talk to us. Just relax

25   Shila: relax. It's a word for you

26   **Shila laughs**

27   T: you are stressed but do not, let's say, fight with your stress

28   Shila: uhum

29   T: we can see you are under stress

30	Shila: you know, I have
31	T: it's okay. Don't hide it
32	Shila: uhum
33	T: okay. Look at your friends and talk to them. As if you're talking to a friend in the real world
34	Taha: look at me
35	T: no. Don't look at him
36	**Learners laugh**
37	T: okay. Talk
38	Shila: I should accept what, what, whatever other person. I shouldn't ignore them. I should see
39	all of them. And I shouldn't reject unpopular
40	T: just one question. Did you prepare it together for discussion?
41	Shila: yes
42	T: how?
43	Shila: half of this essay for me and half of
44	T: What?
45	Shila: yeah
46	T: Mechanically
47	Shila: we didn't know how we are supposed to could organise it
48	Parisa: I think this is a first presentation
49	T: whatever. You are supposed to talk together, harmonise the condition. Not mechanically
50	dividing it in two parts, like an apple, half for you, half from me
51	Shila **laughs:** yeah. We are separate from each other now
52	T: okay. Go ahead
53	Shila: and
54	T: So you divided it into half and then relaxed?
55	Shila **laughs**: yeah. For open-mindness, I should say if I was, I be, I be, the person that has open
56	mind, it should be dangerous and I should have some pre-stages that I would be like that
57	person I said. Because if everything wants to come, it may be destroying my world. So I have
58	be, I have to be a rational person. Rational person means I should have logic not emotion. I
59	should see everything with my logic and reason. I should, I shouldn't
60	T: uhum
61	Shila: I shouldn't decide by emotion and for this reason I really need evidence to have reason
62	so evidence is more important than this

| 63 | T: what do you mean by evidence? Define evidence |

| 64 | Shila: evidence, for example |

| 65 | T: maybe Parisa can share |

66	Parisa: for evidence we can say that, for being a rational, we need some steps of logic. So here
67	we can say that if you are going to decide about something, we are supposed to see that
68	situation from different aspects and then according to, to, let's say, advantages or
69	disadvantages of that decision-making we can just say this is right to do or not right

| 70 | T: okay |

| 71 | Shila: and for this evidence |

| 72 | T: Of course, she didn't define evidence |

| 73 | Shila: can I define evidence? For example, I say somebody is angry and I have some evidence |

| 74 | T: who? |

| 75 | Shila: for example, my mother is angry. You say why? I say to you because |

| 76 | T: and I'm getting angry as well, you know |

| 77 | Shila: yeah? |

| 78 | **Learners laugh** |

| 79 | T: because of this fragmented |

| 80 | Shila: fragmented? Just because of fragmented or because of my |

| 81 | T: no. you are good. But actually you are supposed to manage the discussion together stop the |
| 82 | others and the whole process. Whatever. Your own is good |

| 83 | Shila: and |

| 84 | T: your mom is angry |

| 85 | Shila: yeah. You, you ask me why I think so. I give you some evidence. For example my mom |
| 86 | doesn't doesn't speak to me or it acts |

| 87 | T: define evidence |

| 88 | Shila: evidence? |

| 89 | T: define it |

| 90 | Shila: evidence. It's hard, you know |

| 91 | T: yeah. I know it's hard. Parisa define it! |

| 92 | Parisa: all the facts that you see for something is evidence |

| 93 | Taha: what is fact? |

94	Parisa: for example,
95	T: yeah

96 Parisa: for example, when somebody is struggling, there is a struggle in his or her mind. He
97 should be untidy. He may not concentrate on his way of doing something. In that case, you can
98 say that his mind is not calm. It is an evidence that=

99 T: so you are giving me instances of evidence not definition of evidence. Get it? These are
100 instances, examples

101 Parisa: yeah, examples

102 T: I want definition. Can you give me the definition of evidence? Do you have definition for
103 evidence? Definition for evidence? Definition for evidence? From now on, this is the way.
104 Okay. Go on

105 Parisa: evidence

106 T: Ali, evidence

107 Ali: materials that tells us about some evident. Material that tell, tell about the evident

108 T: tells about evidence?

109 Ali: evident. Something that happened

110 T: something that?

111 Ali: Material that tell about, tells us about something that happened

112 T: the materials tell us?

113 Ali: materials tell us, give us

114 T: how can they tell us?

115 Ali: gives us knowledge, you know. Information. Inform us of something that happened before

116 T: what else?

117 Sara: some fractals that we can

118 T: what is fractal?

119 Sara: let me just finish first

120 T: no. What first fractal means?

121 Sara: that something to broken and we try to find, to see if… wait, to see if we can see any
122 links between evidence

123 T: no. So when you don't know what is fractal, you can't use it in a sentence, you know

124 Mary: can we say it is something integrated?

125 T: something?

126 Mary: I'm talking about evidence. Integrated information not separated one. We have to join
127 the speech in order to give meaning to whatever we are saying

128 T: do you remember we said something to look for evidence, concept in a paragraph,
129 supporting sentences and main idea?

130 Mary: yeah, supporting sentences to find evidence for our main idea

131 T: evidence gives us direction to the main idea

132 Mary: direction

133 T: giving us direction to the main idea. Move this way. Move that way. Move this way. Move
134 this way. Evidence contains direction. Directions are under fractals that she couldn't define
135 yet. You know. She will define later on of course. But she uses that. **He Laughs** So fractals
136 contain, or just they carry, fractal, sorry, evidence carry fractal and fractals have one basic
137 function and that is direction. Showing us direction. So evidence shows us the direction to the
138 main concept. The concept of your mother being angry. Your mother was angry, maybe
139 yesterday and the evidence was the movement for example she has. From her facial
140 expression. Your mother being angry could be evident because of the direction of some bits
141 and pieces around that can direct you towards your mother being angry. So evidence is
142 something that shows you direction.

143 Taha: direction

144 T: The concept. Okay. Go ahead.

145 Shila: I said rationality means think logically based on steps of logic and this logic means
146 evidence and it is evidence and we shouldn't ignore evidence or, or we should follow evidence
147 as you said for getting concept. In this stage, rationality, we are looking for best explanation
148 not for doing right analysing. And the second, third, second, **she laughs,** yes the second stage
149 is self-awareness. **She laughs.** Self-awareness means influence of motives, motifs and the bias.
150 And

151 T: what do you mean by bias?

152 Shila: when I think of something it's clear that I push it from one side because I think before
153 reading or seeing something prejudice, prejudice and bias. My mind without my control would
154 be bias this

155 T: okay.

156 Shila: am I right or wrong? And recognise. And the other part is recognise our own
157 assumptions. I should know what is my assumptions and my bias. Where is, where I tend to
158 be, I like to decide what, what is wrong, what is true, what is based on my prior knowledge. I
159 should see this just for knowing what I'm, where I'm going, you know. And the, and of the next
160 stage is honesty. I should know my emotion. How it push my judgement or whatever. I should
161 see again myself and in others, in other parts of my emotion. You know, I had emotional logic.
162 I should see both of them. The self, the self-awareness was related to my logic. How could I
163 pretend to be or how would like to be. My emotion part related to honesty. I should see how
164 my emotion push my judgement. And after that, after open mindness. I said before open

165 mindness, I should these three stages to be right in this stage because everything may be
166 destroy my linkage in my world. And after that I get something in my, until here, something
167 outside come to my world. How? Now it suspends. I should link it to something in my world.
168 So I have to, I have to have discipline to put it into right position in my world. I shouldn't, I
169 shouldn't, I shouldn't resist manipulation. I shouldn't, I shouldn't be irrational. And here I
170 shouldn't have snap judgement. I should now just clearly outside things that comes of my
171 world. Not any judgement established, snap judgement anything.

172 16th T: you have ten more minutes to finish your discussion. Of course, it was not discussion. It
173 is a presentation. We are waiting for the second part. Listen to my continuation. Have you
174 heard this in the news به ادامه ی همکارم توجه فرمائید

175 **Learners and The teacher laugh**

176 T: okay. And?

177 Shila: the last

178 T: finally judgment

179 Shila: judgement. Hard. Challengeable for you **she laughs.** Okay. Judgement. For judgement, I
180 should see clearly see the relation. The relation of my, you know, my everything. I should see
181 any relation to put it into right places. So. You know, it's hard.

182 T: Parisa wants to sit a look at you?

183 Parisa: judgement?

184 T: no. No. Whatever. You're just have seven minutes left. The whole discussion.

185 Shila: the whole discussion?

186 T: yeah

187 Parisa: here for judgement, we can say that when we are going to judge something we are
188 supposed to see what, for any judgement we need some assumptions

189 T: sorry Parisa, do you see your friends are here

190 Parisa: I cannot. It is the hard part

191 T: no matter. They are like stones. frozen

192 Mary: frozen one

193 Parisa: see. For having judgement you need assumptions and according to build assumptions,
194 we go to the first act to see that situation we need those, let's say, supposition, those
195 suppositions, those assumptions and the perspectives. According to the whole idea we have
196 here, according to having some perspective, we can judge something and, you know, our
197 judgements can be different when we have a better perspective toward, or different
198 viewpoint towards something then

199 T: can I interrupt you? She can interrupt you?

200 Parisa: yes

201   Sara: so if you change your perspectives, your judge would be change? Is it reliable?

202   Parisa: of course not. But you see? The system I think, sometimes the system interrupts the
203   judgement sometimes. According to the criteria that we define every system, for every, let's
204   say, for every environment, according to those we could judge something. So according to this
205   one, it should be something different

206   Sara: so judgement you mean is relative. Right?

207   Parisa: yeah

208   Taha: can I comment both of them?

209   T: sure. Go ahead

210   Taha: your question was, I don't know, out of the process. This is critical thinking.

211   Sara: what do you mean out of process?

212   Taha: this is

213   Sara: no. No. No. She said something. Okay? She said that based on the perspective that you
214   have, your judgement will be changed. So how

215   Taha: because we think critically

216   Sara: so how can a judgement, okay

217   Taha: the process is all changing all the time, all the moment and she didn't answer that.
218   When we think, you know, it's rule. It is rule. Okay. Maybe you can be read if, I don't know,
219   somehow to find some truth. But, I don't know, the judgement can be changed because we
220   think critically, we add logic to the process of

221   Sara: so you think thinking critically is acquiring method which is not reliable. So what's the
222   point of thinking?

223   Yahsar: what kind of benefit? We think

224   Sara: our thinking is not reliable if you at one point say something is blue and then change it
225   other day to red, how can it be reliable? How can I RELY, how can I rely to your judgement on
226   something which now you say is blue

227   Taha: at first it is an example

228   Sara: and then you switch it to red

229   Taha: at first you hold an example and second the process is all based on logic, you know, you
230   know, there, there shouldn't be any kind of hole or gaps in the process

231   Sara: so if there isn't any hole or gap, it leads to the same judgement at all time

232   Taha: what about the new knowledge that you can add to your life, and life could add to our
233   rationalities, self-awareness, honesty, and

234   Sara: so

235   Taha: these change and turn blue to red. Is it that right?

236   Sara: yeah. It can be. It can be. But over time

237   Taha: over time. I agree

238   Shila: I forgot **she started to talk quietly with Parisa**

239   Sara: you were talking about judgement. You weren't finished

240   Parisa: here the next thing that you said about is the extent of the evidence that we have. You
241   told that sometimes it can affect the judgement and I think the judgement part is done. **Shila**
242   **and Parisa chat among themselves quietly.** The last part? I have the last part. Based on the
243   process of the class. Last part?

244   Ali: come on. You are friends.

245   Taha: yes. Relax

246   Parisa: I am relax

247   Taha: I know, just relax

248   Sara: come on. Just talk about the part that you were going to present.

249   Parisa: okay. My part is to read and write critically. As you see the first question is which one is
250   more difficult or is there any relationship between reading and writing, you think?

251   T: good

252   Taha: reading and writing?

253   Parisa: is there any relationship between reading and writing?

254   Taha: yes

255   Parisa: how can they connected?

256   Taha: when, you know, I think when you read you gain knowledge

257   Parisa: uhum

258   Taha: and that you can write

259   Parisa: uhum

260   Taha: for example, a baby couldn't write anything because there is no information in it

261   Parisa: uhum

262   Taha: at first you have to ready some input and after that the result gonna be some writing

263   Ali: and also learn the patterns of writing

264   Parisa: uhum

265   Ali: by reading others' writing and by that pattern you can find your own pattern

| 266 | Parisa: okay. Thank you. So here, I just want to have the answer are they related to each other |
| 267 | or not? |

| 268 | Ali: yes |

269	Parisa: here for the reader and writer, so here for the reader writer, here we can say, we can
270	say, a reader, a writer first of all should be a reader. Just because of the the things you have
271	mentioned. So first of all we should be reader in order to be able to write down something. So
272	we can say a writer can be a reader but a reader cannot always be a writer because there is no
273	need for some to write something. Here the question is how we can improve our writing. The
274	question here is that we should know how to make our thoughts developed. Next thing is how
275	to convey, to show the meaning. So by improving, by knowing these two factors we know how
276	to improve our writing. Then for reading, there are three parts, three elements or three
277	factors that we can say. The first one is restatement. As we now, that we are supposed to read
278	everything three times. So the first thing is restatement. That is what we have in the structure
279	of the reading and also in, say, first of all what we want to say. Without having a subject, we
280	don't know what we are going to write down. So first of all we need some information to
281	convey. So the first part for writing is restatement. We should get that information out of the
282	text. Next part is description in this part we are going to see the structure. How this meaning is
283	conveyed through the text. For example, is it a kind of descriptive, let's say, paragraph? Is it a
284	kind of narration? What kind of, let's say, format does it have? And the last part of those is
285	interpretation that we say that what is at the core idea of this, let's say, reading. To get the
286	main idea. Those are the third parts of the reading. So here for reading and writing, there are,
287	we have just we have two approaches here. The first one is for traditional that goes for
288	reading and writing the traditional approach of perspective of reading it says that we should
289	start with studying skills. Something like what is the main point of that, there are some
290	questions that we have here according to the study skills for example introduction,
291	predetermined sections, I don't know, reading abstracts. Those something are mechanical
292	here, according to the study skills. And also the traditional perspective for reading says that it
293	doesn't say what to look for. And it doesn't say how to think about that reading passage. So
294	they are kind of traditional approach and is not acceptable according to linguistics approach.
295	And about writing here, it says that the traditional perspective, sees the writing as some types
296	of writing. Let's say, that this is a description or it's a narration or it' an explanation or
297	argument. But we know that a text is not always one, let's say, one type of these things. They
298	can be a combination of all these, let's say, writings. So here we can say that traditional
299	approach cannot tell us exactly what is a writing. Then here because of the disadvantages with
300	the traditional perspective, we go to the linguistic approach. In linguistic approach, it says that
301	we are supposed to know how we can find new ideas by combining relative or just find the
302	relationship between other ideas to make a new idea and here for finding out about this, we
303	are supposed to write and link the ideas not something like the vocabularies or the structures.
304	For explaining, for explaining this, we know that for reading or writing, the foundation of
305	reading and writing is speech. So we should see what do we have in speech. One of the things
306	that we have in the speech is structure. For speaking we also need structure, the subject and
307	verb and blah blah that we have. Then here in speaking there is a social aspect. It means for
308	example in some occasions you can use formal language. In some occasions, we can use slang
309	or you cannot use it. Also for a speech, we have tone of speaking. With tone of speaking, tone

310	of voice, you can know somebody is angry. You can know somebody surprised. We should
311	have all these elements in our writing also. So and how we know about these things, the
312	structure and the tone of voice and everything. We know about them by our prior background
313	knowledge and from our experiences. Here I think both of them, the question in my mind how
314	just distinguish between these two and they sometimes overlap. And beside this one, there is
315	a psychological view towards writing. So what is that? We said that if we want to know the
316	meaning, if we want to understand action, we need to know about the intent or intention of
317	that person. For example, if you give money to a salesperson, it means that you want to buy
318	something. So for writing again, we are supposed to know or for reading we should know what
319	is the intention of the writer to get the idea. And

| 320 | T: your time is up. Okay. Two more minutes. |

321	Parisa; okay. So for writings what, we are supposed to do? What should we do for writing?
322	There are three elements that we can just referring to three phases we just said about
323	reading. For reading and writing, we should know how to make the reader interested in our
324	writing. How we should give the knowledge or information to the reader? And how can we
325	convince the reader about the meaning we are getting? And the last thing is about which one
326	is more important reading or writing? We know that reading is easier than writing because in
327	writing we need to make some inventions and we need to form, to make a format at or
328	structure of a text. And also we need to polish the what we have written. So, here we are
329	supposed to have something more than just reading a text. And for accomplishing such a goal,
330	we know that we have to read something and in reading we have some goals. Like for
331	example, finding some similarities in a text, and also finding out and distinguish argument

| 332 | T: okay. Forget about the rest. Come on. Tell me what you wanna say after all these details? So |
| 333 | what? |

| 334 | Parisa: here |

| 335 | T: forget about them **he refers to the papers she was reading from** |

| 336 | Parisa: here, we don't say in critical |

| 337 | T: what do you want to say? Forget about the article |

338	Parisa: so by critical reading what, what we learn here is about critical thinking and critical
339	reading. So we should have the knowledge what is critical thinking. We are supposed to ask
340	questions to be active

| 341 | T: why should I have critical thinking? I don't want to have critical thinking |

| 342 | Parisa: because if we do not have critical thinking, we do not gain anything. We are passive |
| 343 | enough to get, to not know any knowledge, to not |

| 344 | T: they are so many people don't have critical thinking and they are just happy and don't care |
| 345 | about anything |

| 346 | Parisa: so you won't, can't live a good life in that case |

| 347 | Ali: what is good life? |

348	Parisa: a good life, a good life is something, I think, a good life is the life that you find what you
349	are searching for

350	T: okay Parisa, when I ask you to read an article, don't be trapped by the article

351	Parisa: uhum

352	34th T: the article is just an aid, it is a means for you to understand something and then put it
353	aside and go beyond it. Don't go for the articles detail. You did it very mechanically. Like a
354	robot. What do you wanna say? You didn't tell us what you think and how it could be
355	important for you, for example. Why this is so important to you. Why it is so important to you?
356	You just delivered to us as some stones and trees

357	Mina: I'm tree

358	**The teacher and Learners laugh**

359	T: you are a flower

360	Mina: I'd rather be a tree

361	T: tree?

362	Mina: I share my shadow with others

363	T: wow.

364	**The teacher and Learners laugh**

365	Mina: I like the shape

366	Ali: I like the smell flowers have

367	T: yes sometimes. **To Shila and Prinaz**: Thank you very much. You just presented the article.
368	You didn't present YOURSELF. You have a one minute, tell me whatever you want to. First you
369	and then you. Each of you in one minute. Just tell us what YOU are searching for when you
370	read the article. How could the article, let's say, effect you as a person. Okay? Go ahead. One
371	minute. One minute

372	Shila: **laughs** we shouldn't think?

373	T: no

374	Shila: we haven't time. Just one minute?

375	T: you were just present the same thing when you wear preparing the article

376	Shila: yeah. I wanna practice what I think

377	T: go ahead Parisa first

378	Parisa: what am I supposed to say?

379	T: how the article effect you as Parisa? Were you just doing homework for the class? Or no you
380	are trying to see something here in the article?

381   Parisa: frankly speaking, yes

382   **T laughs**

383   T: okay Parisa. Just tell us how you affected by the article

384   Parisa: you see. We can say it is an instance form of what we have in our life about critical
385   thinking. Here it gives us the sight to how can we learn to be a critical reader and critical
386   writer. And the idea, I think, the purpose of this article was to give us the sight to rethink our
387   way of learning. So I think if it's something practical in our way of reading and writing. As you
388   said there is no need for a strategy in reading and writing. I think that's it

389   T: okay. And you? How it influenced you?

390   Shila: Ha?

391   T: how could it be affected you? How is it important to you? Related to you as Shila?

392   Shila: you know. I was, I had done it, I mean I was critical thinking about what I read. But, you
393   know, I couldn't categorise it like this and this stage, like self-awareness and everything, you
394   know. And now I have just categorise. And I know sometimes it wouldn't be that right in this
395   process. You know, I I I know it's critical thinking, it's not a stage, it's not a point. It's a
396   direction. It's a movement. It has a process

397   T: how it is related to you?

398   Shila: to me? You know, this process happened to me each time I was critical thinking but I
399   didn't recognise it

400   T: thank you very much. Please clap for your friends

401   **They clapped and Shila and Parisa returned to their seats.**

402   T: and critical thinking Why it is so important to be a critical thinker? Why you should be a
403   critical thinker?

404   Taha: there is no importance of that

405   T: no importance?

406   Taha: you know, it's the kind of smoke

407   T: kind of?

408   Taha: smoke

409   T: uhum

410   Taha: when you go for it

411   T: yeah

412   Taha: you should, I don't know, be aware that you are drowning in it. But behind the smoke,
413   there is something new. You should just go through it.

414   T: what do you think?

415 Mary: I think you should be critical in thinking in each aspect for changing. Because without a
416 change cannot improve.

417 T: uhum

418 Mary: and maybe think that we are happy but it's not real happiness and it's not real life. And
419 it's not my life. It's a typical life. A copy life. So we should be

420 T: a critical thinker

421 Mary: a critical, yes, thinker

422 T: Mona? How is it related to you? You know, why do you think it is important to be a critical
423 thinker?

424 Mahsa: important thing, important subject for critical thinking for me when I read for first time
425 this

426 T: article

427 Mahsa: article

428 T: table

429 Mahsa: table it was, if I want to have an open world and not a close world, I must a critical
430 thinker. When I

431 T: do you really want to have an open mind? Open system? To be an open system? Do you
432 want to be an open system?

433 Mahsa: yes, I want

434 T: why?

435 Mahsa: because growing in that open system I think

436 T: aren't you afraid of the changes? Radical and drastic changes you should go through? To be
437 a new person? A new person?

438 Mahsa: no

439 T: a different person?

440 Mahsa: I don't afraid

441 T: you are not afraid of it. Good

442 Mahsa: no. Because I want improve myself

443 T: that's right. Okay. Thank you. Sara! Why is it so important to be a critical thinker? Do you
444 think is it relevant to?

445 Sara: you know, I know few years ago something happened to me. Maybe a change. Where I
446 had before, I thought that it doesn't work anymore so I decided to change it. I made
447 something new out of it. But after three years, when I decided to come to this class, again I
448 reached to that place when I saw that if things I made for myself were not enough

449	T: uhum
450	Sara: does not suffice. So I wanted to belonged something
451	T: uhum
452 453	Sara: with more meaning. More meaning. I wanna my life to be, to have more meaning in itself and
454	T: and you thought it could be accomplished with critical thinking, for example.
455	Sara: I don't know yet
456	T: you don't know yet?
457	Sara: no.
458	T: Nasim
459	Nasim: yes
460 461	T: do you think it is important to be a critical thinker at all? Maybe it is not necessary. It is redundant.
462 463	Nasim: it is important for me personally because I need rationality. It is one of my problems I have in my life. One of the concerns I have. And I thought about it maybe for many years
464	T: 50 years
465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472	Nasim: I am such an emotional person as well but I am not rational too. You know, the problem is I look at everything very closely. I am very good at looking, you know. I can recognise the evidence but I am not good at analysing. This is a very big problem for me. In the. When I went to university and we were supposed to solve many problems, I went to one of my professors and asked how should I analyse a problem. I knew that the problem was with my rationality. But, you know, he laughed and said what kind of, what kind of question is that? Just solve the problem. **Laughs**. But I needed a way to taught me how to read the evidence, how to bring me the evidence
473	T: okay. How to operationalise it
474 475	Nasim: yeah and to analyse them and because critical thinking starts with rationality this is makes it very
476	T: touchable?
477 478	Nasim: very interesting for me. And this is exactly what I need in the first step. And when, and if the first step is my main concern, and as it is an organic process, it is
479	T **snaps**
480	Nasim: what I need
481	T: organic process. Thank you. Hoda!
482	Hoda: I am
483	T: how could it be related to you in your life?

484   Hoda: honestly, I'm not a critical thinker at all. Yeah? And maybe that's the reason

485   T: no. You are a critical thinker

486   Hoda: no. I'm not

487   T: you're not? Sure?

488   Hoda: maybe that's the reason that

489   T: what is your evidence?

490   Hoda: **laughs** the reason is that I am too emotional.

491   T: really?

492   Hoda: yeah

493   T: you're too emotional?

494   Hoda: yeah. And unfortunately sometimes

495   T: you don't look so emotional. You don't seem emotional

496   Hoda: I am

497   T: yeah?

498   Hoda: yeah

499   T: okay

500   Hoda: and but I know that but I don't know really why. Because sometimes by thinking a
501   critically, you can lose some part of your life that brings you enjoyment.

502   T: in fake manner

503   Hoda: yeah. Maybe

504   T: so you should be ready to change

505   Hoda: yeah. That's the reason I told you that I wanna, I wanna continue this class. Yeah?

506   T: yeah

507   Hoda: just sometimes, I think that sometimes I'm just playing the role in my life

508   R: that's right

509   Hoda: that's a real life

510   T: absolutely correct. That's right. Go ahead Mina. You tell me. How it relates to you?

511   Mina: I am really eager to make some changes in my mind

512   T: are you emotional as well?

513   Mina: that's my problem actually

514   **The teacher and Mina laugh**

515   T: so anyway

516   Mina: I am but I try to control it as it caused some problem

517   T: it kills you. Yeah

518   Mina: I really want to be a critical thinker but I know it is necessarily difficult

519   T: yeah

520   Mina: Being a critical thinker means you have to challenge whatever happens in your mind. I
521   have problem. I always escape the events that challenge not to lose

522   T: challenge? But this time you need to challenge. The concept of losing and winning dissolving
523   to each other in there

524   Nasim: what does loser mean?

525   T: the concept of losing and winning will dissolve in each other. We will discuss it. Okay? Losing
526   and winning they are the same in this class. You lose some, you win some. And when you win
527   some, you lose some.

528   Mina: but they are not the same thing. They are different

529   T: will discuss it. And?

530   L: Me

531   T: you said. Sorry. And Azita?

532   Azita: I can't express myself

533   T: you should express yourself

534   Ali: you are a councillor

535   T: you are a counselor

536   Ali: I said before

537   Azita: I am Azita here

538   T: you are Azita here

539   Azita: I'm. I like to be a critical thinking but in some issues relates to, for example, life, it's too
540   difficult. For example, in some other issues I like to challenge and even I'm happy because I
541   can I can, I can judge critically. I can judge my critical thinking. But in some other emotional
542   parts, as Hoda said, it's difficult

543   T: so you're emotional as well?

544   Azita: to challenge your soul, your heart

545   T: kill your emotion

546   **Learners laugh**

547	Taha: what is this kind of emotion?
548	Mina: do you mean that?
549	T: kill your emotion for some time
550	Azita: okay
551 552	T: emotion that is fragmented from the totality of your existence is not emotion. It is deceit. It is fake
553	Azita: the question is that what is in that emotion that you don't want to kill?
554 555 556 557 558 559 560	T: you know, I mean they motion which is fragmented from the totality of your existence, this emotion is not called an emotion any more. My hand that is cut from my body is not hand any more. It's dead. It's not hand. My hand is my hand when it is, you know, linked or attached to my body. They're motion when it is fragmented from other parts of your system is not emotion. It is deceit. It is fake. The motion is attached to your logic and everything otherwise it is not emotion. You are controlled. You are being controlled or encompassed by something that doesn't EXIST. Actually it's reality
561	Taha: can I?
562	T: It is a fake thing. I will come to. Yes. Saman. Go ahead. How it is related to you?
563 564	Saman: I think critical thinking is a filter for my think. I I I thinking now this meaning. But I haven't complement
565	T: uhum
566 567	Saman: about this. In two or three years past in my life, I think everything is true or false. But it's not true. I think critical thinking it is a good thinking about everything
568 569	T: uhum. Thank you. That was nice Saman. And thank you for expressing it. And Ali? How do you think critical thinking is related to you?
570	Ali: xxxx because I really don't need to gain anything, to change anything and so
571	T: so?
572	Ali: maybe before, I don't feel the need, you know
573	T: you are a critical thinker?
574	Ali: to whatever its use of, you know
575	T: what do you mean?
576 577	Ali: I mean answering your question, critical thinking is very important and everyone wants to improving himself or herself
578	T: I'm talking about you
579	Ali: to be a better one
580	T: forget about the others. Talk about you

581   Ali: I think yeah. It is important for me

582   T: why? Why it is important for you?

583   Ali: to understand the term and field. You know. To have that, maybe it's a little bit not
584   rational, to have that, to have a sight of the field

585   T: meaning?

586   Ali: for me critical thinking is that

587   T: what is that?

588   Ali: to have, to see it as a whole and details but to enjoy of looking

589   T: okay. Thank you very much. Let's say, critical thinking is a process. A process. Critical
590   thinking is a process. And each process start with a

591   Taha: rationality?

592   T: frame of reference. Frame of reference. Logically. It's not temporary. Frame of reference is
593   something that can be used to define the other parts. It's like a ruler. Like a standard. Okay?
594   You need a frame of reference. For example, somebody calls you Ali, how are you? Where are
595   you? And Ali said I'm here, on the phone. The guy said you are here. What do you mean?
596   You're kidding me? Where is there? Where is here? Oh, yes. Sorry I'm here I mean in Enqelab'
597   square. So you use a frame of reference to make here meaningful. To make it meaningful, you
598   need a frame of reference. And that frame of reference is Enqelab square, for example. Or
599   about time, you know. That question is for about time. For example, when you get out of the
600   solar system. You fly away from the solar system and somebody asks you what is the time. 2
601   o'clock in the afternoon. When you're out of the solar system, okay. So 2 o'clock in the
602   afternoon is meaningless. Because 2 o'clock in the afternoon is meaningful when you are on
603   the earth. Because of the frame of reference. Because of sun rising and setting. It is 2 o'clock in
604   the afternoon. Out of the solar system, so 2 o'clock in the afternoon is not meaningful.
605   Because you don't have a frame of reference. In a family, you are meaningful when you have
606   frame of reference. If you don't have a frame of reference you don't have meaning in the
607   family. What is your frame of reference in the family?

608   Taha: dad. Mom

609   T: dad and mom could be, dad and mom conceptually can be a frame of reference. And for a
610   dad and mom children are frame of reference and for everybody, the relationship. So frame of
611   reference is so important. Frame of reference or reference body is very important for, let's
612   say, meaningfulness. Thinking and critical thinking has a frame of reference and what is that?
613   Rationality. Logicality. Means rationality and logicality makes your thinking meaningful.
614   Otherwise your critical thinking cannot be meaningful. You should have a ruler. And that ruler
615   is logicality and rationality. How can you define logicality or rationality? It is a process. We had
616   this discussion. Looking at the evidence, seeing the evidence, and coming to?

617   Sara: conclusion

618   T: conclusion, definition

619   Ali: judgement

620	T: judgement, decision. Then your decision, your conclusion, your definition, your judgement
621	will be ligical when you look at the evidence. When you see the evidence and then decide. Do
622	not jump to, I feel it sir. I have this feeling that I love this guy. What is your evidence? No
623	evidence. Love is blind.
624	**Learners laugh**
625	T: look at evidence. Then love is blind. It bangs you on the wall and you hurt yourself and then
626	you want to move again, you bang yourself to the wall. Love has big eyes. Can see. If you let it
627	see. So you need to see the evidence. Evidence. Evidence contain?
628	Sara: fractal
629	**Learners and T laugh**
630	T: direction
631	Taha: what is fractal?
632	T: So evidence
633	Sara: basic feature of fractal is direction
634	T: direction. Fact or meaning. Forget about fractal for now. Direction means they show you
635	toward something and then you decide based on something. This process is logic. Logic,
636	conclusion, decision, judgement and definition is based on the EVIDENCE. Okay? You see the
637	evidence. You come to conclusion, whatever. This is called logic. And this logic or logicality or
638	rationality is the rule for you. When you have frame of reference, you can move on. So each
639	part, each level, gives birth to another level. For example, logicality gives birth to self-
640	awareness. Self-awareness gives birth to honesty. Honesty birth to, let's say, open-
641	mindedness. Open-mindedness gives birth to discipline. Open-mindedness gives birth to
642	judgement organically not mechanically. Okay? The whole process is called critical thinking.
643	Critical thinking is carrying the logic through the organic process and manifesting it in the form
644	of judgement. Logic manifested in the form of judgement through the process of critical
645	thinking
646	Taha: I have a question
647	T: the whole process is critical thinking. Yes?
648	Taha: you know, I think it's actually a question just happened in all my friends mind, they
649	T: how do know that?
650	Taha: xxx. Smashed
651	Ali: bomb
652	T: that's okay
653	Taha: It was the thing that I just thought. Dr just said something this is the process of critical
654	thinking. The direction. The critical thinking. What about, what about these process if they are
655	critical thinking but they actually interrupt each other

656	**Learners laugh**
657	Taha: They are a critical thinking. This is the process. This is direct. There is no, there is no
658	actually gap point. But when this come through the point which is eeeee
659	Ali: come together
660	Mary: I think
661	T: come together?
662	Taha: what's the point when where the processes
663	T: thank you
664	Taha: are just linked together in one point and the results are different. The first result is just
665	destroyed by second results
666	T: evidence means?
667	Taha: sorry
668	**Learners laugh**
669	Taha: I just want to stand up. **Taha goes to the whiteboard and writes**. You know, the process
670	is, the first process is, second process, third process. If the second process just interrupt,
671	interrupt the first process on this point. The result is bad. The result effects my life terribly. I
672	want to continue my academic, academic studying but for example, the divorce just happened
673	to my life
674	T: that's right
675	Taha: I should divorce but the result
676	T: so divorce can show you a direction which is in line to your life. I will tell you how can we
677	converge these things. For the time
678	Taha: but our life is not just one point
679	T: exactly. It's not one-way. There is lots of evidence and the evidence show us the direction
680	and from the things based on direction we come to conclusion. This process is logic. This is a
681	process and it can upgrade itself. The more we see, the better decisions we can make. But this
682	is very important. We will discuss it later step-by-step. Don't hurry. You are supposed to move
683	on with this class
684	Taha: but this happened to me
685	Mary: xxx
686	Taha: this happened to me
687	Mary: you resulting that your direction, at least one of it, is not correct that interrupt each
688	other
689	T: the direction is distorted maybe
690	Sara: Is it, can be related to the links?

691   T: yeah

692   Taha: if I be, if I be a critical thinker 100% ideally

693   T: no. come on. The direction is not like this. The direction is not like this. We will discuss it in
694   the movie 'my life' later on on Thursday you see that. For example, my life is moving on but
695   suddenly, for example, cancer comes along. He was to xxx the cancer

696   Taha: the result is actually

697   T: is terminal

698   Taha: the movie

699   T: that's it. But cancer which seems interrupting the whole process of life was giving him a
700   direction towards himself. Giving cancer interrupts his life and everything. It gave him a
701   direction. Don't look at it, don't think about it mechanically. Consider it conceptually. So, let's,
702   we should have a ruler. For everything we need to have a ruler. Frame of reference. Without
703   frame of reference, nothing can be defined. Everything should be defined based on frame of
704   reference. For this, let's say, critical thinking the frame of reference is?

705   L: logic

706   T: logic. And it is a process. It's not a statement. So this statement is logical the other one is
707   not logical. It's a process. And the process moves on in degrees. You know, you can build up
708   your logic. It's not just zero-one. You can grow. Your logic can grow step-by-step. The more,
709   the better you can see the evidence, the better logic you have. Then you go to self-awareness.
710   For example, let me just give you one of them and they can go through them. I want you to
711   write a journal and everything and link them organically. I want you to move from logic to
712   judgement through organic development and bringing it the next session. A piece of writing.
713   Let me give you a hint. When I give you a ruler, a logic. When the logic turns to be, let's say,
714   my frame of reference, you can use this ruler on me first. Okay? I want to define myself. I want
715   to see myself. If I want to define myself, I need something to measure myself. Define based on
716   analogy. Not define based on nothingness. I need a ruler. I need a frame of reference to
717   measure myself. Based on this frame of reference I can define myself. I can define my
718   emotional aspect of life. I can define, let's say, my scientific aspect, my family aspect, my social
719   life, my spiritual life, my morality and everything and this logic can help me to see myself.
720   Means to define myself. Then I can understand who I am now based on the ruler of logic. I will
721   see that there are some points on me which are not logical. Because they cannot be defined
722   based on the ruler of logic. I can see that my emotion is totally, totally distracted, let's say,
723   fragmented from other parts of my existence. Meaningless. So my logic says that your
724   emotion, your emotion is not based on logic. Please do something about it. So I understand
725   that my emotion is not logical. Understand that my social life is not based on logic because the
726   ruler of my logic doesn't confirm it, doesn't define it. So I will see their illogical parts in me. But
727   it was not enough. So this is called self-awareness. Self-awareness means using the ruler of
728   logic to measure yourself, to define yourself. Okay? But this is not enough. Because I am, in
729   this stage, I am at the BEING level. I can see what I can't do anything. I am paralysed. Okay? So
730   what should I do now? I should take myself to a level that I can do something about it. I can
731   modify myself. I can redefine myself. I can recheck myself. I can destroy a part myself. I can

732   add something to myself. I need to take myself, at the level of being I can't do this. I cannot
733   modify. I cannot redefine. I cannot break apart. Breakpoint is necessary. I cannot add anything.
734   I cannot do anything. I just can see. I can be sorry for myself. Okay? But being sorry is not
735   enough. I should take myself to another level that they can do everything. All these things. And
736   what is that level? Existence. Existence. I should take myself to existence. How? Through the
737   third stage. What is the third stage? Honesty. So self-awareness breeds honesty. When I see
738   myself

739   L: honesty

740   T: listen. Honesty doesn't happen outside you. When I see myself, when I measure myself,
741   when I put ruler of logic in me, then I can see myself so okay I feel sorry or happy or whatever.
742   When I see myself and measure myself based on logic, self-awareness then I can see myself
743   and come to decision. I can be able to express who I am. This is the definition of honesty.
744   Doesn't mean expressing yourself to someone else. Expressing who you really are? How can
745   you express who you really are? When you see yourself. Self-awareness is necessary. When
746   you don't see yourself, when you ignore yourself, you cannot express who you are. If I want to
747   express who I am, first I should see ME then I can express it. When I express who I am, this
748   expression, expression transforms me from the level of being to level of existence. So honesty
749   is a gate through which I can step to existence. Without honesty, I will remain in the

750   Taha: being

751   T: LEVEL OF THE BEING. I may see. I may be sorry. But I can't do anything. I can only be modify
752   myself when I go to the existence level. And honesty is the prerequisite for it. Expressing who
753   you are. For example, through your journal writing, through discussion. You don't need to
754   express it to someone else. You can express it through art, through cooking, through
755   whatever. If you want to express yourself, to see yourself. And if you want to see yourself you
756   should be logical. You should have a frame of reference. And at this level of expressing
757   honestly, NOW you can modify yourself. Now you can abrade the parts which are not in line, in
758   conformity with logic. You see these parts are not logical so you can recheck

759   Sara: it's not easy

760   T: I'm not talking about being easy or difficult. I'm just talking about the process

761   Sara: you know, I know about being honest and everything but I don't know how we can
762   rebuild, how we can modify?

763   T: first of all, Sara, try to understand what I am talking about. Do not judge based on your
764   previous understanding. Try to grasp. Try to, let's say, digests the definition now at this level.
765   Don't let your previous information, let's say

766   Sara: no, I

767   T: govern you now.

768   Sara: while I'm writing a journal, okay? I am really honest. Okay?

769   T: so now we have to define honesty again. Honesty

770   Sara: xxx

771   T: honesty is the organic, ORGANIC step which can be acquired and achieved when you go
772   through the other two steps, you know? Means through logicality and self-awareness. Because
773   you are not logical, because you cannot be self-aware, they cannot be honest. They cannot
774   direct the pain that they have. They may have projection, but they can never have expression.
775   Projection and expressions are two different things. If you wanna have expression, you should
776   go through the process of logicality, through self-awareness and then to expression. So
777   honesty is the organic result of the two things we talked about. Try to digest it. So honesty is
778   born now. And then you have the possibility to modify yourself, to recheck yourself, to be
779   somebody that you really want to be based on your logic. Don't you want to be somebody else
780   and a new person? Everybody want to be a new person dynamically. You all want to be a new
781   person. You can be when you express. When you go to existence. You can come into existence
782   when you go through logicality and self-awareness to judge. Then you can come to next step.
783   When you express, then you can go to open-mindedness and the discipline and judgement. I
784   leave them to you. Please look at the whole process and interconnect it organically,
785   interconnected algorithm. This is a kind of algorithm starting from evidence, seeing the
786   evidence and logicality and coming to logicality, sorry judgement. And judgement is the
787   manifestation of logicality. Then logicality as a concept will be manifested in the form of
788   judgement

789   Mina: I think most of us have a problem in the first step. You know, we don't have the right
790   ruler of logic. We don't have logic. For me, emotion is my logic

791   T: experience it

792   Mina: and I try to justify it the best way

793   T: that's right

794   Mina: that's a problem with me

795   T: when you see, when you understand, it's easy but needs lots of train. Whatever you wanna
796   decide, judge, whatever, you should find evidence. Just be committed to find the evidence.
797   Just try to find evidence. Okay? I want to decide for my emotional life. I need evidence. Then
798   just go for it. It can be emotional, it can be family evidence, ideological evidence, it can be,
799   let's say, behavioural evidence. Just find evidence then you can come to decision. And that
800   would be logical. Then your love would be logical. Logic is not just fixed and, let's say,
801   mechanic statement. Logic is a process. Okay? See the evidence and come to conclusion. And
802   the ruler help you. To go all the way through the whole process going to the judgement. So
803   judgement, judgment is logic and logic is conceptual judgement being manifested. Okay? Logic
804   is manifested through the process. So I want you to link them organically and write something.
805   It is a very very important part, you know? It's so serious. So spend some time on your own.
806   Okay? And try to

807   Mina: for the next session?

808   T: sure brighter drawn all and we discuss it. So so critical. Write a journal on the whole process
809   and link them organically. Each one of them should give birth to the other one. Okay?

810   Taha: each of them?

811 T: should give birth to the following one and should be born from the preceding one. Because
812 organic development

813 Taha: this is an exercise?

814 T: this is a true process of life. Critical thinking.

815 Taha: can I ask you something? I want your honest answer

816 T: I try

817 Taha: is it kind of, I think the similarity between critical thinking and an exercise. Is it the same
818 something?

819 T: it's a kind of practice. You should train yourself. Yeah. You will see there is the weak points,
820 the shortcomings, then you can consolidate some strong points and train whatever over the
821 good points. Through critical thinking you just, let's say, remove some parts which are harming
822 you, harming you all the time and you can add lots of, let's say, organically developed parts,
823 increase your frame and trigger your mentality. So critical thinking is very important for us to
824 be a better human being. To be a better human being and what is the definition of better
825 human being? When you go through critical thinking, you can define better human being. So
826 wait for the next session. Take care.

Appendix 15: Setting the scene

For the ease of description, I divided the selected discussion session into six segments specified by the lines as appeared in its transcription provided in <u>appendix 14</u>.

- **Segment1: (Lines 1-60)**

The teacher took a seat among the learners and invited Shila and Parisa to change the position of the teacher's desk to make space for both of them to stand beside the whiteboard. Shila started to talk about 'open-mindedness'. After couple of minutes, the teacher interrupted her as she seemed to be stressful. The teacher started a dialogue with her to relax and feel as if talking 'to a friend in a real world'. Shila continued but was interrupted by the teacher again to ask her how they prepared for the discussion. Shila replied that they divided the article to half and each one prepared to present half of the article. Parnaz said that it was their first presentation which was followed by Shila who affirmed that they did not know how they were supposed to manage it. The teacher expressed his disapproval for he expected them to run the discussion together and not 'mechanically' dividing it in two parts. Then, he invited her to continue so she continued to talk about 'open-mindedness'.

- **Segment 2: (Lines 61-144)**

While Shila was talking, she referred to 'evidence' as an important part of reasoning according to the article. The teacher interrupted her and asked her to define 'evidence'. She started to reply but was interrupted by the teacher that invited Parisa to join and define 'evidence'. Parisa answered which was followed by the teacher's 'OK'. Shila, misinterpreted The teacher's 'okay' as approval, started to continue but was again interrupted by The teacher who clarified that he had not approved Parisa' definition. Shila offered to define the term; she made use an example which was not approved by the teacher. He invited Parisa to define the term again. Parisa answered but was rejected for being an example and not a definition. Then, he asked other learners to define 'evidence'. He called Ali to define the term. Ali answered. Then, Roya and Sara offered their definitions. Their answers were not confirmed. Then, he defined the concept.

- **Segment 3: (Lines 144-268)**

Shila continued her presentation. The teacher interrupted her once by asking what she meant by 'bias' as she mentioned in her talk. She answered which commented by the teacher 'okay'. She asked to see whether this meant approval or disapproval but the teacher invited her by nodding

to pass and continue which implied he did not confirm her answer. She continued till he reminded her that they had ten more minutes. Shila continued for three more minutes till the teacher interrupted her and asked Parisa to join and continue talking. He reminded Parisa to involve the listeners. Sara interrupted Parisa to ask a question. Parisa answered then Taha asked to comment and engaged in a dialogue with Sara till Taha stated his agreement with Sara.

- **Segment 4: (Lines 269-401)**

Shila and Parisa started quiet chatting about how to continue. Ali, Taha and Sara encouraged them to come to an agreement and continue their presentation. Then, Parisa started to talk about reading and writing critically according to the article. She started by asking whether reading and writing is related, which was followed by The teacher's saying 'good', implying his approval of her engaging the learners. Ali and Taha replied Parisa's question. She continued her presentation for 10 minutes until the teacher interrupted her to remind her of running out of time, and gave her two more minutes to finish. She continued for three more minutes which was interrupted again by the teacher who insisted her to forget about the article and explain how this article affected her and how CT was related to her. While she was talking, he asked what if a person did not want to be a critical thinker. While she was answering, he interrupted her by rephrasing his question. When Parisa was answering, Ali interrupted her by asking what she meant by 'good life' that she just mentioned. After she answered, the teacher explained that in reading any article for the class they should avoid being 'trapped by the article' but using it just as an aid to understand the key concepts and try to go beyond it. Then, he criticised their presentation in which they hardly engaged others. Roya added a funny comment at which the learners laughed. Then, he asked them to tell how the article affected them in one minute. First Parisa and then Shila replied. He asked them to sit and they clapped for them.

- **Segment 5: (Lines 402-588)**

The teacher came to the front and asked 'why it is so important to be a critical thinker? Why you should be a critical thinker?' First, Taha answered. Then, the teacher called Roya, Mona, Sara, Nasim, Hoda, Mina, Azita, Saman and Ali. He repeated the question and engaged in dialogue with them.

- **Segment 6: (Lines 589-826)**

When all of the learners were called and talked, he started to explain the first characteristic of CT mentioned in the article, namely 'rationality'. While explaining, he asked some questions that learners replied with short phrases taken from the article. Once in line 652, Taha interrupted

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him to ask a question. Then, he asked to go to the white board and started writing on the board while explaining. Dialogue continued in which Roya engaged as well. Then, the teacher continued lecturing on the two other characteristics of CT i.e. 'self-awareness', and 'honesty'. Sara, Taha and Roya asked some questions to which the teacher answered. He finished the session by asking them to write a journal on the topic and bring it to the class the next session to read and discuss more

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