

**CULTURE AND BEYOND:
THE ROLE OF CRITICAL INTERCULTURAL TRAINING
IN THE MINING INDUSTRY**

by

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the social dimensions of one industry in a globalized economy: mining. The purpose of this paper is to present a rationale for critical intercultural training within the mining industry vis-à-vis individual cross cultural sensitivity and adaptation, as well as the promotion of cultural sustainability within the context of corporate social responsibility. I argue that intercultural training programs have the potential to be an educational avenue for corporate global citizenship. Moreover, I argue that 'critical intercultural training' is necessary in developing sustainable and just global partnerships, that is, an educational model that would provide a more in-depth analytical framework through which to explore the development of culture and context-specific relationships that were based in social equality. Critical theory and pedagogy is used as a conceptual framework to examine the role of intercultural training programs within the Canadian mining industry. It is argued that such programs could offer a means for critical reflection, collaborative action or *praxis* (Freire, 1980) to occur, especially within industries that have major social and environmental impact on the communities in which they operate. I aim to present a rationale for critical intercultural training as a means for unearthing the complex nature of cross-cultural issues within the global corporate economy of mining and implementing reflective, transformatory action based on the findings of this study.

Unstructured interviews and questionnaires were used to get an understanding of mining management and employees' conceptions of cross-cultural challenges during international work assignments. Participants' views on 'intercultural training' were also explored. The purpose of the questions was to seek out how important and/or effective employees and managers felt these programs are/would be, as well as how they feel these programs may be improved and made to be more relevant and useful within the mining industry.

The findings resulted in a few dominant themes that arose from the participants stories, perspectives and opinions. All participants experienced difficulties in adapting either personally or professionally to the culture they relocated to. All participants experienced what Taylor (1994) terms cross-cultural based transformative learning through critical incidents while working internationally. It was these incidents that often formed the basis of the participants' negative or positive perceptions of the particular culture they were working in. Stemming from either specific situations or observations made over time, there was a common interest for the majority of the participants in promoting or contributing to positive social change through dialogue, education and /or the development of community relations with people surrounding the mine site. There was support yet a simultaneous skepticism of intercultural training programs based on prior experience and/or limiting views of the purpose of intercultural training.

The connection between the participants' responses, whether explicit or implicit, was an exposed need to develop deeper understandings of the intersecting socio-political and economic influences underlying 'culture' that are involved in mining developments in South American communities. The implications of the findings endorse a need for further examination into the possibility of critical intercultural training as an avenue for generating more culturally sensitive and sustainable policy and practice with the Canadian mining industry.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and context

As economic globalization exponentially increases interaction between people across national borders, the necessity for understanding differences between cultures has become crucial. Everyday, international organizations such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and private multinational companies send people to work overseas. In Canada, more and more businesses are reaching across national borders to do business and form partnerships with foreign counterparts. Many elements of these partnerships require non-technological skills as human dimensions of organizational structuring provide the core foundation for a successful international venture. Whatever the purpose, the ability to work harmoniously across cultures is imperative for the success of an international assignment or project as well as the development of mindfully sustainable international relations. The province of British Columbia has been building relationships with countries in Latin America for decades now. A commonality between this vast West coast Canadian region and countries such as Chile, Argentina, and Peru are economic development interests within the natural resources and extractive industries. The mining industry is a prominent area where Canadian companies are seeking to pursue and increase business development with various regions of Latin America.

Intercultural communication training programs introduce participants to ways in which they can broaden their perspectives in order to understand how cultural differences may impact their professional and personal experience when relocated to other countries. Almost half a century ago, researchers like Hall (1976) began to link anthropological studies of culture with communication. These ideas were partnered with business and corporate interests and the field of intercultural communication was born (Collier, 2001). Intercultural training programs, for

instance, are often offered to people before leaving for and/or upon arrival of the country that they relocate to. Intercultural communication theories and models offer a means to better understand the nature of cultural difference vis-à-vis values, norms and assumptions (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural communication are explored and intended to provide participants with analytical tools to navigate challenging situations and negotiate agreements within their international work place and host country community (Chen and Starsota, 1998; Hofstede, 1991; Bennett, 1993). As intercultural training practitioners aim to develop their field, building upon and moving beyond traditional theoretical models and practice, new directions are sought in attempt to reach global citizens and leaders to engage in relevant and current curriculum.

Research question

What role does intercultural training play in fostering socially responsible policy and practice within the mining industry? I argue that critical intercultural training is necessary in developing sustainable and just global partnerships, that is, a training model that would provide a more in-depth analytical framework through which to explore culture and context-specific relationships. I use critical pedagogy as a conceptual framework to analyze intercultural training programs used within the mining industry. Originally a discourse of educational reform found most commonly in the realm of public schooling, one result of critical pedagogy in practice has been a “rewriting of what schools are and might become” (Giroux, quoted in Kanpol, 1999: xi). Applied to intercultural training, critical pedagogy is a means through which educators can bridge critical theory and practice by placing issues relating to social justice and democracy at the core of the curriculum. Such an analysis would reflect the socio-economic, political,

historical and environmental context within which the people of a given host country are living. Knowledge of these issues would contribute to increased management and employee cultural sensitivity, in turn, enabling them to adopt and apply a global perspective that incorporates a 'locally reflexive' approach during operation planning and development, work assignments, negotiations, decision-making and personal adaptation within South and Central American host countries. Such an approach would be conducive to a growing interest in the corporate community in a 'triple bottom line' perspective towards domestic and international project developments - an approach that takes into account not only the economic value of business ventures, yet also the impact of these projects on the environment and society. A critical model of intercultural communication that guides collaborative critical thinking, dialogue and ethical leadership is thus urgently needed to develop sustainable and just global partnerships.

Personal statement and rationale

My interest in this topic began six years ago when I went to Paraguay to volunteer for an environmental non-governmental organization (NGO). The organization that administered the program, "Dialogue Across the Americas", was funded by CIDA. As such, each participant, including myself went through a pre-departure intercultural training orientation program before leaving. The premise of the intercultural training program was to examine ourselves as individuals and to challenge the assumptions we make about others based on how different our values and belief systems are. The program offered a solid starting point for developing good inter-personal communication skills. I felt the program was valuable, as it provided structured frameworks that guided us through the process of self-reflection. It was also an opportunity to

prepare ourselves psychologically for implicit and explicit issues that would arise due to the cross-cultural differences we would experience during our time overseas.

A few months after my arrival in Paraguay, I had already experienced the effects of culture-based differences. In my work place, for example, I was often confused and frustrated by situations involving time and deadlines, mixed messages, and what felt like unspoken rules within a gender and status hierarchy that I did not understand (or want to accept). With respect to time, for instance, an issue I had within my work place was the agonizing length of time it took for things to happen. Why an order of tree seedlings was not coming through was so perplexing to me. Even more perplexing was, that after asking many of my Paraguayan co-workers what the delay was, I was never given a 'straight' answer. Even through careful self-reflection, reviewing my own actions in the various situations all whilst earnestly maintaining a respect for "difference", without an explanation, context and therefore understanding, I became so frustrated that I defaulted to negative judgments of people's competence.

Months after my return, I talked with people from various South American countries through BC Immigration Services and later with participants of an international teaching assistant course that was offered through my workplace at the University of British Columbia. I recounted some of my frustrations and asked for their perspectives on my experiences. They offered insight about what they felt might have been happening underneath the superficial layers of what I had perceived as "strange behaviour". Most explanations about the incidents I mentioned pointed to the socio-political and economic climate of the country. In regards to the tree seedlings (that never showed up during the time I was there), suggestions were made that there may have been a lack of funding for the project I was involved in through the national university. Additionally, after being out of a 52 year dictatorship for only a few years, it was

pointed out that there are generally numerous bureaucratic steps involved in processing orders that involve any government related institutions. Many people, many forms, many approvals and signatures could have prolonged what seemed like a simple task that should have taken no time at all in my North American mind. To complicate matters, the nature of the project I was working on, which was to integrate reforestation practices into traditional agricultural practices - termed 'agro-forestry' may have had political undercurrents that I was not aware of. Unknown to me was whether or not this project was supported; by government, by forestry companies and /or by the farmers who were 'asked' to take part in the supposedly progressive pilot project.

After much reflection, I began to have serious concerns about the 'intercultural training' that I had received. I began to formulate thoughts about what I really would have needed from my training. I felt that more information about culture-specific context that included history, politics, environment and current socio-economic issues needed to be explored from a self-reflective and critical standpoint. While taking a course in human resource management, I discovered that multinational companies often hired intercultural training consultants to work with employees that worked internationally within the organization. Feeling a glimmer of hope in the fact that such workplace education existed, I decided to pursue the field of intercultural communication.

After four years of undergraduate university courses in psychology and environmental studies, combined with my experiences in rural South America, I had developed a deep passion for understanding the relationship people had with their environments and the role that relationship played in influencing a group's cultural identity. At the same time, I had developed a progressively critical perspective toward the exponentially growing domination of corporate globalization. Living in a province highly dependent on its natural resources, I quickly became

intrigued by the controversial area of mining that was often highlighted in the media because of conflicts in the First Nations communities in the Canadian north or protests surrounding mining mishaps and injustices in South America. While stories of public protests over cropland water and soil contamination and death threats to citizens who protested mineral extraction in their communities barely made newspaper headlines, I slowly discovered both formal and informal groups that were advocating and lobbying for social and environmental justice in the mining industry (eg. Mining Watch, Amnesty International, etc.). Coinciding with my raising awareness, I began to wonder what these mining companies were doing from the inside to address what seemed to me were culture-based conflict situations and as such, inevitably intertwined with social injustices. Gedicks (2001) points out that “each year since 1991, a major mine tailings containment has collapsed somewhere in the world” (p.vii). ‘Developmental genocide’ and ‘ethnocide’ are just some of the terms Gedicks uses to describe injustices specific to indigenous communities ranging from drilling on traditional territory and systemic displacement to the militarization of areas wherever “mining companies fail to secure the consent of native people” (p.28).

As my experience in the area of intercultural communication and education grew, so did my interest and curiosity in how the role and influence of culture was perceived within the context of an industry whose very nature implicated people, their culture and their surrounding environment. I asked myself, with so much public criticism and protest over the blatantly unethical activities occurring worldwide, how was the Canadian mining industry educating and preparing themselves with regards to adapting and working across cultures in a globally sensitive and mindful way? What tangible, action-based measures were being taken to incorporate cultural

sustainability into developing mining practice codes of conduct? To explore these questions, I embarked on a research quest in the UBC Department of Educational Studies.

For this study, I chose to focus geographically on the particular relationship between North and South America. The reason for this stems from my interest in the social and environmental dynamics of an extractive industry such as mining as well as the economic and political power imbalance inherent between a country from the North and its counterparts in the 'developing' South. As Gedicks (2001) outlines:

In 1992, the number of U.S. and Canadian mining corporations exploring or operating in Latin America doubled from the year before. Latin America quickly became the leading region for new mining investment, followed by Africa and Asia. What accounts for this dramatic increase in mining investment? Mining executives complained about stiffer environmental regulations and the long delays in the mine permitting process because of objections from environmentalists in the United States and Canada. Ironically, the development of a North American environmental justice movement, which provided for greater environmental protection and greater citizen involvement in the permitting process, contributed to an intensified assault against native peoples in the Third World whose lands contained valuable resources.

(Gedicks, 2001, p.197)

In a paper written for the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, Seymour (1998) describes the Canadian mining industry's characteristic growth vis-à-vis Latin American countries' opening to foreign investment and refers to the polarization of views between communities, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations and mining companies:

This polarization is occurring in the context of a rapid expansion of mining activity and the emergence of a stronger civil society in the Americas in the period since 1994 when several Latin American countries opened up their economies to foreign exploration and investment...Canadian companies have played a major role in this. In 1996, Canadian company involvement accounted for over 35% of large company exploration expenditures in the region. During this same period, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in

Canada and Latin America have become better equipped to raise social and environmental concerns.

Seymoar (1998, p.1)

Relations at a local, national and international level amongst and between North and South America are distinctly contentious. As business developments continue to grow at rapid rates, I argue that issues of power, knowledge, social and environmental justice cannot be ignored within the curriculum of an intercultural training program for Canadian companies and Canadian employees working in Latin American countries.

Originally, my goal was to evaluate the effect of intercultural training programs in the mining industry to see whether those who participated in them thought they were effective. Over the course of a year, I talked to members of the Sustainable Working Group (a group of graduate students, professors, social and environmental activists) in the UBC Department of Mining Studies and members of the Canadian Institute of Mining, including the past president and the Vice President of Environmental and Corporate Affairs of a major Canadian mining company. I corresponded by email with the BC & Yukon Chamber of Mines, the Director of Mining at CoDev Canada and a director at the Canadian Foreign Institute's Centre for Intercultural Learning. Finally, I liaised by phone with a geologist turned community relations & cross-cultural conflict resolution consultant. As a result of these communications, I learned two key things: First, while I simply thought intercultural training programs would be common-place, they certainly were not. The second message that came through, albeit sometimes between the lines, was that 'culture', cultural differences and cross-cultural conflict were indeed of concern and were significant factors in the experiences of those working in the industry. Whether the issue was difficulty in personal adaptation into a new culture or negotiating land claims and

surface rights, it was agreed that culture and cultural differences played an important and influential role.

Purpose of the study

Building on the insights generated from this preliminary investigation, the focus of my project shifted to reflect a more exploratory study of mining employee and managers' intercultural experiences within their work and lives in South America. The purpose of the project is two-fold: First, I aim to examine mining employees and managers' conceptions of 'culture' and cross-cultural differences, as well as how they viewed the idea of 'intercultural training'. Secondly, I introduce the concept of *critical intercultural communication* training and argue that such a workplace educational program would benefit mining companies' 'triple bottom line' as well as the people working for them. And the timing is right: Business leaders in the mining industry now attend summits such as 'Global Compact', a United Nations initiative on corporate social responsibility. Members of this network urge companies within their industry to adhere to a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards and the environment. In 2002, The International Institute for Environment and Development, in conjunction with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development put forth '*Breaking Ground*', the Mining Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) project report. This project examines key challenges faced by the mining industry as it attempts to implement positive change and proposes new directions towards sustainable development. Meanwhile, the senior vice president of Environmental and Corporate Affairs at TeckCominco, one of Canada's largest mining companies, speaks to the need for change within the Canadian mining industry

and calls for individual perspective shifts to increase the level of integrity and capability amongst and between people working in the mining business.

In order to explore the issues mentioned above, this study draws on three areas of literature: intercultural communication, adult education, and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Research on intercultural communication has focused on the unraveling of 'cultural layers' of values and norms to explore differences between cultures. Communication models have been developed to identify points of communication 'break down' or misunderstanding within a multicultural context. More recently, theories about conflict, and how to effectively manage conflict across cultures have surfaced to address current trends in a tightly interwoven global economy. Finally, research in this field has also focused on the attitude and behaviours of individuals who successfully adapt across cultures and exhibit what is termed 'intercultural competence' (Vulpe, Kealy, Protheroe & MacDonald, 2000). Lacking in the literature are studies of cultural and context-specific intercultural dynamics that influence how individuals and groups perceive and interact with 'others'. Moreover, there is a related lack of explicit analysis of the role systemic and structural societal influences play in cultural identity development.

Literature on adult education centers on the ways in which adult learners perceive, learn and exchange knowledge. Earlier research focused on theoretical attempts to distinguish pedagogy for younger learners from adult learning pedagogy, which Knowles (1968) termed 'Andragogy'. While he focused on the needs, goals and components necessary for creating optimal learning environments and conditions for adults to learn, others, like Paulo Freire (1972) sought social liberation through adult literacy and emancipatory education. Current studies in adult education have examined both formal and informal educational practices through a postmodern or poststructuralist paradigm. Academics and practitioners from the schools of

critical, feminist and neo-marxist theory challenge hegemonic ideology that reinforces oppressive power dynamics in a market-driven society in the name of knowledge, education and workplace training (Luke and Gore, 1992; Holst, 2001; Brookfield, 2001, Fenwick, 2003). Although much has been written about in the area of Human Resource Development (HRD), very little however, has been written about the role of adult education in the contemporary globalized workforce. Do adult educators have a place in the multinational corporate sector? If so, what are their responsibilities in terms of facilitating learning that contributes not only to the self actualization of the employee, but to positive local and global social change?

The literature on corporate social responsibility explores the development and implementation of ethical codes of conduct across various business industries. The historical roots leading to the need for corporate social responsibility dominate much of the work in this area (Walton, 1967; Hopkins, 2002). Debate over local versus global, voluntary versus non-voluntary standards runs rampant against the backdrop of theoretical variations of corporate social responsibilities (Aaronson & Reeves, 2002; Hopkins, 2002). Dominant in the field is the issue of environmental sustainability and accountability. What is not explored from any angle of ethical corporate conduct is the role of employee and management education relevant to internationalized professional leadership roles, as well as intercultural awareness as it pertains to intercultural relations and sustainable cultural diversity.

Research Methodology and Design

My goal was to recruit international working employees and managers in the Canadian mining industry that had experience living and working in South America. As I set forth to gain access to these people, I attended a Canadian Institute of Mining (CIM) student reception in

Vancouver. There, the senior environmental coordinator of a locally-based mining company (which is now in the top five largest mining companies in Canada) introduced me to a variety of company staff including the company's VP of Environment and Corporate Affairs, the CIM's past president and various employees and managers. After hearing about the purpose of my research, each person that I talked to referred me to people they knew in the industry. In addition, the CIM's past president forwarded my research abstract and recruitment letter by email to a professional association listserv that went to hundreds of mining professionals across Canada. Within twenty-four hours of this email being sent out, I was bombarded by emails from all over the world by people working for Canada's top three largest mining companies. Engineers, mine managers, exploration managers and chief financial officers based in South America, South Africa, Iran and Saudi Arabia contacted me expressing interest in my research and requesting to participate. As I was clear in my intention to focus on those experiences of people working in South America, I had to decline approximately a dozen people. Another five people who did fit my South American criteria ended up either being out in the field during the data collection time, or did not have the time due to the transient nature of their work. In the end, seven participants were confirmed as study participants.

In order to explore the various perceptions of intercultural awareness, training and corporate responsibility within the mining industry, in depth interviews and questionnaires were used to carry out data collection. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the process and variables involved in the participants' experiences, exploratory interview style discussions as well as open-ended questionnaires were used to collect data. Capturing the essence of the participants' first hand lived experiences through story telling and narratives aimed to serve as a "preliminary starting point for future evaluative research" (Palys, 2003: 74-75). This study

follows an exploratory or formulative research design process. I have chosen to approach this study through an inductive perspective as I aim to seek out perspectives, experiences, reactions and suggestions from interviewees in order to generate new insights regarding intercultural or cross-cultural training programs.

All seven participants were white male mining employees, managers or mineral exploration consultants who had been, or were still living in South American countries for an average of over three years. All had either a mining engineering, geology or business background. Two participants had previously participated in workshops on cross-cultural adaptation and negotiating across cultures. From April 1st through to May 30th, 2004, three face-to-face interviews were conducted with participants living in Vancouver at the time of the study. I went to their offices and recorded open-ended question interviews that lasted for approximately ninety minutes each. Four participants who were living in Toronto, Peru, Chile and Brasil were sent attached Word document questionnaires by email. They completed the questionnaires, and sent them back to me by email attachment. In some cases, clarification was needed from those who had completed questionnaires. In these cases, follow up emails were sent for additional elaboration from the participants.

Limitations of the study

There are two main limitations inherent in this study. First, all participants who participated through interviews and questionnaires were white middle class men. Consequently, without intending to essentialize the white middle class male, the information collected through this study is predominately from, and limited to this particular perspective. As such, this study's primary limitation is a lack of diversity in inter-dimensional terms of gender, class and race. A

secondary limitation is the study's sample size. Within the time constraints of the data collection period, a total of seven individuals were found to match the study's participant selection criteria. This number does not translate to statistically significant results. Subsequently, findings are based on the experiences, perspectives and ideas of these particular seven participants and should not necessarily be seen as generalizable to the views and opinions of other individuals in the field of mining.

The remainder of this paper consists of four chapters. Chapter 2 is a literature review on intercultural communication, adult education and corporate social responsibility. This section also introduces critical theory and pedagogy as the theoretical framework and argument from which I analyze the literature and collected data. Chapter 3 and 4 present the findings and looks at how the data supports my argument in the discussion section. Finally, in Chapter 5, the paper concludes with a summary as well as recommendations for future research and application.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intercultural Communication

At the foundation of intercultural communication research lies the pursuit of understanding how common beliefs come about, how they influence our behaviour, and in turn interactions between people from different groups, or cultures. Trompenaars (1993) presents the concept of culture in terms of a connected system of meanings – a shared definition of a situation by a group. He explains that “social interaction, or meaningful communication, presupposes common ways of processing information among the people interacting” (p.22). Trompenaars’ model of culture consists of three layers. The first is the “*Outer layer: Explicit products*”. Explicit culture includes concrete factors such as language, food, buildings, fashion and art. The “*Middle layer: Norms and values*” reflects deeper layers of culture, the norms and values of an individual group. Norms are “the mutual sense a group has of what is right and wrong” whereas values “determine the definition of good and bad, and are therefore closely related to the ideals shared by the group” (p.24). The “*Core layer: Assumptions about existence*” looks at the very basic values people strive for, such as survival and how people organize themselves to most effectively deal with their environment (p.25).

Hofstede (1991) took the notion of values and through extensive studies of employees in multinational organizations, identified various categories of value continuums. He argues that differences amongst people could be attributed to the variance in where they stood along continuums such as collectivism, power distance, universalism and uncertainty avoidance. Cultural roots, or, ‘mental programming’, Hofstede argues, lays the unconscious map of these value and belief systems and in turn influence our ways of being, thinking and doing.

Studies in how to communicate across cultures have examined ways in which bridges of empathy are built and used to better understand differences between cultures. Fred Jandt (1998) describes two important aspects of intercultural communication that encapsulate this notion:

First, your effectiveness as an intercultural communicator is in part a function of your knowledge of other people and their culture, and second, that as you learn more about other people from various cultures you also discover more about yourself, which results in an appreciation and tolerance of diversity among people and which makes you a more competent communicator in multicultural settings.

(Jandt, 1998, p.4)

A vast body of interdisciplinary research exists which aims to develop effective interpersonal and inter-group communication within a cross-cultural context (Gudykunst, 1985; Hall, 1976; and Trompenaars, 1993) Concepts such as uncertainty, anxiety, empathy, self-reflection and effective communication intersect to theorize intercultural communication (Gudykunst, 1995). Chen and Starsota (1998) state that “only through interaction with others can a sense of community emerge”. It is only through “competent” communication that this interaction across individuals and communities can take place (p.239). Culture is seen to have a great impact on our ability to communicate, as it generates “distinctive value systems and perceptions of meaning” (p.242).

The predominant focus of research within the field of intercultural communication centers on intercultural sensitivity, intercultural competence, cross-cultural effectiveness, and cultural adaptation. Widely recognized within the field as well as across disciplines, is the importance of intercultural competence in both global and domestic workforce contexts. For example, Adler (2002) argues that:

Cross-cultural management explains the behavior of people in organizations around the world...describes organizational behavior within companies and cultures; compares organizational behavior across countries and cultures; and perhaps, most important, seeks to improve the interaction of co-workers, managers, executives, clients, suppliers, and alliance partners from countries and cultures from around the world.

(Adler, 2002, p.11).

A study by Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman (1978) offered a valuable contribution to the field of international Human Resource Management as it outlined three factors related to intercultural competence: The ability to deal with psychological stress, the ability to effectively communicate and the ability to establish interpersonal relationships (p.155). The success of the employee or manager that works overseas therefore depends on their ability to understand the (host) nationals with whom they work (Kealy, 2000). In attempt to understand and predict the dynamics of cross-cultural differences between people, as well as conceptualize the dimensions of intercultural competence, various theoretical frameworks have been formulated such as Bennett's (1993) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity.

Amidst research on difference, adaptation and cultural sensitivity, academics like Casmir (1997) bring ethics into the discourse of intercultural communication. Culture, he asserts, "as a sense making system, necessarily implies ethics". (p.16). In the process of sense making, what is examined is the notion of 'right and wrong' in a community and what role ethics plays in cultural identity formation. Consequently, perceptions of other communities, whose sense of right and wrong may not necessarily be similar, are brought to the surface. Although standards and values may not be directly apparent, differences in expectations will arise and highlight the issues of standards and values, and in turn, underlying questions of 'ethics' in multicultural settings.

More recently, attention has turned to work in the area of intercultural conflict resolution. Ting-Toomey & Oetzel (2001) explore core cultural value systems that influence our individual expectations in conflict situations and have put forth a mindful approach to intercultural conflict competence. Ting-Toomey's facework theory (1994) offers a framework through which we can see how different cultures attempt to 'save face', or, preserve their honour, integrity and public image in conflict situations.

Little information exists that offers an examination into the role intercultural training programs play in specific sectors such as the mining industry. Moreover, besides a paper presented at a SIETAR USA (Society of Intercultural Education, Training and Research) by Martin & Nakayama (1997), intercultural communication literature seldom offers critical analysis of power and knowledge as it pertains to the context - and culture - specific relations. I argue that the element of power dynamics is too often ignored in intercultural communication discourse. Whether at an individual micro-level or a societal macro level, the notion of power imbalances needs to be made explicit if we are to truly understand the workings of intercultural communication and conflict resolution within the context of mining.

Adult Education

The spectrum of studies in adult education is wide and politically diverse. One common thread that weaves throughout however, is a focus on developing environments conducive to human growth, self-actualization and empowerment in the face of challenges put forth by society. Adult education positions itself at one end of the spectrum in traditional discourses of enlightenment such as training, upgrading and continuing education. At the other end, adult education can be rooted in postmodern ideology and foster emancipation, critique and change

(Boshier, 1996). Whether for the purpose of workplace training and effectiveness or social liberation, at the core of adult education lies experience and transformation. As such, the essence of adult education has traditionally been a focus on how organizational structures of educational programs lend themselves to learner-centered and democratic environments that foster change and growth (Knowles, 1980, Freire, 1978, Mezirow, 1991, Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982).

Paulo Freire's (1978) work on transformative learning is specifically directed towards socioeconomic transformation. Conscientization, or, consciousness-raising through collective critical reflection forms the basis for Freire's approaches to adult learning. The process involves a critical approach to 'reading the world' in terms of how we perceive the world individually and collectively as societies, cultures, and goal-specific groups. Freire realized the usual education methods consisting of filling people with information, or "banking" information, would not work in any meaningful way. His work aimed to transform social structures so they better serve human rather than corporate or elite interests. Through Freire's transformative learning process, the learner forms a new perspective of how they fit into their own society. As a result of this heightened awareness, the learners are empowered to make changes to better their own situations. The ideological basis of his work has influenced numerous adult educators both theoretically and in practice. Jack Mezirow (1991) further develops the transformational learning movement in adult education. His theory explains the process of formulating new perspectives after critically reflecting upon the meaning of an experience and questioning previously held assumptions or beliefs. He claims that the assimilation of new information enables an individual to develop new insights and make decisions based on these insights. A key component of Mezirow's theory is taking action based on new insights derived through perspective change. The catalyst for transformational learning may be a sudden disorienting dilemma, or it may be a

gradual change in perspective resulting in action. Mezirow builds on these ideas and later explores the concept of critical reflection of assumptions (CRA), which, he argues, is “central to understanding how adults learn to think for themselves rather than act on the concepts, values, and feelings of others” (Mezirow, 1998, p.185).

Taylor (1994) argues that the field of adult education and Mezirow’s transformative learning theory offer a framework through which the experience of international workers can be understood. At the core of this analysis is the assumption that employees who work internationally in cultural contexts different than their own are often challenged through differences they encounter in meaning perspectives. Linking intercultural experience with transformative learning and perspectives changes, Taylor claims that when an employee cannot make sense of new meanings they will either reject these new meanings, or accommodate them by attempting to tolerate and/or understand them. Those who explicitly reject their experience are usually those who have the most problems adjusting to their host culture and co-workers. Those who tolerate the differences they experience and, even further, attempt to understand what is happening are more likely to adapt and become interculturally competent. It is these people that enter perspective-altering transformations. Taylor (1997) continues by critically reviewing studies done on transformative learning and conclusively argues that there exists a need for a “more holistic and contextually grounded view of transformative learning in adulthood” (p.51).

In the area of adult educational program planning, some researchers have focused on more technical-rational techniques (Caffarella, 2002), while others have offered more critical perspectives on the planning process. For example, Cervero and Wilson (1994; 1996, quoted in Sork, 2000) address ‘sociopolitical dimensions of planning’ by examining the tensions surrounding power relations and the negotiation of interests. Cervero and Wilson’s critical

inquiry focuses on change and the various power dynamics that are navigated throughout the planning process. Sork (2000) incorporates foundational principles of adult education and proposes a framework that interconnects technical, sociopolitical, and ethical domains involved in planning educational programs for adults.

Postmodern perspectives have problematized much of the more traditional individual-centered work done in adult education due to the missing discourses of knowledge and power. Questions have been raised surrounding what constitutes knowledge in academic discourse, in culture and in educational programs. Contemporary research in adult education has adopted critical theory to address how adults learn to “recognize and challenge ideological domination and manipulation” (Brookfield, 2001) and engage in critical reflection and dialogue. Holst (2001) radicalizes the examination of the relationship of adult education to social change in the context of a globalized market economy by using anti-capitalist neo-marxist perspectives that inject political activism deep into the core of the pedagogy.

Feminist theory has nudged adult education into self-reflection and has offered a framework through which traditional discourse on adult learning and education can be challenged. The basis for such questioning stems from a gaping hole created from an overt lack of examination into the connection between who individuals are - whether learner or teacher - and how this implicates them into societal systems of privilege and oppression vis-à-vis gender, race and class. Feminism brings forth the need to deconstruct and self-reflect on the theoretical underpinnings of knowledge and power that stratifies individuals in society. Numerous feminist academics such as Butterwick (2003, 1996) have examined workplace training as well as the dichotomies of power by engaging reflexive analysis of relationship dynamics within classrooms, institutions and organizations in which they work. Notions of ‘empowerment’ are

quickly deconstructed as the term implies a preconceived and assumed ranking of power (Luke and Gore, 1992). Tisdell (1998) links theory and literature pertaining to feminist pedagogy, critical pedagogy, multicultural education and adult learning to examine her practice as an adult educator. She concludes that the field of adult education, with its emphasis on 'experience' needs to bring gender into the foreground of analysis and examines the "gendered nature of human experience and its relationship to adult learning" (p.153).

One of the most controversial areas of adult education is workplace learning. Fenwick (2000) examines employee training and the creation of identity and meaning within the workplace. In an attempt to bridge what could be considered the left and the right ends of the continuum in adult education, Fenwick (2003) looks at training within the workplace through a critical and feminist perspective. Drawing on the theoretical foundations of critical and feminist management studies, Fenwick proposes a 'critical human resource development (HRD)'. Through frameworks offered by adult education, yet delivered through critical and feminist perspectives, the proposed "critical HRD" would be based on principles that critique the subjugation of knowledge, skills education and relationships by the pursuit of organizational gain. Conversely, it would guide positive organizational change towards justice and compassion.

Studies in adult education that examine challenges in adult education in relation to strengthening civil society from international and indigenous perspectives (Miller, 1997, Zwierzynski, 2003, Hall, 2002, 2000) are not new. Yet, besides work done by Sparks & Butterwick (2004), very little information exists that takes a globalized perspective towards corporate workplace education, training and development that implicates the individual learner to larger societal systems. Millions upon millions of individuals worldwide are crossing borders and cultures to work and conduct business for their companies. A framework based upon adult

education principles, including critical approaches to inquiry is needed to address issues relevant to a highly migrant and internationally dynamic global workforce. Educational research is needed to better reflect a deeper, more critical examination into the understanding of cultural adaptation and sustainability in worker training and development programs within the context of a growing multinational corporate global market place.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Decisions that the largest companies in the world - transnational corporations - are making between the countries in which they operate have major political, economic, social and environmental impact and consequences. Up until the 1970s, businesses followed a narrow profit-making path, guided by the only group they felt a responsibility towards: their shareholders. Since then, citizens have become more critical and distrustful of government and business. Meanwhile, through public outreach and education, environmental and social activist groups have raised public awareness of the planet's fragile ecology and human rights issues around the world. From highly publicized business scandals such as those involving Enron and Worldcom, to mining disasters impacting the environment and displacing thousands of communities in developing nations, now more than ever, a sense of urgency has developed around corporate social responsibility.

The notion of ethics in business is not new. For years, managers and employees have viewed certain sets of values and principles outlined by government standards or company missions as guidelines for practice and behaviour inside a company. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) aims to take good business ethics beyond the perimeters of the organization and into the communities it operates – concerning itself with both social and

environmental issues (Hopkins, 2002). The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines corporate social responsibility as "...a balanced approach for organizations to address economic, social and environmental issues in a way that aims to benefit people, communities and society" (Leonard and McAdam, 2003). Issues involved are numerous and include human rights; workplace and employee issues; unfair business practices; organizational governance; environmental issues; marketplace and consumer issues; community involvement; and social development (ibid). How these concepts translate into practice depends on what social responsibility means to a corporation.

Aaronson and Reeves (2002) define CSR as "business decision-making linked to ethical values, compliance with legal requirements, and respect for people, communities and the environment". The authors, however, continue by writing that there is "no universally shared definition of global corporate responsibility..." (p.2). Everywhere, the concern for social responsibility has increased and "turbo-charged" globalization (Hopkins, 2002). In an attempt to answer questions surrounding the balance between "economic and non-economic corporate responsibilities", Brummer (1991) outlined five theories: The classical theory of corporate social responsibility; the response to the classical theory; the stakeholder theory; the social demandingness theory; and the social activist theory. Six criteria are used to differentiate the five theories: Motive; relation to profit; groups affected by decisions; type of act; type of effect; and expressed or ideal interests of the group affected. The stakeholder theory has the most significant influence in relation to corporate social responsibility. Various individuals have a wide range of direct and indirect interests, relationships and therefore stakes in the corporation. Max Clarkson defines stakeholders as "persons or groups who have, or claim, ownership, rights or interests in a corporation and its activities, past present or future" (Hopkins, 2002, p.18).

Aaronson and Reeves (2002) highlight key initiatives that have taken place to monitor corporate social responsibility. Codes of conduct, for example are formal statements of a company's values and business practices that "are designed to guide the business and their employees as they operate in nations with different political, social, and economic cultures" (p.6). Described as "aspirational strategies", these guidelines describe how corporations and their employees should behave. More often, the term 'corporate code of ethics' is being used to reflect a broader set of principles that "state the moral obligation of the company in its relations with a wide audience of subjects or stakeholders" (Hopkins, 2002, p.65). Groups such as the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES), Social Accountability (SA) International (formerly Council on Economic Priorities, and The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) work with businesses to help them develop means to describe and report their social, environmental and economic activities (Aaronson and Reeves, 2002, p.7).

David Petrsek, the Senior Director of Policy at Amnesty International recently wrote a paper on Business and Human Rights (2003). Amnesty International, an NGO working to protect human rights around the world, have a committee dedicated exclusively to monitoring human rights issues related to the mining industry. Referring to research done by Amnesty International on human rights violations stemming from public rejections of mining activity in areas such as Tambogrande, in Northern Peru, Petrsek focuses on corporate accountability and commitment to human rights principles. He argues that voluntary initiatives are good, yet not good enough to effectively implement such principles.

Various strategies have been created to address social responsibility issues at a global level. Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General implemented the UN Global Compact - nine internationally accepted principles of labour standards, human rights, and environmental

protection. The International Labour Organization (ILO) enacted the Tripartite Declaration, a code of conduct addressing social justice, human and labour rights, yet not environmental rights. The OECD has also promoted CSR through rules and guidelines found in the Declaration of International Investment and Multinational Enterprises. Such guidelines were hoped to provide cross-border investor countries guidance about their rights and responsibilities. Since the 1970's, the OECD has reviewed and revised their guidelines based on recommendations and negotiations from a wide range of groups lobbying for various means of implementing governing codes of conduct (Aaronson and Reeves, 2002). Hopkins (2002) cites The Caux Principles as being the "most wide reaching" international standard of code of ethics (p.73). Developed by an international group of business leaders from Japan, Europe and the US, the first meeting was held in Caux, Switzerland in 1986. The Caux Principles have three parts: The first being a preamble to the background of the principles, the second part contains general guiding principles and the third part provides an outline for how companies should behave towards its six types of stakeholders – customers, employees, owners/investors, suppliers, competitors and communities.

The seven principles that were formed were rooted in two basic ethical ideals: *Kyosei* and human dignity. *Kyosei* is a Japanese concept and means "living and working together for the common good" and human dignity refers to "the sacredness or value of each person as an end, not simply as a means to the fulfillment of other individuals' purposes..." (p.73). According to Hopkins, the principles have served as an international baseline from which consensus can emerge. The Caux Stakeholder Principles state that companies should:

- collaborate with those forces in the community dedicated to raising standards of health, education, workplace safety and economic well being;
- promote and stimulate sustainable development and play a leading role in preserving and enhancing the physical environment and conserving the Earth's resources;
- support peace, security, diversity and social integration;
- respect the integrity of local cultures; and
- be good corporate citizens through charitable donations, educational and cultural contributions and employee participation in community and civic affairs.

(Hopkins, 2002, p.75)

Hopkins (2002) notes that no general agreement of terms exists that encapsulate the broad range of concepts and definitions associated with Corporate Social Responsibility. "Without a common language, we don't really know that our dialogue with companies is being heard and interpreted in a consistent way" (p.9). This flaw leads companies to either interpret CSR in whatever way suits them, or to dismiss the notion entirely. Aaronson and Reeves (2002) argue that voluntary guidelines (such as those created by the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises) are not enough to address problems surrounding corporate governance. They claim that direct governmental actions are needed to reinforce labour, environmental and ethical standards in general. They also point out that there is a lack of clarity and follow-through in most governments' policies. Although there are many policies in place that promote CSR, there is a lack of consistency and conceptual framework. "This piecemeal approach leads to incoherence and loss of credibility with those elements of civil society calling for a greater emphasis on CSR (p.vii in foreword by Quinton, in Aaronson and Reeves, 2002). Webley (quoted in Hopkins, 2002), found that most of the companies' codes he studied were broad in scope and few provided "a mechanism for employees to report an infringement" (p.85). Further, Aaronson and Reeves (2002) argue that:

Some policymakers and observers disagree about who can bring complaints of violations, about whether the Guidelines are standards or principles (which have different legal force), and whether firms are responsible for the actions of their contractors and subcontractors.

(Aaronson and Reeves, 2002, p.10)

Fundamentally, what is at issue for most critics is accountability. Most guidelines are unable to provide information on processes for making corporations accountable for their behaviours. Kitson and Campbell (cited in Hopkins, 2002) suggest that in order for codes of conducts of ethics or conduct to be successfully implemented, that they should be:

The result of an extensive period of research, consultation and discussion by, on behalf of and between all affected parties; owned by all who are affected by it and are not merely imposed by executive fiat; backed by a programme of staff development and training that is ongoing and that opens the code up to amendment in the light of experience.

(Hopkins, 2002, p.85)

In Canada, the North-South Institute's Canadian Development Report (Hibler and Beamish, 1998) provides an overview of Canadian corporations' efforts towards socially responsible corporate policy and practices. Specifically, questions are raised surrounding Canadian firms' social and environmental responsibilities with respect to the developing world. Criticisms of the traditional view that corporations had "...one social responsibility: to maximize their profits as long as they adhere to the 'rules of the game, without deception or fraud'" (p.4) have transgressed to incorporate an inquiry into the issue of human rights, social and environmental justice. North-South researchers Roy Culpepper and Gail Whiteman outline the ways in which companies can become socially responsible:

- By reintegrating ethics into business culture
- By adopting a systems-centered approach to stakeholder management. This supposes that the firm's long-term interests must take into account the welfare of its employees, customers, the communities in which it operates, and the health of the natural environment.

- By adopting an international code of conduct that addresses social and environmental inequities.
- By broadening corporations' accountability for their actions and unintended consequences

(Hibler and Beamish, 1998, p.4)

As mentioned previously, in 2002, the MMSD (Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development) Report entitled *Breaking New Ground* was published with the intent to address numerous growing concerns and mistrust of the mining industry. The project, which was created in partnership amongst numerous organizations related to the mining industry bearing a wide range of interests, aimed to examine the challenges and mistrust the industry has faced vis-à-vis its divergent conglomerate of stakeholders. The purpose of the project was to reach four main objectives:

1. To assess the global mining and minerals sector in terms of the transition from to sustainable development
2. To identify how the services provided through the minerals supply chain can be delivered in ways that support sustainable development
3. To propose key elements for improving the minerals system, and
4. To build platforms of analysis and engagement for ongoing communication and networking among stakeholders in the sector.

Over the course of the two-year project and stakeholder consultation, nine main challenges were identified as being the most pressing for the mining industry. Table 1.1 on the following page summarizes these challenges:

Table 1.1 Summary of nine key challenges facing the mining industry

Challenge	Description
1. Viability of the mining industry	Companies need to survive and succeed if they are to contribute to sustainable development. This requires such components as an educated and committed workforce, social license to operate and good management.
2. The control, use, and management of land	The competition over land use is usually coupled with a lack of planning to balance possible uses.
3. Minerals and economic development	The ability to contribute to poverty alleviation and economic development at a national level, frameworks must be put in place for the creation and management of mineral wealth.
4. Local communities and mines	Social upheaval and unequal distribution of and benefits and costs within communities creates social tension. Ensuring that a community sustains itself after a mine closes is seldom done.
5. Mining, minerals and the environment	Managing the impact of immense quantities of water, acid drainage requires improvement in the assessment, environmental management and planning systems.
6. An integrated approach to using minerals	Environmental efforts to promote resource efficiency, recycling and equitable mineral use patterns aim to address need for more equitable access to resources worldwide. More focus on long term social and economic dimensions is needed.
7. Access to information	Public participation in decision-making is key to building trust and cooperation between stakeholders. This requires publicly available and accessible information that is of high quality and credibility.
8. Artisanal and small scale mining	The need to address the issues surrounding the people working in small-scale mining, as well as the conflict involved with larger mining companies and government.
9. Sector governance: Roles, responsibilities and instruments for change	The need for new integrated systems of governance: Codes, guidelines and systems are needed to promote better regulation, practice and sustainable development.

(Breaking New Ground, MMSD, 2002)

Conclusions made by the MMSD report include considerable social dimensions. Some of these aspects point to the need for capacity building and the development of new skills; approaching the notion of 'best practice' through decentralized and locally-based solutions; and the move towards collective efforts for positive change. These efforts call for consistent change amongst all companies within the mining industry at local, national and global levels in order to change the industry's tainted social and environmental legacy.

A seemingly admirable amassment and list of 'shoulds' from diverse efforts in policy development begs the question of how these suggestions, guidelines, or any list of principles get carried out in practice. Besides work being done by such researchers as Bury (2003, 2001) who has examined the impact of transnational mining corporations on culture and livelihoods in Peru, missing in the CSR literature is theoretical insight into what frameworks, structures or processes multinationals take to implement any given code of ethics or socially responsible corporate mandate. A lack of study into tangible steps necessary in transforming companies into more socially responsible entities points to a disconnect between top-down paper heavy policy and bottom-up ground practice. Although many aspects are inter-dependently needed to achieve such lofty goals, one area that often lies unexplored is the education of individuals involved in the process of moving organizations into more sustainable directions. What is needed therefore, is an investigation into the models available in the fields of adult education and intercultural communication as potential vehicles to helping bridge this disconnect.

Conceptual framework and argument

The intent of this study is to explore new directions in intercultural training program curriculum development by introducing the concept of 'critical intercultural training'. I argue

that critical theory and pedagogy provide a strong theoretical framework through which the predominant concepts in intercultural communication, adult education and corporate social responsibility can be integrated and concomitantly reimagined. A vast amount of work done in anti-racist education, and feminist pedagogy, and most recently, anti-corporate globalization education also espouse critical key concepts that commonly aim to question, challenge and transform societal status quos that contribute to social (and environmental) oppression. Writings and research by Katz (1978), hooks (1994), Dei (1996), and May (1999) for example, argue that in order to extinguish the implicit and explicit forms of racism that surround us, our personal attitudes, assumptions and positionality in regards to our power and privilege need to be understood. Moreover, the social structures and consequent asymmetrical power relations that feed these perspectives need examining and challenging. With regards to intercultural communication programs, I argue that it is not enough, for example, to examine general and/or superficial layers of cultural difference. It is imperative that deeper and complex layers of cultural identity that influence the ways of being and doing are directly and explicitly examined in terms of their socio-political meaning vis-à-vis how we, as individuals, as well as globalized corporate systems and structures are implicated within these meanings. In the area of anti-globalization education, Held (1999) examines ‘the changing nature of the political community in the context of globalization’ (p.84). His work serves as a guiding reminder that a critical approach to an educational model such the one suggested in this study needs address the complex interconnected political associations that encompass any globalized sector.

Critical theory was born from Western Marxist philosophy. At the core of this theory lie interpretations of “mass cultural relations of society...and... society’s relationship to the economy” (Kanpol, 1999, p.27). As Kanpol explains:

The roots of critical theory depict how the Industrial Revolution transformed Europe. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, the development of commodity-based societies propelled capitalism to its peak in many countries. Within this capitalistic (economic/political) system, race, class, and gender divisions became increasingly apparent.

(ibid, p.28).

Teachers in the American public school system began to raise questions about curriculum development that “acknowledges the important underlying ethical and normative dimensions that structure classroom decisions and experiences” (Giroux, 1997, p.3). Debates on the culture of positivism and historical consciousness upheld a plight for the unmasking of social control that presented itself through “common sense” reasoning and assumptions about norms.

Gramsci called this form of control “ideological hegemony,” a form of control which not only manipulated consciousness but also saturated and constituted the daily experiences that shaped one’s behavior. Hence, ideological hegemony referred to those systems of practices, meanings, and values which provided legitimacy to the dominant society’s institutional arrangements and interest.

(ibid. p, 6)

Related to teaching, critical pedagogy is derived from critical studies in education and culture. Core components of critical pedagogy “must be viewed under the guiding epistemological umbrella of modernism and postmodernism” (p.31). Critical pedagogy is informed by postmodernism. “In a postmodern world view, there can be no universal truth or universal reason” (Lyotard, 1984, Lyotard, 1993, quoted in Kanpol, 1999, p.32). Questions are raised through a postmodern lens such as “whose world view are we trying to understand? How is singular and group identity constructed?” (p.32). Kanpol (1999) states that what is at stake in postmodernism, and therefore critical pedagogy, is change. Through questioning and deconstructing of social and human differences, focus is shifted towards the under-privileged and

the oppressed. He continues by claiming that “it is not enough to simply understand and/or deconstruct differences within a critical postmodern frame of reference...the critical pedagogue always seeks just and fair ways to alter a system...” (p.33).

Henry Giroux (1983, 1996, 1997) and Michael Apple (1999) offer what may be the strongest voices and critique in the sphere of educational studies. Feeding the fuel for his discourse and theoretical argument is the struggle for what he calls *radical democracy*: “the effort to expand the possibility for social justice, freedom, and egalitarian social relations in the educational, economic, political and cultural domains that locate men, women and children in everyday life” (Kincheloe, McLaren & Steinberg (Eds). p.ix. in Giroux, 1997). Alternative paths to inquiry such as looking at “subjectivities or analysis of “what is” vis-à-vis “what should be”” (p.x) offer escape from dominant educational canons that support and maintain the dominant economic and social structures.

Critical pedagogy is the means through which teachers bridge critical theory and practice by placing issues relating to social justice and democracy at the core of the curriculum. Through this curricular paradigm, the social and economic realities of the particular contexts in which school sites are found can be addressed and challenged. Through this process, both teachers and students may transgress the well-intentioned, yet oppressive structures that reinforce debilitating social and cultural divisions. Through this curricular paradigm, the social and economic realities of the particular contexts in which school sites are found can be addressed and challenged. Through this process, both teachers and students may transgress the well-intentioned, yet oppressive structures that reinforce debilitating social and cultural divisions.

I argue that critical theory and pedagogy offer an avenue for intercultural communication theory and practitioners to critically develop their field. Within the context of an exponentially

growing corporate global economy, I also argue that it is the moral responsibility of intercultural educators to create spaces within their programs for participants to critically reflect on issues surrounding social and cultural constructs such as individual and systemic power relationships within the industries they work in and the diverse cultures within which they work.

Parallels can be drawn between how critical pedagogy works within the schooling system and how it could be applied to intercultural communication training/education. The study's participant interviews and questionnaires seek to understand Canadian mining employees' lived experiences and perceptions of cross-cultural and intercultural issues during their time spent in various Latin American communities. Insight into the experiential and sometimes transformative nature of these participants' knowledge can provide intercultural educators with a deeper understanding of the complex and intersecting issues at play within a North-South American mining context. As a result, intercultural educators may be able to more accurately address the needs and concerns of mining employee program participants. Secondly, intercultural educators could foster a deeper level of participant self-reflection and sensitivity around the historical, socio-political, economical and environmental thorny issues inherent within this particular natural resource based sector. Lastly, through such facilitated reflection, program participants and educators could consider the implications of these issues as they pertain their professional roles and to the development of more sustainable and ethical mining policy and practices.

Critical pedagogy would benefit current intercultural training by providing a new perspective and direction to program curriculum. Such a paradigm could support a deeper analysis and understanding of power relations vis-à-vis cultural identity and inter-personal dynamics. Instructors and participants could question and challenge previously held assumptions about their own culture, society, and the structure and systems that govern it. At the core of

critical inquiry lies the need for deeper analysis into contemporary systemic structures of capitalism and their impact on intercultural relations at local, national and international levels. Key to this process lies a need for self-reflexive investigation of the individual and their relationship to others in terms of power relations stemming from race, gender, and class, as well as the socio-economic and political historical roots that influence these dimensions.

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to first explore Canadian mining industry employees' and managers' perceptions of 'culture', cultural differences as well as their views on how intercultural training may address these issues. Furthermore, the aim was to see whether the participants felt that there were connections between intercultural training and corporate social responsibility in terms of the development and maintenance of ethical and sustainable policy and practice within their field.

Results: An overview

Dominant themes that arose from the data evolved around individual lived experiences. All participants experienced difficulties in adapting either personally or professionally to the culture they relocated to. All participants experienced what Taylor (1994) terms cross-cultural based transformative learning through critical incidents while working internationally. It was these incidents that often formed the basis of the participants' negative or positive perceptions of the particular culture they were working in. Stemming from either specific situations or observations made over time, there was a common interest for the majority of the participants in promoting or contributing to positive social change through dialogue, education and /or the development of community relations with people surrounding the mine site. There was support yet a simultaneous skepticism of intercultural training programs based on prior experience and/or limiting views of the purpose of intercultural training. A summary of the data is presented to outline the main results of the study (Table 1). What ensues is a more detailed examination of the findings' key elements through narrative-style quotes from the participants. Pseudonyms are used to maintain participant confidentiality.

Table 3.1 Findings & analysis summary

FINDING RESULTS	IMPLICATIONS
Perceptions of culture and difference	
1. Individual & family cross-cultural adaptation difficulties	- Need for general as well as culture & context specific intercultural education: Development of deeper understanding of host culture; strategies for successful cross-cultural adaptation professionally and personally
2. Transformational learning and new insights gained	- Experiential learning and personal development: The need to examine the role of experienced employees as internal training and development mentors and curriculum designers
3. Stereotyping & assumptions of the host country's culture	- Need for general intercultural education as well as critical reflexive examination of assumptions, values and beliefs
4. Implicitly/explicitly assumed positions of cultural, socio-economic and political superiority	- Need for anti-racist, feminist and anti-globalization pedagogy in intercultural training programs to address issues of class, race and asymmetrical power relations vis-à-vis cultural sustainability and global social justice.
Views on intercultural training	
1. Limited knowledge or misinformation about the purpose of intercultural training programs	- Effort needed to educate upper management and Human Resource Managers of purpose and benefits of intercultural training - More research needed to assess the needs of international managers and employees based on the context of their industry and the socio-political underpinnings of the host country's culture.
2. Skepticism: Beliefs that cultural sensitivity and adaptation cannot be learned through education	- More research needed into the impact and effect of intercultural training programs
3. Concern: the risk of stereotyping	- Importance of communicating and emphasizing the dangers of cultural generalization and essentialism.
3. Disconnects between curriculum content and learner needs: Issues of relevancy.	- Culture specific information deemed more useful: Culture and context or industry specific information required to be incorporated into general intercultural training sessions.
3. Need for staged approach to training: Progression of workshops based on	- Format and timing of the training delivery should match the learners' level of experience

employees' experience	and knowledge - Commitment from company upper management as well as resource allocation for training personal required to enhance the impact of training programs
4. Ability to communicate in host country's language	- Resources needed for intensive language training prior and during international assignment
5. Suggested round-table discussions with all 'cultures' involved in project	- Need for intercultural education facilitators to create space and ensure equal representation during intercultural training and dialogue sessions - More effort needed to form alliances with community groups to develop more culturally heterogeneous and holistic intercultural learning exchanges
5. Different focus of training required for middle level and upper level management	- Training program content and format needs to be relevant depending on the roles and responsibilities of the individual professional
6. Recognition of both formal & informal methods of learning	- Research needed to capture informal learning systems that exist in the expatriate community: An examination needed into what benefits and what harm may potentially result
6. Varying perceived intentions of intercultural training	- A critical examination into the intentions of intercultural training is needed: Who benefits from the training?
Connections to sustainable development	
1. Need for community relations and involvement	- Opportunities and potential new directions for the role of intercultural education programs in the mining industry
2. Intercultural training should be incorporated into mining companies' perspective towards sustainable development.	- Need for critical model of intercultural training to examine structural and systemic influences of mining corporations on local populations
3. Need for improved personal relations and interaction between local community members and mining operation employees	Use of intercultural communication models and frameworks for multi-stakeholder and multi-layered approach to democratic planning and work team process.
4. Need to increase understanding of host country's culture, including its history & socio-political situation in order to develop trust and incorporate a multi-stakeholder approach to planning and development.	- Need for an examination into new roles and directions of intercultural training frameworks: Building on existing models to facilitate multi-stakeholder approach to dialogue and intercultural learning

Perceptions of culture and cultural differences

All participants agreed, at varying degrees that deeper levels of cultural understanding were very important for cross-cultural adaptation. There was a positive consensus about the importance of being culturally sensitive and knowledgeable about a country's culture, socio-political history, and economy. Notions of what 'culture' was and how it entered into workplace dynamics were linked to individual experiences and the particular roles employees had during their time in South America. The question of what role intercultural training could play in relation to furthering the development of ethical and sustainable policy and practice in the mining industry was the most challenging and generated the most diverse interpretations. The result was a mixture of reactions ranging from a questioning of what "sustainable" really meant to issues of accountability, the importance of (North American) standards, 'good business' and ethical leadership.

In order to explore perceptions of culture and cultural differences, participants were asked questions about their experiences in adapting to the new culture they were sent to work in as well as cultural challenges they encountered during the process of cross-cultural adaptation. What insights they gained or, 'lessons learned' through these experiences were also explored. This information further contributed to a better understanding of the participants' evaluative outlook on the situation. The impact culture had on work and adjusting to difference in work styles and leadership was a core commonality between participants. Some components of cultural impact were functional and pragmatic in nature:

probably the most challenging, other than the initial moving in – from a gringo point of view – where we can find food that we were used to...where we could find safe meats...safe fish ... that was a little tough and it wore on you after a while. Like - what were we going to do for dinner? ...figuring out what we were going to

have, how we could adapt our cooking style to survive and keep the kids happy and well fed.

- Bill

...The easiest and the most challenging aspects of working in Peru are the same thing, and that's dealing with the culture...when you're dealing with their culture, one mistake, and you can easily offend someone so that they'll never do business with you again. A real challenge is genuinely dealing with – and when I say culture what I'm talking about is...even just their methods of work ...because then you have to understand why they think like they think (of which I still don't) but I now understand that there are reasons for them to think like this. One of them is that there is historically a lack of money all the time. So the logic states that if you don't have enough money, it's a lot easier to buy 14 bags of cement 4 times rather than 56 bags a month. Because 56 bags of cement – that's a lot of out lay of cash right on the onset. So it's always that. And on top of that, work is really scarce. – unemployment is really high. Therefore labour is quite cheap. Therefore, if you have money, you can afford 3-4 helpers. So it's very rare that you are talking directly to the person you have to talk to. You are always talking to someone's assistant... It's very difficult at times.

- Andrew

Other participants viewed the impact of culture from a historical standpoint, which informed the current legal systems they inevitably had to contend with:

The history and social landscape are a determinant of the culture - witness the impact of the Spanish and the prevalence of machismo attitudes. Understanding the history of the legal code is important from the standpoint of how it may be materially different than what one would expect... Another example is the scars and attitudes that persist in Chile from the Pinochet era.

- Mel

Underlying perceptions of culture and 'the other' surfaced through expanded upon responses to questions. Every participant demonstrated implicit and/or sometimes explicit assumptions of either themselves or the host culture. On numerous occasions, comments pointed to underlying beliefs of self-conceptions of superiority. These assumptions often seem to play through organizational socio-political structures systems. Inter-personal relationships either in the office or in the field sometimes hinted at relational power-knowledge dynamics of superiority and subordination:

to get away from "I am white man hear me roar", you have to appreciate where these people come from; why they do what it is they do. And, as frustrating as it is that they don't work very hard, ...or, they work extremely hard but they don't work in the right direction, they need guidance or whatever the example may be. It all goes down to - they've been doing that for hundreds of years. And, it's very hard to ...you know, change a course of a river over night.

- Andrew

Greatest frustrations...include communication ...but I would also add security, as there was a fair degree of social unrest in Peru. While the people were generally quite warm, in a riot, they were less so!! As well, we personally were victims of some petty crime as were some of our colleagues. Learning how to "get things done" with the inefficiencies inherent in the system, was a challenge...

- George

The biggest challenge is the apparent lower level of work ethic and forward thinking. Sometimes there is a stronger social structure in the working environment which results in a 'do as you're told and don't ask questions' attitude to subordinates. In this way they do not get the same chance to contribute and less chances to develop. On ethics you need to realize that this is local pare and realize that this is cultural.

- Peter

In addition, some observations of experiences pointed to imposed power-relations reflecting the assumed superior role of the expatriate. One of the participants reflected on his own experience with a home-locating service that was provided by the company. Another participant relayed the frustrations he had working with 'the host nationals' and how those challenges were perceived to be resolved. Later, that same participant recounted an interesting 'cultural mishap':

This was a foreign experience for us in the sense that this was very elitist type of approach to going and finding a house. And it was more akin to a stratified society, which Chile is. You have a very, very elite both political and economically elite group of people down there and like 20 families control the whole country...They approach expatriates much in that way - you're an elite person so I'll treat you like that. Which is okay, but again, that kind of shields you from the reality of the place. In the end we found our own apartment...

- Carl

the Peruvian surveyors, quite often, did not do as we wanted them to. A lot of the day to day functions, they just dropped the ball on, forgot, weren't organized enough to actually go out, do the project in an efficient manner, come back in to the office with the data that we needed and carry on like that."..." Quite often, I really think it was a fear of failure that they had in sort of the lesser educated people of Peru that they would always say "yah yah yah" okay I understand, they'd go out do a job come back and it was not at all what you wanted or not at all what you'd expected. And they'd say well it's not my fault. But we ingrained in them that 'yes, it is your fault', ...you are responsible for that particular aspect – we want you to take ownership and near the end of the project, we overcame that sort of difference. And near the end, and they are doing quite well now, but it took a long time to get them to take responsibility for their own actions, to actually think and plan and apply common sense.

- Bill

Recounted stories from years of experience often unveiled underlying influences of contemporary globalized capitalism that subtly and sometimes not so subtly dichotomized the very people that aimed to work together:

There was only sort of one sort of bad cultural mishap that occurred during our whole time where there was this definitely 'us against them' mentality - Expats and Peruvian nationals. And that was when there were riots going on in the town, student riots at the university. They were complaining to the government about funding. And they actually stormed our town site and came to the gates. Security stopped them and they went away. But the expat community didn't feel safe at that particular time so there was a mass exodus of expats to go to Lima. And the company actually hired 7 planes to take all of our expats families out but not the Peruvian families. It was only afterwards that someone in the company said 'hey wait a minute – what about the nationals'? And they made an exception and took the Peruvian expat families out whose children attended the international school. It was only the after the fact that they said okay – we'll take out the national families who kids attend the international school down to Lima, because the school moved to Lima for two weeks. Our families lived in a hotel while all of this political unrest was going on at the town site. And that caused some strife but even though no one talks about it, you could tell, hey this family's gringo, this families' national...one of my better friends...he never did talk to me about it but I knew...and there was nothing I could do, as an employee of the company who made this decision. You know in the end it kind of worked out but you know, he had friends that were kind of left behind, and all of a sudden, you have all the expat families that just left...and left the nationals kinda to fend for themselves. And they knew that once the expats were gone, the security level might not be has severe, it might not be as strong as it was...

It was a money issue. And we'll get these expat families out because if any harm comes of these expat families. It's going to be big trouble. I mean every one of us would say – 'Ok see ya! We can't have our family in danger. Whereas the Peruvians, they sorta live there, and I think we were – the expats might have been targeted as an entity to get the government's attention. Say we were inconvenienced we were held hostage say at the town site. I mean that would draw huge international attention through the media. Where as if they hijacked some nationals, it would be nationals against nationals. It wouldn't be as great a thing.

In that particular instance, I don't think any sort of training or ...preparation could have solved the situation. It's was...it was I mean, it's how it happened. But there's deep-seated resentment I think to this day over this incident. And maybe the company could have acted a little bit differently or explained what was happening maybe a little different – why they were doing it. There wasn't much explanation....

It (resentment between expats and Peruvian nationals) was transparent. You couldn't see it but really you knew it was there. You know 'sorry it happened, but we gotta move on'...

- Bill

This particular incident points to an urgent need to examine economic and class issues that are at play amidst the context of the mining industry. On the surface, this story aims to demonstrate differences in culture. Yet in a case where expatriates and host nationals are pitted against each other due to reasons out of their control, one cannot ignore larger forces at issue that stem from a globalized free market economy: An economy system that polarizes culturally diverse working communities.

Views on intercultural training and education

To what degree or in what way participants felt intercultural training was important varied. Moreover, there was a mixture of opinions from the participants who had previously taken intercultural training. Some felt their training was quite eye-opening while others did not feel that the impact of the training was significant at all. Most did not view generic and broad approaches to intercultural training as helpful. Instead, context-specific comparative

analysis of cultural dimensions and social issues intertwined within the mining industry were considered more relevant and applicable. Others felt that although any form of training or information was a 'good thing', what really mattered was an individual's character or personal traits. The key to successful cross-cultural adaptation was, for instance often viewed as being based on a person's predisposition to open-mindedness, humility and curiosity. Slants on what purpose intercultural training served also varied. Explicitly or implicitly, at the one end of the continuum, there was a fairly basic and even limited view on what intercultural training should or could offer. This view reflected either a survival or utilitarian perspective. Through probing questions about what skills and information the participants felt employees needed to enter into international work assignments, there was a prevailing insistence for the depth of knowledge one should have prior to entering into an overseas project. This view hinted at more critical reflection about 'culture' and how it related to inter-personal and culture-based dynamics in international settings. At this end of the continuum, a call for more socio-politically informed upper-management, deeper dialogue and development of collaborative community relations was made and connected to the notion of mutual intercultural communication, sensitivity and education.

I feel any kind of training is important. But I don't necessarily believe that this kind of training will lead you to success. I think that training is - it's a window or it's an opportunity to provide a window into a local culture or a working environment for an expatriate and their family that says these are the kind of things you should expect or not expect...I think it (training) is important, but it doesn't necessarily have to be formal...I think a large part of it can be informal, it can be directed advice as to 'maybe you outta read this, read that'... maybe you outta talk to your peers and friends...your training is only as good as your willingness to believe it. So...I don't think it's critical to success. I think your own humility and personal beliefs systems is more ah ...I would be more interested to evaluate that for an expatriate that I was sending overseas then whether or not they could take a course correctly...I think the discussion or the training around intercultural awareness is critical for a lot of things.

- Carl

Maybe it's even the definition of what culture is...but culture is the culmination of history, politics, economics war, pestilence, religion and there's a pendulum within every culture as to how to get things done, how to do stuff and how to respect people within that culture. But that understanding that it's not a black box. It's not square, it's an amoebae. It changes with time, it morphs and it can change rapidly at times. That kind of guideline discussion awareness building thing would be great. And I think if one can line it with anecdotal – real anecdotal – experiences or quotes...stories...it's very powerful (for me). It's just in context. Case base teaching is more effective than book learning.

- Carl

There was often a sense of misunderstanding or assumptions about what intercultural training involved. When specifically asked about intercultural preparedness, some participants offered a basic 'do's and don't's' social etiquette utilitarian view:

Apart from the basic customs, most of the customs are best learned in the country. Eg. If invited for dinner at 7pm in Chile, never arrive on time; expected to be arriving later...Certain hand customs in Brazil are very offensive...

- David

Later, when asked about the skills and information they felt individuals needed before embarking on an international sojourn, the same participant outlined a more comprehensive opinion that demonstrated a call for increased intercultural sensitivity:

an understanding of why a country's culture is different whether social or political; the differences are often the result of the country's history and a knowledge of the country's history definitely helps one in cross-cultural adaptation – knowing why something is done differently is much easier for one to accept.

- David

This pointed to the likely possibility that employees and upper management may often be misinformed as to the purpose and objectives of intercultural training programs for international professionals. Participants who had previously participated in intercultural training programs had a wide range of opinions on their experiences and the impact of the workshops. Some offered positive reviews and found the programs to be useful from both a personal and professional

standpoint. Others had less than favourable comments that pointed to a disconnect between educational program curriculum and relevancy in terms of learner needs:

I found the training to be invaluable...I attended after I had been living in Chile for a while. The training should be considered a development tool that opens the person's eyes --- the skills come later with experience. Important points in the training included a study of the inherent differences in cultures such as our perception of time, family values, ethics.... With regard to adaptation, it provided awareness of matters such as length of time to negotiate, and the process is as important as the outcome, building relationships, and different classes in a society, etc. There were also a sizeable component of former ex-pats in attendance, which was very valuable...The task of training is to open the eyes of the individual to looking at culture(s) in a different light, and hopefully he/she will have a more open mind and realize that there are many different ways of seeing the world, and there is no magic formula.

- Mel

This session was not useful in that the consultant was not experienced and we were not experienced enough to ask the right questions. In some cases they had never been exposed to the country in question...The training covered some cultural and geographic aspects, but was not strong on business aspects...the training did not prove very useful.

- Peter

The notion of informal versus formal learning arose on many occasions with the majority of participants claiming that experiential, or, 'hands-on' training on the job was the most effective means of learning. Others explored the notion of learning 'exchanges':

the impact of the training on my experience as an expatriate, and its effect on my interaction with local professionals in the workplace, it was relatively minor... While generally informative, it created no epiphany for me saying, aha, that's the key to survival here. Looking back, I would say that it probably provided minor back up to the things I learned "hands-on" on the job, or informally in discussions with other expats who were either learning along with me, or had more experience than I had at the time.

- George

The training is important if it is well planned but cannot fully prepare an individual. The best training will be the first year's experience.

- Peter

An idea I toyed with was to have an informal round table discussion in the work place with the Nationals to exchange views on local customs / practice/ culture and how the “gringos” could help the Nationals understand the North Americans and vice versa.

- Mel

Participants who had already taken intercultural training had suggestions regarding content, format or timing of training delivery:

In a perfect world, the training would be extended to the spouse as well, and ideally after the employee has been in the country for say ...six months. Why? First the spouse has as much personal dealings with the culture as the employee does, and it is well established that one of the primary causes of “ex-pat failure” is dissatisfaction on the part of the spouse...I wouldn’t say no to cultural awareness for the people preparing to go off-shore, but it makes a lot more sense to do it when after they have some experience...I would also recommend cross-cultural training for key Nationals in the host country if they have not had any experience off-shore. We think of cross-cultural training as a one-way street. It’s not. The same benefits for the ex-pat extend to the Nationals who are struggling to understand the “gringo” in the workplace.

the cultural aspects are difficult to learn before the expatriate has a reference frame. In other words, he/she can’t put the knowledge into context and a good part of the “knowledge transfer” won’t stick until they can put it into context. For example, the notion of time is different in other cultures, but how do you put that into context until you experience it. It is good to raise the awareness, but a keen appreciation of the cultural differences comes much later.

- Mel

One participant expressed concern over how intercultural training is framed and advised that more damage than good could come about from it, depending on how it was done:

The one thing that intercultural training might be bad for..is that there is a risk that, depending on how it’s done, the training might set up expectations or stereotypes or perceptions that you have going in to a situation that might not exactly be correct. That’s where it could be damaging. I think it’s important to have but you have to be careful how it’s done. And done by professional people.

- Bill

Intercultural training & ethically sustainable corporate policy and practice in mining:

All participants supported the idea of intercultural training playing a part in corporate social responsibility planning and strategy. What varied was the inferred intention and application of (inter) cultural training or education. Comments from most participants implicitly implied that the primary purpose of intercultural training was rooted in a capitalist economic model of efficiency, bottom-line cost-savings, with the added bonus of positive public relations:

As today's mining companies strive to incorporate sustainability into their long term corporate perspective, combined with an increasing tendency to "internationalize" their operations, intercultural training can play an increasing role in the company's strategy. While attempting to educate individual expatriate employees as to the cultural norms of a new country will not generally provide the overall strategy for the company to pursue, it will still provide payback through sensitizing the individuals who are the "face" of the corporation in the new location as to what may be expected – both by them and of them. A foundation element of sustainability, as defined by mining companies, is to provide ongoing benefit to a region that outlives the mining operation itself and, as such, is really focused on the local population. The success or failure of dealing with local populations, which are often less sophisticated than the local professionals working within the operation, is commonly dependent on the personal relations and interaction between the local population and the operation. For the local population, the expatriate staff represents the operation and little distinction is made between the individuals and the organization behind the operation, which is a more esoteric idea...While the formulation of the corporate direction with respect to sustainability is normally developed at a high level using cultural expertise beyond the scope of an intercultural training course, it is the individual expat staff members who represent the reality of that policy, especially in the eyes of the local population. In cultures where interpersonal relationships and trust are highly important, a misstep by an expat employee (whether through ignorance or misunderstanding) can easily create a long-term problem for the organization's strategy. Consequently, a better general appreciation of local culture by the expat staff is a benefit, especially if that appreciation engenders some level of empathy toward the local population.

- George

If a company had intercultural training it would show the home country that this expat company is very interested in making the project successful. And that the mining company is wholly and wholesomely interested in giving the project the best head start...companies in general like to have the best management practices. And I think if there were intercultural training, a company like a

mining company could say that they have the best management practices because 'we are teaching our companies how to live overseas. How to live in South America. How to live wherever. Good management practices. It's also providing the employees with the best head start. Because certainly the mining companies would not want their employees to fail at a particular project. And if the employees fail, it means that the project fails, it means that the company fails.

- Bill

Other participants' comments reflected a contemporary colonial mindset, informed by assumed positions of superiority based on the acquisition of North/Western knowledge. A missionary approach to intercultural 'education' also came into play with notions of "helping" the local communities. Comments pointed to questions of who is really being helped and who is actually benefiting when 'educators' enter a local community.

How can this help and what role this plays (re: training/understanding and sensitivity) is how you go about doing your business. And, setting up exploration programs...evaluation programs such that you create as few ripples as possible in the little pond that you are jumping into...You send educated, trained understanding employees to these places and if you do find something ...you'll have less problems getting into production...instead of having riots...Instead of having...in Argentina there was a mining company that wanted to put in an open-pit mine and it got stopped by the locals. They created their own NGO and stopped it. Right?If you go into that environment and you educate them as to how it could help them; let them make up their minds. But to do that you have to understand where you are coming from. And so, it all comes down to the bottom line, the dollar value at the end of the day. And by doing all of this... it will help the business, it will help the company. And that's hitting the bottom note, that's hitting home. If it can not only save you a lot of money in the long run, but advance a program maybe faster, maybe take a program from being an interesting asset, to something that you can make into a multi-million dollar joint venture quicker with more stability that's good business. And if it's good for business and its' good for communities and things it's one of these sort of win-win scenarios isn't it? It's a best of both worlds. And I think that's where this is all going.

- Andrew

Seemingly simple positive connections between mining opportunities and community economic development were accompanied by concerns for accountability and standard setting. Two

participants connected the development of ethical and sustainable practices to intercultural training by citing specific actions that needed to be taken by outside foreigners in order to ensure accountability:

Have better checks and balances and accountability. No single signing authorities, clear policy on various issues and a periodic audit to enforce them... this is why we sometime use expats because we see no easy way to overcome certain cultural trends.

- Peter

It is important to maintain North American standards in doing business. Bribing should not be tolerated, standards for mining sustainable development or environmental practices must be carried out to North American standards regardless that the particular country may not expect to operate at the same elevated North American standards.

- David

The terms 'sustainable development' and 'intercultural training' proved nebulous and were rightfully points of ambiguity for many participants. Two participants skeptically questioned the very concepts of the terms being used. One participant took the concept of intercultural (communication) training further to embrace a broader and more engaging definition that pointed to collaborative dialogue and action:

The definition of sustainable development was argued at length in North America, and I'm not sure if there is common acceptance of one definition. How would that translate and be implemented if left to interpretation...In the end, it's the interpretation, understanding, and implementation of the policy's principal elements that is important, not the words...The implementation of a sound policy depends on the manager leading by example (ie, "walk the talk".) If he/she does not interact and communicate effectively, how can one expect the policy to be effective? It's just empty words. It follows that if there is interchange and interaction, the culturally aware ex-pat will be able to anticipate the behavior patterns and manage the situation much more effectively.

- Mel

I think the word you might be looking for is "what role does/could constructive deep dialogue in training play in terms of fostering ethical and sustainable corporate policy and practice in the mining industry. Intercultural training is

actually dialogue, discussion, understanding...I think empathy, generally speaking empathy and humility is probably 60 percent genetics and 40 percent environment. But you can strongly influence it by the nature of the dialogue and the discussion and the discourse that one has about ethical sustainable rational business practice. It doesn't have to be in the mining industry. It can be in any industry. Without the dialogue, the discussion and the discourse, how do you set expectations of people's activities?...I'd be more interested in a broad engaging multi-stakeholder approach. I think (more) experienced folks would probably say that you open yourself up to too many risks by doing that. Risks of de-railing the process, risks of somebody like an NGO or an independent group that really it is there mandate is to screw these types of operations up...and a lot of them have. You open it up too wide, you'll get myered down and you'll just loose the objective – you'll never get there. I'm of the view that if you have the engaging dialogue...I think it's good enough that I want people to challenge it because I think that by doing that it will get better...

- Carl

Community Relations

Linked to dialogue, understanding and multi-stakeholder interests was the prominent theme of community relations that arose amongst most the participants:

we did have a huge community relations group and the community relations group advised the managers. But there were, in our particular site, there were a lot of problems associated with the mine activities and the campesino (peasants/farmers) groups surrounding the mine site. And as time went on, the managers got to know and cope with these problems, but had they had a better understanding of their social and political impacts of these groups and these villages around the mine site, the project would be a lot better off today.

- Bill

from a corporate perspective, community relations is the most important thing or aspect for working in Peru for example, and I would imagine in Latin America. Once you have the ability, then you go into the community and you have a box of books, erasers, pencils and you go and you give them to the school. And that's the gift from XYZ Mining. Now, all of a sudden XYZ mining looks better in the community, has more respect in the community. And you are also then employing people. Right, you gotta do it on several fronts. Unfortunately, you can't trust them to spend the money correctly. Because they will always have different priorities. But it's not fair for you then to determine what is more important. That's the interactive part. That's the part – that's the community relations. That's understanding where their needs are.

- Andrew

The notion of 'community relations' was perceived in many different ways. While some participants deemed community relations as a prerequisite to collaborative and consensus-based economic development, some participants revealed patronizing views towards local communities. In addition, participants' comments unveiled interesting variations on the intentions of 'community relations' that pointed to deeply rooted colonialist perceptions of what it meant to 'work with the community'.

That's the nice thing about working down in Peru – all the activism is done on a grassroots scale – the NGOs for example. And the community relations of dealing with NGOs is dealing with the people before the NGOs get there. For a specific example, where we had with an old company, a small mine, these NGOs would go into the community and say 'you're an agriculturally based society here, why are letting these people put an open pit mine' and they would go back and say well, 'we like the mine, we like working at the mine' they pay us money, they pay us good money. So why don't we take the money we make from the mine and put it into our crops? Doesn't that make sense?' and the NGO says...ahh I guess that does make sense. But we...over the process of several years, have helped them come to that conclusion. We haven't told them that's what they are going to do. But were giving them – saying – this is why we think it's positive for us to put a mine into production. You and you sons and your daughters will get work. And you can then put that money back into your crops; into improving your house...into maybe getting a satellite dish and a public telephone installed. You know, these sorts of things. You know, so you have to deal with the community on a grass roots elemental basis.

- Andrew

The next section examines the implications of the above wide-ranging views on culture, difference, intercultural training and understanding, cross-cultural challenges and adaptation, and perceived connections between intercultural training and corporate social responsibility vis-à-vis ethical sustainable development.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Analysis: An overview

The views and opinions of all participants leads to a fundamental endorsement, whether explicitly or implicitly, of my argument for the need of a critical intercultural training model in the mining industry. Some participants who had previous intercultural training felt it was quite useful and many supported the notion that such training for employees working across cultures was valuable for the successful adaptation of employees, as well as their spouse and families. Based on further views outlined by most participants - regardless of what experience they had had - the need for a more critical approach to intercultural training surfaced in four ways. First, views on traditional intercultural training were skeptical, indifferent or limited in terms of what purpose it served. This outlook towards intercultural training suggests a need for intercultural educators to examine their practice in terms of how it is construed and perceived within the sectors that require such training. Also demonstrated was that the need to incorporate directly relevant and context specific curriculum into training programs is critical, especially within this particular sector, whose structures and socio-political dynamics are shifting at increasingly accelerated rates. A move towards a more critical intercultural training model would be timely.

As Dei (1996) states:

The harsh economic lessons of globalization clearly point to the urgent need for a new approach to education that responds appropriately to the challenge of difference and diversity in communities internationally.

(Dei, 1996).

Secondly, there was consensus from the participants that a deeper understanding of the intersecting influences of 'culture' is needed in order to adapt to the host culture. Overall, the

intention for this understanding was to either assist the participants to become more efficient at work by being more culturally savvy or to help their spouses adapt to the new surroundings. Attention, however, is needed to address the fact that people will be at varying levels of readiness to learn, based on their international experience and specific situations. Third, the need to build community relations was emphasized by several participants who spoke about public input, collaboration and reciprocated learning. However, while most participants' comments insinuated an advocacy for community involvement in mining developments, perceptions of what this meant in practice were often skewed by assumptions derived from a neocolonialist paradigm. Issues of control and power were intermittently woven into good intentions simply due to the systemic nature of the North American expat - South American host national dichotomy within the context of a multinational mining corporation. Finally, while most participants acknowledged the underlying possible influences of culture that impacted the way people behaved, many comments made by the participants implied a one-dimensional concept of culture that was influenced by a hegemonically capitalist economic paradigm. The problematics surrounding the assumed rationality of these particular comments confirmed and reinforced a case for critical intercultural training programs. Giroux (1997) claims:

As the fundamental dominant myth of our time, the positivist mode of rationality operates so as to undermine the value of history and the importance of historical consciousness in other significant ways: First, it fosters an undialectical and one-dimensional view of the world; second, it denies the world of politics and lacks a vision of the future; third, it denies the possibility that human beings can constitute their own reality and alter and change that reality in the face of domination.

(Giroux, 1997)

When describing situations that were challenging from an intercultural point of view, every participant implicitly or explicitly alluded to the host culture's inherently inferior ways of

doing things. Most participants claimed they 'understood' where the behaviours were coming from (eg. History, economy, etc.) and felt a certain sense of empathy towards the plight of their host national counterparts. Yet in each case, there remained an expectancy to conform to a North American way of working and operating. It is this implied techno-rational assumed 'common sense' line of reasoning that requires immediate attention. As mining companies all over the world continue to proliferate into the many cultures around the globe, so too is an imposed dominant Western ideal. Although some positive aspects can be gained from the implementation of certain North American standards, what is problematic is the belief that this ideal extends into the socio-cultural dimension of thinking, being and doing. If mining companies are interested in adhering to a socially responsible corporate ethical code of conduct, the issue of cultural sustainability must be addressed. For such a mandate to translate into action, critical intercultural training is required in order for those arriving from the dominant culture to examine the normative dimensions that structure the work place, challenge these norms and learn about alternative approaches to notions of work and life. Many Latin American countries such as Chile, Brazil and Peru are economically dependent on their natural resources. As long as it's citizens' desire social and environmental justice, democratic dialogue, critical reflection and emancipatory action will be critical to the health of the communities within which multinational mining companies seek to operate. As Dhruvarajan (2003) articulates:

It is important for all of us to move beyond liberal indifference and make a sincere effort to know one another's ways of life. When we interact as equals to explore our experiences, we often discover that we have many things in common along with our differences. Exploring these issues requires different ways of thinking and acting. It is only when we engage in such dialogues are we able to develop solidarity across differences. Such solidarity is imperative to achieve the goal of dismantling the powers of the corporate globalizers and reclaim our right to choose to live a way of life that is meaningful to us.

There remains a need to validate the numerous realities, experiences and needs of the mining industries' invested stakeholders. Through such validation, the possibility of positive social change may manifest.

What would 'critical intercultural training' entail?

In order to develop and implement a critical intercultural training model, I suggest that intercultural trainers would first need to espouse a reflexive orientation and acknowledge the existence of "competing intellectual and normative perspectives" (Giroux, 1997, p.17). The field of intercultural education and training houses a far-reaching range of values and assumptions that implicate the individual trainer. For instance, some individuals come from a social justice background, informed by anti-racist pedagogy. Many are from an intercultural communication background, while others are trained in counseling, education, or leadership development. Before approaching the notion critical intercultural training, trainers need to make explicit their own governing ideological paradigm (ibid) through a reflexive orientation. Smyth (1987) claims that "what is needed is a 'critical' view of teaching" (p.20) and suggests that asking one's self the following questions would aid in guiding a critical self-analysis:

- Where did ideas I embody in my teaching come from historically?
- How did I come to appropriate them?
- Why do I continue to endorse them now in my work?
- Whose interests do they serve?
- What power relationships are involved?
- How do these ideas influence my relationships with my students?
- In light of what I have discovered, how might I work differently?

(Smyth, 1986, p.3, quoted in Smyth, 1987, p.200)

Reflections on one's socio-political values towards society stemming from their own historical context form the basis for how each trainer will engage themselves and learners throughout the educational process. This first step of self-reflection would be a core component of critical intercultural training in practice. Then and only then may one engage learners in a mutual exchange of critical learning.

Key to putting critical intercultural training into practice is how it is presented to the learners, such as expats and host national mining employees, managers and community members. The paradigm through which the training unfolds needs to encapsulate how the mine site, the office, and the logistics are not "things separate and distinguishable" (Smyth, 1987) from the people that comprise them. Each action, communication and behaviour is intertwined and contributes to a reality that is constructed in a particular time and a particular place. At the core of critical intercultural learning lies the need for a deep examination into the notion of power and knowledge. One angle of examination would be the need for intercultural educators/trainers and learners to recognize and actively address the heterogenous and diverse elements of the host country's culture. Contracts negotiated within the upper-levels of the corporation most often exclusively include the 'elite' sectors of a particular culture. Those operating from within these higher corporate levels have often been educated abroad and incorporate an accommodating Western approach to business. The nature of this intercultural exchange and process lies in stark contrast to the often more complex cultural dynamics at play when members of the local communities are involved in project development at the ground level.

Another criteria for critical intercultural learning is the ability to reflexively position oneself vis-à-vis the ideological assumptions of knowledge and the subsequent questioning of a universal notion of 'common sense'. Through the analytical frameworks offered in intercultural

communication theory, learners could explore these issues at deeper levels and form the critically reflective abilities to recognize the socio-political implications of their culturally developed assumptions. Through this understanding, learners would foster the ability to not only understand their 'ways of doing' but to question and challenge these ways. In turn, individual employees as well as upper-management could open themselves up to the possibility of alternative ways of doing based on the knowledge, values, ways of thinking and being of the local communities and cultures in which their project is taking place.

Critical intercultural training would of course be incomplete without praxis, or action based in critical reflection. As Giroux (1997) argues:

...critical thinking represents the ability to step beyond commonsense assumptions and be able to evaluate them in terms of their genesis, development, and purpose. In short, critical thinking cannot be viewed as simply as a form of progressive reasoning; it must be seen as a fundamental political act.

(Giroux, 1997, p.26)

Through the process of critical intercultural learning, change could be made possible through constructive and collaborative initiatives generated from decisions made by all stakeholders. Taking the initiative to generate change begins with the needs and interests of those who are primarily effected by both the short and long term plans of a project. Given the power-dynamics inherent in North-South American relations in the mining industry, it is with great caution that these initiatives should take place.

Why critical intercultural training?

In a separate paper I have proposed a participatory action research plan incorporating upper management mining personnel, community leaders and activist groups. My professor wrote:

“why would mining companies think this is a good idea”? I smugly thought “well of course they

will think it's a good idea...it's progressive, collaborative civil society informs 'The corporation' at its best!'. Yet, the reality is, within the capitalist economic model, the practicality of ideas such as intercultural training and consensus-based planning may be seemingly idealistic to some.

As one study participant states:

Dealing with XYZ mining who has a stock trading at 11 cents, from a time and money standpoint it's (intercultural training) just not something that is...well it's not practical.

- Andrew

On the other hand, initiatives taking place by the UN Global Compact, the ILO and the OECD are calling for change that incorporates civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights (Petrasek, 2003). There remains a need for transformation within the mining industry and this transformation can only take place through the actions of individual people, from top-down as well as from the ground up. The role of policy is integral to this process. As mining companies fine tune their mandated codes of conduct and social responsibility, so should executive management be allocating resources in the name of time and money to train the people who will be responsible for making those policies manifest.

Organisations which have had environmental policies in place for some time know that full effectiveness in implementation depends on people at all levels.

(Hutchison, 1997, p.131)

The nature of these changes involves a host of factors that all reside under a multi-dimensional umbrella of cultural diversity. An educational model such as a critical intercultural training program would offer one possible avenue for the process of transformation to occur. Policy sets standards, provides guidelines and a means for accountability. Yet formal and informal learning, and in turn reflexive action taken by the individuals involved create a bridge between policy and practice. While some may resist the notion of a conceivably radicalized

approach to intercultural training, a reconceptualization of professional training in an international context would:

make possible a critical interrogation of how human beings come together within historically specific social sites...in order to both make and reproduce the conditions of their existence.

(Giroux, 1997, p.71)

Curriculum would build upon current intercultural communication theory and examine the experiences of mining 'expats' and 'host nationals'. With a critical lens, participants could, through the use of critical incidents and case studies, unravel the underlying, intersecting historical and socio-political influences that implicate all parties in that particular context. Curriculum would therefore need to be developed through a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach, with equal representation from all parties involved. The importance of emphasizing a cultural and context specific approach that reflects a temporally dynamic nature echoes the voice of one of the study's participants as well as Sparks and Butterwick (2004):

It is important to avoid essentialising cultural aspects of life among different groups. The dynamic nature of culture points to beliefs, values, institutions and formations that change over time within social relationships, rather than a fixed and unchanging cultural essence that we can know once and for all.

(in Foley, 2004, p.278)

For instance, the notion of 'critical theory' lies at risk of falling into ideological trappings of cultural assumptions. Terms such as 'democracy' and social justice' are culturally defined and therefore can be problematic if not approached from a culturally sensitive manner.

Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991) provides a strong basis from which critical intercultural training could build upon. The theory provides a solid learning model that acknowledges and validates the unique lived experience of the international employee. Starting with their own experience, each individual can extend their reflective analysis towards larger

structural systems surrounding their work and society that construct the day to day intercultural relations with their host country counterparts. Perspective transformations that often take place during extended international experiences (Taylor, 1994) are worthy of exploring more deeply. There is tremendous value in the unique knowledge base an individual possesses that is interculturally experienced. Transnational employees are fortunate to be 'pushed' into this learning transformation. The role of critical intercultural trainers would be to access the learners' experiential learning environment and facilitate a more critical understanding of the culture and context specific social relations they were implicated in. Educational opportunities for knowledge exchange amongst employees - both expat and 'host nationals' - as well as local community members readily exist. The challenge for intercultural educators and the policy makers behind corporate sustainable development mandates is to use these opportunities as instruments of change.

Timing is an important component to facilitating any successful intercultural learning, whether to support an expat employee, or to generate dialogue amongst groups of people. As one participant pointed out, training should be carried over time at different stages of the employees' stay in the host country. The content of the training needs to be relevant for whichever stage the learner is at. For instance, to hold a workshop on class and race power relations three days prior to departure may be a waste of time, unless it is framed in an appropriately relevant manner. At that point, the survival stage should be primarily acknowledged and addressed in order to support the relocating employees at the most basic level of cross-cultural adaptation.

One final element needed for a critical intercultural training program is collaborative learning. For a truly 'intercultural' learning experience, all 'cultural groups' involved in the context in question need to be present. It is a redundant effort to sit around a table of fellow

North American gringos contemplating 'the other'. To engage in critical learning that encompasses reflection, acknowledgment, ownership and action, the process needs to partake amongst all people (expats, management, host nationals, community members and interest groups) implicated in the development or project. Caution, however, must be taken due to the disparate power relations between these groups of individuals. As such, opportunities for discussion and training with, for instance, only expats and only 'host nationals' should occur in addition to inter-group training.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

Summary

This study aimed to explore conceptions of culture, cultural differences, intercultural training and their connections to sustainable policy and practices in the mining industry. Seven participants were involved in the study. Three were interviewed face to face while four participants completed questionnaires. All questions asked were unstructured to encourage participants to share the stories and experiences that were meaningful to them. The rationale behind the study was to investigate what role a critical model of intercultural training could play in fostering ethical and sustainable policy and practice on social and cultural dimensions within the mining industry. The assumption was that, given the amount of pressure mining companies are under to transform their ways of operating to comply with environmental and social justice demands from the public, there is a need for an educational model as an instrument for positive change.

Three areas of literature were examined and informed the study: adult education, intercultural communication and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Gaps existed in each area of literature: In the adult education literature there was a lack of questioning into the role adult education theory and practice (could) play in the context of globalized organizational training and development that addressed the needs of internationally working employees. Missing in the intercultural communication literature was an investigation into industry specific training contexts that overtly wove an imbalance of power and knowledge into intercultural relations. Finally, almost no information existed about the practical means in which international and national CSR policies and mandates were being put into practice. Based on the intersecting gaps

in all three fields, a case was made for critical intercultural training: An educational model that would address the cross-cultural needs of the international worker, while at the same time attempt to bridge CSR policy and practice by fostering a critical, collaborative and action-based 'multi-stakeholder' intercultural learning exchange.

The findings supported the argument that a critical intercultural training model was needed. Participants demonstrated a unanimous agreement over the importance of cultural understanding within their field of work. These feelings stemmed mostly from the wide range of experiences whereby cultural differences in approaches to work negatively impacted interpersonal relations. How the participants perceived the source and implications of these sometimes subtle, sometimes overt, cultural clashes became a point of analysis for this study. The most difficult situations evolved around frustrations in workplace efficiency, as well as critical incidents involving the host country's surrounding socio-political issues. The lack of ability to 'follow instructions', think 'independently' or use 'common sense' was a reoccurring source of frustration for most participants who worked closely with people from the host culture. Most comments about culture and the implication of cultural differences displayed a level of empathy that acknowledged the deeply rooted influences of culture as it translated into actions and behaviour. At the same time, implicit assumptions surfaced demonstrating the asymmetrical power relations that were interwoven throughout most work related intercultural encounters. Based on this observation, as well as a general sense that most participants felt that traditional intercultural training was relatively important at best, an argument for critical intercultural training was put forth.

Drawing from critical theory and pedagogy, a critical model of intercultural training was presented to address issues of power and knowledge and well as the construction of cultural

identity through historical, socio-political and contemporary capitalist economic dimensions. An appeal was made for training that encompassed critical self-reflection, a collaborative intercultural learning exchange as well as time and content relevant delivery of the training program. It is the hope that by implementing a critical intercultural training program as regular protocol for upper management, foreign and local employees in the mining industry, change may be possible and the ways of being of hundreds of cultures that the mining industry infiltrates may be sustained. As Tara Fenwick (2000) aptly states:

Meaningful work and learning are inseparable and unfold in communities whose creativity is directed towards contributing to the general “good” – defined in a space honoring multiple voices. People grow in their work by becoming conscious participants in caring relationships. Through mutual transformation we develop ethical awareness of our responsibilities and stewardship in a work community, creating together sustainable conditions that nourish one another.

(Fenwick, in Wilson, 2000, p.295)

Recommendations for future research

The question remains, how does one put such a concept as a proposed ‘critical intercultural communication training program’ into action? What model exists that could offer a means through which the many intersecting issues could be explored and acted upon so that change may occur? I suggest that participatory action research offers a means for a deeper, critical and collaborative exploration of the multitude of layers intertwined in cross-cultural relations. Specifically, participatory action research would be especially well suited within the mining industry in Latin America, where multinational corporations from the powerful North often impose their policies and practices through a conservative, capitalist and neocolonialist

paradigm. Such an approach would offer a framework that incorporated the multitude of voices, alternative ways of being, thinking and doing into the process of consensus-based planning and decision-making. Incorporating members of the local communities in this process is a direct means of fostering sustainable mining practices through collaborative and equal power-based systems of public consultation and intercultural work team project developments.

This study was intended as an exploratory examination into the perceptions of culture, difference, intercultural training and the connections to sustainable development within the mining industry. As such, the implications of this study point to the need for future research to be done through a variety of avenues. Given the nature of the mining industry and all its intersecting social, environmental and economic factors, an integrated approach is needed to examine how the mining industry can proceed to transform its policies and practices towards more sustainable and just directions. Building on work already being done by environmental and social activists and academics, it is argued that an additional element that connects all disciplines involved in the mining industry is education. From an educational standpoint, a critical analysis is needed of the multi-layered implications of a globalized mining industry at local, national and international levels. Research is needed that examines policy making processes, upper management and decision makers who bear control over the implementation of policies and guidelines that incorporate socially, environmentally and culturally sustainable systems of development within the mining industry. In addition, research is needed to evaluate the systems that are or are not in place for holding players accountable for their actions. In regards to the field of intercultural studies and education, a critically reflexive approach to examining the purpose and practice of intercultural training is needed. A social movement is required to train the trainers in this field that creates an awareness of the socio-political realities within which their training programs are

taking place. In turn, a call for action that addresses these issues needs to borrow from concepts such as Held's (1999) '*cosmopolitan democracy*': a concept that looks at alternatives to corporate globalization in the name of creating and maintaining social justice, including cultural identity, diversity and sovereignty in a globalized economy. This study focused on the particular geographical region of South America. Naturally, future research is required on every continent and country where mining takes place. This would support one aspect of the MMSD project report's conclusions, which suggest that good mining practices are dependent on the cultural, environmental and context specific circumstances of a local area (2002). In addition to regionally specific studies, a critical analysis of gender, class and race issues needs to be pursued to identify and challenge the impacts that the globalized mining industry has on these particular intersecting dimensions.

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Appendix 1 Questionnaire and Unstructured Interview Sample Questions



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QUESTIONNAIRE

Culture and Beyond: An evaluation of intercultural training programs in the mining industry

**A Masters Thesis Study by Rachel Speiran
University of British Columbia**

1. Please briefly describe your international work experience (location, length of stay, role).

2. Did you receive intercultural training prior to and/or during your international work assignment?
 - If you have not had intercultural training, please skip to question #3.
 - If you have had intercultural training, please describe your perceptions of this experience: For instance, what skills did you develop because of this training? What effect do you believe intercultural training had on your professional and personal cultural adaptation and/or the overall process of business and operations with your Latin American counterparts?

3. How was your experience adapting to the host country you were relocated to? What were the most enjoyable aspects? What were the most challenging aspects?

4. Did you ever experience any difficulties working with local people on the job and/or outside of work?
 - a) If yes, please describe these situations/incidents.
 - b) If no, please skip to question #6.

5. What would you say is the most significant thing you have learned from this/these situations/incident(s)?

6. What are your feelings about employees and/or their spouses/families receiving “cross-cultural” or “inter-cultural” training when they are relocated to Latin America? Is this type of training important? Why or why not?

7. Given your own experience living and working in Latin America, what do you think people (expatriates) need to know, and what skills should they have before they enter into a work assignment and life in Latin America? Why is this information important?

8. How could a deeper understanding of a culture’s social, historical, political and environmental issues facilitate successful professional and personal cross-cultural adaptation?

9. What role does/could intercultural training play in terms of fostering ethical and sustainable corporate policy and practice within the mining industry?