# What has race/ethnicity got to do with EFL teaching?

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*Abstract: This article examines the way that some EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers in Green City (South of Brazil) understand and address the issue of cultural plurality as a cross-curricular theme (CPCCT) and issues of race/ethnicity. The reason that CPCCT is such an important issue in Brazil is that it is a diverse society with a tradition of upholding the myth of racial democracy. The main argument in this article is that, unless teachers have an adequate understanding of issues of race/ethnicity, issues of CPCCT will be addressed inadequately in schools. This article is based on a qualitative research I carried out in the south of Brazil. According to my findings, teachers' own orientations to CPCCT might be associated with the celebration of diversity in Brazil, rather than challenging to deconstruct racism that exists in Brazilian society.*
*Key-words: race/ethnicity; EFL teaching; cultural plurality; critical race theory.*

*It is very tempting to appropriate CRT (Critical Race Theory) as a more powerful explanatory narrative for the persistent problems of race, racism and social injustice. If we are serious about solving these problems in schools and classrooms, we have to be serious about intense study and careful rethinking of race and education. Adopting and adapting CRT as a framework for educational equity means that we will have to expose racism in education and propose radical solutions for addressing it. (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p.22; her emphasis)*

*The major point of CRT is to place race at the center of analysis. (Parker, 1998, p. 45)*

## INTRODUCTION

The PCN-FL in Brazil gives particular emphasis to Cultural Plurality, and within this race/ethnicity is an important issue (BRASIL, 1998a, 1998b). In addition, recent legislation (Law 10.639) passed on 9th January 2003 made the

discussion of History and Afro-Brazilian and African Culture compulsory in Brazilian schools (BRASIL, 2003; 2004; 2005). The content should be discussed in *all* school curricula especially in the subjects of Arts, Literature, and Brazilian History. I believe that FL (foreign language) also has a responsibility to address issues of promoting equality in terms of race/ethnicity (Auerbach, 1995; Block, 2003; Ferreira, 2004; Hooks, 1994; Kubota, 2002; Moita Lopes, 2002, 2003; Pennycook, 2001; Starkey & Osler, 2001). In this article I will discuss the issue of EFL (English as a foreign language) and race/ethnicity. I examine teachers' perceptions of cultural plurality as a cross curricular theme (CPCCT)[1] and race/ethnicity. In order to examine teachers' accounts I will use some of the ideas of the conceptual framework of Critical Race Theory applied to the field of education. The quotations with which I started this article by Ladson-Billings and Parker shed light on the way that I will be examining my data (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Tate, 1997). As this article is intended to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences with regard to race/ethnicity, I first outline my understanding of race/ethnicity. Second, I discuss the complexities of engaging with race, ethnicity and colour in the Brazilian context. Third, I explore the meaning of the *myth of racial democracy* and introduce the methodology I used to collect and analyze the data. Fourth, I present teachers' general perceptions of CPCCT and teachers' perceptions of race/ethnicity in the context of EFL. Finally, I provide some considerations reflecting on the implications of the outcomes provided by EFL teachers. I argue that unless teachers have an adequate understanding of issues of race/ethnicity, issues of CPCCT will be addressed

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[1]    In this article I will use CPCCT (cultural plurality as a cross-curricular theme) to refer in general teachers' understanding of CPCCT referring to PCN (National Curriculum Parameters). I will be using race/ethnicity to refer to teachers' understanding of the specific issue of race/ethnicity as a sub-theme within CPCCT.

inadequately in schools.

The terminology in the field of *race* is very sensitive, and *race* is still a problematic term because it carries with it the notion of biologically distinct species. In this article I use the term race "to denote its contested and socially constructed nature" (Gillborn, 2002, p.55). It is important to distinguish between the terms *race* and *ethnicity.* Gillborn (1995), researching in the field of antiracism, states that *"'race'* is usually associated with physical differences (phenotype) such as skin colour, while *'ethnic'* refers to groups set apart by a shared cultural identity (e.g. on the basis of language, religion or history). However, the terms are often used interchangeably" (p.4; his emphasis). Thus, according to Gillborn (1995, p.1), although the discussion of race seems to be obvious, it is in fact "complex and dynamic" and at the same time dangerous to contemporary society, for the discourse of race is always changing, as Kincheloe & Steinberg (1997, p.176) explain:

> racism is virus-like. While we can identify particular prototypes of racism and come to understand the ways they interact in the lived world, it is more difficult to appreciate that a virus-like racism is always mutating, taking on new forms and posing new dangers.

The new dangers in contemporary society and in this new millennium according to researchers in the field are related to the racism built on the bases of cultural and identity differences. So it means that racists and anti-racists have the same aim that is based in the respect of cultural differences (Munanga, 2003; see also Gillborn & Youdell, 2000).

The concepts of race/ethnicity that I used in my research

were related to social construction (Gillborn, 1995). Thus I did not take into consideration the concept or idea of race as a synonym of some biological features/type, or markers such as skin colour, hair texture, facial features and stature, that could define differences in people related to their intelligence for instance. Race is not a *biological given,* but a historically and socially constructed phenomenon (Apple, 1999; Gomes, 2003; Munanga, 2003).

The complexities of engaging with race, ethnicity and colour

This section is intended to clarify my own position in relation to engaging in the discourse of race, ethnicity and colour. Discussions about race, ethnicity and colour in the Brazilian context are very complex because even the terminology itself can lead to misunderstandings about these issues. In the Brazilian context the term 'black' is associated with skin colour and physical features rather than with ancestry. Writing about the issue of colour [*cor*], Telles (2002, p.421) has made the following observation:

> Colour/cor captures the Brazilian equivalent of the English language term race and is based on a combination of physical characteristics including skin colour, hair type, nose shape and lip shape with the non-white categories having negative connotations. (…) In Brazil, the word colour (cor) is often preferred to race (raça) because it captures the continuous nature of Brazilian racial concepts in which groups shade into one another.

Gomes (1995) argues that in Brazil ethnicity is a more appropriate term than race because of the specific Brazilian cultural and historical background. Cashmore (1984, p.102) points out that, "The ethnic group is based on a commonness of subjective apprehension, whether about

origins, interests […] (or a combination of these)".

Although theoretically I agree that race is a socially constructed phenomenon, it is necessary to understand the importance of issues of ethnicity as well because it is not possible to understand contemporary inequalities in relation to race such as racism, institutional racism, prejudice and discrimination without reference to history and ancestry. Although I take this position, it is also necessary to clarify that it can carry with it the danger of essentialism, which can be defined as "a notion of ultimate essence that transcends historical and cultural boundaries" (Brah, 1992, p.126). Kincheloe & Steinberg (1997, p.22) also point out that: "Essentialism is a complex concept that is commonly understood as the belief that a set of unchanging properties (essences) delineates the construction of particular category".

In this article I will tend to use the words 'black' and 'white'. I will use this terminology because as I explained above there are racialized discourses of colour in Brazil: people refer to 'colour' [*cor*] when they are referring to race. Although I will use the words 'black' and 'white' to describe my informants, it is necessary to acknowledge that there is a potential problem with this because it constitutes a single 'black-white' binary identification in a country in which people have self-identified 136 gradations of colour. The gradations of colours were identified by the IBGE in the census used by Brazilians when they had to self-identify in 1976 (Schwarcz, 1998). However, there were some informants in the questionnaire who self-identified as mulatto, as it will be possible to notice later in the section of the methodology. In the next section I will discuss the 'myth of racial democracy'.

The 'myth of racial democracy'

The purpose of this section is to provide a brief historical background to the so-called 'myth of racial democracy' as it has developed in Brazil. The 'official' history of Brazil started with the arrival of the Portuguese in April 1500. The Portuguese started bringing African people to Brazil as slaves in the 1520s. Today, Brazil has the world's second largest black population after Nigeria (Heringer, 2000, p.4).

According to Prandi (2002, p.52), between 1525 and 1851 more than five million African people were brought to Brazil in a condition of slavery. Slavery was abolished in 1888, Brazil being the last country in the world to abolish the practice (Heringer, 2000, p.2). Subsequent European immigration to Brazil was an attempt by the Brazilian government to 'whiten' the national population in the late 19th century (Heringer, 2000, p.2). This strategy was based on facilitating white Europeans to immigrate to Brazil. This desire to 'whiten' the population was also encouraged through intermarriage to produce 'lighter-skinned' children (Telles, 2002, p.418). The Brazilian elite, through government policies, did not want Brazil to have the status of a second-class country in the eyes of the rest of the world because the majority of the population were non-white (Telles, 2002, p.418). The attempt to 'whiten' Brazilian society was unsuccessful and consequently the government projected an image of 'racial democracy' to the world (Cashmore, 1984; Ferreira, 2005; Heringer, 2000; Telles, 2002). However, the idea of 'racial democracy' is a myth in reality because there is little equality of treatment for Afro-Brazilians descendants.

The Brazilian population in 2004 was 178 million inhabitants. The tables below are intended to show some aspects of Brazilian society related to colour/ethnic groups. The distribution of population by colour and race according to the classification provided by the IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) is 55.2 percent of White (Euro-

Brazilian descendants); 6.0 percent of Black (Afro-Brazilian descendants), 38.2 percent of Mulatto (mixed race of white and black, Afro-Brazilian descendants), 0.4 Yellow (Asian descendants) and 0.2 Native Brazilian Indians (Heringer, 2000, p.5). In relation to this census I want to make clear that it does not include people who haven't declared their colour. Likewise, it leaves out the population of the rural areas of Rondônia, Acre, Amazonas, Roraima, Pará and Amapá, which may account for the low percentage of Native Brazilian Indians. However, I want to make clear that although this research discusses issues of race/ethnicity it focuses on Afro-Brazilian descendants.

In relation to the figures above it is clear that:

a) Brazil is not a "blended" nation in terms of race. In Brazil there is *still* a clear distinction in terms of ethnic groups.

b) A significantly large proportion of the population is made up of Afro-Brazilian descendants.

The table below (Table 1) shows the number of school years by colour for people aged 15 years old or more in 1996. The second table (Table 2) shows the number of students entering Federal universities by colour/ethnic group.

Table 1: Number of school years by colour. Adapted from Heringer (2000, p.1)

| Number of school years by colour, people 15 years old or more. Brazil, 1996 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage (%) | | | |
| Number of school years | whites | blacks | mulattos | Total |
| Less than 1 year/never went to school | 11.8 | 26.2 | 23.4 | 16.7 |
| 1 - 3 years | 13.3 | 18.5 | 19.5 | 15.9 |
| 4 - 8 years | 43.8 | 41.3 | 40.7 | 42.4 |
| 9 - 11 years | 20.3 | 11.2 | 13.3 | 17.2 |
| 12 years and more | 10.9 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 7.5 |
| No information | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 |

Table 1 clearly shows the disparity that still exists in terms of colour in Brazilian society. Challenging the 'myth of racial democracy', it exposes the inequality of Brazilian population by ethnicity, showing that on the average white people (Europeans descendants) have more years' access to school as compared to black and mulatto people (Afro-descendants).

Table 2 below presents the rate of entrance at some of the most prestigious and highly competitive public universities in Brazil by ethnicity, and is another example of the way inequality in relation to race operates.

Table 2: Percentage of students' entrance to Federal and State universities in Brazil. Adapted from Guimarães (2003a, p.204).

|  | UFRJ Southeast Rio de Janeiro | UFPR South Paraná | UFMA North Maranhão | UFBA Northeast Bahia | Unb Centre-West Brasília | USP Southeast São Paulo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| White (Euro-descendants) | 76.8 | 86.5 | 47 | 50.8 | 63.7 | 78.2 |
| Black (Afro-descendants) | 20.3 | 8.6 | 42.8 | 42.6 | 32.3 | 8.3 |
| Yellow (Asian-descendants) | 1.6 | 4.1 | 5.9 | 3 | 2.9 | 13.0 |
| Native Brazilian Indian | 1.3 | 0.8 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 1.1 | 0.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| % of population who are black | 44.63 | 20.27 | 73.36 | 74.95 | 47.98 | 27.4 |

The tables above clearly indicate the inequality that exists in Brazil concerning Afro-Brazilians as to access to education. According to Gandin , "The 'myth of racial democracy' that has been reproduced historically in Brazil is easily destroyed when we add racial analysis" (p.7). The figures in Tables 1 and 2 are examples of the fact that if we "add racial analysis" to statistics, it is possible to highlight the inequality in terms of opportunities between Afro-Brazilian and Euro-Brazilians descendants in contemporary Brazil.

THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

This research took place in a city in southern Brazil, which I shall call Green City. The city inhabitants are mainly descendants of immigrants from Germany, Italy and Poland. It is my contention that this fact is highly significant because teachers will be referring to these aspects of their own cultural context. Thus, the cultural context will help to underpin my analysis.

Green City has 40 state schools (including elementary and high schools), which employed 107 EFL teachers during the time that my data research was collected in 2002. A total of 46 teachers answered my questionnaire and six teachers among them were my main informants, providing me interviews. Their names are all fictitious.

| Informants<br>Interview and questionnaire | colour/race |
|---|---|
| Ame | white |
| Barbara | white |
| Carmen | black |
| Daniel | black |
| Elisa | black |
| Fabia | white |

I also brought the contribution from three teachers who only answered the questionnaire. I used those three teachers' responses, because they brought significant contribution. Those teachers were identified by numbers because they were not interviewed. Those teachers were:

| Informants - questionnaire | colour/race |
|---|---|
| Teacher 29 (questionnaire 29) - male | mulatto |
| Teacher 42 (questionnaire 42) - female | mulatto |
| Teacher 46 (questionnaire 46) - female | white |

In relation to the teachers' colour/race, I asked them to identify themselves according to the IBGE classification, since it is the official system of classification of colour/race in Brazil. However, I do recognize that there is a conflict when Brazilian people have to self identify as discussed in the section above about the complexities of engaging with race, ethnicity and colour.

I analyzed teachers' responses using qualitative methodology. My research was intended to answer the following question: How do EFL teachers understand and address issues of cultural plurality as a cross-curricular theme and race/ethnicity in education?

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CPCCT

One of my main arguments in this study is that, unless teachers have an adequate understanding of issues specific to race/ethnicity, issues of CPCCT[2] in schools will not be adequately addressed. Teachers' perceptions are important because it is their understanding of the issue that is going to make it possible to implement the National Curriculum Parameters (PCN) policy in the schools. In other words, it is essential that these teachers understand the PCN (and specifically in this study race/ethnicity) so that they are able to implement it in the classroom. In this section I will examine some teachers' accounts to draw a picture of their perceptions. These perceptions were categorized in terms of CPCCT and race/ethnicity in the EFL context.

*Perceptions of CPCCT: overview of general responses*

EFL teachers' opinions of the CPCCT seem to be influenced by what is written in the PCN, a very broad document that is open to multiple interpretations. Ladson-

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[2]   CPCCT – Cultural Plurality as a Cross Curricular Theme.

Billings & Tate (1995, p.61), introducing Critical Race Theory (CRT) to the educational field, explain that:

> Current practical demonstrations of multicultural education in schools often reduce it to trivial example and artefacts of cultures such as eating ethnic or cultural foods, singing songs or dancing, reading folktales, and other less than scholarly pursuit of the fundamentally different conceptions of knowledge or quests for social justice.

Although Ladson-Billings & Tate's findings about the way that teachers interpret multicultural education are taken from the U.S.A. context, it seems to conform to the description provided by some of my informants in the Brazilian context. Most of the discussions in Brazil relating to CPCCT refer to multicultural education, critical multicultural education, intercultural education, and critical intercultural education, and very few include an analysis of anti-racist education. It seems that all the teachers in my sample believe that CPCCT is a way of understanding differences solely connected to habits, culture, music, dance, and the like:

> *CPCCT is to know about the several ethnic aspects that exist in the world.* (Ame, white teacher, questionnaire)
> *CPCCT means the various cultures that exist in the world so that students can have a broad understanding of their own culture. In English as FL, I taught students the themes of health, food, values, family values (...)* (Ame, interview)
>
> *CPCCT is about cultural aspects, a mix of cultures.* (Barbara, white teacher, questionnaire)
>
> *My impression of CPCCT is the habits of several countries and races.* (Barbara, interview)

This pattern apparently reflects what some researchers have found in other circumstances. Troyna (1992, p.74) criticised multicultural education in England because he found that teachers were teaching students based on "The 3 Ss interpretation of multicultural education (Saris, Samosas and Steel bands)". It appears that the aspects identified by Troyna are replicated in the teachers' responses in my research as an indication of the cultural differences between students and other cultures:

> *The issue of race/ethnicity is very important, not just in EFL but in any language, because skin colour is an irrelevant physical aspect in relation to the valorisation of a human being.* (Ame, questionnaire)

It seems that for some teachers CPCCT is merely a way of relating the various cultural aspects that exist in Brazil:

> *CPCCT is interesting [...] I don't remember the name of the author but someone once said that Brazil is made up of many 'Brazils' [...]. This issue (race/ethnicity) has to be taught in our country, particularly because it is such a mixture. Culturally, we have all races here. I believe that it is the country that has the greatest mixture in all senses: dance, habits, food, the way we dress and so on. [...] The issue has to be taught particularly in Brazil, because we have all races here [...] race/ethnicity is interesting as an issue because it is possible to teach about the differences and how to live with the differences.* (Elisa, black teacher, interview)

In expressing her view about Brazilian culture, Elisa touches on the view that 'Brazil is made of many Brazils'. She believes that in Brazil all races can be found, through the aspects of diversity of food, dance and so on. Elisa recognizes the need to teach "about the differences and how to live with the differences". However, what is not clear in her statement is how she understands "living with differences". For example,

should one accept the 'differences' or try to make students more aware of the "differences" in terms of the inequalities that exist in Brazil in relation to Afro-Brazilian descendants and Euro-Brazilian descents? Barbara provides another example:

> *CPCCT is very interesting because we can say Brazil is the symbol of cultural plurality I believe that. I mean you have everything here, you have people of several colours, there are even 'black' Japanese, mixed race Brazilians.* (Barbara, white teacher, interview)

In the above statement, it seems that Barbara is supporting the 'myth of racial democracy' and colour-blindness. It appears that Barbara cannot understand that working with CPCCT might also be a way of discussing the stereotypical view of race/ethnicity in Brazil. Moreover, she uses the example of two ethnic minorities to exemplify the ethnic mixture in Brazil (i.e. black and Japanese). In addition, her use of the word 'even' can convey a negative meaning to what she is saying. In the extract below it seems that teacher Daniel, who is black, presents an alternative orientation:

> *In relation to CPCCT, people pretend that it does not exist (racism), that there is no necessity to speak about it. It is something that is accepted, people make jokes (about black people) you have to ignore. People make pejorative comments and it becomes speculation, but it seems like jokes. So I think that Brazilian people 'give that Brazilian way'[3] to everything.* (Daniel, black teacher, interview)

Daniel's view about CPCCT is very different from most of the teachers above. He does not believe that Brazil is a symbol of CPCCT. Daniel provides an example of how the

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[3] Brazilian way (jeitinho Brasileiro): when people break the rules and it is accepted.

'myth of racial democracy' and colour-blindness occurs in reality on a day-to-day basis in Brazilian society. People make pejorative jokes concerning the colour of black people and it is implied by society that this should be accepted.

The aspects pointed out by Barbara and Daniel seem to show, in very different ways, that the aspect of colour-blindness and 'the myth of racial democracy' still operates. Parker, a critical race theorist, explains that:

> Critical race theory exposes the color-blind position to the light. Through narratives and other historical evidence, it documents minority student exclusion and the ways some have had to compromise their race to survive at predominantly white colleges and universities. (Parker, 1998, p.49)

Parker's quotation supports Daniel's comments that black students in Brazil have to be silent when other students make pejorative jokes. Teachers' interpretations of CPCCT seem to reinforce Ladson-Billings & Tate's (1995) criticism of multicultural education. Teachers' accounts also support one of my arguments that, if discussions related to race/ethnicity should occur, the 'terms' used need to be explicit. This means that using CPCCT with the aim to address race/ethnicity might be wrongly interpreted, as was shown by the teachers' accounts in this section.

*Perceptions of race/ethnicity – the EFL context*

In this section I will examine teachers' perceptions in relation to race/ethnicity and EFL. An overwhelming majority of my questionnaire informants (87%) stated that it is important to discuss the issue of race/ethnicity in the EFL classroom. Although a majority of teachers acknowledged the importance of discussing the issue of race/ethnicity in their lessons, it *seems that their orientations were different.*

For some teachers, a way of addressing the issue of race/ethnicity would be to try to connect it to some specific course content that they had to deliver to students. Ame's strategy was to talk about colours as content in the EFL lesson (red, blue, etc.):

> *I did not teach the way I would like to about the issue of 'black people'. I touched on the issue (race/ethnicity) when I worked on colours in EFL lessons. It was not a deep discussion where students could reflect. We had a discussion about several races and about prejudice. I think it is very important to discuss it.* (Ame, white teacher, interview)

Although she suggested that they did not discuss the issue deeply, it was a starting point that made her think about the importance of discussing race/ethnicity in the EFL classroom. For other teachers, discussing race/ethnicity means increasing the familiarity with the language:

> It is important to discuss the issue of race/ethnicity in EFL classrooms so that students do not think that English is just translation, but also information, and awareness (consciousness raising). *(Barbara, white teacher, questionnaire)*

In Barbara's view, the EFL classroom can be used as an arena to discuss the issue, relating the subject to students and making them aware of the issue. Yet, in her comments it also appears that the idea of EFL as 'translation' could be one of the assumptions in the way her students, and perhaps herself, understand EFL. For some teachers, the discussion is about breaking down taboos, and discussing topics that are considered controversial:

> *It is important because we work with very diverse students, where races, habits and beliefs are mixed. It is also important to smash some taboos relating to race.* (Carmen, black teacher,

questionnaire)
*It is relevant. However, it is a complicated issue if you are working with a highly controversial issue, which is also hidden by society.* (Daniel, black teacher, questionnaire)

Carmen's and Daniel's views conform to Tatum's findings:

> The first source of resistance, race as a taboo topic, is an essential obstacle to overcome if class discussion is to begin at all. Although many students are interested in the topic, they are often most interested in hearing other people talk about it, afraid to break the taboo themselves. (Tatum, 1996, p.325; see also Carrington & Short, 1989, p.26)

As Carmen and Daniel pointed out, discussing the issue in class might be a way of breaking taboos and discussing controversial topics. The taboo and controversial issue that Carmen and Daniel mentioned might also be related to the legacy of the 'myth of racial democracy' that still exists in Brazil:

> The racial democracy ideology created a taboo identifying the masking of its antiracist pretence as a reverse racist attack on antiracism. This phenomenon has an effect of supreme importance to the maintenance of the status quo: It robs those excluded of the legitimacy of their protest against discrimination, placing on their shoulders the onus of the very racism that operates their exclusion. (Nascimento, 2004, p.870).

In the following accounts of Elisa and Fabia, they recognise the need for discussion of the issue, considering it important for the Brazilian context, and also relating to what is discussed worldwide:

> *It is extremely important, above all in our country, where the majority are black and mulatto, and we don't acknowledge that.* (Elisa, black teacher, questionnaire)

> *It is important that we make students aware that this is a worldwide issue, not just in Brazil.* (Fabia, white teacher, questionnaire)

Although a majority of questionnaire respondents acknowledged the importance of the discussion, a tiny minority (three teachers) said that it was not important to discuss the issue of race/ethnicity in EFL classrooms. Some of their responses were as follows:

> *It is not important, because what really matters is the culture of EFL.* (mulatto teacher 29, male, questionnaire)

> *It is not important, because students are not interested in these issues.* (mulatto teacher 42, female, questionnaire)

> *It is not important, because the knowledge of EFL that students have is so precarious. It is better to approach it in another subject.* (white teacher 46, female, questionnaire)

These responses seem to suggest that it is not the responsibility of EFL teachers to address such issues. The views of the teachers above might also indicate teachers' own fears of dealing with the issue. Teacher 42, for example, makes assumptions about the way that students might respond. Teacher 29 seems to be more worried about cultural aspects related to EFL. Teacher 46 also seems to believe that the issue should be 'approached in another subject' but seems unable to understand that all subjects have the responsibility of promoting equality in terms of race/ethnicity. The responses clearly show the need of addressing the issue of race/ethnicity in teacher education courses (Cameron, 1992; Connolly, 1998; Ferreira, 2002; Guimarães, 2003b; Gomes &

Silva, 2002; hooks, 1994; Lopez, 2003b; Milner, 2003; Osler & Starkey, 2000).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

I will make and attempt to answer my research question which is, How do EFL teachers understand and address issues of cultural plurality as a cross-curricular theme and race/ethnicity in education? According to my findings, the responses provided by teachers  show that teachers' own orientations to CPCCT varies. However, there are some factors that influence their perceptions. One factor is in relation to CPCCT, and is associated with learning about the cultural aspects of the 'other' related to EFL, the celebration of 'diversity' in Brazil, rather than challenging and deconstructing the racism that exists in Brazilian society. Teachers' perceptions also seem to relate to the Brazilian historical context. By this I mean the construction of the 'myth of racial democracy' and the fact that colour-blindness is very clear in some teachers' voices.

In relation to race/ethnicity, teachers' perceptions seem to reflect two important points of view. First, it seems that teachers' worries in terms of the issue of race/ethnicity in relation of EFL were about discussing the specific content of EFL lessons, for example colours as content, but not the issue of race/ethnicity as a planned theme to be discussed and included in the EFL classes. Second, it was also evident that teachers were worried about discussing an issue that many of them considered to be a "taboo", or "controversial" issue. My findings seem to reinforce my argument that teachers' understanding of CPCCT might be a factor that affects their understanding of race/ethnicity.

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***Título:*** *O que raça/etnia tem a ver com o ensino de inglês como língua estrangeira?*
***Resumo:*** *Este artigo examina a forma que alguns professores de EFL (Inglês como língua estrangeira) em uma cidade da região Sul do Brasil entendem e consideram o tema pluralidade cultural como um tema transversal e o assunto acerca de raça/ etnia. Pluralidade cultural é um assunto importante porque o Brasil é uma sociedade diversa com uma tradição do mito da democracia racial. Neste artigo, minha argumentação principal é que a menos que os professores tenham uma compreensão adequada de assuntos relacionados à raça/etnia, assuntos relacionados à pluralidade cultural serão implementados inadequadamente nas escolas. Este artigo tem como base uma abordagem qualitativa de pesquisa. De acordo com os meus resultados a orientação dos professores com relação à pluralidade cultural tem uma tendência a estar associada com a celebração da diversidade no Brasil, do que desafiar e desconstruir o racismo existente na sociedade brasileira.*
***Palavras-chave:*** *raça/etnia; ensino de língua inglesa; pluralidade cultura; teoria racial crítica.*