Chapter 11
History in the Now: Asserting Indigenous Difference in "Top End" Higher Education Using Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Michele Willsher and Janine Oldfield

Introduction

Recent changes to curriculum and course design by schools and universities signal their agreement that the teaching of intercultural communication skills and cultural competencies is vital for a sustainable world future. The importance of being culturally competent has reached an international status, with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) including cultural competence in their Programme for International Student Assessment Global Competence Framework. However, a local and substantially earlier sign of its importance was made by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (established in 1987) when the Commission recommended a cultural competence approach to the training of professionals across Australia (UA, 2011, p. 6). It is generally understood that cultural competence requires not only awareness of one's own culture but an understanding of "others", as well as an understanding of how cultures interact (UA, 2011).

When teaching Indigenous students in the higher education system, one is cognizant that, at this point in time, Indigenous students remain marginalised by the lack of awareness of many non-Indigenous Australians about their culture and by a lack of inclusion (Krakouer, 2015). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are reportedly highly unrepresented in higher education comprising only 1.6% of the students out of a working age population of 2.7% (UA, 2011). Another study on Indigenous education (Gore, 2017) cites distrust of government institutions and social and racial isolation, where students feel "stranded in a racially bound social capital", as a key factor contributing towards prospective student non-attendance. Gore (2017) also asserts that once students enter university, retention rates are low as a consequence of a lack of cultural safety and support (Gore, 2017).

M. Willsher (✉) · J. Oldfield
Batchelor Institute, Batchelor, NT, Australia
e-mail: michele.willsher@batchelor.edu.au

Quite often, cultural competence and communication courses have revolved around the notion of cultural awareness and its link to the development of cultural intelligence and implications for creating cultural safe environments. Few such courses, however, address the direct relationship of racism on cultural safety or examine the social and historical colonial relations between Indigenous people and mainstream Australia and their impact on cross-cultural interactions (Smith-Maddox & Solorzano, 2002). Brown (2018, p. 2) notes that this is a consequence of the tendency for settler-colonial education systems to "dismiss" the "knowledge, stories and perspectives students carry with them into the classroom". This, Brown (2018) argues, is a consequence of the failure to critically engage with our past and "how it impacts both the present and the future" (Brown, 2018, p. 2). The result is continued educational disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Brown, 2018). This disengagement and lack of educational parity can be explained by the racial trauma inflicted upon Indigenous students as a consequence of their invisibility and the identity annihilation or death that occurs with Indigenous deficit construction and Indigenous identity devaluation—that is, the representation of Indigeneity as a problem and lack of identity validation (Oldfield & Jackson, 2019). The invisibility of Indigenous Australians in settler-colonial contexts, including educational contexts, and the continued deficit constructions and representations also ensure the population majority remains in a state of ignorance, racial pillorying and/or cultural incompetence (Oldfield & Jackson, 2019).

In league with Abrams and Moio (2009, p. 246), who noted the need to consider race as "a central mechanism of oppression" in order for social work students to achieve cultural competence, we argue that the incorporation of critical frameworks that deal with racial oppression, such as critical race theory (CRT), are essential to achieve a shift in focus, for course design that acknowledges the positioning of Indigenous people and develops a social justice and social reform agenda. The use of culturally responsive pedagogy that also incorporates the tenants of Freire (1972) in terms of Indigenous agency and liberation will also help to achieve this change and incorporate the aspirations of our Indigenous students. Apart from gains in cultural awareness and intelligence for students and/or academic skills, this will also achieve a more stable polity (May, 2008).

This chapter provides a personal, critical ethnographic reflection of the teaching practices involved in a cultural awareness course, at a tertiary institution and a university, both located in Northern Australia. It examines the need to embed such courses in the socio-historical context of Indigenous Australians so that all Australians have an opportunity for developing ethical intercultural understandings and subsequently to improve communication practices between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This chapter firstly describes our approach or methodology; it then outlines the current literature on CRT and culturally responsive pedagogy, in relation to education and tackling "racism" as an ideology that undermines educational equity and ethics. It then discusses the design of the cultural competence unit that is the subject of this paper, its deficiencies in terms of addressing issues of race and its inappropriateness for Indigenous students. Finally, it presents a case for shifting the unit focus to one located within the history of colonisation in Australia. In summary, this

chapter advocates for acknowledging the colonial past, addressing the neo-colonial present and collaboratively working towards a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Our Approach

In line with Freire's account of critical research and the involvement of educational research "subjects" as research partners in addition to the practice of "re-reading the world", this account draws from the two authors' lengthy experiences in First Nations education, living in remote Northern Territory communities; in addition to teaching First Nations students in higher education for more than a decade, our PhD and other research, and our exposure to the views of students and First Nations community residents (D'Olne Campos, 1990). That is, we have used our decades-long understanding and experiences in the field to create a critical ethnographic reflective account of our teaching practices, which involves the attempt to realise the critical pedagogical research and "problem-posing" approach of Freire that gives rise to generative themes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In terms of this approach, our philosophy was underpinned by critical literacy which acknowledges and examines the inherent ideologies in the context of Indigenous education and "recolonised" spaces—a context of increasingly repressive policy and reform that has resulted in the dissolution of self-determination as a legitimated and normalised ideological tenet in Indigenous policy (Fairclough, 2013). The "problem-posing" strategy that arose from this thereby centred on themes generated in discussions on repressive policy. This problem-posing strategy framed both our design of the cultural awareness unit and its delivery; the design entailed the application of critical frameworks and content that accommodated the positioning of our students, while the delivery involved using culturally appropriate pedagogy, and getting students to identify Australian cultural intelligence issues and problems and ways to solve them. The qualitative literature reviewed below represents an overview of the literature related to these two key areas of critical theory and pedagogy.

Critical Race Theory and Whiteness in Education

Critical race theory and "Whiteness" studies originated in legal disciplines in the United States of America (US) and arose from a critical legal studies movement that recognised hegemony—maintenance of state power through the consent of all groups—as the basis of privilege (Chadderton, 2012). The interplay of hegemony and race in CRT was used to explain how "White privilege" was embedded in property rights, which endowed and legitimised White power and control to both mask and "enshrine the status quo as a neutral baseline" (Harris, 1993, p. 1715). This explained the degree to which White privilege remained with the introduction of civil rights legislation (Chadderton, 2012). That is, CRT recognised race as a socially constructed

ideology that had material consequences (Pechenkina & Liu, 2018). As Pechenkina and Liu (2018, p. 2) note, CRT framed Whiteness as racial oppression which operates:

> simultaneously [as] a location of racial privilege; a standpoint from which to look at oneself, others and society; and a way of being in the world through taken-for-granted social practices.

Critical Race Theory soon traversed across a range of disciplinary areas. By 1995, CRT entered educational discourse with Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate's article, "Toward a critical race theory of education". This article addressed the perpetual racialisation of school experiences for children as being marginalising but also unrecognised and under-theorised (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Entwined in this text were the works of Du Bois (1903) on double consciousness, the divided self of oppressor and oppressed. This presaged the latter work of Said (1978) and Orientalism in terms of the perpetual construction of privileged "Self" and deficient "Other" that continues to taint the life experiences of First Nations students. Said provided productive fodder for the critique of racial oppression in colonial sites and contributed to settler-colonial works in nation-states such as Australia, where the coloniser never leaves but establishes territorial sovereignty through the material and symbolic violent oppression of Indigenous people (Veracini, 2010). These works included those of Veracini (2010) and Wolfe (2006) that have specific relevance to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders since they outlined the genealogy of the invisibility of Indigenous people as a product of settler-colonial territoriality.

In terms of the major contributions of CRT to education, Dixson and Rousseau (2005) have succinctly outlined these, noting that they have derived from both the legal fraternity as well as educational disciplines, and that all focused on the notion of property as underlining White privilege. Dixson and Rousseu (2005) claim that *voice*—the racist experiences, narratives and counter-stories and knowledge of the non-dominant as a legitimate way of knowing—is perhaps the most important element of CRT in relation to education. However, they warn this must be accompanied by the analytical power of CRT literature, as well as social activism and a transformative agenda (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005).

The next major contribution is an *expansive or outcomes-based view of equality* versus a *restrictive understanding*. That is, rather than perceiving equality as a process and failing to acknowledge the impact of contemporary "actual outcomes" and "present manifestations of past injustice", an expansive view of equality both acknowledges the current structural impediments to equality and recognises racism as an ideology that is socially constructed and operates through discourse, policy and practice to recreate and legitimise White domination (Crenshaw, 1988; Pechenkina & Liu, 2018). This is also in line with the works of Foucault on the naturalisation of assumptions and unconscious beliefs and the discoursal stratification of groups (Foucault, 1977). Dixson and Rousseau (2005) remark that an expansive view of equality construes the phenomenon of teacher "colour blindness", for instance, as a problem. This is a consequence of the fact that this perspective or ideology obscures the role of institutions and those within them in sustaining "hierarchies" and "racial power" as well as pathologising non-dominant students (Dixson & Roussaue, 2005:

14). This in turn leads to patterns of underachievement and a lack of reflection by teachers on their practices (Dixson & Roussaue, 2005).

The third major element of CRT is its *transformative agenda* and goal of changing conditions of racial oppression. In relation to this, according to Pechenkina and Liu (2018, p. 2), CRT "seeks to destabilize the hegemonic status of 'whiteness' by revealing the invisible, naturalised ways it manifests, while providing people of colour and their white allies with the tools to challenge white supremacy". Contemporaneously, racial oppression is recognised in the higher education sector not only through overt aggressions, such as racial slurs, but also through more covert racism including the invisibility of "non-Whites" in the classroom (Pechenkina & Liu, 2018). This can be manifested as non-White students being overlooked for teacher attention; subject content and curricula being constructed with normative White perspectives (that conform to a cohesive national ideal or social good); and the presentation of sanitised "power neutral" social realities and histories (Ahmed, 2007; Pechenkina & Liu, 2018, p. 3). While CRT is an expedient tool to "ferret out" instruments of racial oppression and White normativity, as Dixson and Roussaeau (2005) acknowledge, its ability to transform has been little developed in the field of education, beyond the issuance of recommendations. This failure of CRT can, however, be ameliorated through Indigenous pedagogies and approaches, such as culturally sustaining pedagogy.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Culturally responsive pedagogy is a student-centred, social constructivist approach that is inclusive, culturally safe and respectful of culture; integrates culture and language practices /knowledge into teaching strategies; and is transformative since it is based on a social justice agenda and the critical engagement of students (Daniel-Mayes, 2016; Oldfield & Willsher, 2017). In culturally responsive pedagogy, learning is negotiated, scaffolded and cooperative, involving culturally and contextually situated social interaction and symbolic communication (Oldfield & Willsher, 2017). Learning activities comprise "real world" problem solving and action learning tasks that are hands on and inquiry-based (Oldfield & Willsher, 2017). However, in Indigenous contexts, this pedagogy can be extended into what is known as *culturally sustaining pedagogy*. Culturally sustaining pedagogy entails Indigenous territorial reclamation of educational institutions through Indigenous control. McCarty and Lee (2014) argue that culturally sustaining pedagogy in US Indigenous contexts involves a number of rights not necessarily applicable to other groups such as:

> tribal sovereignty: the right of a people to self-government, self-education, and self-determination, including the right to linguistic and cultural expression according to local languages and norms. (McCarty & Lee, 2014, p. 101)

Although tribal sovereignty is not acknowledged in the Australian Constitution or codified in Australian treaties or laws (including native title), Australia is a signatory to many human rights tenets, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Korosy, 2008). The doctrines embedded in this declaration affirm Indigenous people's rights to self-determination, autonomy, self-government and the establishment and self-control of Indigenous education systems and Indigenous language institutions. This would suggest that in Australia, there is an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of Indigenous people, albeit a modest one.

In Australia, this acknowledgement began with the introduction of bilingual education in 1974 (Collins, 1999). Based on the Navajo bilingual bicultural education systems that evolved in the 1960s, this initially involved biliteracy and bilingualism (Education and Welfare Group Legislative Research Service, 1973). However, in many sites, bilingual biliteracy programs did not entail biculturalism (Marika, 2000); rather, bilingualism biliteracy was taught through a monocultural dominant lens. By the 1980s, however, a new Indigenous pedagogy, titled Both Ways, had emerged with the greater Aboriginalisation of schools (Marika, 2000).[1] Both Ways, a form of culturally sustaining pedagogy, entailed a centric view of Indigenous language and culture in pedagogy, curricula and lesson creation and delivery and involved cooperative learning and symbolic interaction in culturally appropriate ways (Ober and Bat, 2007). As noted by Ober (2009, p. 39):

> Both-ways education is about drawing on and acknowledging skills, language, knowledge, concepts and understandings from both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems … It is our way of telling our stories, it's about our way of making meaning in our world, both-ways is about going from the known to the unknown, using current knowledge as a springboard to gain new conceptual academic understandings, both-ways teaching and learning is being open-minded enough to see that there are alternative methods of reaching a goal, than following a strictly mainstream approach.

Both Ways as a social constructivist pedagogy evolved at a time when self-management, self-determination, community development and control reached its primacy in Australia, particularly in the Northern Territory (Ober, 2009). At this stage, Aboriginal people were returning to their homelands from urban centres and establishing settlements in what became known as the "homelands movement". This transmigration also led Aboriginal teachers to search for more culturally appropriate teaching methods (Ober, 2009). Both Ways evolved with a focus on social practice as well as intellectual growth and understanding of two worlds—Indigenous and western—which was recognised could only occur with the linguistic and place-based engagement of students to achieve a deeper cognitive development (Fogarty & Kral,

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[1]While the Aboriginalisation of schools hit a "high point" during the 1980s and early 1990s, the reduction in self-determination at all levels of the education process has meant that bilingual and/or Both Ways is now very poorly understood, supported, resourced and implemented. Only a few teaching staff maintain Freirean perceptions of education. As it is beyond the scope of this chapter to detail these developments and history, please refer to Devlin, Disbray, and Devlin (2017) as well as Oldfield and Lo Bianco (2019).

2011; Oldfield and Willsher, 2017).[2] Both Ways at our institute also entailed the works of Paulo Freire, particularly in terms of the tenets within Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1972)—of critiquing structural domination, the political ideologies of schooling and the collective transformation that can follow. In the twenty-first century, these ideas have metamorphosed into the postmodern equivalents of critiquing and subverting discoursal subjugation and the "regimes of truth" (the dominant deficit discourse of the "other" that becomes a "truth" in the public domain, as a consequence of power) (Foucault, 1972, 1977). It is this discoursal critique that is also now a feature of Both Ways. Both Ways at our institute also entailed the three stages of Freire's problem-posing methodology—identifying a social problem, identifying the causes of the problem and finding solutions (Smith-Maddox, 2002). It is these methodological principles that are the most important, in terms of effectiveness and positive academic outcomes, in teaching cultural competence to our students.

Current Course

The cultural awareness unit that is the subject of this chapter is offered through a university in Northern Australia, at its various campus locations. It has online and face-to-face modes of delivery so that it can cater to students both close to campus sites and across Australia with the use of digital literacies. Since 2012, this university and our educational institution have been working in partnership to deliver courses—with the university focusing on mainstream non-Indigenous students, and the only or primary cohort of the institute being Indigenous students. The courses that are taught in partnership are those that have been identified by the Institute's strategic plan in the areas of health, education and Indigenous languages, social sciences and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges.

The cultural awareness unit is a compulsory "common" first-year unit designed by the university and is also delivered by the institute for Indigenous students. The university's cultural awareness and capability unit has a primary focus on mainstream students, although international students are also enrolled since, as noted above, it is a compulsory common unit, designed to help students further develop their academic literacies. It is really an awareness raising course, predominantly exposing students to new academic concepts associated with culture, experience and behaviour, cultural awareness and cultural intelligence, which it does through academic literature as well as drawing from the personal accounts of students themselves. Its aim is to induct students into the cross-cultural relations and interactions required of them as students and, later, as professionals in remote, national and international contexts.

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[2]Place-based pedagogy, where pedagogy occurs in the natural environment, draws more deeply on Indigenous ecological and cultural knowledge than in any other environment since this is where conceptual and linguistic knowledge are most deeply rooted in Indigenous cultures. Place-based pedagogy is learning on and through the land. It is embedded in Both Ways as part of the "experiential" phase of learning, which is later explored linguistically and cognitively in the classroom with additional activities.

Given the focus on dominant students, course material is designed from a dominant perspective. The topic on culture is created to allow students to develop an awareness of their own "normative" culture as well as self-awareness of normative dominant assumptions and normative dominant values and behaviours. In addition to attaining an understanding of the multiplicities of the self, examination of these elements is viewed as a way to develop in students the metacognitive skills necessary to achieve cultural intelligence. The assumed development of these domains, in turn, is eventually used to analyse an environment for cultural safety and recommend "actions on how people can improve their cultural capabilities".

Colonial territoriality and White hegemony are evident in the material for this unit as there is limited reference to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders' experience or histories. This lack of Indigenous representation is acknowledged by the current course coordinators and developers who are in the process of rectifying the situation. We argue that this situation of Indigenous invisibility is a common one across university sectors (although there are certainly exceptions). This has also been noted by Fredericks (2009) who argued that universities continue to "reproduce imperial attitudes and processes which marginalise and exclude us while proclaiming they want to include us". As discussed above, Wolfe (2006) perceived this as a process of territoriality where strategies of elimination and dispossession result in the invisibility of Indigenous identities, language and culture or the creation of a deficit Indigenous construction to justify dispossession and elimination in a process that Wolfe (2006, p. 403) has labelled "structural genocide".

The process of structural genocide is also visible in the historical narratives that either sanitise history or give the appearance of a temporal rupture where there is a past, present or future break from a colonial genocidal history (Strakosch & Macoun, 2012). This is also achieved by discoursal construction; for example, where remote communities are constructed as "set apart from the body of the nation and as the locus of unspeakable violence and abjection" (Strakosch & Macoun, 2012, p. 13). This is underpinned by a "temporal logic" where Indigenous political groups, and particularly remote people, are constructed in terms of a primitive non-liberal past that resides in the present (Strakosch & Macoun, 2012, p. 48). It is exactly this logic that the lecturers in the institute, in conjunction with students, are engaged in "debunking" in the final part of the cultural competence unit, with its focus on Pilger's (2013) *Utopia*—a treatise on racism against (particularly remote) Indigenous people.

Need for Cultural Responsiveness

As noted above, since 2012, the institute has been delivering the university's cultural awareness and capability unit to its higher degree Indigenous students. The institute's mode of delivery is multi-modal and, unlike external university unit delivery, includes delivery both online (throughout the semester) and block, where students come to the institute campus, stay on site and receive two weeks of intensive face-to-face teaching (one week at the beginning of the semester and one week at the end).

In contrast with the majority of students at the university, all students at the institute are Indigenous and have invariably suffered from resource deprivation in their earlier schooling. This is largely a consequence of inequity in education, such as instruction in standard English as opposed to their own Indigenous language or dialect; the marked cultural differences between Indigenous students, their school teachers and the school as a western institution with foreign norms, values, metaphors and languages; marginalisation and the education system's low expectation of Indigenous student's achievements (Oldfield, 2016). These factors have invariably led to early exits from schooling for Indigenous students (Oldfield & Willsher, 2017). Apart from a school experience that fails to align with Indigenous students' language and culture, those students are the subject of racism related to colonisation in other domains; for example, invisibility of culture, language and identity; deficit constructions; daily harassment and racial slurs. This is noted by Ferninand, Paradies, and Kelaher (2013, p. 19), who relayed that 66% of respondents in a survey conducted in Victoria reported racist acts such as "beings spat at" and having "something thrown at them". According to Wolfe (2006), racial slurs, invisibility of culture and language and even genocide are a product of settler-colonial territoriality. As part of the claim for territory, language congruence in terms of Standard Australian English has become the most powerful symbol of belonging and legitimacy for the Australian nation-state (Wolfe, 2006; Oldfield, 2016).

It is this experience of the disparate norms, values, cultures and languages and the negative Indigenous representations and constructions by the wider society, in addition to the multi-dialectical, multi-linguistic and multicultural experiences within and between Indigenous communities, that has led the students of the institute to have delayed their entry into tertiary studies and also to have developed highly sophisticated metacognitive and cognitive understandings of diverse cultures and ideologies. We use here Ang and Van Dyne's (2008, p. 4) model of cultural intelligence where metacognition can be related to awareness, referring to the "processes of individuals use to acquire and understand knowledge", while cognition is "individual knowledge and knowledge structures". As such, the current unit, written for mainstream students, was highly inappropriate for students who were already lay "experts" in the field (Oldfield & Willsher, 2017). In addition, the unit, largely devoid of Indigenous stories or experiences, appeared to reinforce Whiteness (via hegemonic ideologies of settler-colonial territoriality and Indigenous invisibility) and so could result in learning resistance and, thereby, academic failure (Cummins, 1996).

Given the somewhat sporadic educational history of some of our students and the mismatch between home and school languages and literacies, few students of the institute had experiences, or successful experiences, of an academic learning environment or with academic literacies; and some had limited Standard Australian English and/or experience with digital literacies. Boulton-Lewis, Wilss & Lewis (2003) identified these elements as factors that can cause potential dissonance between learning strategies and the demands of learning tasks for students. That is, students can fail to identify and apply in their tertiary studies the deeper metacognitive learning tasks required for academic study, such as monitoring, elaborating, interpreting and analysing—as opposed to memorising, understanding or acquiring (Boulton-Lewis

et al., 2003). The strategies applied to ameliorate this dissonance were based on Freire's pedagogical approach, in addition to critical theory.

What We Changed

As a consequence of our long experience in Indigenous education and Indigenous higher education, rather than viewing our students as if they were in deficit, both lecturers came with the view that we were dealing with students who had rich resources: cultural experience, insight into "White Australia" (were lay experts in Whiteness studies), and cross-cultural and multilingual experiences (with many having family members from disparate Indigenous tribal and language groups) (Biermann & Townsend-Cross, 2008). The Both Ways/culturally responsive philosophy of embedding lesson content and tasks in a student's culture and language was augmented by both lecturers' acknowledgement of Indigenous sovereignty and an acute understanding of the political processes of colonisation.

These elements of our teaching approach at the institute meant that there was a focus on collectivism, which translated into open class discussions and considerable group work, as opposed to individual work, in order for students to collectively unpack or create texts. This was facilitated by explicit teaching of academic and digital literacies and the use of translanguaging in discussions (code-switching between Aboriginal English, Standard Australian English and academic discourse) so that students could use a wider linguistic repertoire and reduce cognitive load (Wei, 2017; Gutierez & Kim, 2017). This was particularly effective in relation to studying academic texts which were read aloud by individuals in the class and interpreted by the whole group.

Discussion also centred on critical consciousness, where students unpacked their lives in relation to a broader social landscape of invasion, colonisation and Indigenous agency, similar to Freire's "Culture Circle" (Freire, 1988). "Stories", with teacher guidance and input, provided the structure through which students could access western critical theory (neo-colonial theory, Marxist and postmodern theory) and apply Indigenous knowledge to create a Both Ways type of learning approach between teacher and student. These processes allowed a validation of student voices as co-constructors of, and experts on, knowledge as well as providing them with the analytical and language skills required of academia (McLoughlin & Oliver, 2000).

Given the invisibility of Indigenous agents and cultural perspectives in the unit material, both lecturers also consciously invoked culturally sustaining/responsive pedagogy and critical theory in terms of unit content and delivery, in order to avoid marginalisation, disempowerment and the isolation of our students (Malcolm & Rochecoste, 2003). This was achieved by including and/or rewriting some material so that it had Indigenous agency and perspectives and ensuring requirements for assessment tasks (academic discourse and digital literacies) were explicitly taught and clearly located within the students' own political and social experiences (Boulton-Lewis, 2003). As mentioned, we focused the teaching and learning as well as resources on both studies of cultural competence and Whiteness, which

included personal experiences of exclusion and racism. This led to a close analysis of the constructions and representations of Aboriginality, and how this can impact on cultural awareness and cultural intelligence. We also used readings that clearly showed a discipline-specific, but explicit, relationship between cultural awareness and cultural intelligence. Although they were perhaps problematic in terms of the high level of academic discourse, they replaced readings that were less specific and less coherent. In addition, lecturers capitalised on Indigenous identity by introducing a session on learning an Indigenous language. This session provided students with a small but meaningful opportunity to learn Gupapuyŋu, an Aboriginal Language of North East Arnhem Land. This exposure to a local Aboriginal language and the subsequent examination of how language encompasses and reproduces culture and cultural perspectives allowed students to discuss similarities and differences between their own Aboriginal cultures and further analyse the varieties of Aboriginal identities.

In relation to assessments, while the initial assessments remained the same since they were focused on the individual student, involving the investigation of "yourself as a cultural being" as well as a visual mind map of the "four elements of culture", later assessments focused more specifically on Indigenous experience. The critical reflective essay allowed students to link personal experience to Whiteness, cultural awareness and cultural intelligence; that is, students were expected to reflect on and analyse their experiences, in terms of analysing the level and distinctive characteristics of the cultural awareness and intelligence of White subjects, and how this influenced the subject's further development of cultural intelligence and cultural competence.

Analysis of Whiteness was even more pronounced and explicit for the final report, whereby students studied an Australia Day excerpt (set in Circular Quay, Sydney) from the John Pilger documentary, *Utopia*, which is a 2013 documentary that outlines contemporary Indigenous oppression and colonisation. The territoriality clearly seen in Pilger's interviews with White subjects gave students considerable scope to link Whiteness, CRT and settler-colonial theory with those of cultural intelligence and cultural competence. It was in this final report that students were also able to engage with Freire's (1972) problem-posing methodology most deeply, through identifying the problem, its causes and solutions. In this process, the social problem of "colonial racism" against Indigenous people was identified as preventing dominant group cultural awareness and competency; while the causes of the problem were viewed to be the result of settler-colonial ideologies inhibiting different aspects of the subject's metacognition, which consequently led to a lack of cognition. Finally, the solutions were shown as recommendations of a report that included Indigenous languages and culture educational responses, in addition to alternative dates for Australia Day, and symbolic representation of Indigenous people in terms of place and street names, flags and historical markers. This engagement with the problem-posing approach allowed students to openly express their positionality and experiences in relation to the topic and view White privilege and hegemony as an object of study as well as a challenge and problem to be collectively resolved—as opposed to accepting conditions of perpetual oppression, and the cultural deficit discourse. Using these mechanisms and strategies, we were also implementing the transformative agenda of CRT (Pechenkina & Liu, 2018).

What Are the Implications of These Changes?

It is the belief of these authors that a failure to deeply focus on such processes, instrumentalities and technologies of settler-colonialism, on Indigenous socio-historical and contemporary experience as well as Indigenous positionality, will result in cultural competence courses continuing to blind non-Indigenous people to the perpetual structural invasion of, and effects of, institutional and systematic racism against Indigenous people. It is only through a reformist agenda, which Potocky (1997) labels the "anti-oppression model", can tertiary students achieve a deep understanding of the colonial forces which continue to reproduce structural racism, territorial invasion and structural genocide. Without a focus on these elements, cultural competence courses will continue to facilitate the perpetuation of settler-colonial strategies and unceasing oppression of marginalised groups.

Alternatively, framing a unit of study on cultural awareness and cultural intelligence in the context of Aboriginal history and colonisation has potential benefits for all learners. Firstly, for Aboriginal students, it affirms their identity and experiences and offers them an opportunity to access academic literature to support their responses to, and experiences with, a broader Australian audience. Analysing Pilger's Australia Day footage and developing an action plan for creating a safe space required students to build a measured and attainable response. For non-Indigenous students, this task provides an opportunity to analyse another's perspective and then to plan and evaluate possible solutions. For non-Indigenous Australian and "International" students, it provides an opportunity to reflect on race relations and the technologies of colonisation and so contribute towards helping build a more respectful relationship with Indigenous people.

In 1991, the situation of Australian workplaces was described by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody as being places where "professionals largely operated within a neo-colonial framework and were generally ignorant of knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures, worldview, histories and contemporary situations and lacked practical skills and strategies for working effectively in Indigenous contexts" (cited in UA, 2011. p. 18). Some 25 years later, Krakouer (2015) concluded, in a literature review, that Indigenous students still remain marginalised by non-Indigenous Australians who display a lack of awareness about Indigenous culture and history. McConnochie and Nolan (2004, cited in UA, 2011) explain that one of the key issues to emerge out of their research was the need for non-Indigenous people to be aware of how their own behaviours and attitudes impact on Indigenous people both inside and outside the workplace. There is an ongoing need for universities to offer programs that not only provide time for students to acknowledge their own cultural history and ways of being but also provide opportunities to develop an empathy with other cultural groups. López (2009) defines this as "interculturalism" and promotes this approach when teaching minority groups located within settler-colonial contexts. May (2008) maintains such empathy and recognition of cultural and linguistic difference will lead to a cultural pluralism, denoted by group rights and characterised by greater political stability.

This contrasts with the current system of dominant hegemony, marginalisation of other groups, injustice and disadvantage, that inflames racial hatred and revolt and makes us all politically vulnerable (May, 2008).

Conclusion

This chapter has reported on the relevance of Freire's pedagogical and research approach, CRT and settler-colonial theory, for designing cultural competence subjects in undergraduate programs. It has also discussed the need to employ culturally responsive pedagogy when teaching Indigenous students, to ensure academic development and engagement with tasks. This chapter has specifically examined the need for university intercultural communication units to acknowledge the colonial history of the past and address the systemic racism of the present, in order to contribute to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people collaboratively working towards a more sustainable and inclusive future. There is ample evidence in University Australia's *National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities* that intercultural education embedded in a socio-historical context can play a key role in transforming communication practices within society as a whole (UA, 2011). Opportunities for non-Indigenous people to understand the problematic history of culture contact should be an integral part of any undergraduate course. The words of Sally Morgan, who gave evidence to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Elliott, 1991), still have relevance today as we seek to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians a place to be listened to, talk and learn together.

> In the telling we assert the validity of our own experiences and we call the silence of two hundred years a lie. And it is important for you, the listener, because like it or not, we are part of you. We have to find a way of living together in this country, and that will only come when our hearts, minds and wills are set towards reconciliation. It will only come when thousands of stories have been spoken and listened to with understanding. (Sally Morgan cited in Elliot, 1991, para. 10.10.8)

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Michele Willsher commenced working in bilingual education programs in the early 1980s in the Northern Territory. Since then she has furthered her interest in language teaching and teacher education by working with Indigenous people in Australia as well as in China, Vietnam and Laos. She completed research for her Ph.D. in Laos, and has since then undertaken teaching and research projects, both in Australia and international, in the areas of teacher education, language and literacy education.

Janine Oldfield has worked in higher education as an English as a Second Language academic English instructor/lecturer and higher education lecturer since 1995. She has a Ph.D. in education (language planning and policy). Her primary work focuses on English literacy education for Indigenous students, in addition to Indigenous bilingual education and critical Indigenous language education policy analysis in Indigenous contexts. Janine also researches pedagogical theory in relation to Indigenous students, and colonial/whiteness studies in Indigenous education.