8 A critical outlook to the future

8.1 Personalized transgressive pedagogies

Recalling Pennycook’s (2007) notion of “critical philosophy of transgression”, which is highly relevant to the spirit of critical pedagogies, I would like to sketch out further insights of the philosophy. To begin with, the problematizing practice also hints at its own problematization. We do not want to be trapped in problematizing things for problematization’s sake. There are times, speculatively, when not problematizing is a transgressive action. This is what I call as “transgressing against the transgressive movement”, which is akin to a double negation that restores a negated thing to its original meaning before negation (e.g., “it is not uncommon” may be an equivalent of “it is common”). At times people are so frantically critical (if not transgressive) that they lose the essence of praxis. In fact, an informed or thoughtful reflection may necessitate a silence or a “non-action as action”, albeit not for forever because everlasting silence may mean perpetuating the status quo in its broadest sense of the phrase.

Teaching and learning languages is, in a similar vein, supposed to pay more attention to use silence (or be quieter) appropriately in classroom discourse; otherwise, the students can be inhibited from acquiring optimally a foreign language being learned. My colleague (Henny Zacharias, personal communication) once grieved over her producing “too much noise” in her own classroom, partly due to teacher-fronted lecturing, such that students were not given ample time to use the English language. Some other teachers could not tolerate students’ silence for too long as they felt “uneasy” or “impatient” when the students did not respond to them (Tsui, 1996, p. 151). In another case, it was the students whose right to remain silent was to be respected. As Hilleson (1996) suggests: “The quiet time seemed to be a necessary stage, violation of which induced dysfunctional anxiety” on the part of the students. He elaborates on that “[t]he teacher must be sensitive to this need and attempt to protect students from demotivating experiences” (p. 272). In yet another context, even if language teachers
were determined to allow their students to speak or contribute to group- or whole-class discussion, the students kept relatively quiet (Boshell, 2002). Reflecting on a videotaped session of his own listening class, he witnessed more participation from active students but he interrupted quiet children who actually tried to contribute and he completed what he thought they were saying. For instance:

So, children, tell me about Mars then.
Teacher (Boshell): How about you, Camino? Can you tell me something?

Quiet child (Camino): It’s a small planet and its…[interrupted by Boshell]

Teacher: That’s right and it’s quite far from the Earth as well. That’s what you wanted to say, wasn’t it Camino?

Quiet child (Camino): [No response]

Teacher: Okay, children, have you got that? Let’s move on then. (p. 186)

Motivated by the desire to change his tendency of controlling students’ amount of speech and to get more involvement from the quiet children, in the next lesson Michael Boshell (2002) radically changed his approach by giving these quiet children “both initiative and control”, but they failed to take advantage of them: “The children merely sat at the table and stared blankly at the materials before them” because they were not given the chance to get some intervention (help) from Michael who believed that his intervention would only “spoil” the objective of the planned activity (p. 190). To rectify this problem in the subsequent lesson Michael supplied some essential words that the group of quiet children could use. They also could approach him and get some advice from him, without him controlling the group too much. In other words, some more space was given to these quiet children and they were scaffolded (or facilitated) whenever necessary by Michael. The
space could have been spoiled (again) if Michael had dominated the classroom discourse or had not been quiet in an appropriate way and at proper time.

Using silence suitably is not the only reason why I contend that foreign language education cannot be separated from spiritual issues. When I attended Sunday services in Hope Brisbane Church at the University of Queensland campus, I as an English learner myself had to use English to think, listen to sermons, sing, speak with friends there, or give a personal testimony before the congregation. As a son raised in a devout Christian family, I have accumulated, internalized, and reflected upon religious knowledge upon which my Christian worldview is built. More broadly in the academic level, I am not all alone as there are scholars who have devoted to embracing spiritual worldviews in their intellectual endeavors.

8.2 Being “critical” through worldviews

A worldview expert David Noebel, as cited in Anderson, Zuehlke, and Zuehlke (2000), states that there are four most influential worldviews in Western society: humanism, utopianism, New Age, and biblical Christianity. He defines worldview as “any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relations to God and the world.” There are ten areas in every worldview: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history (pp. 27-28; see Table 8.1). Note: Taken from page 24 of Understanding the Times, copyright © 1994 by David Noebel, published by Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon 97402. Used by permission. Not to be reproduced.
Table 8.1. Four Western Worldview Models.

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As critical educators, we cannot avoid ourselves from being embedded in, exposed to, and having practiced at least one worldview as our critical tool for making sense of and viewing the world, God, and “gods” around us. Let me now expand upon my critical views on utopianism, humanism, and New Agerelatively briefly – not all aspects will be discussed – in light of my Christian worldview and my evolving understanding of CPs. The second worldview (humanism) will be the most extensively discussed as it is, as far as my observation is concerned, the most pervasive worldview in English language teaching, although many English teachers and students worldwide do not realize it. Please suspend your judgment for a moment that I am biased as in due time I will address how critical educators need to respect people embracing worldviews other than that of their own.

8.2.1 Utopianism

Central to utopianism is Marxist materialist philosophy. Just like the pure humanist theology, as a materialist philosophy Marxism excludes the beliefs in the supernatural world. Things are to be explained scientifically, logically, and concretely based on facts that can be observed. To avoid redundancy, please refer to my critique on this atheistic stance in view of my personalized Christian worldview. What I would like to see in more detail is hence the historical materialism. Core to Marx’s view of history is the existence of “class struggle” due to desires to gain political, social, and economic benefits, with one social class (capitalists) exploiting the other class (proletariat). Marx compares the modern society, in which social classes are polarized in capitalists and working-class people, to ‘pre-industrial’ or ‘cottage industry’ era which, he observes, workers finished their home-made products to be offered directly to their potential buyers. In the modern era, however, the capitalists take control of what the labors do. These workers simply follow the capitalists’ command to do ‘fragmented, repetitive tasks’ without even understanding what the whole processes of their jobs are for, except for getting much fewer amount of money than the profits the capitalists can earn for them themselves. Hence, labors have become de-humanized as they are things to be sacrificed for the greater good of the capitalists (Barry, 2002, pp. 156-157).
Although the Marxist theory is to some degree still relevant to the overall structure of our capitalist-proletariat divide in our societies to date, it has been critiqued solely for its “logic which believes in the power of capital to control all aspects of human behavior” (Giroux, 1983, p. 121). The capital (or economic base) in Orthodox Marxism, which refers to “the material means of production, distribution, and exchange”, forms (or determines) the superstructure (or “the ‘cultural’ world of ideas, art, religion, law, and so on”). This economic determinism (Barry, 2002, pp. 157-158, italics original) restricts the autonomy of ideas and other aspects in the so-called superstructure to transform oppression in its broadest sense of the word, especially the excessive accumulation of capital by relatively few people that sacrifices the lives of less-affluent people through de-humanizing labor force. Another weakness of Marxism is that the working class is treated as a single, monolithic entity that is incited (using propagandas) to show enmity, not transformation or liberation in the Freirean sense, to the capitalists or ruling class. As a result, the former oppressed people became oppressors – let us recall the Russian revolution in 1917 that overthrew the last Tsar (emperor) became a new oppressive regime hoisting the Soviet Union flag.29

Thus, absent from this utopianist worldview (at least in its beginning) is the transformative capacity of humans to oust oppression in general and the totalistic power of capital to control all human behaviors, in particular. This transformative capacity is actually an

expression of “human agency” or “subjectivity.” Both Freire (1990) and Giroux (1983), nevertheless, have implied their warnings that “human agency” or “subjectivity” does not live in a social and ideological vacuum. This suggests that human agency may reflect someone’s dominant worldview that is shared by his/her like-minded fellow people. Those having similar (or the same) worldviews constitute an abstract structure upon which individual’s agency or subjectivity is based or built. To transgress the boundaries of structure encapsulated in a certain worldview is therefore crucial for human agency or subjectivity to have a transformative value.

As it is impossible for an individual not to have a worldview, the question then becomes what worldview(s) is/are to be embraced in order that his/her agency has a transformative impact. Glossed over in many critical educators’ praxes both in general and second/foreign language pedagogy are their reluctance (or courage) to delve into the issue of spirituality, which, I contend, is salient to extend our critical praxes. In the name of class struggle (in utopianism), “critical” educators from the utopianist worldview, I suspect, dispassionately attempts to exclude spirituality (or, interchangeably used here, religiosity) to prevent themselves from sectarianism. Nevertheless, by avoiding spiritual issues, the utopianists become sectarians, too.

If within- and across-class struggle is still the common ground on which critical praxes are located, then other worldviews should be taken into account, especially spiritual worldviews. The question is which spirituality it is to be taken into account. If it were Christianity, still the question would be which or what kind of Christianity. These will be partly addressed in my elaboration on and critiques toward humanism to which I now turn.

30 Agency in this book denotes “the power of [actors] to operate independently of the determining constraints of [social structure]” and is “intended to convey the volitional, purposive nature of human activity as opposed to its constrained, determined aspects” (Jary & Jary, 2000, p. 9). Similar to agency is subjectivity which indicates, in general, “the perspective of the person (subject)” (p. 617).
8.2.2 Humanism

According to the definition of humanism in the *Dictionary of Philosophy* by Mautner (2000),

“especially” in the English-speaking world, humanism has since the nineteenth century come to designate a non-religious or anti-religious world-view, usually based on a belief in man’s [sic] capacity for self-cultivation and self-improvement, and in the progress of mankind. (p. 256)

In Noebel’s list, the philosophical underpinning of humanism is naturalism which, in Mautner’s view “…implies rejection of traditional beliefs in supernatural beings or other entities supposedly beyond the ken of science” (p. 373), idolizing empirical evidence which “can be confirmed by sensory observation” (p. 166). Concerning ethics, the humanist ethics “…opposes absolutism, like the rules of prohibiting incest, blasphemy.” Besides that, the ethics – reflecting that of postmodernism – is permissive: “…different individuals, groups, societies, cultures, differ in their view of what is good or bad, right or wrong, in relation to character and conduct” (p. 180).

Discussing the ontological existence of God is certainly not my cup of tea as I am not a theologian. However, with a lot of people in the English-speaking world and other western countries plus the majority of people in eastern countries embracing a variety of faith, particularly Christian denominations, imposing humanism to these people is certainly unethical although there have been more and more Christians hold humanism at the expense of losing their faith, especially because humanism discards God or other supernatural beings from their belief. Besides that, with their relativistic ethics, humanists are not in the position to attack beliefs in Christianity and other religions. It can be implied from their ethics that different religious groups differ in their view of what are absolutes regarding good or bad and right or wrong. Absolutizing the idea that humanism rejects absolutes in “traditional” religions means that it denies its own ethics.

Humanist worldview is very broad and Carl Rogers, as inferred by Anderson, Zuehlke, and Zuehlke (2000) has a slightly different
view: “all the major religions are scientific because they all have inner personal meaning.” This is based on Rogers’ redefinition of “standard scientific method” as something not necessarily “repeatable, observable, structured phenomena in the objective world” but something subjective out of the “private world of ‘inner personal meanings’”. When the subjective meanings are central to humanistic “science”, then humanism is not a “pure natural science” in positivistic manner but rather “a religious worldview”, too. As Anderson et al. further elaborate:

Humanism is a religious system, as many of its own publications admit. Also, the United States Supreme Court in 1961 case of *Torcaso v Watkins* declared, ‘Among religions in this country which do not teach what would generally be considered a belief in the existence of God are Buddhism, Taoism, Ethical Culture, Secular Humanism, and others.’ (p. 30)

A religion must have a god, and in my opinion, the god of humanism is human. And what is a god? In its broadest sense it refers to anything or anyone which or who is worshiped, revered, cherished, thought over – you name it – which or who creates meaningfulness to its worshipers’ lives.

Self-actualization, as the psychological aim of humanism, can be regarded as actualizing a self’s fullest potential. In light of Christianity, the fulfillment of self-actualization can be twofold. On the one hand, it puts the self as a god when its ambitions, desires, and dreams are not consistent with the word of God as written in the Holy Bible. On the other hand, it may be compatible with God’s spiritual calling in an individual’s life (just as Isaiah was called to be God’s prophet, inter alia, among the Israelites; cf. also the positive side of “purpose-driven life” as superbly presented by a best-selling Christian writer and pastor Rick Warren, 2002). But once the spiritual calling is skewed by the god inside (i.e., the “self”), so some Christians’ view goes, the calling is tainted by humanism that is independent of God.

I will not go too far beyond this interpretation at this juncture. Rather, I would like to pinpoint the weakness of Noebel’s model
of Western worldviews. Probably for the sake of convenience, the model treats each worldview to be, on the whole, mutually exclusive (distinctively separate) from other worldviews. There are, of course, overlapping aspects such as socialism in both humanism and utopianism, for example. However, there is no mention of capitalism as the dominant economics. It is my contention that misinterpretation of Christian economics has led to capitalism, instead of "stewardship of property". This will be revisited in greater depth below under my critique on utopianism and the monolithic Christian worldview in Noebel's list. In addition, it seems as if the Christian worldview were the "best". While I may to some extent agree with this – thanks again to my personal Christian bias – my question is which Christianity it is that makes it superior compared to other worldviews. Answering this is certainly dragging us to be even more subjective. More at issue here is therefore how our own ever-evolving, predominant held worldview – whether it be of Christianity or New Age or whatever – is influencing and being influenced, or is coloring and being colored, if you like, by other worldviews. By influencing or coloring I mean that a dominant worldview (mine being Christianity) will tell me (and other people listening to me) that a certain aspect of a non-Christian worldview is not entirely wrong or bad. To illustrate, my Christian view populated by the understanding of the notion of “talent” as written in a parable in Matthew 24 verses 14 to 28 in the Holy Bible influences the way I make sense of self-actualization in humanism. To me, developing my God-given talents or gifts (e.g., teaching, public speaking, philosophizing, writing, playing piano, etc.) is an attempt to actualize myself in a godly way, as long as the gifts are not replacing my priority to worshiping God whom I believe in the name of Jesus Christ. Hence, there is nothing wrong about actualizing my talents in me so far as they are used for the glory of God in whom I trust. As to the notion of being influenced or colored, this suggests that my Christianity can be translated into a spiritually humanistic way of life in view of some aspect(s) of a non-Christian worldview. The example of self-actualization, again, has shaped my Christian worldview by reminding me of the spiritual calling, capacities, and talents that I believe the Lord Jesus Christ has bestowed in my life. Thus, influencing and being influenced, coloring and being colored are constitutive of each other.
With these influencing-being influenced and coloring-being colored interfaces, I confirm the Apostle Paul’s contention: “Test everything. Hold on to the good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21, NIV). I do not agree with the humanist worldview concerning its atheistic theology but the idea of self-actualization is good anyhow, given that it is my God-inspired self being shown and not my carnal self.31

Setting aside God (or other supernatural beings) from their belief, humanists certainly do not think that the subjectivity of self (or human agency) can be filled by spirits. This humanist belief, however, is not at all plausible for many people who believe that spirit possession exists. To oversimplify a bit, allow me to use this analogy. Just because radio waves cannot be seen, smelt, tasted, heard, or felt (except there is a radio reception), it does not mean they do not exist. Likewise, just because God (or Satan) cannot be “confirmed by sensory observation” (except there is a human spirit who can feel the presence of spirits), it does not mean supernatural beings are not existent. What humanists can falsify is, in my opinion, not the existence of God; rather, they can cast doubt on someone’s claim that their “hearts” are “filled”, “enlightened”, or “inspired” by a spirit or God. The same Popperian falsifying stance in such a case is also of mine to “test everything” and “hold on to the good.” Put another way, falsifying stance is a humanistic way for a Christian like me to discern spirits critically and spiritually; that is, by (1) using my logic to see the consistency of someone’s words and deeds and (2) asking God (or other godly Christian leaders) to verify if a certain teaching or prophetic direction is reliable.

As a Christian English language teacher whose pedagogies are critically oriented, the humanist tenet which I agree to some extent is therefore self-actualization. I am challenged to find the divine purpose of my English learning and teaching, and my professional life as a lecturer. This leads me to explore what it means to be oppressors, to be oppressed, and to be liberators in language teaching and learning, language teacher education, and other language-related problems in real world contexts. The medium of exploration is the English language, which is assisted by insights from my Christian worldview, my past

31 More discussion on double-mindedness due to dual selves in one person (the actualization of God in one’s self versus one’s self-centeredness apart from God) in light of one Christian denomination can be seen in Rick Joyner’s (1993) There were Two Trees in the Garden, among others.
experiences (when I became – or still have become – oppressors and the oppressed, among others), and the literature on critical theories in language studies, in particular. Moreover, I would like my passion of the critical is contagious – to readers of this book and to my students, at least.

Furthermore, the aim of teaching and learning a foreign language such as English is not merely about acquiring a pre-determined set of competencies in order for learners to “function” well in the “target language” culture (such as Indonesian learners learning English so they can survive in English-speaking countries and have the sociolinguistic repertoire to conform to the cultures in such countries). With this mindset, especially when EFL learners do well in “gatekeeping” tests like IELTS or TOEFL, they will feel ready to integrate themselves into mainstream societies in which the use of Standard English is a must. In view of transgressive CPs, the integrationist mentality is not complete. It is like a one-way direction in education, privileging the mainstream as the ultimate norm “non-native” speakers of English have to acquire (if not simply acquiesce). Lacking in this “liberal”, integrationist view is/are personalized English(es) as means of resistance – in the sense that any oppressive realities, associated with the mainstream culture (or worldview), need to be transformed or transgressed.

In fact, another term of “humanism” in Noebel’s model is “liberal” movement which is a prominent worldview in the United States, for example. This movement is certainly not liberating in light of transgressive CPs that I am proposing here. Liberal movement in the U.S. endorses equality in terms of individual freedom for its citizens to participate in political, social, economic, cultural, and religious arena. Largely overlooked by this liberalism is, nonetheless, that competitions in attempts to position and secure oneself in a certain field (under the guise of self-actualization) have – subconsciously, perhaps – been unfair. Mostly, white, Anglo-Saxon, and male, affluent Americans are those who belong to the noblest caste in the American society. The class struggle and social conflicts that arise within and across racial, gender, and ethnic groups other than the white, Anglo-Saxon, male Americans have, on the whole, been ignored or pushed to the periphery, at best. The mainstream, in response to this (if at all they respond) has
addressed it superficially by blaming the marginalized groups for their non-conforming values (worldviews) and behaviors that are not in line with what are regarded as the-whole-nation values, which they claim to have been agreed upon “together.” In fact, nevertheless, these values are not always inclusive of those minority/marginalized groups, as their voices have not been really taken into account together with the mainstream in the first place. Moreover, differences are acknowledged, albeit perfunctorily, as in international or intercultural parades where people from different ethnic groups perform their traditional dances, musical skills, and clothes but their day-to-day social tensions and frictions, particularly due to unfair treatments from the mainstream, are mostly disregarded (Kubota, 2004).

To further illustrate, let us consider this excerpt of classroom discourse, most likely between a white American and his fifth grade students in Toronto coming from working-class families (with perhaps some being Afro-Canadians):

Let’s have art this afternoon, Mr. McLaren!
Yah. We want art!
Well, we’ve got some math to do this afternoon, perhaps after we’re finished with that....
We wanna naked model...one with really big tits that stick out to here!
... and lots of fuzzy hair down here!
You guys are sick! Is that all you think about?
Shut up Sandra! All you think about is naked boys too!...
Sir! Let’s have floor hockey instead!
I hates floor hockey!
We don’t want you girls! Hey, sir! Let the girls play skippin or something, but let us play floor hockey!
There will be no playing anything until we finish our math.
Kids should be allowed to choose sometimes. You said so!
Yah! You never let us have fun – real fun!
Okay, okay. What does “real fun” mean?
If we wanna go somewhere, the creek or something, they say you should let us...
...Open your book to the math review on page fifty-one.
Wait a minute! I ain’t gots no pencil!
That’s because you used it to jab that little kid at recess and the teacher took it off you!
Get lost….
Here, you can use my pencil.
Thanks, sir! Hey look! I stole the teacher’s pencil!
Can turn on the radio during art?
Quietly, yes… quietly. But first, our math!
Hey Sandra, get up on the desk and take off your shirt!
Anybody who doesn’t finish this test gets a note to take home and get signed!
Sir! Can I have a note, please! I love notes!
Me too! I wanna note saying I’m bad!
Everybody line up for bad notes!
…Hey! Gimme back my math book!
Cut the crap!
This is boring….

(McLaren, as cited in Giroux, 1983, pp. 93-94, italics original)

This is probably an extreme example but in other countries such as Indonesia, chaotic classes are not uncommon, either. I do not know more about the context of the classroom discourse but for sure the math curriculum imposed by the teacher was vehemently lambasted by the students. It is unclear whether they are low-achieving students but their discourse of resistance may reflect (1) the class struggle (in view of Marxist utopianism) from the working-class students against the “capitalist” (represented by the teacher) or (2) frustration on the part of the students as their self-actualization – in light of humanism – through sports (floor hockey) and hobbies (art, listening to radio) were not well accommodated by the teacher because the mainstream required that the math curriculum be rigidly followed regardless of their irrelevance to the students’ interests.32

32 I would personally be unhappy if I happened to be the teacher in the class as the students were indeed rebellious and mischievous (e.g., their premature interest in pornography – alas!). This said, I imagine that if it had been an English (not math) lesson in Indonesia, I would have applied democratic (humanistic), critical, and spiritual principles. Rather than always sticking to the predetermined curriculum as driven by text-bookish lessons, I would have addressed the main themes of hobbies (e.g., sports, art, and music), morality (e.g., pornography), and educational values (rather than giving low-achieving students a note to take home and getting
In ESL classrooms, many nonnative speakers of English who have relatively poor English are definitely less fortunate than their Canadian counterparts in McLaren’s class above. These ESL students do not have adequate language skills at their disposal to function effectively in an English-speaking country like the United States, let alone to use English as a way of demonstrating considerable resistance against racial, religious, gender, cultural, or even educational discriminations.

In an attempt to tap into the anxiety of a group of sixteen-year-old students with low English proficiency in Singapore, Hilleson (1996) elicit his data through interviews and diary data from students coming from Japanese, Indonesian, Italian, Norwegian, and German. I will quote some voices raised by the Indonesian student whose pseudonym here is Wayan. Regarding “language shock” due to quite a sudden shift from using L1 to being immersed in an L2 environment, Wayan commented in an interview, “I’m afraid if I’m talking then they [are] listening to me. I’m not shy in Indonesia, but I see my English really really poor” (p. 253). Having got more exposure to English outside the classroom, however, Wayan said in another interview, “I think it’s much better in the boarding house because a lot of friends and if I were living in a family it would hard. In boarding house it pushed me to speak English” (p. 260). Worried about task demands that required extensive use of English (“foreign language anxiety”), Wayan said, “Reading is first problem. A lot of words I have to look up in dictionary so it makes me bored so just leave it” (pp. 260, 264). On the whole, this study has informed ESL teachers to consider pressures and reliefs felt by learners inside and outside the classroom. The question is whether this approach equips learners with some critical tools that push them to go beyond the common ESL practices. To this I have to express my doubt although it was reported that in the diaries and interviews, the students thought that “the ‘United Nations Day,’ when they planned ethnic dances, sketches, and food stalls, was of crucial importance in confidence them signed by their parents) as central to unraveling the complexity of counter-discourses (e.g., whether or not hobbies and pornography are “sinful”; how educational values are not solely determined by or reduced into test grades, etc.) using various teaching and learning approaches. For example, dealing with the issue of pornography, students are to do some simulations with some male students become husbands addicted to pornography and some female students represent desperate housewives who feel neglected by their adulterous husbands. The rest of male and female students will act as psychologists, priests, or other religious leaders who try to resolve this complicated matter.

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building and making contact with others” (p. 272). I am afraid this is reminiscent of liberal-humanist multiculturalism in which cultures are “essentialized” or reduced into superficial cultural celebrations at some events (cf. Kubota, 2004 again). Besides that, the hidden structure between dominant (here represented by more advanced English users in Singapore) and non-dominant society (such as Wayan, whose English is relatively limited) stay untouched. I am left wondering how ESL teachers can think beyond creating confidence-building classroom environment and step forward by empowering students to do praxes that examine injustices in societies. More ironically, a student like Wayan was much more fortunate socially and economically than his fellow peers from remote areas in Indonesia who cannot even afford schooling in a village, let alone in Singapore.

A more radical move can be shown through advocacy, not simply accommodating voices of students’ anxiety as in Hilleson’s (1996) study. Humbly speaking, by the way, I have to admit that I was also fortunate like Wayan to get an AusAID scholarship to pursue my master’s degree in Australia, although I may not be as rich as Wayan, who I believe is a private student afforded by his affluent parents. The story of my own advocacy in Australia hopefully will shed more light on what ESL students (and teachers) can resist anomalous treatments by a dominant society (here shown by policies of a university regarding my admission as an international student). In 2003 I was admitted in a school of education in an Australian university. On the one hand I was happy but on the other hand I was bewildered as to why I had to complete three undergraduate courses which had nothing to do with my intended major on rural studies. I remember taking one of the three courses, Early Childhood Care and Education Services, in which all the lecturers and students are women, with me the only man in a classroom of some 30 students. More mystifying was that if I had completed the three undergraduate courses, I would be granted a graduate certificate, which was supposed to be higher than the undergraduate level), and could proceed to my master’s. I was not satisfied with this service and, supported by my Indonesian friend, Dr. Semuel Littik, I sent a grievance letter in which I protested this highly questionable treatment. The punchline of my experience is that of identifying potential injustice.
or hidden agenda by a certain educational institution (e.g., admitting me in a strange graduate certificate program so the university would get more money from my scholarship) and of an attempt to rectify the problem, which in my case, I asked to be transferred to another university and, fortunately, I was. A myriad of other problems might have been or will be encountered by international students like I was. Therefore, making an effective use of the grievance procedure is the critical, transgressive “strategic competence”, if you like, that international students can perform to compensate for unfairness or injustice imposed on them by the dominant, liberal-humanist society who claims to respect equality for self-actualization.

In EFL contexts (where English is not the first language or the dominant medium of instruction, and the mainstream society is not white, Anglo-Saxon, male, rich Americans), English use is not less important than that in ESL contexts as a means of resistance. Inundated by capitalizing, Americanizing way of life (thanks to their dominant humanist worldview), EFL teachers and students such as those in Indonesia are involved in the battle of either assimilating to or integrating into the “native-like” mindset or opposing such state of mind using global Englishes (cf. Pennycook, 2007) that may not always conform to the Standard American/British/Australian English.

Transgressive CPs are not only about resisting but it should also be empowering. In fact, EFL learners cannot resist worldviews and behaviors critically without first being empowered through teaching and learning English. Thus, for ordinary formal schools the goal is not simply learning English in order to be able to function effectively in the target language community by way of naïve and parrot/cuckoo-like implementation of the so-called “competency-based” curriculum or KTSP (“school-level curriculum”) within the implicit spirit of liberal-humanism. It is probably that (to some extent), and something more (or even something else): transgressive, critical praxes. The praxes will provide students with alternative worldviews against which the liberal-humanism is critically evaluated. In turn, students are not simply learning the mainstream ways of thinking and acting (liberal-humanism) but also the alternative ones in a critical (or transgressive) manner which empower them to challenge the taken-for-granted
things, e.g., uncritically examined notion of “equality for all” which in fact let conflicts within or across groups or social classes remain hidden.

For non-formal education in which strict adherence to government- or school-imposed curriculum is minimal or even absent, transgressive, critical praxes with English as the medium of instruction or communication, or at least as an additional language being taught and learned, can be introduced and practiced. EFL Curricula in formal schooling are not the bases for CPs-inspired EFL learning, but are possible points of reference to scaffold learning. In other words, non-formal education is not to be government-curriculum-based but government-curriculum-informed, plus transgressive, critical praxes. This suggests that the curricula used in formal schools will not drive or control the whole content and direction of CPs-inspired non-formal education; instead, such curricula will be critically examined by teachers and learners alike so the hidden, taken-for-granted agendas of the mainstream (mirroring the middle-class lifestyles, in particular) are uncovered. For example, some rural students living under the poverty line, economically speaking, will probably think that going to a big city like Jakarta is a luxury, let alone to Sydney in Australia. The following excerpted text from Kang Guru Radio English, August 2002, as cited in Kistono, Andayani, Ismukoco, and Tupan (2004) in their “competency-based” English lesson book for the second grade of junior high school entitled The Bridge English Competence for SMP 2, may be irrelevant to and even offensive for such students, although, I believe, some of them are dreaming about going there too:

January 2nd, 2004
Hi, you everyone in Indonesia,

In either formal or non-formal education, critical praxes are to push learning participants to think beyond the given curricular straitjacket. This is the real challenge, especially in formal schooling where exploratory learning can be very restricted by time and milieu constraints: the exam days are looming; a critical teacher is deemed “non-conformist”, “uncooperative”, and “a revolutionary rebel”; some parents and students alike are still comfortable with the status quo. The question of how to teach transgressively practical also lingers in many formal teachers’ and informal educators’ minds. Having presented vignettes of critical inquiries into worldviews, teaching practices, and learning opportunities through dialogic thematic investigations, and other things following this section, I hope readers will have found some critical moments during the reading that will serve as impetuses for further praxes in much wider contexts.
I am in Sydney now and it is a fantastic city. I haven’t started working yet so I am a tourist. I want to see everything that Sydney has to offer. The transport system is great here – cheap and fast… (p. 84)

While the lesson using this topic and text might be useful linguistically (at least from liberal-humanist teachers, although they may not be aware of being as such), rural students are left behind their counterparts from middle-class families. First, to illustrate, the students probably do not use Indonesian as their first language, which makes it even more difficult if the English teacher does not speak languages other than Indonesian and (limited) English. Second, and more importantly, the students are not exposed to literate practices middle-class families have: reading books of various genres in Indonesian or English, having private courses on English or other foreign languages, getting a passport and airplane tickets for going abroad, etc. The question then becomes whether it is necessary in the first place that rural students need to be equal to their middle-class counterparts in terms of literate practices. This question is too big for me, and yet I have some views to push nonetheless.

When the rural students have the courage to work and compete with those coming from middle-class families in the future, they will certainly need to familiarize themselves with the literate practices of middle-class people. Some portion of competency-based curriculum will be of a great benefit as these students will need to master some competencies to function effectively in professions such as an English lecturer, a teacher in a school whose curriculum is internationally based, a manager or an accountant in an international company, an embassy staff, a pastor who serves both Indonesians and expatriates, a flight attendant, an air traffic controller, etc. At first glance, the role of CPs may not be obvious. CPs-inspired educators, however, will not simply be satisfied with equipping students with English for Specific Purposes (ESP); rather, they are eager to impart critical values.

Which critical values, though, by the way? Marxism and liberal-humanism alike have their critical values, and so do New Age movement and Christianity which I will set sights on in due time.
Suffice it to say here that I hint at *transgressing worldviews* (which I will revisit in section 8.3). Of course, it is impossible for a person not to have a worldview. By knowing where an individual and other people are coming from (i.e., from which dominant worldview all of them stem their being critical), they will not be trapped in naïve, sectarian critiques. To do critical praxes, those who are skilled at transgressing worldviews will fairly state which dominant worldview they believe, hold or even disagree, and which other aspects of other worldviews are embraced and rejected.

If I were to teach English for a group of rural students intending to work in tourist-related industries (e.g., becoming tourist guides, bellboys, front-desk staff, or even hotel managers), I would say at the very beginning that some Christian perspectives would influence my teaching. It would be critical that these students have Christian (or general) work ethos in their future jobs: obeying and respecting their employers or supervisors (to some extent), “walking another mile” (i.e., pursuing the spirit of excellence) when others are pleased to work as commanded, avoiding themselves from corruption in its broadest sense of the word, etc. I would not agree, however, with those employers such as hotel owners who claim to be Christians or religious and yet they oppress their employees by not giving them decent salaries or prohibiting them to worship in certain days (especially on Sundays). To anticipate this, I would incorporate some simulations of legal advocacy both in Indonesian and in English for my students so they would not be fatalistic in regarding their being oppressed as simply “following God’s will”. I understand that in a way “[i]t is good for me that I have been afflicted [or oppressed], [t]hat I may learn [God’s] statutes” (Psalms 119:71, NKJV), such as how to be more patient and reliant upon God in time of difficulties. Nonetheless, there are some humanistic ways in which Christians may also be critical and stand up for justice, like St. Paul who could use his advocacy (and apologetic) skills to defend himself before Felix (a governor; see Acts 24:10-21), to appeal to Caesar (see Acts 25), and to stand before King Agrippa (Acts 25:13-27), among others. Moreover, although I do not agree with the atheistic values in both the humanist and utopianist worldviews, socialism in these worldviews (see Noebel’s list above again) is not to be discarded as
it is “a political ideology… which aims for societies in which poverty is eliminated, market forces are not the sole means of the distribution of economic wealth, and where the human ideals of cooperation and altruistic behavior develop” (Jary & Jary, 2000, p. 567). Finally, as this paragraph is still under the critique toward liberal-humanism that puts an emphasis on self-actualization, I would remind my students of a much greater being than a self, i.e., the Divine Being, whom they have to revere in all aspects of their lives. Self-actualization may only be what is seen at the surface by other people but more importantly it should be the actualization of the Divine Being through an individual’s self that can be felt by and have impact on other people – a self who is not oppressive, whose love emanates in whatever communities the self belongs to.  

Unlike rural children who decide to find jobs in big cities, inside or outside of Indonesia, there are (probably) some children who are determined to stay in their own community. Concerning this, I am very much indebted to Butet Manurung (2007), an anthropologist whose educational insights through her praxes with Orang Rimba (henceforth OR, or literally “jungle people”) in the Bukit Dua Belas jungle, Jambi, Sumatera are superbly inspiring and thus worth citing at length here. First, it is interesting to note how Butet was entertained by clashes of worldviews. The following is an excerpt of the typical questions asked by journalists from cities to OR:

“Umur kamu berapa?” (Padahal OR tidak punya konsep menghitung umur)

“Orang tua kamu kerja apa?” (Semua OR pekerjaannya sama, berburu dan berladang. Itu pun kalau bisa disebut pekerjaan oleh orang luar)

34 “What if your students are not Christians, Joseph?” people may ask. I certainly do not agree with ruthless proselytization. I may not even have to state what my religion is to my students. More important are my transgressing worldviews, with Christianity as my central point, though it does not have to be known – and yet I let readers here know anyway. Some basic Christian values are presumably universal, not religion-specific. As the apostle Paul puts it in Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV): “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law (emphases added). When the ninefold fruit of the Spirit is viewed from Freire’s (1990) perspective, it can be asserted that absent from the ninefold fruit is oppression. In fact, oppression is to be removed by this fruit of the Spirit, and there is no humanistic law against it.
“Cita-cita kamu apa?” (OR balik bertanya, “Apa itu cita-cita? Untuk apa ada cita-cita?”)

“Kelas berapa?” (OR bingung, Wartawan juga bingung, sekolah apa yang tidak ada kelasnya)

“Sampai kapan mau tinggal di rimba?” (Lagi-lagi OR bingung)

“Tidak kepingin tinggal di kota?” (OR tambah bingung dan kesal).

“Masuk Islam, atau Kristen?” (OR tersinggung sambil menjawab, “Kami juga punya agama!”)

[“How old are you?” In fact, OR do not have the concept of counting ages; “What do your parents do for a living?” All OR have similar jobs: hunting and opening fields; if they are at all considered jobs by outsiders; “What are your dreams?” OR replied, “What on earth are dreams? What are they for?”; “What grade are you in?” OR were confused. Journalists were also confused as to what school had no grades; “For how many more years will you stay in the jungle?” Again, OR were confused; “Don’t you want to live in a city?” OR were even more confused and annoyed; “Do you become a Muslim, or a Christian?” Offended, OR answered, “We also have our own religion!”] (pp. 194-195)

The above re-animated dialogues reflect the clashes of people’s worldviews. On the one hand, the journalists might have been trained with the Western tradition of schooling that takes for granted the (1) quantification of age, (2) the commodification of profession, dreams (visions), and schooling, (3) the allure of a capitalistic way of life in urban societies and (4) the essentialization of spiritual beliefs into formal religions such as Islam or Christianity – all of which have nothing to do with non-Western, OR-specific worldview. This also extends our attention to include more worldviews other than the four dominant ones in the Western world as outlined by Noebel. Theoretically, a certain worldview acts as a parameter by which critical values are made sense of and practiced by a community of people having the
same worldview. Here, the liberal-humanist-orientated journalists who were interested in the exotic educational phenomena in the jungle have some critical questions that are not relevant to critical responses of the OR. Recall that in chapter 2 I agree with the notion “Critical Pedagogies”. If we were to introduce CPs to our students, therefore, we need to see where (from which worldview) they are coming from (i.e., “intersubjectivity”). The very plurality of CPs makes it possible for educators to understand their own worldview(s) and those of learning participants they are willing to empower. The empowerment may not necessarily be driven or imposed by the educators’ worldview(s) but it may derive from the learning participants’ critical praxes inspired by their own worldview(s). To put it in another way, some of the basic tenets of being critical (e.g., waging war against poverty and domestic violence through education) may be the same across worldviews but the ways praxes are to be critically implemented are contingent upon which worldview(s) a community of learners chooses to embrace, with that/those of the educators being not automatically “better” or “more correct” than that/those of the learners being empowered.

Second, Butet Manurung (2007) has been dreaming about how to help OR educate themselves so they will not rely on outsiders’ claimed “assistance” that only denigrates them eventually. As she puts it:

“Sebenarnya aku turut berterima kasih dengan perjuangan yang gigih menyusun kampanye demi kelestarian hutan (yang bisa juga demi OR). Membawa OR ke sana ke mari menemui pihak yang diharapkan berpengaruh dalam mendukung kebijakan atas Bukit Dua Belas. Atau membawa media massa untuk meliput kehidupan OR. Walaupun jadinya kayak sinetron. Tapi aku juga sering gemas bila ikut dalam pertemuan OR dengan orang dari dunia luar. Katanya sih, OR perlu difasilitasi selama pertemuan...”

35 The notion of intersubjectivity implies the degree to which a language teacher is able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of a certain grammatical point and to be aware of his/her students’ thought processes that account for their confusion on that grammatical point (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, p. 45). Intersubjectivity suggests two subjects at work: the foreign language teacher (who is supposed to be knowledgeable about grammar and his/her students’ grammar) and the students (whose foreign language grammar, as reflected in their questions to the teacher or in a written form, is still evolving). More precisely, intersubjectivity requires the teacher to see “where a student is coming from” or to “[establish] just what it is that the student is trying to express, and why” and then “supply an acceptable linguistic formulation” to be noticed by the student (pp. 76, 132).

Aku membayangkan kalau OR secara keseluruhan bisa berdiri mewakili diri serta menyuarakan kebutuhan dan kepentingan mereka sendiri. Tidak lagi menggunakan pihak lain di luar mereka sebagai perantara persentuhan mereka dengan dunia luar. Tidak seperti yang aku lihat di forum yang aku hadiri, saat aku melihat OR digambarkan seolah-olah tidakpunya kekuatan untuk memosisikan diri mereka sendiri. Apalagi untuk menyuarakan kepentingan dan kebutuhan mereka.

… Keinginanku yang lain adalah melihat OR bisa mengambil sikap dan pilihan-pilihan mereka sendiri saat menghadapi arus tekanan dari dunia luar.

[Actually I am also grateful to those who, with persevering spirit of struggle, set up campaign to preserve the forest (which may also for the sake of OR). They brought OR back and forth to meet parties who were expected to be influential in supporting policies for Bukit Dua Belas. Some others invited mass media to cover the life of OR, although the coverage ended up being like a soap opera. But I was often irritated when I attended meetings between OR and outsiders. It was said that OR needed to be facilitated during such meetings. But in practice, facilitation means becoming interpreters. Outsiders interpreted to Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia), and then the Indonesian language was interpreted by the so-called “facilitators” to the Rimba language. And then OR’s answers were interpreted to Bahasa Indonesia again. It was always like that. In my opinion, OR hence looked dumb. In such a situation, communications must not have been effective. Or,
even worse, those “facilitators” oftentimes became spokespersons, chattering bla...bla...bla...on behalf of Orang Rimba. No sooner had these “facilitators” spoken, than they asked OR, asking for an agreement, “Mumpa iyoy, au Bepak?” (Is that so, Sir?).

I imagine that when OR on the whole can stand, representing their own people, and voice their own needs and interests. They will no longer use other parties outside of their community to become their mediators to the outside world. This is unlike what I saw in the forum I attended, in which OR appeared as if they had been powerless to position them themselves, let alone to voice their needs and interests…. I also wish that OR could show their stance and their own options when encountering pressures of the outside world] (pp. 195-196)

Probably the facilitators from outside of OR community were humanists. Hoisting the flag of environmentalists who are in favor of forest preservation, some (I believe not all) facilitators were deeply concerned with the “poverty” of OR as they looked to have a “primitive” life and did not appear to have “proper” education, clothing, housing, and way of life from their urban standard of living. The OR way of life, in other words, might have been deemed “exotic” by these urban, naïve humanists. With regard to self-actualization, journalists and those facilitators had actualized themselves by acting, I am afraid, as if they had paid more attention to these “poor” people. These humanists ended up being narcissistic for their self-actualization and yet they did not really empower OR to voice their own needs and interests, first in their own language, and later in foreign languages (Indonesian and English – only after OR agreed to learn these languages), instead of looking dumb in forums of mediation. Critical educators who particularly happen to be language teachers may, I imagine, create the needs for OR to think that learning languages other than their own can help them resist oppressive pressures of the outside world. In so doing, these educators are still humanistic and yet they go beyond the naïve humanism which only exposed its adherents’ narcissism and not empowering those “primitive” people they claim to assist.
Butet Manurung (2007) has again proved herself to transcend what I called as naïve humanism since she helped OR resist oppressive pressures of the outside world. Let me quote her experience again:


[Talking about taking a stance in encountering pressures from the outside world, I remember one idea that originated from Rimba children. The idea was to form a troop that protects the forest… They thought that by becoming soldiers, they could drive wood looters in the jungle away. They said, forest cops (police) would rather be replaced by them. We then discussed this “project” enthusiastically. Yes, it is more appropriate for them to be the guards of forest because they could be disguised as ordinary OR. The thief must not have been suspicious to these OR because they were considered ignorant. In fact, they could write so they could record: who did the illegal logging, where it was done, how many people were involved, what kind of wood was stolen, and where the wood was sold.] (pp. 196-197)

Looking ahead to the future, Butet has also optimistically thought about what OR possibly do despite current obstacles:

Banyak juga dari mereka yang menyatakan ingin menceritakan tentang perkembangan hutan ke dunia luar. Beberapa dari
mereka juga ingin menuliskan pikiran mereka tentang hutan dan memasukkan tulisannya ke koran. Tapi mereka belum bisa menulis artikel seperti yang diminta oleh koran. Belum lagi semua koran ternyata meminta penulisnya untuk mengirimkan KTP, atau nomor rekening. Mereka jadi kecewa. Jadi kupikir mungkin mereka juga perlu pengetahuan media. Mereka butuh keahlian untuk menuangkan ide ke dalam bentuk artikel...

Atau juga seni? Walaupun orang luar sering bilang OR tidak punya nilai seni, aku berpikir mereka tetap perlu penyaluran untuk mengekspresikan perasaan dan pikiran mereka lewat seni. Mereka bisa bermain dengan media yang ada, misalnya kayu untuk patung, atau gambar. Bisa juga dengan tanah liat. Atau apa saja yang sederhana dan ada di sekitar mereka. Hmm… kayaknya aku butuh bantuan orang yang bisa mengajarkan seni deh...

[Many of OR who expressed their desire to tell about the forest to the outside world. Some of them wanted to write their thoughts about the forest and put their writings in newspaper articles. But they still could not write an article as required by newspapers, not to mention the fact that all newspapers turned out to ask their columnists to send their residence identification card, or account numbers. They got disappointed. So I think maybe they also need some knowledge about media. They need some expertise to pour out their ideas in the form of newspaper articles...

Or art also? Although outsiders often say that OR do not have a sense of art, I think they also need some outlets to express their feelings and thoughts through arts. They can play with existing media, such as wood for making statues, or pictures. Or with clay. Or anything modest that is available around them. Hmm… I think I need help from people who can teach art…] (pp. 201-202)

It is no exaggeration that Butet is one of the Indonesian pioneers in Critical Pedagogy who is not simply good at theorizing the notion of liberating education; in fact, she is a practitioner who has immersed herself as an ethnographer, an anthropolog, an educator, a comrade to OR, and most importantly as a human being whose conscience is devoted to removing oppression in the forest where OR live.
Still lacking in Manurung and other humanistic-centered worldview I reviewed thus far, nonetheless, is how spirituality plays a central role in being critical. Not that Butet has no religious beliefs herself, but she, as far as her published *Sokola Rimba* is concerned, has chosen not to disclose her religious identity, maybe on the grounds that she may not have wanted to be considered religiously exclusive and thus not inclusive of (more) humanistic education that aims at liberating people regardless of their religion. Her socialist, humanistic standpoint has overlooked worldviews that use spirituality as a critical tool for human liberation.

Spiritual issues are addressed in New Age and Christianity worldviews, which will be discussed below, and yet please bear in mind that devotees of both worldviews may be trapped in naïve (uncritical) sectarianism when they get bogged down in internal conflicts regarding different interpretations of either New Age or Christian doctrines and forget to ameliorate humanity humanistically and spiritually.

### 8.2.3 New Age

New Age as a newly developed worldview in the Western world began as a critique of humanism which “failed because it taught that humanity is finite and thus has limits to what it can accomplish” (Anderson, Zuehlke, & Zuehlke, 2000, p. 33). Believing that everyone can be God, only after he or she actualizes his/her deity, New Age defenders have faith in achieving everything they “dare to believe” (p. 33). Some humanists may not agree as they believe in infinite self-actualization without having to be “a god”. As I argued above, however, humanism is also a religion with someone’s self as the god. The main difference, therefore, lays in the methods of actualizing the god-self. In humanism, the primary source of power is rationalistic thinking which establishes facts and theories based on scientific, logical evidence that can be observed and perceived by senses (sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing) and common sense. The New Age, on the other hand, uses meditation, astrology, crystals, mantras, and other spirit guides as its major methods. The fact is that “New Age” is not at all new as it bears its resemblance to the Eastern mysticism, which includes some sort of spiritualism that has been practiced in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.
The current CPs may not have anything to do with this worldview as they are more utopianist and/or humanist. The question is whether people adhering to the New Age principles can be critical educators. To me, they can as each worldview has its own critical tools to evaluate values in other worldviews, just like New Age critics who problematize the finiteness of humanism for its denial of the existence of spiritual beings or of the belief that human beings are spiritual beings. In a postmodern world in which truths are deemed contingent upon who believe and view them, it is fine, I suppose, for someone not to believe in the principles of other worldviews, but it is absurd to say that people coming from other worldviews cannot be critical. It is absurd, therefore, for pure humanists, for example, to regard New Age (and other religious) people are “illogical” and hence “not able to be critical.”

The principles of religiously affiliated worldviews and humanists may be incomensurable and yet imposing that humanistic rationality is more superior than spiritual logic is the very absurdity that New Age defenders (and Christians alike) can attack those whose regime of truth is solely based on non-spiritual rationality.

By assuming that both New Age and Christianity bring with them spiritual baggage in their belief (and critical) system, let me show an example of critiquing the New Age movement from the Christian worldview which was superbly executed by the apostle Paul in the New Testament. As far as I know, Paul was not a monolingual as he spoke Hebrew and Greek (at least, for he was also a Roman citizen). His expository and argumentative discourse as recorded in the book of Acts and his epistles, in particular, reflect his philosophizing style typically produced by Greek scholars. As a Jewish converted to a Christian, his Greek-influenced discourse proved to be effective to share the Gospel to the non-Jewish (“gentiles”). By effective I mean that some Greeks attended to his voice. Concerning this, I am greatly indebted to Pastor Satrio Sambodo (2009) whose exegesis on Acts 17:16-34 helps me understand how Paul’s critical discourse may also be directed towards the present New Age followers.36

36 Sambodo (personal communication, 20 March 2009) suggested that I also consulted a more thorough interpretation of this passage from a theological book. Finally I found a similar interpretation in Brink (1967, pp. 277-286).
To begin with, Sambodo (2009) suggests that Paul was not “allergic” to the world[ly] culture as he did not show a puritan-like mentality which limits someone to have contacts with “immoral” people and their cultures. This is based on his personal principle:

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law… I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. (1 Corinthians 9:20-23, NIV)

With this in mind, he observed – ethnographically, I submit – whatever was considered “immoral” by his Christian principles before he critiqued Athenian people in a superb manner. Paul’s first observation was in Acts 17 verse 16 “While Paul was waiting for [Silas and Timothy] in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see the city was full of idols” (NIV). The word “Athens” itself represents the goddess of wisdom.

The targets of Paul’s action (ministry) in Athens after he observed it were its leaders (Sambodo, 2009):

So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbler trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. (Acts 17:17-18, NIV)

Regarding Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, Sambodo comments:

Orang-orang Epikuros percaya pada banyak tuhan. Setelah penciptaan dunia, allah-allah ini tidak tertarik dengan urusan manusia dan tidak membutuhkan apapun dari manusia! …

Golongan EPIKUROS dan STOA adalah para pemikir yang kompleks. Mereka tidak setuju dengan iman Paulus .... Tetapi mereka sangat terkesan dengan cara Paulus membawa dirinya sehingga mereka mengundang dia ke AREOPAGUS.

[Epicurean philosophers believed in many gods (pantheism). After creating the world, these gods were not interested anymore with humans’ matters and did not need anything from humans! ... Stoic philosophers were very similar to the New Age in the 21st century. They believed that God is the source of life, and can be found in anything. Particularly, God is actually inside of human’s heart. Core to this belief is eventually that human is the lord for him- or herself. Epicurean and Stoic groups are complex thinkers. They did not believe in Paul’s faith.... But they were really impressed with Paul’s manner so they invited him to speak to a meeting of the Areopagus.] (p. 5)

For Sambodo, Areopagus is like a parliament house of a city where cutting-edge thoughts are presented. As Acts 17:21 witnesses: “All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking and listening to the latest ideas” (NIV). Talking in Areopagus was therefore very strategic for Paul to share the Gospel and release the influence of God’s kingdom to the city of Athens whose citizens were fond of pampering their ears with any kinds of philosophies: “You [Paul] are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean” (Acts 17:20, NIV). And Paul started his discourse by sounding as if he praised his listeners, who worshiped idols, for their spiritual hunger:
Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an alter with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. (Acts 17:22-23, NIV)

By so doing, Sambodo contends:

Paulus masuk ke dalam budaya Athena dan menemukan ‘entry point’ (titik masuk) dimana [sic] ia bisa mengkomunikasikan imannya kepada mereka. Kemudian menjelaskan tentang Allah yang benar dengan konteks budaya yang mereka pahami… Paulus menunjukkan pengetahuan yang dia miliki tentang BUDAYA POP Athena.
[Paul entered into the Athens culture and found an ‘entry point’ where he could communicate his faith to the Athenians, and then explain about the true God by way of the cultural context they understood. Paul displayed his knowledge on the Athens’ pop culture] (p. 7)

There are two proofs as to how St. Paul was knowledgeable about the pop culture of Athenians whose pantheistic belief resembles that of the present New Age. First, Paul quoted the words in a poem entitled “Cretica” written by Epimenides (600 B.C.), a Cretan poet: “For in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28, NIV). This quote was used by Paul to justify his argument that the “unknown god” in one of the Athenians’ idols should have referred to the Lord Jesus Christ he worshiped, which, at the same time, should not have been idolized in the form of a statue. Paul knew that Athenian people were afraid of natural phenomena like lightning and rain and other powerful beings so they made idols to appease these beings and name them gods or goddess of such and such, including the “unknown god” whose name or identity was yet to be recognized. For these people, they would have rather made a statue of an “unknown god” than wait until the unidentified god was angry with them. Paul noticed this gap in these
people’s religious belief and attempted to fill in the gap critically by introducing God Almighty who could not be reduced into a statue. As he says:

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else…” (Acts 17:24-25, NIV)

Second, Paul also quoted the sentence “we are his offspring” from Phaenomena which was written by Aratus (270 B.C.), a Greek poet from Soli in Cilicia (see Aratus, 2009). This became his starting point to advocate his belief that “since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone – an image made by man’s design and skill” (Acts 17:29, NIV). In fact, New Age worldview believes that “[a] rock is God, an ant is God, a person is God, and the earth is God” (Anderson, Zuehlke, & Zuehlke, 2000, p. 32), all of which are reminiscent of the ancient Greek mythology during Paul’s era, and were attacked by his apologetics. Sambodo (2009) goes on that despite Paul’s disagreement with the pantheistic beliefs and philosophies of the two poets, Paul found it fine to quote their words which were not contrary to, or even support, God’s word.

If the Christian worldview as a parameter is set as a critical tool for viewing the world, then a Christian critical educator like Paul will view oppressive realities as having been created by Satan and his followers, both his dark angels and humans, who plant seeds of sinful thoughts, motives, and behaviors. One of such realities is dependence upon idols apart from God himself. From this Christian parameter, New Age is wrong.

To avoid naïve sectarianism, however, Christian critical educators must learn from Paul who used his intertextual virtuosity to find an entry point through which his beliefs could be listened to at risk of being rejected (e.g., some of Paul’s listeners “sneered” after they heard about “the resurrection of the dead”, as recorded in Acts 17:32, NIV) and yet Paul could reap some success as “[a] few men became followers of Paul and believed” (verse 34, NIV).
More broadly, being CPs-inspired foreign language teachers is all about expressing their own credos of pedagogy. Such credos not only consist of what teaching approaches (like communicative language teaching or task-based language teaching) are held, but also whatever they are being communicated and assigned to students: religious (dis)beliefs, philosophies, economics, biology, politics, psychology, ethics – in short, worldviews, with theology usually becoming a sticking point and thus avoided.

Eventually, all educators will end (or have ended) up sectarians, depending on their dominant or held worldview. What make them different as sectarians are their degrees of naivety. At the most extreme naïve end of a naïve-versus-aware continuum, so to speak, are those who presume to be “scientifically objective” (e.g., some humanists and utopianists). Conversely, to me, the most aware critical educators are those who know where they are coming from and humbly admit their own limitations as human beings so they need help from one (or more) divine being. But the question is which divine being: Are they the things, people, and spiritual creatures being made divine (as in New Age), or a belief in only one God (as in Christianity or Islam)? I have shown my adherence to Christian monotheism here, backed up by Paul’s apologetics.

However, Christianity is not simply about monotheism. It is interlaced with some humanistic issues such as democracy and marriage. The question then becomes what kinds of Christian interpretations can be said to be critical. To this end I will devote the next section.

8.2.4 Christianity

Many critical educators stem their values from a true democracy (e.g., Giroux, 1983; Lin, 2004; McLaren, 2001; Shohamy, 2004, to name but a few). I also share some agreement with the notion of democracy. It is important though that we need to address a knotty issue of fundamentalism first. For religious fundamentalists in some religions, Christianity included, theocracy37 takes more precedence over secular democracy. As I have mentioned earlier in chapter 2 (section

37 That is, “a social system or state controlled by religious leaders” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2001).
2.8.3 above), however, I do not want to be trapped in rigid Christian fundamentalism, which is inherently sectarian. I may be a fanatic for my own religious belief, but I try my best not to impose my fanaticism on other people – Christians or non-Christians alike. Therefore, although I view the world from my version of Christian understanding, I also attempt to discuss it critically through more secular notions such as democracy.

Some Christian values cherish democratic principles (e.g., the command to respect governments or human authorities and pray for them, as in Romans 13), although some other teachings may not seem so democratic at first glance. For instance, some people may think that Christianity is a gender-biased religion. Paul in Ephesians 5:22-24 commands: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church... Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything” (NKJV, italics original). A similar instruction is also echoed by Paul to the Colossians (chapter 3 verse 18) and by the Apostle Peter (1 Peter 3:1, 5). However, Paul does not stop there. In Ephesians 5:25 he says: “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church...” (NKJV). Husbands’ authority to which wives are to submit is not without limit as husbands are under the Lord’s authority as the head of the church. As long as husbands are submissive to God, they will not abuse their authority by oppressing their wives; instead, they will love their wives. It is nonsense for men, in my opinion, to claim that they submit to God if they abuse their wives verbally and physically. Concerning wives, the order to “submit to... husbands in everything” indeed sounds gender-biased. It does not suggest, however, that the whole Christianity is. Some may argue that Paul is not God and hence his command, no matter how authoritative it is, is still subject to the Lord’s or His people’s gender-friendly views. It is true that following human’s fall in the garden of Eden, God cursed Eve: “Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you” (Genesis 3:16, NKJV).

During his three-year ministry on earth, however, Jesus had never explicitly stated (or re-emphasized the curse) that wives had to submit to their husbands in everything. More obvious was Jesus’ voices
against patriarchal domination. Consider the account of an adulteress being caught red-handed in her very action. Jesus did not punish her but forgive her instead. Besides that, He made all the male scribes and Pharisees convicted by their conscience that they were all sinners (John 8:1-11). Consider also the story of Jesus’ life-transforming conversation with the Samaritan woman who had five “husbands.” Jesus took the risk of “losing” His face as a noble Jewish who should have avoided Himself from an adulterous Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42). Moreover, Jesus addressed the issue of adultery in a way that surpassed the understanding of the issue at the time. For example:

[27] “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’

[28] “But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart…”

(Matthew 5:27-28, NKJV, italics original)

It is very likely that women can also commit adultery by looking at men lustfully. However, Jesus was talking to the patriarchal society of Israel that marginalized women (especially the adulterous ones) and had a mindset which regarded adultery as simply the action of mingling with or having sexual intercourse with another person not his/her spouse. These exemplify the very democratic principle that Jesus disseminated and framed within His theocratic sovereignty (or “kingdom”, in the Christian terminology): men and women are equal; both genders are capable of committing sins and have the same opportunity to experience the grace of God’s forgiveness and better lives.

Let me now address how gender-friendly/ier view was implied in another biblical text concerning husband-and-wife relations. Even though Peter initially says in a gender-biased tone – “Wives... be submissive to your own husbands...”, the remaining clause potentially shows wives’ leadership role: “so that, if any of them [husbands] do not believe the word [of God], they [husbands] may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives” (1 Peter 3:1-2, NIV). The wives’ leadership is
not shown by over-reactive response toward the husbands’ disbelief in or disobedience to God’s word, but by their seemingly silent posture. Allow me to resort to my earlier contention of “transgressing the transgressive movement.” The wives’ action is a transgressive silence; that is, it is accompanied by their behavior that transgresses their own intuitive desire to be burnt in an uncontrollable anger by showing their “purity and reference of … lives” to their husbands instead. By transgressing the impulse to be mad at or hold a harsh demonstration to their husbands, wives break the logic of violence. This is a Christ-like value: Jesus did not retaliate those who tortured and crucified Him, and yet He prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34, NKJV); Mahatma Gandhi launched his Jesus-inspired silent revolution; and Paulo Freire (1990) reminds us that “… the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity… become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather of the humanity of both” (p. 28). Wives are usually the oppressed, particularly when their husbands do not submit to God. However, the apostle Peter shows us one strategy for wives to solve this oppression, i.e., by leading the wives themselves to demonstrate a godly life that may in turn lead their husbands to repentance.

Nonetheless, my personal interpretation of Peter’s words is still incomplete, in light of my personal feminist reading. If Peter urges wives to be silent, I challenge husbands to practice the same “transgressive silence” if they think that they are oppressed by their wives. The husbands can (and must) also show “purity and reverence of their lives” if they want to win over their wives. Still, the world is not always as ideal as this advice offers. Cases abound when husbands are severely abusive, and simply praying like Jesus did to those who crucified Him (i.e., using transgressive silence) has a time limit. The following case recorded by three Christian psychologists, Anderson, Zuehlke, and Zuehlke (2000) is worth quoting at length because it captures how Christianity also addresses domestic violence:

... Even after a number of therapy sessions, [a] husband continued to be verbally and physically abusive... [His] wife contacted Terry and their pastor. Terry advised the mother and teen to file
charges, observing that abuse is not to be tolerated; the pastor, in contrast, only advised the mother and teen to “pray through it,” explaining, “God will deal with this in his own way.” This pastor did not understand the need for the family to set boundaries for their protection, nor did he sense the deterrent to abusive behavior that calling in the police provides. In fact, the pastor overlooked clear biblical teaching about the divinely established role of the state (Romans 13:1-5). Clearly not all pastors would respond in the same way, but if they do not grasp the totality of the problem, they could too easily apply Scripture in a superficial way. (pp. 75-76)

There are certainly more issues to be raised regarding Christianity (e.g., a debate over congregational [“traditional”] churches versus housechurches, as in Simson, 1998, among others). However, the most crucial point in relation to CPs is determining (and discerning) critically which interpretations of Christian teachings are inclusive of all people regardless of religions and are truly liberating. If some interpretations are naively perpetuating oppressive realities (recall the example of a pastor who suggested that a wife kept praying without taking legal actions), critical Christians and non-Christians alike are free to be skeptical.38 And when some interpretations of Jesus’ teachings (as I discussed above) are not gender-biased and liberating, they are, I submit, candidates to be more attended to by critical educators in general. Foreign language teachers will also benefit from Christianity within the spirit of CPs. Christian students can learn how to make devotions in a foreign language such as English that critique misinterpretations of biblical teachings that only marginalize some groups of people. If non-Christian students are broad-minded enough to suspend their harsh judgment to some villains claiming themselves as Christians, they can also learn Christian values whose good quality can be compared to their own religious beliefs.

38 I do not imply, however, that I will bother changing some Christians’ insistence on believing in the power of prayer.
8.2.5 Beyond Christianity

If foreign language teachers are to transcend their main concern only in using grammar-translation method (probably at worst) or, far (though possibly not always) better than that, in applying “communicative language teaching” approach, then they need to begin thinking about contents (themes) that are relevant or salient to learners’ religious or ethnical backgrounds, (non-)academic preferences, genders, struggles, hopes, etc.

Thus far my personal understanding on CPs is highly influenced by my Christian worldview. To prevent myself from the totalizing impact of my bias, I am aware of the fact that I need to attend to CPs that are inclusive of non-Christian spirituality. Readers may refer to Fredrick’s (2007) example of using novels with non-Western (and non-Christian) themes in a reading program. One of the novels used was Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*, with the two main characters being two Muslim boys growing up in Afghanistan. The complication of the story reached its peak when there was an ethnic tension incited by the Talibans. Although the novel was the most challenging, it spawned the richest discussions in the reading program for Tajik students. One of her students, Mohammad, wrote the following reflection:

> The story takes place in a neighbor country. Since it’s a neighbor country, I’m familiar with the situation there. So, I’ve the ground to say that the novel is real…The best thing I liked in these novels was that they were based on real events…there is something in common between some stages or moments of his life with my life. (pp. 25-26)

I will certainly need to collaborate with non-Christian (and yet critical) English language teachers if more inclusive CPs in foreign language education are to be brought into existence. The very issue to be raised is not oversimplistically whether Christianity is better than other religious beliefs. Rather, in its truest sense of the word “collaboration” is the inherent respect by foreign language educators toward each other to work together inside or outside of schools with the vision of transforming the world into a better one – which upholds
love and compassion (Freire, 1990, p. 29), combats injustice regarding race, class, gender, and religion (Giroux, 1983), mainly due to the spirit of capitalism that oppresses both the ruling- and working-class people to idolize material affluence at the expense of quality life with a sense of contented-ness\(^{39}\) – through praxes (integrated reflections and practices) in a foreign language being taught/learned, despite divergent spiritual views. If my beliefs in Christ (and Christian values) are plausibly put into action, then the impacts may be felt by both Christian and non-Christian language educators alike, without me having to formally proselytize them to be Christians.

8.3 Transcending (or transgressing) worldviews

Reconciling contesting worldviews is not an easy task. Each worldview – presuming that it is on the whole considered mutually exclusive, as in Noebel’s framework – has its own critical tools to view the world. Humanists criticize religiosity; Christians condemn atheism and other religious beliefs alike. If critical educators from various worldviews (especially religious backgrounds) are to work together with the commitment to empower disadvantaged groups of people, what common grounds are there to settle frequently insurmountable differences among them? I have implied earlier that I will stick to my Christian beliefs, either to a group of learners and educators who share similar Christian beliefs to those of mine or to non-Christians, hoping that the impacts of my Christian-inspired praxes will be felt by any learners and educators regardless of their spiritual beliefs. However, not all educators will agree with this. Hence, I will suggest that critical educators need to transcend (if not transgress) their own dominant worldview. Mine is Christianity and I have exemplified in 8.2.4 above how some Christian doctrines are subject to my critical reading as a Christian. In fact, to transgress one’s dominant worldview (henceforth transgressing or transcending worldviews) entails the art of eclecticism.

\(^{39}\) Again, this is an influence of my Christian worldview exemplified by Jesus and Paul. In Jesus’ model prayer, He said, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11, NKJV). Implicit in this sentence is to be contented with food (or, more broadly, wealth) that is divinely granted after someone works. Similarly, Paul witnessed: “… for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances” (Philippians 4:11, NIV). More radically, Paul warned us: “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil…” (1 Timothy 6:10, NIV). Put differently, the spirit of capitalism in our era is the culprit of many kinds of evil.
This art is twofold. First, it tries to find commonalities that are in the interest of humanity and at the same time fighting against any kinds of discriminations or marginalizations regarding class, race, gender, and worldviews. For example, if we look back to Table 8.1, the economics of both humanism and utopianism is socialist in nature. This is not to be abandoned by religious people who are deeply concerned with poverty and are motivated by love to cooperate with each other and develop “altruistic behavior” (Jary & Jary, 2000, p. 567).

Second, the art of eclecticism in transcending worldviews attempts to discover limitations of each aspect in a worldview and confront them to some possible strengths, which other aspects in other worldviews or the same worldview perceived from a new perspective, can provide. This means Noebel’s list of four dominant Western worldviews is not to be rigidly used for structuring (and limiting) individuals’ human agency (or, simply put, free will). As a person possessing a human agency, my critiques to respective worldviews (see sections 8.2.1 to 8.2.4) signify the process of my “ideological becoming”, that is, how I “develop [my] way of viewing the world, [and] system of ideas” (Freedman & Ball, 2004, p. 5), which is still subject to future personal and/or other people’s critiques. Along this ideological becoming process, I have cultivated intersubjectivity. I have not only made myself aware of my own dominant worldview but also learned where other people are coming from and how others’ worldviews (and the perspective of people having a similar worldview to mine) enrich my dominant worldview, or even transgress some aspects of this dominant worldview (e.g., justifying the action of filing charges by a wife who was physically abused by her husband instead of simply praying through it; see section 8.2.4 above).

Human agency also has the capacity of transforming a human being and his/her companions in a community from being trapped in an oppressive-and-oppressed duality to becoming liberators (Freire, 1990; Giroux, 1983). Liberators according to whom and for who? According to those committed to transgressive deliberations of worldviews; that is, those who dare to move beyond the compartmentalizing shackles of “given” worldviews (such as those which are pre-determined structurally by Noebel). Not until these deliberations through dialogues
by members of prospective liberators that humans can liberate themselves and others. The process is certainly not a one-go activity because being a liberator always implies a sense of being in bondage such that eternal praxes will occur throughout a personal liberator’s life. There will always be times when liberators are trapped in ironies: a husband standing up for non-discriminatory gender relations, for example, but sluggishly sharing household chores with a pregnant wife raising two other kids at home. Hegelian dialectics that strives for synthesis or resolving an anti-thesis of a thesis – or, put more simply, reconciling an irony (i.e., the anti-thesis), as exemplified earlier, of a strong belief in non-discriminatory gender relations (i.e., thesis) – is possibly actualized only after ironies (or the belief vis-à-vis the actions that are against the belief) are identified.

Furthermore, transcending worldviews is paramount because people cannot avoid themselves from being “value-free” or “worldview-free”. Even a critical educator like Butet Manurung (2007) may not be aware of this “value-free” fallacy.

Aku merasa berkewajiban untuk menjelaskan setiap pilihan yang dihadapi OR secara fair, tanpa agenda apa-apanya. Karena aku bukan agen atau antek dari ideologi apapun. Agendanya tidak ada, selain kemandirian OR itu sendiri dan kebahagiaan versi mereka. [I feel obliged to explain every choice encountered by OR fairly, without any agenda. Because I am not an agent or devotee of any ideology. There is no agenda apart from cultivating OR’s own independence and happiness] (p. 190)

While it is desirable that Manurung felt obliged to explain every choice to Orang Rimba (OR), her claim that she is not an agent or a devotee of any ideology (thus worldview) can be misleading. She appeared humanist and her hidden agenda seemed to expel non-humanist religions (Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, etc.), among others, on the grounds that these external religions have nothing to do with OR’s happiness whatsoever. If she argued for explaining every choice to OR, she should let these OR be exposed to external religions. Her role as a transgressive educator in light of my personal view, if she at all had
realized it, could have been that of a partner to OR who examines the (ir)relevance of external religions to OR’s own religion. Only after she does this stage, at least, can she be said to completely cultivate OR’s own independence and happiness.

Critical foreign language teachers are worldview mediators. Each of them is an agent or a devotee of a dominant worldview. To nurture intersubjectivity, they need to understand the “grammars” – or Discourses, in Gee’s (2005) formulation – of each worldview other than his or her own dominant worldview. If he or she is able to mediate his or her own dominant worldview with other worldviews or other perspectives within his or her own worldview, he or she can transcend and even transgress himself or herself. Put in another way, understanding worldviews enables teachers to be self-critical or to problematize their own understanding and actions at the present time that are inspired by their dominant worldview. If they can do this problematization as a personal endeavor during their educational journey, it can be hoped that they will impart doing praxes as a way of life to their students and less- or non-transgressive educators.

Being transgressive or critical, however, does not mean to be happy being “tossed to and fro” by faddish waves of “new” philosophies. If a critical educator happens to be a Christian, for example, his or her yardstick should be principled by his or her belief in the infallibility of biblical principles and the capacity of human beings to have communication with God through prayers. This yardstick has certainly been “critically” attacked by pure humanists and utopianists who cast doubt on the reliability of humans as vessels to contain divine prophesies, among others. Nonetheless, just as realists whose epistemological and ontological principles dictate that there is “a truth out there” – or there is God as the Truth in heaven, Christian people can defend their faith by arguing that “the eye of faith” is their critical tool to transgress and transcend their own limited human logic. In fact, paradoxically, with the eye of faith, life can make sense (cf. the logic of Jesus’ parables, which have to be seen with such an eye of faith, as elucidated by Ramsey, 1965, p. 12ff). Furthermore, supposing that there were only very few grains of truth in the Bible, not believing it altogether would have been like throwing out a baby with the bath water – an
absolutely uncritical stance atheistic humanists and utopianists can be trapped into.

To avoid (again) my sectarian view of Christianity from “poisoning” readers’ free minds, however, I open up possibilities for anyone claiming to be interested in and devotees of CPs to have freedom as to being “tossed to and fro” by whatever critical praxes from whatever worldviews they prefer to embrace or juggle. I speculate that at the end someone’s praxes may be crystallized into a relatively constant, personalized worldview nonetheless, which may not transgress his or her but always be critical toward those not coming from his or her own personalized worldview. Put simply, humanist and utopianist critical educators will remain atheistic or at least – if at all they have personal religions – reluctant to engage themselves in spirituality as a means of educating transgressively. Freire, Gee, and Pennycook, inter alia, may belong to this category. On the other hand, spiritually based critical educators will stay spiritual (not atheistic) and find it unthinkable to exclude spirituality if they want to transcend human limitations. Scholars such as Anderson and the Zuehlkes (2000) are Christian psychologists who do not explicitly label themselves as critical educators and yet their attempts to integrate theology and psychology have tremendously critiqued the common belief that secularism and religiosity are mutually exclusive. For them, “[t]he Bible does not teach a separation between the natural and spiritual worlds” (p. 49). In other words, the secular-versus-religious divide should have collapsed. As they further argue:

…the Bible teaches that the unseen world is just as real, or even more real, than the seen world. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:18, “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” This truth is why we are instructed to “live by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). (p. 49)

These suggest Anderson et al. are no less critical educators who happen to focus on Christian, psychological counseling.
If foreign language teachers would like to educate their learners transgressively, they need to know first their positions: non-spiritualistic (humanistic or utopianistic) or spiritually based. Educators in each position will inevitably argue that theirs is the “best”. However, as non- (or at least less-)sectarian educators who are committed to CPs, collaborations of educators from these two positions are vital.

To simplify a bit, let me attend to a useful definition of collaboration: “… two or more individuals with complementary skills interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed… on their own” (Schrage, as cited in Fullan, 1993, p. 94). Even in collaboration, working individually is favorable because individual thoughts, intuition, and reflections are essential (Fullan, 1993). However, working in isolation should be avoided (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Fullan, 1993; Rogoff et al., 2001; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Regarding how to collaborate, DuFour and Eaker (1998) list that teachers can take part in reflective dialogues, observations of other teachers’ teaching lessons, developing curriculum and assessment together, carrying out new methods, sharing lesson plans and materials, etc. The worldviews (or, here, positions) might be conspicuously distinct from one group of teachers to another, and yet they can, supposedly, find some common grounds to do (Critical) Pedagogies, e.g., in teacher-teacher interactions to talk about what the learners seem to need, what teaching methods can be experimented with in class, or what assessment procedures can be used. In true collaborative interactions, however, some caveats on fake “collaborations” (or “contrived collegiality” [see Fullan, 1990, p. 15]) should also be avoided. For example, collaboration does not necessarily mean that everybody in a group must agree on something. Rather, diversity of contentions may lead a group to identify more challenges necessary for improvement, e.g., determining which teaching model(s), in view of Joyce, Weil, and Calhoun (2000), for instance, should be applied for a group of students. This is quite unlikely to happen when all members of a group impose a similar voice (Fullan, 1993). Uniform voice or contention, whether it be unanimously or predominantly imposed, may, in fact, perpetuate the status quo (Little, as cited in Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004).
Thus, transgressive CPs are not only a matter of actualizing the fullest potentials of worldview exploration and utilization, but also they transcend preoccupation with discussing worldviews. The discussions of CPs go back to what I partly addressed previously in this book, i.e., the non-exhaustive contents and pedagogical approaches (see chapters 4 and 5), and some alternative assessment procedures (see chapter 6) within classroom contexts and beyond (see chapter 7). The discussions should also have a future orientation, e.g., how teachers work in true collaborations despite coming from different worldviews. This specific issue has yet to be adequately addressed in this book.