

One of Us or One of Them: A Generic Qualitative Study on the Efficacy of the Funds of
Knowledge Strategy to Reduce Teacher Ethnocentrism

Munjeera Phillips-Jefford, B.A.

Department of Graduate and Undergraduate
Studies in Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

Faculty of Education, Brock University
St. Catharines, Ontario

©Munjeera Phillips-Jefford 2014

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine whether English a Second Language (ESL) instructors' ethnocentrism could be reduced using multicultural education (MCE) principles. There were three focus group discussions and a Likert scale questionnaire. The findings demonstrated that while ESL instructors were conscious of systemic barriers, media stereotypes, and bullying, more diversity training is required in order to improve teachers' attitudes, responses, and instructional strategies regarding integration issues due to the increasing diversity of learners present in classrooms today. The findings of the study also demonstrated that MCE principles could be used to effectively raise the awareness of ESL instructors when dealing with integration and assimilation issues. When immigration, human rights, and multicultural policies were examined critically, ESL instructors were able to improve their cross-cultural skills in the classroom to be more inclusive towards diverse ethnic groups by giving learners greater opportunities to express themselves. As a result, learners' knowledge, experience, and skills were validated in the classroom leading to a more meaningful learning experience.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to acknowledge my parents, the best parents, Padmaraj and Mary Phillips, who support me in every way possible and without whom I would not have been able to accomplish anything without their encouragement. Thank you for everything that you do every single day. Second, I would like to thank my husband, Jeff, and our two sons, Luke and Adam. I researched the topic of successful integration for us and I hope that the time and effort that has been spent on the study will improve understanding our worlds. I would also like to thank Dr. Joe Engemann for giving me the opportunity to fulfill the dream of completing the thesis route in a master's program. I believe that your academic advisement was so skillful that I did not even realize or feel as if I were being supervised. Through our many discussions over the last 5 years you have brought out the best in the study and in me.

Special thanks to Grant Reimer for sharing case studies and without this input that took an incredible amount of time, it would not have been possible for me to complete my graduate course work. I would also like to recognize Lisa Kattelus who *always* encouraged me as an ESL instructor and Janet Timbrell for her personal support as a principal. Mr. Joe Lu and the Lu family have been brilliant models of international educators. Finally, I would like to say thank you to all my former students from whose funds of knowledge I have learned much more than I taught.

“Just because not everyone has caught the vision, it does not mean the action is not worth taking.” Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869 – 1948)

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM	1
Background of the Problem	2
Statement of the Problem Context	4
Purpose of the Study	11
My Journey	11
Rationale and Research Questions	15
Theory	17
An Overview of the Document	23
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	26
The Politics of Demographics	26
The National and Municipal Divide	31
The Complexity of Diversity	33
The Vulnerability of Cross-Cultural Connections	35
Linguistic Hegemony	36
The Race to Define Nationhood	38
Multicultural Education: A Pathway to Social Justice	41
Multicultural Education in Action	42
Canadian Multiculturalism: An Oxymoron	46
Multiculturalism in Ontario: A Case of Disempowerment	48
Summary of the Chapter	57
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	59
Research Methodology	59
Site and Participants	63
Instrumentation, Data Collection, and Recording	63
Intervention	64
Data Processing and Analysis	67
Limitations of the Study	68
Establishing Credibility	68
Methodological Assumptions	69
Ethical Considerations	69
Restatement of Purpose	70
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS	71
Culture as the Elephant in the Classroom	71
Power	76
The Challenges of Integration	79
Instructional Strategies	83

The Importance of Culturally Inclusive Strategies	87
The Role of Multicultural Education	92
Summary of the Chapter	97
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	99
Scope and Limitations of the Study	99
Context	100
Discussion	103
Literature Theories	109
Implications	112
Recommendations	115
Conclusion	117
References	119
Appendix A: Workshop #1	126
Appendix B: Likert Questionnaire	127

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to determine the degree to which the funds of knowledge instructional strategy can be utilized to facilitate cross-cultural interactions in an adult English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom and affect instructors' attitudes towards ESL learners. Some definitions pertaining to this study are: (a) Culture as the behaviors and beliefs of a human group, (b) Ethnicity as relating to common characteristics of a human group, (c) Nationality as the status of belonging to a nation by birth or naturalization, (d) Race as people with common characteristics through heredity, language, or culture and, (e) Immigrant as a person who migrates from another country usually for permanent residence (Dictionary.com). Based on my observations over the last 25 years as an ESL instructor in a school board in Southern Ontario, I have noticed that although diversity is reflected geographically in public spaces, such as schools, the level of social engagement among cultures is very low. Even though Toronto has often been proclaimed as the most multicultural city in the world, and while "the diverse nature of cities can theoretically provide multiple opportunities for people to dialogue across difference, ... this rarely occurs" (Epstein, 2010, p. 40). In fact, some cultures that adhere to Islamic traditions and do not embrace changes associated with the postmodern world are marginalized. A lack of engagement among residents of all origins in neighbourhoods has implications for Toronto, because "for the first time, the proportion of foreign-born population born in Asia and the Middle East surpasses the proportion born in Europe" (Shariff, 2008, p. 457). In the future, Canada will continue to become increasingly dependent on foreign labour as Statistics Canada has identified one in five

people in Canada as foreign born in 2006 and that population growth by 2030 will increase solely due to immigration (Shariff, 2008).

Background of the Problem

Recognizing that ethnic enclaves in a large urban centre in Ontario have become marginalized over the last 15 years, due to city and board amalgamation, the City of Toronto identified 13 Toronto neighbourhoods as underserved for newcomers. Over the last few years, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) have been working in partnership with several agencies, such as the United Way and the Working Women Community Centre, to roll out a one-stop shopping centre for immigrant services including employment counseling offices and social spaces for neighbourhood groups. These centres work outside the established system because “solutions which rely on existing structure of agencies within a neighbourhood ,... are likely to be self-defeating” (Allen & Cars, 2001, p. 2201). There are community engagement coordinators who support resident groups to develop a voice and become active in the community. The principles of social justice and a consciousness towards diversity issues are embedded into activities held by the groups. However, just planning events is not the focus of the resident groups. Rather, the engagement level of marginalized groups is constantly monitored by community engagement coordinators. Capacity building of residents and empowering newcomers to have a voice in the community is the primary focus of these centres. The centres follow principles that empower residents because resources are controlled by resident groups, initiatives rise from the bottom up and are supported by the top-down process, and the

initiatives are very small scale and targeted to specific groups (Allen & Cars, 2001); for example, balcony gardens and yoga classes.

Not only do the structures of the centres support newcomers, but the practices endorsed by the employees foster inclusivity by allowing multilingual communication, having visual representations of all races and cultures, including spiritually minded groups, and hiring residents that are visible minorities (Dei, James, Karumanchery, James-Wilson, & Zine, 2000). These newcomer centres can be perceived by residents as beginning points in engaging marginalized communities because the structures support inclusivity by having a holistic perspective towards residents and their neighbourhoods. The positive effects of these structural changes have yet to be determined as the centres are only 3 years old in various parts of the city. The immigrant centres may, in the long term, fill the gap for grassroots-level involvement for newcomers in urban centres who are finding access to health care, community involvement, and employment services increasingly difficult due to language, religious, and social barriers.

The outlook is positive though because “it is necessary to find ways around the system in order to generate real change” (Allen & Cars, 2001, p. 2201). The initiative to build newcomer centres is a tacit acknowledgement by the City of Toronto (municipal), the MCI (provincial), and the CIC (federal) that achieving integration within a diverse society, such as Toronto, requires not just policies and structures but personal commitment to principles of social justice by those who interact daily with newcomers. In addition, the newcomer centres encourage the idea that all cultures are perceived to be equal by decentralizing power and allow private and public realms to interact in neighbourhoods (Allen, 2007). The use of native languages at meetings and community

events is permitted and there is a public kitchen to cook food and eat for celebrations such as Eid al-fitr after Ramadan. Since Canada has had a longer tradition of an official multicultural policy than many other countries, except for the United States, the example of Toronto as one of the more multicultural cities in the world offers a view of the shape of potential issues and responses to come in the global future of the 21st century.

Statement of the Problem Context

In 1962, Marshall McLuhan wrote in the *Gutenberg Galaxy* that “the new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village” (p. 31). As a result of being connected through technology, McLuhan optimistically predicted that an international collective identity would form. While it is possible that a global collective identity is forming in the 21st century, it is also equally possible that members of a diverse global society are experiencing a greater lack of engagement or connection locally (Dei et al., 2000). Education has long been concerned with the socialization of learners to form a cohesive society with shared national values. Dewey and many other educators proposed that schools could be utilized to function as cradles of democracy that could birth civically minded citizens (Dei et al., 2000). Dewey could also be credited with being the first champion of GE principles because he emphasized social problem solving and critical thinking

from his philosophically based understanding of the role played by schools in an unjust society...Dewey was responding to the pressing need for democratic intervention by an informed and active citizenry; he hoped that such intervention would lead to the transformations required to resolve social problems in the early twentieth century. (O’Sullivan & Vetter, 2007, p. 17)

Historically, Canadian schools have attempted to nurture learners to function in a Western democracy and become productive Canadian citizens. Due to rising immigration rates, schools around the world are consistently reflecting a greater variety of cultures to form a microcosm of the global village in the classroom. The global village today also necessitates the development of students as global citizens of all age groups who know how to perform well in diverse postmodern settings.

It may be possible to prepare learners for the cross-cultural expectations of the new millennium using various types of educational pathways such as global and multicultural education. What is the difference between global education (GE) and multicultural education (MCE)? GE focuses on human beliefs, values, and histories to increase globally conscious participation *externally* from a nation (Lucas, 2010). MCE can be defined as a critical pedagogy that challenges institutionalized racism and promotes social justice by affirming diversity as inherently good for socializing citizens *internally* within a nation (Lucas, 2010). GE is generally perceived by teachers to be universally relevant for native and immigrant children while MCE is primarily directed towards socializing newcomer populations and is seen as problematic for building unity in a nation (Gibson, 2010). Despite the dichotomy of teachers' perspectives, GE can be utilized effectively to leverage learning for issues within a country. In a way, GE and MCE are two sides of the same coin. They are intertwined because the boundaries of local neighbourhoods and global connections have become obscured resulting in a sense of interconnectedness (Dei et al., 2000). As an illustration, learning about consensus building in African villages can easily lend itself to discussions about the democratic processes in the West. Whether or not there is diversity in the classroom, it is also

important to distinguish between MCE and GE because “there is the potential for teaching global issues from a purely Western perspective” (Lucas, 2010, p. 215). The primary distinction between MCE and GE can be concluded as being concerned with diversity issues internally within a nation and externally from a nation, respectively.

Developing an awareness of issues central to diversity is essential to facilitating cross-cultural interactions in educational institutions. The term “diversity” refers to age, race, gender, physical abilities, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, and associated with diversity is the position that a person can hold in the existing social hierarchy resulting in issues of marginalization, oppression, and identity crisis (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008; Dei et al., 2000; Holm & Londen, 2010; Moll, Gonzalez, & Amanti, 2005). Sensitivity to the societal implications among race, privilege, and power is helpful for cross-cultural interactions. In terms of education, “globalization means that new forms of knowledge and expertise as well as new visions of our world and ourselves as workers, citizens, and private individuals will define the goals and objectives of the curriculum and instruction” (Vasquez, 2007, p. 120). Consequently, teacher education that includes components associated with GE and MCE principles has gained prominence in classrooms around the world, thus reflecting a greater number of culturally diverse perspectives.

There are six metaphors used to describe globalization: (a) the global village that shows the interconnectedness of cultures through technology; (b) the military competition model that reveals hegemonic struggles, such as the Cold War; (c) the network of interdependence that is seen in the expansion of free trade; (d) “McWorld” that shows a rise in consumerism; (e) spaceship earth that makes humanity eco-aware; and (f) neo-

colonialism that allows corporations to mimic the exploitation of imperialism (Gibson, 2010). Gibson writes that public education is in danger of serving the needs of G20 corporations, which will, in turn, promote global imperialism through capitalism and value profit over human life to enable and exacerbate racial and economic stratification.

Statistics from *The United Nations Human Development Report* (2000) show that, in 1976, Switzerland was 52 times richer than Mozambique. However, by 1997, Switzerland had become 508 times richer. Global inequalities in income by 1995 had increased by unprecedented rates. Between 1970 and 1995, incomes in one third of affluent countries rose 1.9% annually. The poorest countries, such as Africa and Latin America, did not increase but actually experienced a decline in all aspects of economic measure, such as personal income and gross national product. Once again, according to *The United Nations Development Report*, globalization is further marginalizing the poorest countries that were already struggling to rise above their postcolonial circumstances (McCann, 2003). Similarly in Canada, there has been the rise of Canada's richest 1% since the 1980s due to the rising global economy resulting in 8% of Canadian households controlling 67% of the nation's total financial wealth (Yalnizyan, 2010). The economic stratification, dubbed the Great U-turn, has been attributed to "record breaking growth in incomes (due to jobs) with historically low top tax rates" (Yalnizyan, 2010, p. 4). A study based on the 2006 census in Ontario cited that race and gender were the primary determiners in terms of accessibility to plum jobs (Block, 2010).

The term racialized is used to acknowledge 'race' as a social construct and a way of describing a group of people. Racialization is the process through which

groups come to be designated as different and on that basis subjected to differential and unequal treatment. (Block, 2010, p. 13)

In terms of employment, non-Whites were more likely to hold lower paying jobs and face unemployment with varying degrees of vulnerability based on ethnicity. It is possible to conclude that instead of uniting the world to form a great collective consciousness, globalization is actually creating greater economic and racial divisions than ever before.

One critic of GE is international economist Amartya Sen, who stated that human potential should not be seen as capital to facilitate economic growth (as cited in McCann, 2003). Similarly, Gibson (2010) believes that the key ideas of GE should be long-term sustainability that values humanity and is committed to improving the quality of life for all, as essential to global citizenship. An educator's role, according to Gibson, is to promote critical thinking in schools, which will consequently result in greater protests against transnational corporations to fight against the magnification of inequality and racism. Due to the seeming inevitability of globalization, Gibson advocates that the role of GE curriculum should be to support critical educators who will teach the next generation to fight for a socialist global order. She believes "the act of *knowing* the world is inseparable from the act of *transforming* the world" (p. 129). Educators, such as Gibson and McCann, speak as detractors of GE when it is used as a corporate tool, but will support GE when it is used to promote socialism. Centrists would argue that both human capital and the development of an individual's potential are equally important. In any case, creating an awareness of all three underlying philosophies girding the development of globalization and developing skills to analytically articulate an

individual's personal views is important for educators to teach and students to learn, regardless of their personal biases for or against social justice and/or capitalism.

An example of how globalization affects marginalized groups comes from Vasquez's (2007) study, which showed how Latino values of teamwork, social context, and shared decision making are valued globally, yet Latinos represent a small part of the global power structure due to high-stakes testing and a monocultural curriculum in America. Vasquez cites resegregation and a lack of access to quality education as factors that oppress Latinos into a cycle of poverty. Since many corporations rely on cheap labour in large cities, transnational corporations can create a

21st century caste system with a definitive elite class commanding a large service sector ranging from advanced to low-skilled labour. At the bottom rung would be an irrelevant class that is unskilled, unprotected, and has little or no access to the benefits of globalization. (Vasquez, 2007, p. 121)

Furthermore, Vasquez criticizes the United States educational system as creating an educational apartheid where students from diverse racial groups have little opportunity to mix in schools, citing the Harvard Civil Project that showed desegregation gains in the 1970s have given rise to trends in resegregation since the 1990s. In terms of educational institutions, cross-cultural understanding is compromised due to ignorance about diverse groups. Once the cohort from this generation graduates into the workplace, there may be a lack of shared lived experiences that may result in an inability for workers to interact as equals. However, "citizens today must have a working understanding of how to exercise their human and civil rights in any part of the globe" (Vasquez, 2007, p. 133). Schools, therefore, are an important venue through which cross-cultural interactions can be formed

and intercultural sensitivity skills can be fostered. While some may argue that GE is not utilitarian and, therefore, not as important as teaching reading and writing, residing in diverse neighbourhoods and living in the post-9/11 era can prove that cross-cultural skills are just as useful as math, science, reading, and writing.

Aside from Western capitalism being exported around the world through multinationals and further exploiting marginalized groups, such as Latinos (Vasquez, 2007), another factor that enables globalization to perpetuate exclusivity is the digital divide (Zembylas & Vrasidas, 2005). Some countries, such as the Ivory Coast, do not have the hardware readily available to promote computer literacy. Other countries, such as Iran and China, have the hardware and are wired, but the governments limit access. Both situations constitute a digital divide that can foster ignorance and the inability to keep up, in terms of knowledge, with the rest of the world. Not being wired can result in electronic imperialism (Zembylas & Vrasidas, 2005). Some strategies for promoting critical GE are to step outside the comfort zone to develop critical emotional literacy, see the political and ethical aspects of group protest for collective witnessing, and engage in discourse and negotiation to raise awareness of ethnocentrism, racism, and sexism to develop collective intelligence (Zembylas & Vrasidas, 2005). Since developments in information technology (IT) allow for greater collectivity worldwide, becoming interconnected is an important step towards getting a speaking part on the world stage. The virtual dialogue reflects the Freireian concept that dialogue can lead to emancipation (Moll et al., 2005). Interaction through listening, reading, and responding in the virtual world is vital for developing a collective consciousness. Participation in globalization requires the ability to access technology and also to understand how to be critical, be

analytical, and see oneself as part of a mature socially conscious collective global discourse (Zembylas & Vrasidas, 2005). Critical GE can help raise the awareness of citizens in wired nations to connect and also overcome barriers on both sides of the world to resist corporate dominance. Sadly at this time, the two factors of corporate interests guiding GE and the digital divide are promoting exclusivity and privilege in the world. Simply, “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.”

Purpose of the Study

When I began teaching foreign-trained professionals 18 years ago, the students communicated to me that they felt learning English challenged their ethnic identity. Their comments were reminiscent of the experience of Aboriginal children who had been taught English in residential schools. I started to question my own role as an ESL instructor. Was I really helping immigrants or oppressing newcomers by adopting a proassimilation stance? I began to realize that language learning is inextricably entwined with culture and ethnic identity. Teachers are expected to know how to deal with diversity, yet many, including me, may not have reflected on the implications of racial, cultural, and linguistic hegemony.

My Journey

I began teaching English as a Second Language 25 years ago, supplying while I was in university and volunteering when I did not get called for supply work. Back in the 1980s, there were not many jobs available in immigrant services and even though I did not have an interest in teaching, I viewed education as a vehicle to help immigrants because I felt a great deal of empathy for newcomers. I enjoyed living in a multicultural city, appreciated having friends from many ethnic backgrounds, and believed that variety

was the spice of life. At the same time, I was keenly aware of racial injustice in Canada and saw teaching ESL as a way to level the playing field for immigrants. I felt that since I had been through the Canadian system, I could stand in the gap in terms of sharing knowledge. For the first few years of my teaching career, I was offered basic level classes between literacy to level 3 and I utilized the Canadian content found in the curricula. I was enthusiastic about empowering learners by teaching them to read and write and since for many students I was their first teacher in Canada, I enjoyed a special relationship with my classes.

As amalgamation of the school boards took place, I was given a class with predominantly foreign trained professionals ranging from level 5 to level 7. Since I was in my late 20s but my students were mainly in their 40s and engineers, small business owners and medical professionals, I felt challenged to bring my teaching to a new level. At the school where I worked there was a co-op program led by Wanda, one of the ESL instructors who participated in this study. While the school received many accolades for the innovative program, the supervisors in the companies where our students had gained their Canadian work experience had some disturbing feedback that Wanda shared with me. They commented that ESL instructors were not doing their jobs because while students could perform tasks well, their communication with coworkers bordered on inappropriate and even rude. Since many students from my newly assigned class aspired to getting into the co-op program, I was determined to make sure my graduates performed well on the job. In an attempt to ensure their success, I created a unit on communication. I covered topics such as differences in gender communication styles, cultural expectations, and the Canadian communication style. I also covered, most

importantly to my mind, communicating with coworkers. Much to my dismay, while the male and female communication style topics garnered much interest and always seemed to offer potential for humor in the classroom, teaching the Canadian style of communication evoked a great deal of resistance from the foreign trained professionals. When I went over the polite phrases, the students in the class would invariably protest saying, “This is not me” or “This is not who I am.” They would also defend the communication styles from their first cultures by arguing that it is acceptable to interrupt, directly disagree, and ask what would be considered personal questions in Canada. Quite a few students said that using Canadian polite phrases as outlined in the textbooks would “Make me feel phony.” Perplexed, I asked them how they planned to communicate politely since they were eschewing the direction I was giving them in the lesson plans. They adamantly asserted, “If I think someone is wrong, I will say, ‘You are wrong.’” I started to feel that teaching the Canadian style of communication was an exercise in futility and was actually causing me more problems even though my intentions were to be helpful.

I spoke to some of my friends who were instructors and whose first language, like me, was also not English. I found that they agreed that there was a “Canadianspeak.” I researched various communication styles and shared the material in class. We discussed international styles of communication, various types of conversations, and societal hierarchies and their influence on verbal interactions. I spent some time on improving the unit and making the delivery of the lesson plans more effective based on the learners’ responses. In the end, I made my case to the students by saying that I would teach them the polite Canadian phrases but they could choose to use them if and when they found

them useful. I felt that this negotiated stance was showing respect for cultural identities and also sharing information needed to communicate according to Canadian cultural norms and in a politically correct manner. It was also a way to help adult students express themselves, especially when I taught them the vocabulary associated with their world views and gave pointers on starting conversations about international styles of speaking. I narrated personal stories of my family's early life in Canada when we got into many misunderstandings because we did not fully understand the Canadian styles of communication. Some anecdotes were amusing but other stories were quite serious as my family sometimes ended up facing strong repercussions as our meanings were lost in translation. At the end of the revised unit, the ESL students would often have an epiphany that language and culturally based communication styles were strong components of their personal identities and learning Canadian communication styles required personal reflection. A corollary that I came to discern through my experiences as an ESL instructor is that learning a language involves developing a new cultural identity.

Why is culture important in education? Taking a Parekhian view, culture can be seen as a way to understand individuals as their own unique persons and their public persona, and multiculturalism can help teachers understand that learners are culturally embedded, diversity is a reality, and cultures are complementary (McGlynn, 2009). Parekh sees multiculturalism as an inherently positive learning experience. While there are both detractors and supporters of multiculturalism, in the 21st century, ethnic diversity is a lived reality in cities and neighbourhoods around the world. That is why transformation is needed in teacher training that "takes ideas from marginalized groups,

questions the status quo, encourages new methodologies and ways of thinking” (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008, p. 47). Critical education assists the learner in interpreting and changing his/her worlds. Knowledge acquisition is for self and group enhancement as well as for collective actualization and well-being. The possession of knowledge can help the student/learner/teacher not only solve daily problems, but also articulate a vision for a collective future. (Dei et al., 2000, p. 49)

It is essential that teacher education in TESL programs should include units on instructional strategies that help keep adult ESL learners rooted to their cultures while simultaneously engaging them to create a new identity with a postmodern perspective by utilizing praxis taught in GE and MCE. I hoped that out of this study, ESL instructors would learn how to use Moll et al.’s (2005) instructional strategies to help students learn English to effectively construct a more personally integrated ethnic identity with a global focus. Prior funds of knowledge studies mainly focused on qualitative narrative research to find that parent participation and student engagement increased and that teacher confidence improved in these cross-cultural settings. Even though the funds of knowledge strategy encouraged learners, parents, and teachers in Moll et al.’s and Rowsell, Sztainbok, and Blaney’s (2007) study, I wanted to find out whether adult ESL instructors’ ethnocentrism towards their students could also be reduced.

Rationale and Research Questions

There is an ongoing need for professional development in adult ESL education to facilitate cross-cultural interactions in classrooms and promote intercultural sensitivity. Post-9/11, the climate in ESL classes can be perceived as new territory because ESL

instructors encounter a level of diversity previously unknown to prior generations of learners. Although there has always been ethnic mixing, the degree of diversity has increased exponentially in the last 20 years (Dei et al., 2000). East and West interactions have the potential to be volatile because Western societies ascribe to postmodern views while Eastern cultures lean towards modern paradigm assumptions; that is, hierarchical, authoritarian, and rigid. The changing role of women has also been cited as exacerbating tensions between East and West (O'Sullivan, 1999). To illustrate, there is an ongoing debate over the wearing of the hijab. In some countries, such as the present day theocracy in Iran, the head covering is mandatory in public. In Turkey, a secular republic with Islamic roots, it is illegal to wear a hijab if a woman attends university. In an ESL class in a large urban centre in Ontario, one female student may enjoy the freedom to wear the hijab in an educational institution, while another female student may exercise her right not to cover her hair in a public place. Furthermore, since 9/11, the hijab may no longer be perceived as primarily a women's issue by Westerners because it has taken on political connotations to become associated with religious fundamentalism. The diverse views represented in adult ESL classes due to ethnic and religious divisions can be bridged by teachers and administrators who have been trained with intercultural sensitivity and who are well-versed in strategies that foster greater understanding of multiple perspectives.

Because teachers interact daily with diverse groups, they are uniquely situated to foster change in society. In fact, "as Giroux (1985) indicated, educators as transformative intellectuals can recognize their ability to critically transform the world" (Moll et al., 2005, p. 132). Change can take place to transform traditional hierarchies within

neighbourhoods as teachers assert that the local knowledge of learners, families, and community members have a place in educational institutions (Moll et al., 2005). As a result, relationships are personalized and a democratic interaction is restored when the teacher assumes the posture of a learner with students. The traditional idea that the learners are recipients of curricula can foster the view that ethnic communities are deficient because the knowledge based on the lived experience of ethnic groups may be rarely incorporated into state-mandated curricula. When teachers find the funds of knowledge in a classroom and use it to construct units with themes and equity-orientated curricula, it can foster a postmodern outlook (Dei et al., 2000; Moll et al., 2005). Also, by appropriating funds of knowledge from the learner, the teacher's perspective can be transformed from viewing diverse urban neighbourhoods from a deficit orientation to an assets-based interaction (Moll et al., 2005). Thus, diverse views can be incorporated into the class for both teacher and student learning.

Theory

Education has often been depicted as a jigsaw of knowledge and learning consisting of pieces that make a complete puzzle. In the same way, openness to diverse views is an opportunity to learn from one another and a willingness to challenge previous assumptions may lead to the development of strategies in policy, curriculum, and relationships and, ultimately, result in a balancing of perspectives (Dei et al., 2000; Denevi & Carter, 2006; McGlynn, 2009). Multiculturalism with a small "m," but not the Multicultural Policy with a capital "M," has the potential to increase the knowledge of students drawing from a variety of perspectives. Sadly, at this time, ESL learners are

sometimes viewed as culturally deficient learners who have little to offer in terms of classroom participation.

Despite the fact that a large urban centre in Ontario has often been credited as being a multicultural city, it is important to face the sobering reality that “a diverse society is not necessarily an integrated one” (Dadzie, 2005, p. 9). Although Dadzie is referring to multiculturalism in Britain, a similar observation can be made about Canadian multiculturalism, in the sense that Torontonians may inhabit the same space geographically, but the levels of interaction and engagement in educational institutions among cultures may be distressingly low. Even when interaction does take place, newcomers may adopt various unhealthy strategies in order to be accepted. This term is referred to as “jouissance,” meaning there is an element of enjoyment that visible minorities get when accepted as someone other than an outsider (Shariff, 2008). Newcomers may also adopt a proassimilationist stance for success but this can lead to a loss of personal identity and feelings of exclusion (Dei et al., 2000). Thus, on a deeper level, these coping strategies may be “considered contra-intuitive to healthy identity development” (Shariff, 2008, p. 463). For this reason, the ESL classroom should function as a cradle of multiculturalism to nurture learners to construct a healthy integrated ethnic identity with a global perspective.

Part of encouraging a global lens is the acknowledgement that identity formation is an important concept in learning any second language (Dei et al., 2000). Osler and Starkey (2000) studied a French language course that admits 700 students annually, and within this study, they explored issues of identity and integration in modern society. Osler and Starkey found that “social tensions may occur when collective feelings about

individual identity conflict with politically and economically driven agenda of modernity” (p. 211). Those who are seen as not embracing postmodernism, such as members from traditional Islamic countries, can be stigmatized and face difficulties in integration while some individuals may embrace a hybrid identity. In contrast, some people may opt for the creation of a completely new identity that is neither concerned with maintaining ties to their cultural or linguistic roots nor is fully connecting to the new community. Instead, a highly individualistic stance is adopted. In any case, learning a second language should not be seen as a purely linguistic skill but should encompass an awareness of the “complex process of identity formation in a new place” (Rowell et al., 2007, p. 153). Adult ESL instructors need to find ways to help newcomers develop linguistic competence, but they should also encourage identity exploration in the context of second language learning.

How can adult ESL instructors learn how to adopt constructive ways of inclusion in a multicultural classroom? First, there is “an underlying assumption that people will learn better if their cultural contexts are taken into account” (Rose, 2000, p. 31). Not only that, but when multiculturalism is central to teaching and not just added on, it has the power to “transform an educational environment into an equitable community” (Denevi & Carter, 2006, p. 18). When teacher training includes components on social justice, teachers are more willing to try methods to enhance student learning and focus on changing learning strategies (Ensign, 2009). Teacher training that includes components about social justice and diversity issues has the ability to empower teachers to successfully relate to a greater number of learners, thereby enabling teachers to understand the complex nature of diverse perspectives and practice strategies that are free

from ethnocentrism (McGlynn, 2009). Ultimately, teachers can model for the students an intellectual openness that demonstrates that they are prepared to learn from other cultures.

This kind of social interaction can lead to the development of an integrated global consciousness within the classroom. Vygotsky's postmodern constructivist perspective rejects the view that knowledge rests within the individual (as cited in Daniels, 2005). Instead, he theorizes that learning is passed on through social and cultural contexts using tools, such as language, to develop collective meaning. Instructional methods that will promote "the emergence of individual and collective meanings in the classroom" (Daniels, 2005, p. 281) are required. There should also be an overarching focus for "the interdependence of the social and individual process in the co-constructivism of knowledge" (Daniels, 2005, p. 281). In the ESL classroom, the multiple perspectives that are voiced require a postmodern outlook where teachers should be skilled to facilitate a high degree of mediation among various cultural views (Rowell et al., 2007). Using Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, teaching diverse groups takes into account the divisions between the first and second culture, disconnects between communication styles, and internalized negative stereotypes. Moll (as cited in Rowell et al., 2007) proposes that "inviting funds of knowledge" (p. 143) is an instructional strategy that can help bridge gaps between teachers' and learners' lived experiences. ESL learners need not be perceived as deficient but, instead, they should be allowed to express their lived experiences and knowledge in order to contribute to the overall learning for students and teachers. In this way, it may be possible to gain trust among people who do not have similar values, customs, and communication styles and, consequently, who feel divided

and threatened. Moll et al. (2005) describe this kind of trust as a “confianza en confianza” that is conducive to inclusive cross-cultural interactions. In addition, the “interconnectedness” (Rowse et al., 2007, p. 141) among cultures should be stressed to bridge further potential divisions in the class. This type of learner-centred, co-constructivist, holistic teaching practice can help learners build language skills in an authentic and meaningful way.

Dei et al. (2000) found several supports for teachers to foster inclusivity in the school environment. The curriculum used should not be Eurocentric but rather demonstrate that knowledge is produced by all cultures. Local ethnic groups in neighbourhoods should also be tapped for indigenous knowledge. The practice of involving community leaders would support the curriculum and “transcend the notion of multicultural knowledge and ‘experience’ as rituals of song, dance, and food. Instead, we must undertake a more substantial approach to knowledge production that situates education within a broader global and epistemological frame of reference” (Dei et al., 2000, p. 171). There should also be visual representations of culture around the school environment to validate learners’ cultures. The presence of racialized communities as staff would also promote the idea that a globally just society involves power sharing. Fostering inclusivity has many aspects within schools and in the community.

My study focused on the efficacy of the funds of knowledge instructional strategy within ESL classes. Rowse et al. (2007) used a policy-theory-practice triad to infuse culture into the curriculum. This study also included teacher education for immigration, multicultural, and human rights policies. Although Bryan’s (2009) study in Ireland showed that state-sanctioned antiracist policy and curricula had the opposite effect of the

intended goal (unknown graduate student, personal communication, September, 2009), information about government policy was still disseminated to see whether knowledge of the policies from a critical MCE perspective informs ESL instructors' practices or changes teachers' attitudes towards ESL learners. Instructional strategies were shared based on Moll et al.'s (2005) funds of knowledge strategy and Pahl and Rowsell's (2010) *Artifactual Literacies: Every Object Tells a Story*. Instead of the official Multicultural Policy, with a large "M," methods of instruction using Vygotsky's sociocultural postmodern methods were used to build on the learners' existing knowledge to show that good teaching practice is effective overall, but especially with a diverse group of learners. Finally, the role of ethnic identity within a global context was examined. The idea of ethnic identity has not diminished as the world becomes more connected, but issues surrounding language learning and ethnic identity have been documented (Dei et al., 2000; Moll et al., 2005; Osler & Starkey, 2000; Shariff, 2008). As such, language teachers need to be aware that learning a new language is associated with the construction of a new identity.

Yet, teachers are largely unaware of their own culture when teaching (Rowsell et al., 2007). Teacher ethnocentrism continues to be a barrier to helping ESL learners develop a fully integrated individual identity and develop positive feelings of belonging in a connected global society. How can teacher ethnocentrism become a positive foundation to foster intercultural sensitivity? According to Vygotsky (as cited in Daniels, 2005) in some ways

conflict can lead learners to disequilibrium and the questioning of assumptions to construct a new understanding. In this case knowledge building would include: 1)

Treating new information as something problematic that needs explaining to reconcile knowledge conflict and 2) Using new information to construct understanding with diverse pieces of information. (p. 292)

Making connections with texts and real life and focusing on building consensus is an essential part of postmodern perspectives. In diverse classrooms, constructing identity and building shared knowledge facilitates interactions and promotes deeper engagement among learners.

Vygotskian principles are also presented in the funds of knowledge concept. Funds of knowledge refers to “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household and individual functioning and well-being” (Moll et al., 2005, p. 72). The concept moves away from food and customs displays to utilizing the existing knowledge of the ESL learner to scaffold learning. Therefore, the research questions underpinning this study were:

1. How will intervention based on global and multicultural education principles and Moll et al.’s funds of knowledge practices facilitate inclusive cross-cultural interactions and/or affect teachers’ instructional strategies?
2. How will learning about multicultural, immigration, and human rights policy from a critical perspective affect ESL instructors’ attitudes towards ESL learners?

An Overview of the Document

In this study, the efficacy of using the funds of knowledge instructional strategy was investigated to see whether ESL instructors’ ethnocentrism could be reduced. In Chapter One, the problem was outlined as declining personal connections among diverse

ethnic groups in neighbourhoods and educational institutions taking place within the context of global technological advances that may be more conducive to virtual interactions. A theoretical assertion for the validity of Moll et al.'s (2005) study through Vygotsky and other research on identity formation in relation to second language learning for adult ESL learners was provided.

Chapter Two presents issues related to the changing demographics around the world. Policies for minority language groups, accommodation, and the definition of nationhood are some aspects associated with global diversity and GE. Current trends in marginalization and American studies on MCE are examined. Further, the educational structures, policies, and curricula that perpetuate oppression in Ontario are outlined.

Chapter Three describes the methodology to be used in this study. The intent of this study was to see if whether the funds of knowledge instructional strategy is a viable way to respond to teacher ethnocentrism and if information about policies using critical MCE is effective in changing teachers' perceptions regarding immigrants. This chapter discusses assumptions, limitations, and ethical considerations. There is also a restatement of purpose.

Chapter Four presents the themes that emerged out of the focus group discussions using a peer review.

Chapter Five summarizes the research study. The research questions are discussed in relation to the context of the research conducted in this study. Implications are discussed and recommendations are also presented. In conclusion, I oppose the use of ESL classes as a forum for assimilation and advocate for an integrative approach using

GE, critical MCE, and culturally inclusive instructional strategies as essential in the context of standardization and monoculturality in schools.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are many issues surrounding diversity. The first is that diversity is becoming the norm in many countries that were previously relatively homogeneous in terms of language, race, and culture. Even countries that were initially multicultural, such as the United States and Canada, have grown in terms of racial and linguistic heterogeneity. Changing demographics have resulted in various responses from policymakers in an attempt to deal with cross-cultural engagement, cultural exemptions, and linguistic hegemony. Another key aspect in terms of changing demographics is the role of cities in terms of globalization. Municipal centres have tended towards a more integrative approach, while nationalistic policies have focused more on assimilation goals. Adding to the complexity of dealing with diversity is the relationship of race to nationhood, feelings of entitlement, and racial stratification. GE and critical MCE may be an effective response to diversity and educating teachers about social justice can be a strategy to respond to ethnocentric attitudes in education.

The Politics of Demographics

Changing demographics is a huge driver for a nation's creation and implementation of multicultural education policies. Although North America has often been associated with multiculturalism, many countries that were previously monolingual and monoethnic are becoming internationalized. South Korea, a former bastion of monolingual and monocultural homogeneity, is transitioning into a heterogeneous society. In 2009, there were 1 million foreigners living in South Korea. In fact, South Korea is transitioning into a multicultural society with a 70% increase in immigration mostly from China, the United States, Vietnam, and the Philippines due to work study

programs and intermarriage as the result of the disproportionate number of Korean males to females. Considering Korea was one of the most homogenous, monolithic cultural groups, “this new trend poses the issue of how to integrate new groups with existing groups and how to achieve a healthy balance between diversity and national unity” (Choi, 2010, p. 174). South Korean educators fear that if students are not socialized, segregation based on physical features may result, and, for this reason, MCE in Korea is mainly aimed at helping foreigners adjust to mainstream society. Choi recommends that research-based learning in social studies about Korean immigration history, community-building activities, and the definition of the Korean national/individual identity will help develop sympathy for cultural communities. However, Choi also recommends that MCE educational experiences in South Korea show similarities among cultures, explore diverse perspectives, and improve critical thinking. She argues that

teachers play a pivotal role in creating learning environments where students learn and think. They, as guides not directors, should expose students to diverse opinions on socio-cultural issues so that students can understand other groups’ standpoint, reflect on their own point of view, develop increased tolerance for differences of opinion, and present their own points of view. This process is compatible with citizenship education in which students become more interested and involved in their society, understand various perspectives and cooperate to solve problems. (p. 177)

Choi endorses a MCE praxis that is linked to practices within a classroom such as (a) fostering intercultural sensitivity by appreciating differences, (b) going beyond tolerance towards a critical perspective that challenges the status quo, and (c) encouraging social

action in many countries around the world. While changing national demographics is a key factor in initiating cross-cultural interactions on one level, the decision to engage more fully, as Choi points out, can be influenced by educators who support critical MCE.

Similar to South Korea, in recent years, Greek society has had an influx of immigrants prompting the government to implement intercultural educational policy initiatives because “research on teacher education on multiculturalism in Greece indicated that pre-service teachers continue to have stereotypical understanding of multiculturalism” (Spinthourakis, Karatzia-Stavliot, & Roussakis, 2009, p. 267). Spinthourakis et al. interviewed 288 elementary education teachers using Chen and Starsota’s Intercultural Sensitivity (IS) Scale in order to examine the relationship between the participants’ demographics and their levels of intercultural sensitivity. These researchers found that although IS ranked high, 70% of the participants felt unable to cope with cross-cultural issues in education. Only 6% self-identified as well-trained to respond to intercultural education issues, leading to the conclusion that IS training “is an important parameter in all efforts to improve the ability of future teachers to deal with complex circumstances of contemporary school, which is increasingly impacted and influence by multiculturalism” (Spinthourakis et al., 2009, p. 274). The study demonstrated that while teachers may be culturally sensitive, interacting with a high degree of cross-cultural skill requires further professional development in order for teachers to acquire a robust set of learning strategies designed to facilitate effective multicultural interactions in the classroom.

Internationalization is also increasing in China, but bridging foreign students with the many ethnic groups within China’s borders remains a concern for Chinese higher-

learning institutions. In 2006, 162,695 overseas students from South Korea, Japan, the United States, Vietnam, and Indonesia were studying in universities in China and, in 2009, 4,000 African students were awarded scholarships by the Chinese government. Not only are students increasing in diversity, but Chinese graduates from postsecondary institutions, such as professors and university presidents, have foreign credentials and, therefore, are conscious of the need to develop cross-cultural skills. In fact, “in a world of growing diversity, education’s most challenging task is to teach how to live comfortably in a world of diversity” (Zhenzhou & Postiglione, 2008, p. 133). Zhenzhou and Postiglione examined three universities that had multiethnic compositions and researchers remained at each location for 2 months. There are two parts to the data: university policy and daily life narratives. The policies promoted ethnic minority customs and practices in the form of a canteen for Muslims, on one hand, but the underlying premise was that ethnic groups should conform to Chinese national ideals. In daily life, minorities were seen as favoured and foreign, and Asian students minimally interacted with ethnic groups in song and dance expressions out of curiosity. The daily life discourse revealed that the recruitment policy was in conflict with policy and structural discourse because the political goals of the state were primarily to ensure state cohesion and national unity as opposed to promoting a multiethnic voice.

Zhenzhou and Postiglione (2008) examined the relationship between internationalization and multiculturalism and found that the drive for internationalization that brings status is in disharmony with the role of the ethnic minorities in Chinese universities. They stated that it is possible that if globalization may further marginalize minorities, “as many scholars contend, then leading universities need to make a special

effort to provide greater access to ethnic minorities” (p. 145). Zhenzhou and Postiglione recommended that China bridge multiculturalism with internationalization by: (a) recruiting more international students, (b) recruiting more ethnic groups in China, (c) offering more courses on multiculturalism, and (d) offering more opportunity for multicultural expression. China, with its unique position in northeast Asia and the presence of many ethnic groups within its borders, is in a favourable position to lead the way in terms of cross-cultural interactions in the future, especially in universities.

Another example of increasing multiculturalism is Ireland; however, Ireland’s internationalization is taking place within the context of two historically segregated groups polarized due to religious, political, and geographical divisions. In 2000, the economic boom in Ireland led to the birth of the Celtic Tiger. As a consequence of foreign investment, labour shortages occurred that coincided with an influx of African and Eastern European refugees coming to Ireland due to social unrest, leading to “Ireland’s transformation from a mono-cultural to a multicultural society” (Bryan, 2009, p. 301) in the Republic of Ireland. Similarly, Protestant and Catholic schools in Northern Ireland were forced to integrate because there were new immigrants from Portugal, Lithuania, and Poland. In fact, “Northern Ireland has both an on-going need to promote understanding between its segregated Catholic and Protestant communities and a new need to accommodate an increasing diversity of inwardly migrant minorities” (McGlynn, 2009, p. 203).

Just as in China and Greece, the Republic of Ireland responded by producing policies that addressed issues in intercultural education. Bryan (2009) studied a national-level policy titled, *Planning for Diversity: The National Action Plan Against Racism*

(NPAR). She observed classes in a variety of schools and school events in an ethnically diverse, middle SES area for 1 year. In one particular school that was studied in depth, teachers had added on unit activities to an existing curricula and the school had been touted as successfully promoting inclusivity. However, Bryan noted the disturbingly frequent use of “us” and “them” language to conclude that the NPAR policy actually fostered a greater feeling of “otherness” among racialized communities. Thus, developing intercultural sensitivity within educational institutions is more complex than it first appears with state motivation, policies, and actual classroom practice intersecting in ways so that policies can actually play out in a way that has the opposite effect of the original goal (unknown graduate student, personal communication, September, 2009). Bryan recommended that instead of creating a plethora of policies, teacher education should encompass learning strategies that have global perspectives as more conducive to developing intercultural sensitivity. A nationalist view could be replaced with a global lens with “alternative pedagogical strategies” (Bryan, 2009, p. 313) that include viewpoints from marginalized groups. Otherwise, minority groups may be seen as existing to benefit the majority and, in this way, cross-cultural interactions have the potential to become exploitive and based on conditional acceptance (Bryan, 2009). Policies can be applied in ways that are largely ineffective in terms of facilitating cross-cultural interactions on a daily basis and, for this reason training teachers to use instructional strategies that promote a collective global identity could be more effective.

The National and Municipal Divide

While changing demographics have prompted a national response in countries, such as Greece, China, and Ireland, a study in Finland shows that there is a gap between

national interests that tend towards a proassimilation stance and municipal interests on the educational frontlines that respond to newcomers with a focus on the principles of critical MCE. A negative aspect of MCE is that implementation is often targeted towards newcomer populations, while many native teachers, in their respective countries, may be virtually unaware of multicultural policies or the implications for educators (Choi, 2010; Holm & Londen, 2010; Jonsdottir & Ragnarsdottir, 2010; Lucas, 2010). Holm and Londen's study hoped to aim MCE at both majority and minority students and focus on social justice for all residents of Finland. Although there has been teaching on tolerance, since the 1990s, "tolerance allows the educational system to continue on a mono-cultural ethnic basis" (Holm & Londen, 2010, p. 109). The curriculum in Finland promotes awareness of cultures and identity formation through the teaching of the Law on Equal Treatment to emphasize integration and access to employment opportunities. By 2020, the diversity of students in Finland will have increased to a point that one in five students will be an immigrant and, therefore, teacher training is needed in terms of knowledge, skills, theory, and practice. Interestingly, there was no mention of training for principals (Holm & Londen, 2010).

Most MCE centres for children in Finland are in the larger municipalities, such as Helsinki, Espoo, and Vantaa, and they are concerned with the study of Finnish as a second language. Racial differences are not valued and a colour-blind approach is applied to newcomers, but acceptance of variety in ethnicity, religion, and language is encouraged. Clearly, some uniqueness is valued while other aspects are not, which could lead to the creation of social barriers with no space for hybrid identities or an awareness of social justice (Holm & Londen, 2010). Finland, while promoting human rights and

gender equality as well as a more enlightened implementation of MCE in cities, reveals that there is a tension between the national goals and the priorities of municipalities in terms of immigrant education management. In order to provide greater cohesion, national curriculum guidelines should also include aspects of MCE that show differences as equal, literacy in both home and school languages, and visual representations to promote ethnic identity formation and are directed towards both native and immigrant communities.

The Complexity of Diversity

Furthermore, another aspect of diversity is that in every country, there are cultural exemptions (CE) made to accommodate groups that may have practices that contravene the laws of a nation. For example, Quakers are exempt from military service in the United States as a matter of religious principle. One controversial custom includes the stunning of animals by Orthodox Jewish and Muslim groups. In countries, such as Switzerland, Norway, and Sweden, the *shechita* and *dhabh* have been outlawed (Shorten, 2010). In response to the lack of accommodation, Islamic leaders declared that Muslims in the Nordic countries are not breaking religious laws by eating meat because they are following state law. Some devout Muslims have chosen to become vegetarian in order to fulfill both state and religious laws. In Canada, the Supreme Court has always sided on accommodating religious practices even to the point of allowing the *burqa* to be worn by a woman giving her testimony in court, which violates the law that a person has a right to face his/her accuser. In December 2012, however, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled 4-3 in favour of requiring the *niqab* to be removed based on a case-by-case decision by the presiding judge in an effort to balance the rights of religion, the right to a fair trial, and

the rights of rape victims, especially among ethnic women. In addition, although carrying a weapon without a license is illegal in Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in 2006 that Sikh students are allowed to carry the *kirpon* to school. Other examples of religious accommodation are the RCMP that designed a brown turban and the Metro Toronto Police that designed a blue turban for Sikh police officers. In Britain, the House of Lords granted Sikhs the exemption from school uniforms to wear turbans based on “moral and practical considerations” (Allen, 2007, p. 86). Although Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, and Canada all have human rights policies, clearly the level of legal accommodation a country is willing to make varies greatly.

Shorten (2010) refers to John Rawls’ *The Theory of Justice* to argue that democracy means equal treatment and that the law of equality should be applied to everyone, unless it reduces the self-respect of the person and, in a truly democratic society, citizens perceive themselves as having rights. Following this line of reason, asking for accommodation can be interpreted as exercising democratic rights. Further along this vein, usually religious accommodations receive the strongest arguments for CE, but the extent to which lack of accommodation affects alienation and integration is difficult to assess (Shorten, 2010). In diverse settings, it is important to be aware of how laws affect diverse groups and encourage discussions that will facilitate an understanding of various faiths. On the other hand, it is the complexity of accommodating various rights that results in many educators feeling frustrated and perceiving multiculturalism as problematic (Allen & Cars, 2001). An understanding of why accommodations occur and the ability to articulate rationales for cultural exemptions are key skills required for cross-cultural interactions.

The Vulnerability of Cross-Cultural Connections

Diversity can create complex situations, but an example of an educational institution that actively promotes engagement between students of diverse religions and ethnicities is the University of Haifa (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Zelniker, and Azaiza, 2010). A long-term project using the dramaturgical model, which is the use of social settings as a drama with plot and characters, was developed by Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. and aimed at undergraduates to foster respect between the Arab and Jewish student populations.

Cooperative participatory action research (CPAR) is an elective research seminar with a one half Arab and a one half Jewish class that works together for one semester in bicultural cooperative teams to analyze problems and find solutions through participatory research. Solutions found by participants are more likely to be applied from a transformative model that “is founded upon the principles of emancipation and social justice, seeking to empower members of community groups who are less powerful or are oppressed by dominating groups” (Hertz-Lazarowitz et al., 2010, p. 271) than a top-down approach. Qualitative research methods are utilized by CPAR in an “epistemology that assumes knowledge is rooted in social relations and most powerful when produced collaboratively through action” (Hertz-Lazarowitz et al., 2010, p. 271) to empower university students. Over the last 10 years, CPAR has helped create a space for dialogue, negotiation, and reconciliation. Yet, the Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. study also helped to demonstrate that there needs to be an awareness of the sensitivities to the complexities and the possible volatile nature of campus interactions and the effects for the Jewish and Arab communities in Israel and around the world.

Linguistic Hegemony

Another aspect to diversity is the role of language. Laws concerning minority language rights are a way to establish power for ethnic groups. Furthermore, language rights legitimize cultural groups because they are public recognition linked to the identity of ethnic groups and the negotiation of cultural expressions. Without a moral obligation of inclusivity for ethnic groups, both longstanding and new, many disaffected immigrants may exercise their exit option, such as they have in Australia, where national policy was forced to change from proassimilation to multiculturalism due to the fact that many immigrants returned to their respective native countries (Spencer, 2008). Similarly, affluent newcomers who have obtained a Canadian passport but are unable to find jobs or feel as if they truly belong in Canadian society, have headed back and forth between their first country and Canada, resulting in the creation of the moniker, “Hotel Canada.” It is important to remember the underlying premise of migration where both immigrants who leave their country of origin and nations who accept immigrants do so for the perceived benefits (Spencer, 2008).

That is why states grant not only economic, racial, and cultural rights to minorities within a nation, but language rights as well. Spencer (2008) examined Bill 101 in Canada that protects the French language in English-dominated Canada and the Baltic States after the Cold War, to show that “a deep commitment to cultural diversity also requires that these cultural communities have the capacity to ensure the reproduction of their identities through the process of nation-building” (p. 256). The “how” of cultural expression validates ethnic identities and supports their survival as well as promoting multilingualism for minority groups. Granting legal rights to linguistic expression helps

to ensure the continuation of the minority language's survival and perpetuation. Bill 101 was passed on August 26, 1977 in Quebec to encourage the perpetuation of the French language within the province of Quebec. Since income disparities have decreased since the 1970s between English and French groups in Quebec, Bill 101 can be seen as successful because there was active reproduction of the French language, thus ensuring the survival of French culture in Canada. In 1984, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously agreed to uphold the rights of French language minority rights outside of Quebec, which further protected the French language within Canada as a whole (Spencer, 2008). For this reason, language rights can be seen as essential to publicly acknowledging minority cultures and promoting the survival of ethnic languages and, consequently, the survival of ethnic identities.

The Baltic Republics is another group of states that demonstrates public recognition for minority language rights and its relationship to the continuation of ethnic identity. During the Cold War, the Baltic states, along with the rest of the U.S.S.R., were required to learn Russian. However, Russian minorities in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania had less than 50% language proficiency in the host country's mother tongue. After The Thaw, Russia was no longer a superpower and Russians within the Baltic States comprised a linguistic and cultural minority. The demise of the Russian empire in the Baltic states is a case of role reversal where the formerly oppressed became the dominant group over the oppressor and reflects the countermoves and ultimate checkmate to establish linguistic hegemony. If states do not give language rights to minorities, the nature of democracy does not permit exclusionary behaviour for long. The Croatian war stemmed from the Serbian fight for cultural autonomy and was rooted in resentment and

alienation. Ultimately, the result was the destabilization of the area because the language rights of Serbians, as a constituent nation, were taken away (Spencer, 2008). Similarly, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania enacted various language laws and citizenship requirements as republics that secured their position within their homelands. For instance, only those who resided in the Baltic States prior to Soviet occupation could automatically become citizens. The West applies a “citizenship by birth in the country” rule. In contrast, those who had entered under the Soviet bloc era, even if they had been born in a Baltic state, had to pass a language test amid fears that native Baltic state citizens would become marginalized minorities in their own country. In turn, the Independent Commonwealth of States (ICS) feared that Russian minorities residing in other countries would return to the motherland and exacerbate the economic crises they were facing. But by 1995, 86% of Russians residing in the Baltic states agreed that it was their obligation to learn the language of the host country. Both Bill 101 and the Baltic states’ responses after the Cold War ended demonstrate that language rights act as public recognition for minority groups in order to avoid the idea of nationalism based on exclusivity but rather linguistic inclusivity, leading to greater national engagement by minority groups.

The Race to Define Nationhood

Another issue, besides the gap between national and municipal goals and the hegemonic struggle for linguistic rights, is the lack of definition that exists in multicultural settings between the role of race and nationhood. *The Future of Multi-ethnic Britain* (FMEB) released on October 11, 2000, amid public outcry, reveals the complex relationship between race and nation. *The Parekh Report*, as it is popularly

referred to, was vilified. Some of the White commissioners on the committee were also spoken against, but

in the main it was the non-White status of key ‘public face’ Commissioners such as Professor Bhikhu Parekh and Professor Stuart Hall that fed into a racially connotated chain of meaning which appeared to equate non-whiteness with non-attachment to the British nation. (McLaughlin & Neal, 2007, p. 915)

Some British citizens vehemently felt that Parekh and Hall could not speak to the definition of the implications of being British or to the implications of British citizenship. In the end, the FMEB Commission found a more receptive context to examine the questions regarding race and nation when the political climate changed, but, at first, there was a negative response to the non-White face of the FMEB. Defining an individual’s national identity and the relationship to race has become controversial due to the changing colour of nationhood and citizenship.

Tan and Lefebvre’s (2010) study looked at how teacher candidates responded to MCE in Quebec. Firstly, there was “the tension between multiculturalism as equality of all groups and intercultural as the sustainability of Francophone Quebec culture was a constant undercurrent of conflict in the McGill Multicultural Education course” (Tan & Lefebvre, 2010, p. 384). In some ways, bilingualism and biculturalism can be seen as competing with multiculturalism. In addition, some teacher candidates felt that they were being picked on and portrayed as the bad guy because a discussion in the MCE class brought to light the fact that students are a relatively homogenous group within teacher education programs. Other teacher candidates who were White-skinned but were of a different ethnic origin did not identify with White privilege. Sofia, a first generation

Greek immigrant student teacher, “did not see herself as white because to her whiteness is associated with cultural, political, and economic power – all of which do not apply to her Montreal experience as a working-class Greek-Canadian” (Tan & Lefebvre, 2010, p. 385). Thus, there is an identity that may be required to be negotiated because “a white Quebecois might visibly look like any other white Canadian or American, but their identity as a white person is different linguistically, historically, and culturally” (Tan & Lefebvre, 2010, p. 385). In this way, there can be a dissonance in terms of looking like an Anglo Canadian but being heard as a French Canadian.

On the other hand, establishing a strict definition of nation and negotiating an identity based on race and ethnicity is a concern in diverse settings (Tan & Lefebvre, 2010). For example, Singapore’s multilingual and multiracial policy, established in 1965, did not shy away from defining the nation of Singapore as having four races: “Chinese (74.2%), Indian (9.2), Malay (13.4), and ‘Others’ (3.2%)” (Alviar-Martin & Ho, 2011, p. 129). However, the clear definition and delineation of race forced biracial citizens to deny a part of their roots and the adoption of Mandarin as the language of Chinese Singaporeans also excluded Cantonese and all Chinese dialect speakers from receiving language rights (Alviar-Martin & Ho, 2010, p.129). The creation of the racial definition of postcolonial Singapore resulted in an exclusionary policy as to race and national identification. Both clarity and ambiguity about nationhood and race can be problematic because the blurring of race and ethnicity results in the blurring of traditional territorial boundaries.

If nations in the new millennium do not define themselves by language, race, or ethnicity for citizenship, then what defines a nation? The role of a nation is similar to the

ambiguity faced by men during the early years of the feminist movement. Feminists had sought to emancipate women and redefine their roles in society, but they failed to articulate a redefined role for men. In the same way, globalization, while in some ways emancipating citizens from being bound by race and language, can also result in making the idea of nationhood a nebulous concept in the 21st century. There is a “global cosmopolitanism” (McLaughlin & Neal, 2007, p. 911), meaning that very few nations are homogeneous, unilingual, or monocultural, whether there is an official multicultural policy or not. As a result, there may be a need for “cosmopolitan education” (Nussbaum, 1996) that avoids xenophobic vocabulary. Furthermore, if everyone is going to be a global citizen at some point in the future, then how much does the nation that one resides in matter? Should schools continue to promote patriotism or should educational institutions promote global citizenship and multiculturalism?

Multicultural Education: A Pathway to Social Justice

MCE has many dimensions, but critical MCE can be defined as leading to an awareness of systemic barriers within a nation and developing an attitude that will seek to change institutional hierarchies and confront racial and social stratification (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010). Unfortunately, at this time, because most teachers may perceive multiculturalism as primarily the result of an increase in immigration levels worldwide, they may not implement social justice perspectives and may remain at the tourist curricula level promoting a “beads and feathers” approach by focusing on the exotic. Ideally, MCE should be delivered using a curriculum that fuses all subjects with equity and occurs in an empowering school culture (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010). There are four curricula approaches: (a) Contributive, refers to vocabulary included in English

from various cultures and music from other countries; (b) Additive, Black History Month; (c) Transformative, reading books from other cultures; and (d) Social Action, doing activities that help the world. Although teachers in the Schoorman and Bogotch study claimed to feel positive about diversity, during the research phase, an unexpected finding of the power dynamics between new and veteran teachers revealed that the established teachers were frequently disdainful of discourse with diverse voices, especially from new teachers. In addition, teachers preferred the tourist curricula and used food, fun, and fair approaches rather than critiquing patterns of privilege, oppression, and systemic barriers because social justice was seen by the established teachers as controversial and more appropriate for university settings (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010). Therefore, MCE can be seen as ineffective when it is applied in an isolated, fragmented, and shallow way; it needs a school culture with social justice as a priority for both staff and students. In addition, a high degree of collegiality and collaboration among teachers is required for transforming a school into an equitable place, which, unfortunately, did not exist in the Schoorman and Bogotch study. On the surface, the teachers seemed to grasp the idea that diversity was positive but they did not have the cross-cultural skills to support the diverse views presented by their peers or their students.

Multicultural Education in Action

Beyond Today is an American MCE curriculum that attempts to bring together youth from diverse backgrounds, such as Latino, White, and Black, to advocate for social justice and fight against institutionalized racism. The expectation for the level of engagement goes beyond just being friends to a deeper level of raising awareness of

systemic barriers against interaction by becoming critical towards social trends and historical events. The basis of the program is to establish community, cross borders, promote student leadership, and inspire social action. In a study by Epstein (2010), 22 students from three schools in the same northeastern city gave consent to participate. One activity with these students was that they were asked to reflect on media stereotypes and segregation. During the discussions, students showed that they were responsive to socially just ideals, but were hesitant to build interethnic friendships. Instances in society that disempower students of colour hindered interracial friendships in class (Epstein, 2010). Even when students did interact, occasionally they regressed back into their similar groups because

when students form racially homogenous groups, they can engage in conversations that can help them understand the racist experiences they encounter, protect themselves from additional attacks, and keep the dominant group at a distance. This leads to racial segregation even within social situations that may allow for integrated friendships. (Epstein, 2010, p. 44)

Recurrent themes in conversations centred around race, privilege, and power, and students danced around topics simultaneously, getting closer and pulling away figuratively as well as literally. When one group was practicing a dance move, a student from a different background participated in learning the new moves. But instead of continuing to dance with the new group, she returned to her familiar group of friends and taught her friends the new moves. While boundaries were stretched, they were also reinforced by cultural pride that can foster solidarity in diverse groups, because there is a consensual understanding that “everyone has a different way of knowing” (Epstein, 2010,

p. 53). Epstein found that it is possible for teachers, through MCE, to foster antiracist attitudes, especially when not feeling confident about how to approach questions regarding institutionalized racism, which actually highlights the importance of starting conversations concerning prejudice. However, teachers should anticipate conflict and be prepared to manage varied student responses. Epstein's study demonstrates that successful interracial and diverse SES youth can engage with each other to foster critical thinking about societal assumptions through MCE.

In a study by Wright and Tolan (2009), adventure curriculum was utilized to bring together a diverse group of university students for prejudice reduction. Shared wilderness experience

assumes a diverse multicultural group (will) become a supportive small group experience. The positive group experience creates the opportunity for prejudice reduction based on the contact hypothesis. The shared group experience also creates the "opportunity for dialogue on diversity issues that can be more genuine and in-depth because of the supportive community that has been created. (Wright & Tolan, 2009, p. 141)

First, Wright and Tolan focused on increasing self-awareness in order to form a basis for accepting others by discussions about identity. Next, 134 students participated in rope courses and wilderness trips and wrote a reflective journal about their experiences.

Wright and Tolan's study is unique because it is a quantitative study, the results of which suggested statistical correlation between the MCE taught and prejudice reduction, whereas most studies done in the area of MCE are qualitative. Participants in the Wright and Tolan study found that "adventure challenges and team development initiatives

cemented the bonds of group cohesion where as group dialogue and reflection encouraged insights about diversity” (p. 150). The researchers concluded that shared adventure experiences with diverse groups may reduce prejudice.

In another case, The Montana Indian Education for All Act was passed after a 38-year reform effort to support a Native American education curriculum that promotes inclusivity for Native Americans in Montana, the second largest minority in the area (Carjuzaa, Jetty, Munson, & Veltkamp, 2010). Carjuzaa et al. examined how multicultural education is implemented and began with a social justice perspective and promoted respect, responsibility, and mutual understanding. Relationships with group elders in the community were initiated to promote Indigenous cultures and languages. The preservation of Native American heritage was facilitated through stories and there was assent because Native American histories were seen by both Native and White communities as mutually beneficial. The effects of MCE in the Montana Native American setting have not been studied; therefore, it is difficult to establish how successful the new curriculum will be in terms of academic achievement. Carjuzaa et al.’s article demonstrated how the foundation of a new inclusive curriculum could be implemented.

Implementing inclusive curriculum and promoting social justice practices are two aspects of critical MCE, and proponents of critical MCE have criticized food, fun, and fair approaches to diverse settings as shallow and superficial. However, Richardson’s (2011) study provides a unique take on the tourist curriculum because he feels that MCE focusing on social justice limits the possibilities for food events. In Richardson’s study,

gardens provided food for neighbourhoods and encouraged healthy eating in low income communities. He attempted to show

food-centered activities can be shown to foster community building in schools among teachers, school families and the surrounding neighbourhood. Moreover, this article shows that popular discourse around food events such as school gardens also amplify the terms of volunteerism, civic engagement and the development of an environmental awareness among students. (Richardson, 2011, p. 109)

The urban garden concept is growing and “there are more than 500 gardens in Los Angeles Unified School district and 2000 in the state of California alone” (Richardson, 2011, p. 116). Not only do the gardens scaffold learning about becoming environmentally conscious, but growing vegetables promotes healthy eating. Richardson provides an alternative response to MCE critics who believe that tourist curriculum has no place in MCE because it does not challenge institutionalized racism, but food gardens do promote responsibility and global awareness of ecosystems. American studies (Carjuzaa et al., 2010; Epstein, 2010; Richardson, 2011; Wright & Tolan, 2009) have shown that social justice dovetails within MCE and can be utilized to facilitate cross-cultural interactions with diverse groups of students.

Canadian Multiculturalism: An Oxymoron

Back in the 1930s, Senator Yuzyk proposed that Canadian multiculturalism could be distinguished from the American model of the melting pot through the mosaic metaphor that legally permits newcomers to keep their native culture and the connection to their roots does not hinder their participation in society. Hugh MacLennan’s 1945

novel, *Two Solitudes*, depicts the internal and societal conflict of the protagonist as he strives to reconcile his French and English heritage as a symbol of the classic Canadian struggle for cultural identity. Ever since 1971, when Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau famously declared that there is no official culture in Canada except multiculturalism, the “Canadian identity and history has been constructed to celebrate the nation’s mosaic diversity” (Tan & Lefebvre, 2010, p. 383). Cynics interpreted Trudeau’s Multicultural Act as a divide-and-conquer political strategy between French Canada and ethnic communities in order to subdue Quebec’s bid for independence. Canadian multiculturalism has always taken place in the context of the two solitudes.

Similar issues have arisen among Canadian multiculturalism and increasing internationalization occurring in other countries. Just as Ireland’s globalization is taking place against the backdrop of the divisions between Catholics and Protestants, Canada’s multiculturalism is taking place within the polarization of French and English Canada. In terms of policies, Canadian multiculturalism has similar patterns of policy implementation with Finland. Despite proassimilation nationalistic goals that create cultural tensions, increasingly globalized cities in Finland and Canada have become more progressive in terms of integration of newcomers. The battle for linguistic hegemony in Canada is similar to the Baltic states’ efforts to establish minority language rights after the Cold War. Likewise today, due to the low birth rate in Quebec, there is a fear for the sustainability of the French language in Canada. Fluctuating demographics can influence the fight for linguistic rights. In terms of policy responses to diversity, demographics are probably the most influential aspect of responding to multicultural issues and associated with multiethnic diversity is the struggle for cultural, linguistic, and racial hegemony.

Multiculturalism in Ontario: A Case of Disempowerment

By 1988, multiculturalism had become a defining factor of the Canadian identity, coming in second only to universal health care (Goonewardena, Rankin, & Weinstock, 2004). The Canadian Multicultural Policy mandates that the government is “working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life in Canada (and) ensuring full participation in Canadian society including the social and economic aspects of individuals of all origins and their communities” (Goonewardena et al., 2004, p. 9). Towards the national goal of integrating immigrants, over the last 25 years, federal and provincial governments have put into place various educational structures to facilitate newcomer settlement. The federal government under Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) offers English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults using the Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) curriculum. The grammar-based curriculum is utilitarian in nature using the same ESL texts for Levels 1 to 6 across Canada. Classroom lesson plans are monitored and strict adherence to standardized exit criteria, within predetermined timeframes, are enforced. In contrast, the provincial government, through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), partners with district school boards in Ontario to deliver an ESL Continuing Education Program using the task-based Benchmarks curriculum that offers a great deal of latitude for both ESL instructors and adult ESL learners. Lesson plans are designed that spiral learning outcomes and are adjusted according to the level and interest of the students in the class. Adult learners are encouraged to learn at their own pace through guidance from the teacher. Promotion occurs at any time based on the instructor’s judgment through formative and summative assessments in class to ensure each student’s mastery of

reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. There are also Ontario Specialized Language Training (OSLT) classes provincially funded by the MCI and English Language Training (ELT) classes federally funded by the CIC, which fast-track newcomers into jobs where there is a labour shortage. Although ESL, LINC and OSLT/ELT classes are utilitarian in nature, because many newcomers immigrate to Canada in the hopes of finding a better job, there is nothing inherently wrong with the more pragmatic focus of education.

Nonetheless, there is a need to promote teacher education that develops cross-cultural skills. While there is diversity in student populations, teachers in Canada do not reflect the cultural demographics in the classroom. A *Globe and Mail* article, “Toronto school board hiring push a setback for white women”, published February 13, 2013 cited a memo circulated by the TDSB that the first round of teacher candidate interviews be granted to males and visible minorities in an effort to bridge the racial divide between a 72% non-White immigrant student body and an 80% White female elementary teacher workforce. Nor does teacher education effectively cover how to deal with diversity. Studies (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004; Visser, 2012) have shown that students leaving teacher education programs are not well-prepared to deal with diversity in the classroom. By examining policies and structures, it may be possible to determine the various factors that promote the exclusionary nature of cross-cultural interactions in educational settings in Ontario.

The 1960s Hall-Dennis Report is an example of a policy in Canada that promoted social justice. O’Sullivan (1999) provides an historical overview of two global paradigms, utilitarianism or social justice perspectives, to argue that rather than pursuing

global competition, educational reform should increase awareness of our globally interdependent needs and responsibilities. In fact, as stated in the Hall-Dennis Report, “education should promote tolerance and friendship among all nations and further the activities of the United Nations” (O’Sullivan, 1991, p. 313). Unfortunately, the Hall-Dennis Report did not specifically outline exactly how these noble ideals of peace and harmony should be achieved in the classroom or how teachers should implement values associated with social justice. Nor did it “provide specific and structural recommendations for operationalizing this kind of global paradigm in the Ontario curriculum or its educational goals” (O’Sullivan, 1999, p. 313). It merely reflected the strong 1960s Canadian belief that the world could be reconstructed through educating learners about social justice “without developing specific culturally relevant pedagogy” (O’Sullivan, 1991, p. 312).

Kuchapski (1998a) explains how, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the philosophy of ethical liberalism allowed high school study programs to meet learners’ needs and the pressure to perform for standardized tests diminished. Teachers’ individual instruction was seen as valuable for developing a child’s potential and there was a great deal of autonomy for teachers. Furthermore, to promote parent and teacher participation “public education underwent a process of massive decentralization” (Kuchapski, 1998a, p. 537) to encourage grassroots-level involvement and power sharing. The pendulum began to slowly swing to the other side in the 1970s through the technological liberal philosophy that

is considerably influenced by the competitive global economy made possible by technological change. Spiraling debt, intractable unemployment, and the

increasing ability of transnational corporations to relocate on a global scale, have resulted in a renewed interest in the instrumental value of education as the means for collective economic well-being. (Kuchapski, 1998a, p. 539)

For these reasons, education has shifted away from focusing on personal development to serving economic interests. Kuchapski (1998a) articulates two types of ideologies, person-centred liberalism and technological liberalism, to show that demands for accountability triumphed over the idea of developing the individual. She concludes by stating that spiral holistic learning may be better suited for multiethnic urban settings than evaluation through standardized exit criteria.

The curriculum, therefore, and not the learners' abilities, becomes the prominent guiding factor as mandating the level that should be reached, regardless of the level at which the student enters into that class or whether the class is high or low for that level. There is great variation in terms of proficiency levels in ethnic enclaves in large urban centres in Ontario. Moreover, the architects of curricula rarely incorporate diverse perspectives found in large urban centres in Ontario into the units studied. Since curricula are usually designed by the upper echelons within educational hierarchies that are far away from the school setting, experientially and spatially, "the issue of whose knowledge and whose voices are embedded in these measures can be answered only as we cross this furthest border between knowing and power" (Moll et al., 2005, p. 42). The curriculum becomes a powerful tool, if implemented by the teacher, to marginalize newcomers who do not have the cultural capital to respond to Eurocentric material and also can create a disservice for native Canadians because there are few, if any,

expectations to learn about the world. Changes in curricula focused on meeting standardized exit criteria can ripple into further marginalizing ethnic communities.

Social justice perspectives in education were further pushed aside when Ontario's 13-person Royal Commission on Learning (RCOL) was established by provincial decree on May 3, 1993. The RCOL was given the task to study and make recommendations for the publicly funded education system in terms of accountability and a vision for the future. *For the Love of Learning* was released to the Ontario Minister of Education and Training in January 1995 with 167 recommendations in a 600-page report. However, the commissioners had been concerned with distancing themselves from aspects of the minister's agenda concerning the amalgamation of school boards. Despite the RCOL commissioner's efforts, Anderson and Ben Jaafar (2006) argue that although Ontario has had three different political parties in power over the last 15 years, the NDP, the Conservatives, and the Liberals have all moved in the direction of centralizing education. Anderson and Ben Jaafar suggest that through changes in curriculum, governance, and funding, the Ministry of Education was able to wrest control away from a large urban centre in Ontario with seven district school boards and local communities.

Implementing the RCOL's recommendations in terms of curriculum and the centralization of boards may have resulted in sacrificing social justice values in order to educate learners to compete globally in the 21st century. Firstly, the utilitarian nature of the curriculum may have fostered a preoccupation with standardized tests and accountability in the form of data-driven evaluation to allow students to become successful in educational settings without ever having to make local connections, invest in teacher and student relationships, or develop a global consciousness (Dei et al., 2000).

Not only that, but because urban schools have greater diversity, more special needs, and more racialized communities, the implications of standardized testing are greater. Yet, how realistic is standardization in ethnically diverse settings? Ironically, as classrooms in Toronto have become more multiethnic, expectations of teachers to show progress through standardized testing have also risen.

As well, in terms of structure, when Premier Harris enacted *The Fewer School Boards Act* in 1997, all seven Toronto boards were rendered organizationally powerless by taking away their ability to generate income by raising taxes. Consequently, the social connection and local empowerment of residents in neighbourhoods became confined to a fewer number of individuals consisting mainly of established groups (Dei et al., 2000). The Common Sense Revolution effectively used budget cuts to undermine local participation in the school system on the cusp of the influx of minorities into a large urban centre in Ontario in the early 1990s. Thus, over the last 15 years, the original Canadian vision of social justice and an educator's responsibility to transform society to become more equitable may have slowly eroded through changes in curriculum and the centralization of school boards.

While some boards benefitted from the policy changes and some communities retained a voice in the form of the new parent councils, the amalgamation of all seven boards into one megacity and one megaboard largely contributed to diverse groups becoming marginalized and even oppressed. There are "two aspects of city process that can contribute to inequality and indeed oppression. First is the decision making process within which interest groups vie for and bargain over the distributive effects of city projects" (Goonewardena et al., 2004, p. 5). Gerri Connelly, the first director of the

TDSB, acknowledged that equity and social justice were at the heart of the sustainability for the newly formed school board in 1998 (Bell, 2007). In fact, cultural diversity is associated with social inequality, marginalization, social justice, and a lack of identity (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008; Bell, 2007; Goonewardena et al., 2004). As an illustration, participation on parent councils may be difficult for parents who cannot speak English and may not be aware of how to navigate through the Western educational system. Within the TDSB, there are more than 80 different first languages (www.tdsb.on.ca/communications), and because many teachers are unilingual, it may be difficult for ESL parents to express their concerns. Since parental involvement is directly linked to student success (Kuchapski, 1998), the lack of structural support for immigrant parents may create barriers for tapping into a student's potential. Policies and structures of an educational system can create language barriers and, as a consequence, perpetuate patterns of privilege and marginalization (Dei et al., 2000). Thus, there can be a potential for racial stratification in the larger context of Canadian society because local schools, following state-mandated curriculum to attain standardized utilitarian expectations, may have become unable to manage cross-cultural interactions and become meaningful centres of connection for communities in a large urban centre in Ontario. There is a correlation between issues related to diversity and the viability and sustainability of maintaining school boards with their connections to local ethnic enclaves.

In terms of classroom practices, it may be possible to foster greater community connections through the funds of knowledge strategy. Originally, Moll et al.'s (2005) research began in 1990 with 10 teachers as an ethnographic research project in Tucson, Arizona for children of Mexican ancestry. Teachers interviewed children's parents to

find out their skills, histories, and beliefs to base their funds of knowledge into units taught in the classroom such as math or science. Later, the funds of knowledge concept was used in the University of Pennsylvania to educate preservice teachers to teach in low-income urban settings. Preservice teachers from middle- to upper-class homes had to enter poor urban ethnic communities to solicit knowledge from community members and use it to teach their students, in order to help preservice teachers transform their views from deficit perspectives to focus on the positive aspects of living in lower SES ethnic neighbourhoods.

Rios-Aguilar's (2010) research sought to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between the funds of knowledge strategy and improved scores on standardized tests. Rios-Aguilar used a random sampling of 1,100 Latina/o students from K-12 in a northeastern United States school district to explain variations in academic and nonacademic performance on standardized tests. In this school district, 64% of students were African-American, 20% Hispanic, and 14% White. Eighty percent of these students were on the poverty line as determined by the number of students receiving free or reduced lunches at school. On Sept. 28, 2006, surveys were mailed out and 212 responded. Of these respondents, 88% were female and 77% had been born in the United States. Rios-Aguilar wanted to answer these questions: 1) What is the relationship between reading and academic achievement and Latino household funds of knowledge? 2) What is the relationship to the bilingual nature of Spanish and English homes and funds of knowledge? 3) What commonalities are there for Latino subgroups? Rios-Aguilar also wanted to provide a survey instrument that could be used to find out about the funds of knowledge in a research study. Rios-Aguilar's findings suggest that

“multiple regression analyses indicate the existence of a significant association between some component of funds of knowledge and students’ academic and nonacademic outcomes” (p. 1). Rather than ignoring the bilingual strengths of students, educators, and policymakers should take into account “the cultural basis of instruction and pedagogy, as well as of the evaluation and assessment of processes that are currently in place. They argue education reform should capitalize on household and community resources if it is to succeed” (Rios-Aguilar, 2010, p. 4). But, a direct cause-and-effect relationship was not established in this study. Only a relationship between allowing the funds of knowledge concept to be used could be seen as an integral part of success in Latino performance in academic outcomes. The Rios-Aguilar study, however, was still significant because prior quantitative studies on Latina/o academic performance on standardized tests have used large-scale data bases that do not take into account “the context in which Latino children and families live” (Rios-Aguilar, 2010, p. 4). No previous research had attempted to quantify the relationship between the funds of knowledge concept to standardized testing from a quantitative perspective.

Rowse et al.’s (2007) yearlong research took place in Toronto in an area with a high concentration of members from the Islamic community and explored how to use effective strategies to mediate cross-cultural interactions. They found that it is essential to change the rationale that ESL learners are deficient. Rather, instructional strategies should bridge the linguistic and cultural divisions in the classroom. In practical terms, especially in second language learning, teachers need to have strategies that will tap into the learners’ funds of knowledge in order to encourage alternate ways of knowing and interconnectedness among cultures. Rowse et al. asked these questions:

- 1) Why does culture play a secondary role to linguistic competence and language learning?
- 2) What can emergent bilinguals contribute to ESL classroom practices between instructors and students when not viewed as culturally deficient?
- 3) What types of discussions should teachers and teacher candidates have about culturally inclusive practices in diverse classrooms?
- 4) How do we approach a diverse classroom?

Teachers' responses were recorded over a period of 1 year to these questions that have great implications for classrooms in a large urban centre in Ontario, especially in the field of adult education. In all the above-mentioned cases, the concept of the funds of knowledge was adapted to suit the research.

My study also adapted the funds of knowledge concept to suit adult ESL classes based on Rowsell et al.'s (2007) study where there was an effort made to give a wide berth to the food and fun fair topics, but rather focus on specific lived experiences of students in the classroom. Learners who are preparing for college or university were surveyed informally through conversation to find out their professional backgrounds and areas of interest. Instructors were taught how to elicit funds of knowledge using an object, talking about religious rites, and sharing daily practices. The timeframe was one term, which consisted of 14 weeks.

Summary of the Chapter

Increasingly, globalized classrooms from preschools to universities around the world demonstrate that there is a need to use culturally inclusive practices. GE and MCE are pathways that can be used to raise awareness of global issues and learn about the

implications for local neighbourhoods. As part of building community connections, the funds of knowledge strategy can be used to value the cultural diversity represented in ethnic enclaves as specifically relevant to urban centres.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe a brief history of research methodology in terms of evolving practices for researchers. The advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative research will be discussed. There will be explanation for using pragmatism as an underlying philosophy in mixed methods research. This chapter will describe the location of the research and the participants. The instruments, design, collection, and analysis of the data will be explained. The limitations and methodological assumptions of the study will be identified and the process used to obtain ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Board at Brock University will be outlined.

Research Methodology

Over the past century, paradigm wars over research methods have been well-documented over the positivistic (quantitative) methods and constructivist (qualitative) perspectives (Clark & Creswell, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Purists have subscribed to the incompatibility thesis arguing that qualitative and quantitative methods are inherently incompatible, citing concerns over internal and external validity. However, since the early 1990s, mixed methods research has gained popularity as researchers approach data collection with a pragmatic paradigm as an underlying philosophy of what works best in order to answer research questions as opposed to searching for metaphysical truths in the positivist and postpositivist traditions. Instead, qualitative and quantitative research functions in a complementary fashion because “many theories can be used to explain a set of data” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 13).

There is a difference between mixed methods research and mixed model research. Mixed methods research refers to quantitative and qualitative approaches in data

collection and can be defined as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Mixed model research has qualitative and quantitative methods combined during all stages of the research process “such as conceptualization, data collection, data analysis and inference” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 26). Creswell (as cited in Plano Clark & Creswell, 2010) defined four mixed methods designs:

- 1) Sequential studies – first the qualitative research, then the quantitative research
- 2) Parallel studies – qualitative and quantitative research at the same time
- 3) Equivalent status design – qualitative and quantitative methods are given equal importance in understanding a phenomenon
- 4) Dominant-Less Dominant study – qualitative or quantitative is the dominant design, but a portion of the study uses an alternate approach

All of the above designs are products of the pragmatist paradigm in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are used in a variety of combinations.

Pragmatists believe that using a variety of methods strengthens the investigation and interpretation of research, and, especially in response to concerns about internal and external validity, pragmatists have argued that using various methods for data collection will effectively achieve triangulation. Originally used as a nautical term, triangulation refers, in research, to a third point of analysis from varying sets of data (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). There are four types of triangulation: (a) data triangulation, where there is more than one source of data; (b) investigator

triangulation, where various researchers study the same phenomena; (c) theory triangulation, in which a variety of theories are used to interpret results; and (d) methodological triangulation, in which multiple methods are used to study a phenomenon. Thus, in terms of establishing a cause-and-effect relationship, mixed methods are seen by pragmatists as a credible way to determine a causal relationship that is fairly stable and rules “out competing explanations for the results” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 31) and “builds on separate strengths” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2010, p. 299).

Qualitative researchers, on the other hand, believe that it is impossible to establish a cause-and-effect relationship because truth is unknowable and only defined as participants convey their own reality. Open-ended interviews that have the narratives of participants provide a more sophisticated, complex picture of the situation where recurring themes can be used to understand multiple perspectives. Quantitative data, “such as scores on instruments, yield specific numbers that can be statistically analyzed, can produce results to assess the frequency and magnitude of trends, and can provide useful information to describe trends about a large number of people” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 1998, p. 299) to establish cause and effect. Qualitative data provide subjective knowledge while quantitative data result in more objective knowledge.

While positivists have expressed doubt over internal validity in mixed methods research, due to the value-laden process of qualitative data collection, pragmatists see little reason to be unduly concerned over the role of value-laden research. Instead, pragmatists believe that researchers should be allowed to study topics they feel are important and that are congruent with their value system, “including variables and units

of analysis that they feel are the most appropriate for finding an answer to their research questions” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 27), particularly if the results may have relatively important implications for society. Mixed method studies are an attempt by postpositivists to aim “at enhancing the validity of results and their interpretations...to reduce the influence of their personal values and their allegiance to certain theoretical positions” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 26). Pragmatists believe that one approach may produce the ideal outcome; however, absolute truths remain elusive. Nonetheless, pragmatists should use results from research in a way that can bring about positive consequences within the sphere of the researcher’s world and his or her value system. One positive effect of this study may be that learning about the funds of knowledge strategy can create an inclusive classroom environment. Over the last 25 years, most studies using the funds of knowledge concept have been ethnographic and qualitative studies and relatively little research has been done on the funds of knowledge strategy using quantitative methods or mixed methods designs.

But, there have been qualitative studies (Moll et al., 2005; Rowsell et al., 2007) that have demonstrated the efficacy of using the funds of knowledge strategy to reduce teacher ethnocentrism. Teachers’ reflections from three focus group sessions formed the qualitative research in this study. First, I collected qualitative data by recording ESL instructors’ narratives about their changing perspectives on using culture in the classroom. Then, I attempted to see whether the results of the reported reduction in ethnocentrism through the focus group discussions could be confirmed through quantitative measures such as the Likert scale questionnaire. I used teacher narratives over the course of 3 months and a Likert scale questionnaire.

Site and Participants

This section will describe where the research was conducted and how the participants were found.

Selection of Site

The site chosen for this research was an adult ESL learning centre in a major urban centre in southern Ontario. This site was also my former place of employment and was chosen because there is a conference room wired with the necessary hardware to make intervention both comfortable and professional. The higher-level ESL classes consist predominantly of foreign-trained professionals who are immigrants from all over the world: Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, Africa, and South Asia.

Recruitment of Participants

A purposeful sampling was made of four instructors with multiethnic classrooms who teach precollege and preuniversity students. Purposeful sampling can be defined as the “selection of individuals/groups based on specific questions/purposes of the research in lieu of random sampling and on the basis of information available about these individuals/groups” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 76). Instructors who self-identify as interested in improving intercultural sensitivity were asked to participate in this study. The instructors were solicited by asking who would be interested in improving their cross-cultural skills based on global education principles.

Instrumentation, Data Collection, and Recording

The following section describes the instrumentation, data collection and data recording.

Instrumentation

Interviews were transcribed at the end of the workshops. They were coded in a peer review with my academic adviser. Initially we met and went over some of the themes that could be seen as emerging at a campus in a small city in Southern Ontario. Then later, I spent a day at Brock University and coded the rest of the interviews and checked in with my adviser.

Data Collection

The three focus group sessions were held in two neighbourhood schools after school where the instructors worked. The first workshop was held at the beginning of the term. Then 2 weeks later, another workshop was held. At the end of the term, after 14 weeks, the last workshop was held. The instructors started changing their practice after the second workshop after they had had a chance to start their classes and gotten to know the students.

Recording

All of the focus group sessions were recorded by tape. The instructors' responses were kept on the chart paper, lesson plans handed in, and essays collected from students to show that the funds of knowledge strategy had been used.

Intervention

The generic qualitative study was created to find out whether using Moll et al.'s (2005) funds of knowledge instructional strategy would help facilitate inclusive cross-cultural interactions between ESL instructors and adult ESL learners through reflective discussions. The outline of the PD and the focus groups questions (see Appendix A) were developed with expert opinions from committee member, Dr. Jennifer Rowsell,

which supported the construct validity of the research to determine the change in perception of concepts of culture in the classroom, if any. At the first focus group meeting, there was a premeasure of instructors' attitudes towards cultures by asking them to write or draw something about concepts of cultures in the classroom on a large sheet of paper in the form of a web. One person from each pair presented the main concepts of the discussion. I explained how to use the funds of knowledge concept with a PowerPoint presentation. Giving the PD at the beginning of the term allowed the instructors to have a timeline that was conducive to eliciting some baseline data from the learners in the classroom through informal conversations. A discussion took place among the four instructors responding to the question of how the funds of knowledge instructional strategy could be incorporated into the ESL classes and/or existing lesson plans. We discussed how topics used to springboard learning could be drawn from the educational and occupational backgrounds of the adult learners as well as from their cultural icons and societal norms. Rather than using topics to practice writing methods from a Eurocentric viewpoint, such as making a Christmas wish list, students could write about subjects they already knew.

Then, I explained how the additive model, based on Pahl and Rowsell's (2010) *Artifactual Literacies: Every Object Tells a Story*, can be used through a PowerPoint presentation. Instructors were encouraged to ask learners to bring an object or artifact to class from home. This object was used as a prompt for a writing topic. I modeled an example of how an essay could be written using an object as a prompt for brainstorming ideas. I also suggested ideas for writing topics such as daily rites and practices at home, in the community, and in places of worship. One week later, a second focus group

session took place. Instructors filled out a Likert scale questionnaire (see Appendix B) regarding their knowledge about immigration, multicultural, and human rights policy. A Likert scale was used to quantify the instructors' degrees of ethnocentrism at the beginning of the second workshop. The Likert scale was a good measure of attitudes because the questionnaire "asked the respondents to express their degree of agreement/disagreement with issues (or presence or absence of an attribute)" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 104) using a number to show the magnitude of the agreement. The participants were given the professional development regarding information on immigration, multicultural, and human rights policies through a PowerPoint presentation. Ethnocentrism is not always an observable behaviour, but rather an attitude; therefore, it would have been difficult to assess the degree of the effectiveness of the professional development in strictly quantifiable terms. Because other valuable information may have been lost with just quantifiable data on the Likert questionnaire, an open-ended question at the end of workshop #2 was asked after rapport had been established (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Participants were asked two questions about multiculturalism and human rights that would reveal the latent content to show the "underlying meaning of that narrative" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 122). The instructors discussed the questions:

1. Should ESL classes primarily provide newcomers with the opportunity to assimilate into Canada?
2. Should ESL classes provide the opportunity for integration into Canadian society while preserving cultural roots?

A definition from Google was read out to clarify the concepts of assimilation and integration.

The instructors then spent time working on their lesson plans. The participants submitted three lesson plans after 10 weeks. The first lesson plan showed that the funds of knowledge had been elicited from the learners through conversation. The second lesson plan showed how a variety of multicultural instructional strategies had been incorporated into lesson plans through the themes and topics studied. The third lesson plan showed that the writing template had been used. The instructors in the control group gave me their lesson plans after 10 weeks to show that the funds of knowledge strategies had been used. Sixty essays were also handed in to show that funds of knowledge topics such as “What was the happiest day of your life?” and “What was your best vacation?” had been used: Thirty at the beginning of the course and 30 at the end of the course.

Finally, the third focus group session took place at the end of the 14 weeks. The instructors were given these discussion questions as a postmeasure of ethnocentrism reduction:

1. Define being Canadian in terms of race, language, and ethnicity.
2. Define culture in the classroom.
3. Is diversity training useful for ESL instructors?
4. What did you learn through the professional development?

Data Processing and Analysis

The three recorded focus group sessions with the instructors made up the qualitative portion of the research. Focus group sessions were taped and emergent themes noted to comprise the qualitative aspect of the study in the form of instructor narratives. Results from one-on-one interviews tend to be “more easily influenced by the researchers’ personal biases and idiosyncrasies” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 20)

and that is why the instructors were in a focus group of four people. By taping the conversations, I was able to collect verbal data and I also obtained the written work in each session that described the complexity embedded into the local contexts and saw how the instructors responded to local situations (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Through the qualitative data analysis, I looked for recurrent themes, meaning units, and diverse perspectives, and then I constructed a composite (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Limitations of the Study

In an effort to reduce the Hawthorne effect for the students or participant expectancy for the instructors, everyone was informed that they participated in a study where the researcher was interested in multicultural and global educational strategies that would improve cross-cultural interactions between teachers and students.

In this way, the professional development, hopefully, included components of all three parts of the policy-theory-practice triad found in Rowsell et al.'s (2007) study to teach ESL instructors how to socialize ESL learners in order to construct an integrated ethnic identity.

Establishing Credibility

Internal validity was established in several ways. First, it was important to find out instructors' attitudes about culture and immigrants because they interact with newcomer populations on the frontlines. It was also important to find out instructors' existing knowledge about human rights, immigration, and multicultural policies because learning why Canada has immigration and multicultural policies may affect instructors' perceptions of newcomers and themselves. By drawing on policies, it may be possible to enhance the importance of the study and appeal to the instructors' sense of altruism and,

hopefully, reduce the amount of misinformation given by the participants. Second, the questionnaire is written with a Likert scale to increase objectivity, but also to include the possibility of a richer response by providing open-ended questions at the end. By taping the conversations, it was possible to gain an understanding of how instructors felt towards learners' existing knowledge. The final session provided an opportunity to find out whether there had been a reduction in ethnocentrism on the part of the teachers towards learners as deficient in knowledge or altered perceptions, if at all.

Methodological Assumptions

There are a few assumptions related to this study. It was assumed that instructors would participate in the project to help their students and to develop their own intercultural sensitivity. It was also assumed that the instructors would use the writing unit and the MCE instructional strategies because I only collected lesson plans that showed the instructors used the instructional strategies. Finally, it was assumed that instructors would tell the truth regarding their biases.

Ethical Considerations

An ethics review was completed through Brock University Research Ethics Board. Permission was also sought from the school board to conduct professional development for research purposes. The study commenced after clearance had been granted from the district school board and clearance had been given from the Brock University Research Ethics Board (File # ENGEMANN 12-186).

Ethical consideration was given to all participants in the form of informed consent, participation assent, participation withdrawal, and confidentiality and anonymity. Informed consent is defined as the participant's agreement that he/she will

partake in the study after receiving full disclosure about all aspects of the study. I met with the participants and described the research and methodology along with the impact on them. I also informed the instructors of the research process and how their students would be involved. Participation was optional and the participants were told that they could withdraw at any time for any reason. However, no participants withdrew from the study. The researcher did not teach any of the writing units.

The instructors were asked to teach the unit in the normal delivery of the ESL program. All questionnaires and tapes were kept by the researcher in a safe and secure location. Pseudonyms were used for all the instructors' focus group discussions and the location of the site was not divulged.

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to find out whether an intervention based on Moll et al.'s (2005) study could help ESL instructors recognize that adult learners have knowledge that can be a powerful springboard for language learning in order to help them develop an integrated cultural identity. Allowing learners to express their funds of knowledge could be a response to ethnocentrism in diverse classrooms. I also wanted to find out whether it was possible to help learners construct a global identity that is rooted in their first culture and interconnected with new information for individual and group learning. Perhaps that will ultimately help lead to the creation of the collective global conscious that Marshall McLuhan (1962) envisioned when he first coined the term the "global village."

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

In this chapter, I will present the findings from the three focus group sessions with four ESL instructors who indicated an interest in improving their cross-cultural skills.

Esther is a 67-year-old female from Germany, who grew up in South America. She has been teaching for over 20 years and speaks four languages. Wanda is a 67-year-old White female, born and raised in Canada. She overcame dyslexia and graduated from Harvard with a Master's degree in International Education. Selena is a 42-year-old South Asian female who went to the same high school as I did and we have been living in the same predominantly Islamic neighbourhood for the last 40 years. Darren is a 60-year-old White American male. He grew up in Japan because his father, a United States Army officer, was sent there under the Marshall Plan. We all worked together as colleagues for 15 to 22 years until last three years ago when I moved to a different department in the school board.

The themes that emerged using a peer review from an analysis of the data are: (a) Culture as the elephant in the room, (b) Power, (c) The challenges of integration, (d) Instructional strategies, (e) The importance of culturally inclusive strategies, and (f) The role of MCE.

Culture as the Elephant in the Classroom

Culture as examined in this study produced three sets of findings: negative aspects of involving culture in the classroom, teacher-controlled dialogue, and positive aspects about culture in familial contexts.

Negative Aspects of Involving Culture in the Classroom

Because improving their cross-cultural quotient was advertised in the flier, all the instructors were aware that there would be extended discussions about culture. Their reasons for wanting to improve their cultural diversity skills ranged from “curiosity” for Darren to “personal self-improvement” for Wanda. Esther was motivated to sign up because the topic sounded “interesting.” A few years ago, we had shared the same level 6 classes for 3 years, and Esther had heard about my use of GE and MCE instructional strategies from the learners. Selena also signed up because GE and MCE were concepts that she was already exploring in class and she felt she would be able to incorporate “new ideas easily.” During the first focus group session, Wanda pointed out that she represented the Canadian-born female, Darren, the American male, Esther, the European female, and Selena, the immigrant female. The instructors appeared comfortable about discussing diversity issues in Canada and were prepared to reflect on cultural differences amongst themselves.

However, discussing culture with the adult learners in the classroom generally revolved around the negative aspects and involving culture in the classroom was seen as problematic. Instructors felt that talking about culture would allow “hot topics such as politics and religion” to crop up. Darren stated, “We try to stay away from people who are scary types...happens occasionally. I personally never had a real cultural problem other than a few misogynists or people who make misogynist statements and that is a real showstopper right there.” Darren specifically focused on misogyny in several of the focus groups and felt that a discussion in class about women’s roles “was going to be really unpleasant and so he shut it down.” He felt that “there are some things that might

be sensitive and people might speak from...you never know what someone's experience has been." This comment was a subtle reference to spousal abuse. Esther also talked about women's roles and said, "We spoke about what happened with women and you don't know what is going to happen in class. Sometimes women are very covered." Wanda talked about a situation where "it got hot" with "an Iranian guy with Tibet out there and there was a Chinese woman with an Iranian guy and it got into Tibet in the class discussion." Wanda said

I shut it down. Okay, I said, you guys can talk about that after. You both have different opinions. But, he didn't come for about a week. And she didn't come for about a week. I was like, "Oh no!" It's not a discussion anymore. It's like there's heat and personal attack and even though he is criticizing the country, he's treating her as if she is a Chinese citizen. It's like, "Whoa!"

Darren agreed, "And the Chinese, rightly or wrongly, believe that Tibet has been theirs for centuries. That is a very difficult discussion to have." Esther commented that someone in the class said, "All Chinese people eat dogs. They eat monkeys." A Chinese person responded that it is only the people who live in that region and not in the whole country. Later, the Chinese students discussed these comments about their first country amongst themselves. Wanda also added, "A student was saying they get better health care there in the Middle East and decent paying jobs. I'm like, oh, you know."

In the personal experiences of the teachers, culture was a topic that created a toxic classroom environment because instructors felt uncomfortable when Canada was perceived through a pejorative lens. Cultural topics, such as the changing role of women, eating habits, and political issues, were perceived by all instructors as divisive and not

conducive to building bridges among learners in the classroom. Darren summed up by saying, “I can’t tell you how many Syrians I had tell me that Assad is not a bad guy. That it is a group of radicals and extremists that want him out. And so, who’s right?”

Teacher-Controlled Dialogue

There was a consensus among the instructors that when talking about culture, it is better not to have an open discussion. Selena commented that, “We have like target questions as opposed to an open discussion. Questions are controlled in the classroom.” There was a desire to avoid arguments and Darren said it was important to “field comments.” However, Wanda did question what she felt was the avoidance of the Aboriginal role in Canadian history. She believes that newcomers

are also trying to understand the Native Canadian issue from their cultures. We shouldn’t try to shy away from the negative part of our country and the fact that every country has a negative history and the idea of globalization and making them aware of what has happened here.

Esther stated that her preference when dealing with cultural issues is that she finds “it’s better to have it when we separate women and men” regarding certain topics. In terms of teaching, Wanda and Darren said that they mostly discussed culture in terms of Canadian content. To do this, Wanda used Canadian history and Western pop culture and Darren used the headlines from a newspaper in a major urban centre in southern Ontario. Esther and Selena agreed that all viewpoints, Canadian and global, are “good.” But, initially the instructors felt that cultural topics were a Pandora’s Box that would be prudent to leave unopened.

Positive Aspects about Culture

Culture was mostly perceived in a positive light when talking about the family. Children were seen as learning about culture in the family and through what Wanda called “family apprenticeship.” She felt that, historically, children learned about family trades from the parents and that this was a positive interaction. She said she “liked that word family apprenticeship.” But Esther responded that in families, “children also are taught to avoid playing (with each other) in schools.” Later on in the first workshop, the concept of respect was alluded to repeatedly. After watching the Michael Jackson *Black or White* video, Esther commented that family is a vehicle to perpetuate culture and that “a son has to obey his father” because it is a universal expectation. Esther felt that a son has to respect his father. Selena felt “that word respect is very important.” But Darren challenged them by questioning

Yes, the son is supposed to obey his father and most cultures are like that. We want our kids to obey. My opinion is that this culture in North America isn't like that. One of the things I have noticed in my class is that my students have enormous respect for teachers... And how does that appear? But the idea that rule breaking is celebrated. If you break the rules and you get caught, you go to jail. But if you break the rules and you succeed, you are a hero. You are an iconoclast, someone who broke the norm. That's a good thing. In other cultures I don't know if it is openly or as much seen as defiance, for better or worse is really part of this culture.

Wanda asked, “Does rule breaking have to do with Black culture?” Interestingly, this was the only time race was mentioned by an instructor during the entire study. Culture

was generally seen in a positive light by the instructors when kept in a private familial realm as opposed to public spaces such as classroom.

But both Selena and Wanda felt positive about culture in the classroom when they asserted that teachers in ESL represent the diverse populations reflected in the classroom. Wanda stated, “The teacher populations also reflect globalization.” Selena believes, “You see a lot of different people teaching ESL.” She clarified on the idea that ESL instructors are a diverse group by pointing out

One group of ESL instructors are not from Canada and another group of ESL instructors are born in Canada; however, their parents are from different countries and they come here and grow up here in Canada. Another group is one that was born here and their parents are from here and they have been here for generations.

Darren observed that “culture can be a rich field for discussion.” In these ways, the instructors perceived culture through a positive lens; however, cultural topics were predominantly seen as a negative and potentially volatile influence in the classroom.

Power

Two issues about power emerged during the focus groups sessions. Instructors reported that the media was a powerful vehicle for perpetuating negative stereotypes and as a result, negatively impacted the role of culture in the classroom. The instructors also found that being articulate in English was a key factor in gaining power in employment and society, even though they did not go into great detail about hegemonic struggles in cultural diversity.

The Power of Media

The instructors were asked, “What are some powerful unexamined ideas about your students and immigrants?” Immediately Wanda questioned, “Do you mean unexamined by the media?” Darren responded by saying, “Stereotypes.” Darren and Esther felt that Muslims were portrayed negatively by the media. Specifically, Esther said, “We had a discussion on the documentary with the whole class and we had Muslims in the class and it was concluded it is not because of Muslims but it is a cultural idea.”

Darren added

There have been a couple of times when it was a woman from Pakistan who was killed by her father...But, the stories that appear in the newspaper that someone who never works or sees someone, the media can do a lot of harm. They don't sell newspapers if they don't sell it. If it bleeds, it leads. It is true. So if you read in the newspaper or hear it on TV it is going to be bad news but it reinforces some people's stereotypes. A lot of it seems what people want is what reinforces their own believed ideas whether they are on the right or on the left.

Not only was the media seen as powerful in perpetuating stereotypes, but the media was also perceived to have a hidden power. Darren critiqued, “We are shaped by the news media, by those people who have the power to do it. It is unseen, it happens and we accept it.” The media was identified as the key culprit in not only perpetuating stereotypes but actually “saturating” the public mind with negative images about ethnic groups.

The instructors were quick to disassociate themselves with buying into media stereotypes. Darren said, “Of course we don't think that people from Pakistan or

Afghanistan behave that way (killing daughters) because we know them. They are our students. We can see and talk to them.” Selena talked about various push/pull factors that influence newcomers to come to Canada. She empathized

In Canada, there are a lot of people from different cultures, people who speak different languages and people who are of different ethnicities... Basically in Canada there are a lot of people from different cultures and they come here, live, work and try to find a better life for themselves. They try to open up the doors that Canada as being the land of prosperity. In terms of race, basically people who are from a certain country and where they are from and make ends meet here in Canada are trying to find a better life for themselves.

The instructors felt that it was important to maintain the perspective that learners should be viewed as individuals with various motivations for immigrating to Canada, especially among professionals who work with newcomers as an effective way of responding to media stereotypes.

The Power of Language

The instructors did not cite linguistic, cultural, or racial hegemonic struggles as associated with diversity. But being articulate was noted as an important factor in gaining power in employment and feeling accepted. Selena shared a story about one of her learners. She said

A student of mine worked his way all the way to the top and all of a sudden he got a job, a really good job but he had to come back to school and quit his job because the language was *not powerful* (italics mine) enough. Because of that, that

brought him back here again. I think the problem with him was that he wasn't accepted there and did not feel accepted because of the language problem.

Selena observed that language gives power in social situations and later commented that people "may not be crippled by less language" if they are knowledgeable. Esther explained that second language learners "lack the language and the comebacks. Natives have comebacks and they can make comebacks." In other words, verbal dominance or being able to hold your own verbally is a key factor in maintaining success in the workplace and feeling accepted in social situations. Wealth was also seen as giving people power and control. Darren stated cynically, "talking about wealth and the controllers...Our ideas or what we think is acceptable or common. Governments are servants of themselves" and the media controls the message because "everyone wants to control the narrative." Selena felt that the Sikh community had power because "they came to Canada over 100 years ago, so they are pretty well established in the Canadian community." Thus, according to the instructors, power in society through wealth, knowledge, and English speaking skills were key concepts in being able to maintain positions in workplace interactions.

The Challenges of Integration

As ESL instructors teach, they provide opportunities for learners to integrate into Canadian society. As such, their beliefs about integration and assimilation are important because their personal views affect program delivery. The level of their ethnocentrism also affects how they deliver the program. The findings showed that ESL instructors were not conversant with the various types of individual discriminatory behaviour being

faced by immigrants on a daily basis even though they were very sympathetic towards the systemic barriers against newcomers.

Systemic Barriers

The instructors were well aware of the systemic barriers facing learners. They cited the lack of language, educational recognition, and Canadian experience as the top three barriers to integrating into Canadian society. Selena referred to the movie the *Iron Road* when talking about systemic oppression because she had just gone with her learners on a field trip to see free movies at REEL Canada.

Individual Acts of Discrimination

Initially, in terms of talking about discrimination, there was silence when I asked the instructors about individual experiences of discrimination in Canada. When asked to specify discrimination in terms of individual behaviours, Darren admitted, “I think that I don’t know what discrimination students face because it is not something we discuss in class...we don’t really talk about negative experiences that they have had here.” But 9/11 was identified as an occurrence that made life “harder” for the Islamic community. One student shared with Darren

that a bus driver closed the door and drove away and she felt sure that it was because she was Muslim. That was her perception. I assured her that it happened to me, too. It happens to all of us. But that doesn’t make any difference. It’s her perception. She has that feeling that she is the “other” and very well educated person but still didn’t feel rooted here...yet! It takes a while to be rooted any place even if you don’t change language, it takes a while.

The discussion about barriers to integration encompassed both systemic barriers and individual acts of discrimination that were reported as creating feelings of “frustration,” “rage,” and “helplessness.” Within schools and in the classrooms, there was a feeling by the instructors that talking about systemic barriers could be freely discussed, but personal discriminatory and individual negative experiences in Canada were almost a taboo topic.

Bullying

Rather than talk about racism, instructors veered to the topic of bullying as a euphemism for individual acts of discrimination. Wanda cited bullying as a problem for everyone

It is human nature and just now we are addressing this issue...Behaviour that was tolerated for 100 years and for some reason the perception has changed or shifted. My son was learning disabled and he experienced it and it's something that all of a sudden now society is focused on. That I don't think that it is 25 years and immigrants are dealing with it. I think it is a bigger thing that all of a sudden, not sudden but society is focusing on it and thinking we are going to change or shift people's perception. I see it in a much bigger context.

Selena felt that, “It has been going on for so many years and also bullying at work...Social media has made it more talked about.” The instructors were concerned about bullying in schools and felt that bullying had become magnified recently in diversity. Especially in immigrant communities among the learners, Wanda reported that

There were many stories about their kids being bullied or hearing about it. Kids of friends or relatives were bullied and some horrible stories about kids peeing on each other. It was a discussion of how it is the new kid that gets targeted and it

went on like this for the whole class and their frustration about this. How they can help the kids and how upset they were. They felt they could not talk to the teacher or principal about it and it did not do any good.

Wanda was deeply concerned that the learners felt helpless and frustrated about their children being bullied. Bullying was cited as a ubiquitous problem in employment, education, and social media.

Factors Influencing Successful Integration

The guiding idea seemed to be that integration was an achievable goal when learners focused on the positive aspects of living in Canada. Darren observed that

The students are generally very keen to integrate and learn language and get out there. Very positive by and large I think...Students all kinds old and young who have this very positive keen attitude. I know they are going to do well because of their personality. Other ones, I think that will have a more difficult time. The ones I am thinking of, a few are rather more pessimistic and may have had a career. I think personality also really determines a lot.

Both Wanda and Esther commented that the learners today are more globalized than in the past because they have lived in and travelled extensively to many countries. In

Esther's view:

Also like what Wanda was saying the other day we have people who have lived in other countries. I think for those who live in other countries it's easier to integrate because they already had the experience of being out of place.

Personal resilience and a positive outlook were determined by the instructors as key factors for successful integration and racial discrimination was not cited as a barrier.

Instructional Strategies

The results of the focus groups sessions showed that ESL instructors already had a foundational idea of the funds of knowledge strategy. They mostly utilized the strategy for the skills of reading and speaking. However, none of the instructors were using the funds of knowledge strategy for writing and the PD from this study helped instructors implement the strategy to help learners improve their writing and make the writing process more meaningful.

Instructors' Beliefs and Knowledge

Once the funds of knowledge strategy was explained, instructors shared examples of how they were already using it in class. Selena referred to her ESL sewing class. She said:

In my sewing class, I teach measurement and a lot of them don't really understand in English. But when we sit with them and talk about I show them exactly what one inch is or one meter. Then they realize oh...and put it back to when their family members used to take measurements a long time ago. They use their hand to elbow. It does help them in that way.

Selena referred to the universal form of measurement. Darren said learners had knowledge about work, language, and political unrest as well as the "fund of knowledge of adults that we all have." Esther confirmed, "They know something." However, Wanda wanted clarification on how

we are to do something that brings this out in class...So the stories we get them to write in traditional assignment and this story we get them to write will be more on a multicultural level theme...So they can write about their own culture?

Esther also wanted some clarity about how the PD was different by asking, “Can we write about something more about occupational? We already do that but this is more cultural. We can do both. We can let them choose. Occupational means like business things.” Wanda talked about reading explaining that she tends to take things that are current events and

we read about it, usually *metro* and I try to give them the background to the history or even using the citizenship booklet...I wouldn't understand some of the words in the event. I would understand the dictionary meaning but I wouldn't understand it (the article) because I wouldn't understand the history of the article or some of the cultural norms in the country. So if you see a story about a politician in front of two flags I would ask, “What does this mean?” I would read the words and understand the words but without understanding the history of the French being here before the English. They don't get the meaning. They want to in a scaled down level 4 English level understand that cultural history so that then they can understand more of what's actually happening. I mean, the flag is just one thing. I do it with quite a bit of stuff. I encourage them and I almost make them read every day. They have to read every day. Then we'll look for something in that paper and really get the meaning in history.

Wanda felt that vocabulary should be framed in cultural contexts. Wanda also uses pop culture, “Like when you hear Canadians say, ‘Thank you, thank you very much.’ They are thinking Elvis, you are thinking thank you. If you don't understand the cultural history, the singers, that stuff, you are not getting that meaning.” Once the concept of the funds of knowledge was explained to the instructors, they gave many examples of how

they use it for the skills of reading, listening, and speaking to springboard discussions among learners reflecting their existing beliefs, practices, and knowledge about the funds of knowledge strategy.

Instructors' Uses of Vygotskyian Principles

Instructors were also already using existing knowledge about the first culture to scaffold learning about Canada by starting conversations in class and relating the topic to the first country. In this way, Vygotskyian principles were used as learners responded to topics from the reference point of their first cultures. Instructors then bridged that knowledge to introduce Canadian content. Both Darren and Selena commented that learners wanted to learn about various banking and educational systems in Canada and around the world. Selena commented that, "In the end, I think they do want to learn a little bit of Canadian knowledge like how to do the banking system. Maybe they want to express their viewpoints too." Wanda asked, "Why is that a news issue? I always explain that in the context of their first country...they understand the context in their countries for some events." She used the example of what would happen in the first country. She said:

Would this happen in your country where all the regional heads would meet but the head of the country would not be there? How would that play out in your first country? So it was a way for me to talk to them about Canada is a federation of provinces. The federal in this country, the federal government, is weaker than the regions. In most of your countries, in China and all that, the national government is stronger. So quite often in news you will see about, and we saw this quite recently, the province ganged up on the leader. They wouldn't see that. So that is

an example of taking something out of the news and try to give them a cultural context for some of the things they are seeing in the paper about how we are organized.

In Darren's view:

They have knowledge of the world and worlds they occupy...Many have knowledge of their primary country and this country forms a basis for comparison. A lot have knowledge of troubled social unrest that we don't have. It is not a part of our life.

Also, he alluded to the postmodern view when he said

In the needs assessment people always say they are interested in the Canadian system...some background. They want to know where they are. But they are all looking at it through their lens. Through their experience and they all have something to say about it.

The instructors were extremely sensitive to the fact that adult learners had existing knowledge, beliefs, and feeling that could be interconnected with Canadian content.

Darren also accommodated the lower level of learners in his class by finding a writing book with more contemporary materials rather than "arcane" writing conventions.

Wanda commented that

The global funds of knowledge wouldn't work with the usual level 4 class. That level 4 class I had was quite high and I would have used more the artifacts with the lower level class because it's easier for them to bring in something from their culture and talk about it than it is actually to deal with concepts like personal

finance or government. So I think I was able to do and it was interesting because there was a much higher level than normal. It would be about a level 5.

In this way, both Wanda and Darren were conscious of the learners' levels and adjusted their delivery of the PD accordingly reflecting Vygotskyian principles of the Zone of Proximal Development.

The Importance of Culturally Inclusive Strategies

In this study with adult learners, the findings showed that learner engagement was enhanced by using the funds of knowledge strategy. Instructors observed the learners' nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and body language. The teachers observed how eager the adult learners were to have an opportunity to share with the class and the teacher about the knowledge they had and they did so in an animated way. By observing the learners' affect, instructors were encouraged to continue implementing the funds of knowledge strategy which perpetuated a positive cycle of learning in the classroom.

Workshop Impact

The instructors referred to their teaching as the "traditional" writing instructional strategy repeatedly. Dennis pointed out that in the past, "We researched and wrote in the traditional way but it was always something where we were gathering and getting information and getting vocabulary and writing the essay. They would do their best." Although they were using the funds of knowledge strategy for the other three skills of reading, listening, and speaking, none of the instructors were using the funds of knowledge strategy for teaching writing. They talked about global and multicultural themes as a way for learners to "express" themselves and said the learners "liked" the strategy and were very "happy" over and over again. It was very important to the

instructors to understand the distinction between the traditional topics and global and multicultural themes that drew from the personal “knowledge and experience” of the learners. The instructors wanted clarification that the topic should not be a generic topic about a country but one that was personally relevant. Wanda pointed out that “To me, what you are trying to do is focus on the different knowledge and experiences and share in the classroom and writing about it.” They also wanted to use various cultural ideas from learner’s first countries and talk about ideas we all share. Darren talked about what gives people hope as a topic

But there was, in my opinion, a thoughtful, well-expressed essay that they wrote on what gives them hope and faith. They all could say something on that and I believe it is something that we all share and that they liked.

One instructor in particular, Wanda, took the funds of knowledge strategy to a new level when she delved into international writing styles as a funds of knowledge topic for discussion. First, she recognized that the writing template was the “North American writing style.” Next, she talked about Asian writing styles in her class. She had the learners talk about the Asian style as

evidence and examples and points. Then, she tells you the conclusion. When we do a story we tell you the intro, the conclusion and then we tell you examples to support that conclusion. But they will go story, story, story conclusions. We do here’s my topic. Here’s my conclusion. Evidence, evidence, evidence. So then we repeat it. This is the perfect Asian spiral. When she saw it, it was like the first time she had seen it and when I saw it from academic writing it was different cultural rhetoric.

Next, Wanda talked about the Arabic style

It is Arabic. I didn't see it as cultural style, this writing. I thought everybody in the world did it. So in an Arabic zigzag, they will state the fact but not the conclusion for that fact. So if you are comparing the States and Canada, they'll say Canada sells 85% of their products to the U.S. If it is our style, we say so Canada is dependent economically on the U.S. But they won't do that because that is treating the reader they are stupid. Did you get it? And it is considered rude.

Esther had noted earlier that she thought that "when you write in your own style you can write well. The good writers in their own language can organize themselves. Maybe it is a little bit different but I didn't think about that." Wanda and Esther both realized that writing styles are culturally embedded and Wanda exclaimed

The first time I saw ours [Western writing], I said I thought everybody did that. The people from my class were from all over the world and this person said the North American teachers writing here, they get to the point. Here they say what is the point? It is Arabic. I didn't see it as cultural style, this writing. I thought everybody in the world did it.

Wanda also acknowledged that when learners veer from the writing script in any way, they are penalized. She said:

We jump right into the problem, they're more likely to say how is your mother, grandmother, and business and all that stuff? Then they jump into the problem. That culture of writing or formal use of language, the different styles of usage that they have in different cultures try to communicate in words. Even if their

grammar is great and their sentence structure is great still the employer is like um...it doesn't fit in, they want to edit it and fix it. Where it is different is at UNESCO and they really accept differences because everyone there is so different. Many people give different reports with lots of spelling mistakes and some grammar oddities but it is accepted because they are so used to accepting different people from different cultures reporting on things. I don't find that is accepted here. And it is not sort of skill level or language. It is how you shape something, how you organize it that is the problem that people are sort of uncomfortable with.

Darren agreed saying:

I also believe that they have a harder time expressing themselves with other topics. They have a harder time looking for the right words and to express themselves, their ideas. They tend to try to say too much. The sentences become too long. It is clause, clause, clause...Trying to say something. They are having a difficult time doing that.

Darren also commented that this had been a "useful project," he "had never seen students write so well," "students had thoughtful and well-expressed ideas" and that the essays were "easier to read and to mark." The impact of the workshop on the instructors raised their awareness that writing styles are culturally embedded. The impact on the learners was a more holistic approach to writing and beneficial to fostering a more meaningful learning experience.

Support Needed for Writing Strategies

However, some instructors felt that there could have been more support in terms of using the template. I had handed out writing books relevant for each respective level. Instructors asked for clarification regarding the writing steps. Esther remarked that the learners were able to find the funds of knowledge to “write upon this topic and expand upon it.” She also asked questions regarding “writing about Human Rights.” She wanted to know about timeline as “after one month” for the order of the delivery pertaining to the new strategy. Darren had to change the materials because the book was “too high” to using materials from a “lower level” book. One theme that emerged was that instructors could have used more support in terms of developing a greater variety of instructional writing strategies, timelines for learner improvement and appropriate materials for their respective levels.

Feedback about Learners’ Feelings by Teachers

Esther remarked that, “I was thinking about the funds of knowledge when you write about something that you are very passionate about then you are more into it.” She felt learners were “interested” and “encouraged.” Darren also commented that

when I asked them to write on what gives them hope, their sentences were much more concise and they wrote much more directly. Subject, verb, object out. It was much easier to read and to mark by comparison. If they were trying to talk about something they really had not thought about it was very difficult to do that.

As well, Darren said, “There was a quality of expression that I liked.” Selena reflected, “There are always different reasons why students are in the classroom. Maybe they want to take a TOEFL class for university or for daycare. Who knows what they are there

for?” She felt that learner motivation was a key factor in improving writing skills. Esther reported that when the learners talked about heroes from their first country, it was, “Very interesting! We got a lot of participation. They were very happy to talk about their feelings about someone they admired.” Teachers’ feedback about the learners’ emotional reactions were extremely positive.

The Role of Multicultural Education

Before we covered policies in the workshop, I gave out a Likert questionnaire asking the instructors various questions about policies to see how much they knew about policies that affect the learners they are interacting with every day (see Appendix B). Three out of four instructors felt that Canada had a fair and just Human Rights policy. Three out of four instructors were aware that Canada’s immigration policy was based on population demographics and labour needs. All four instructors disagreed with the statement that Canada’s immigration policy was based on global humanitarian needs. Three out of four instructors recognized that Canada was not the first choice destination for immigrants around the world. Only two out of four instructors were aware that the Multicultural policy was designed to make Canada more marketable for immigrants. While instructors appeared to have a solid understanding about information regarding Human Rights, Immigration and Multicultural policies, they did not view the policies through a critical or analytical perspective.

Critique of Human Rights

In terms of the initial response to the negative aspects of culture in the classroom, Human Rights was referred to by Selena and Darren when issues about women’s roles emerged. Both talked “about the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and this is deferring to

a higher authority and say you are here right now ... this is the way things are here as deferring to the law.” Selena expanded to the learners “the rules and responsibilities that you have to uphold. That is a really big issue that we always like to express.” Both Selena and Darren felt that learners needed an awareness of Human Rights in Canada in response to misogyny.

However, Darren did refer to Human Rights as a “myth” in the first few minutes of the workshop and later followed up on the concept after watching the *Black or White* video. He observed:

This is something we are pulled in two different directions by and that is one you say the rule of law and the other is the law is an “ass” and there is not much justice. Sometimes justice is not just. This is the nature of our culture and that is insisting on peace and order and good government and this is Canada. There has to be defiance because order is often unjust and uncaring and for people to get justice they have to defy the established order.

Examples of injustice were pulled from the video by all instructors and included “KKK,” the “oligarchy,” and “segregation.” Darren acknowledged that, “What I am struck by is that the last part of the video is about destroying the established order. This is an act of rebellion, an act of defiance. But it is defiance against the established order.” Wanda also commented about the dual nature of the video observing, “The first part seems to go one way and then the last part is something completely different: more violent, more internal, more sullen.” Selena agreed that Michael Jackson may be instigating a “let’s break it” attitude. When the song *Holiday* was played, Selena commented that the musicians sounded “angry.”

Critique of Immigration Policy

After learning about Canadian immigration policy and the need for immigrants to maintain population growth, the instructors made personal, systemic, and historical connections. Esther observed that in the past, “I think it has to do with last names. If you have a last name maybe they won’t take you because your last name is not Canadian. I know from the past, maybe not now.” Wanda stated

I think some of those stereotypes are discussed or debated what is interesting is that some of them that aren’t, even discussed you have to do some like shitty jobs of the seniors. Hazing it is called. But it seems to me we have an unexamined idea that I think is pervasive with employers that you have to do your time in shit jobs before you get a professional job. You are an immigrant they did back in the 1950s they built bridges and built subways and all that stuff...I think there is an unexamined, un-discussed idea about Canadians, feeling that people have to pay their dues before they get their job. If you are a manager for engineers you have to go back and be an assistant before you can work your way back up again and you should not complain about this. You know the high school freshman shining the shoes of the seniors. That kind of idea and I don’t think we talk about that. I think that is an unexamined idea. It affects where we expect immigrants to start. (Laughs) Not that you will never get a job but you have to go through that process. Go back and work your way up.

Wanda reflected that a key unexamined idea by Canadians is “our bias, our prejudice.” An awareness of the absence of self-criticism regarding Canadian systems emerged at the forefront of Wanda’s observations. In this way, MCE in terms of critiquing the

immigration policy did appear to foster a greater awareness of social justice issues in cultural diversity.

Critique of Multicultural Policy

When a picture with a woman wearing the Canadian flag as a hijab was shown, Esther felt that, “Canadians are embracing multiculturalism.” But both Darren and Selena commented that the Canadian flag hijab was a “fashion statement.” Later, Darren admitted that some might “take offence.” At the beginning of the third workshop, when asked to define being Canadian in terms of race, language, and ethnicity, Esther questioned quietly, “Do we know what is Canadian?” To which Darren responded quickly, “Or what is not Canadian?” It was clear that there was some ambiguity about Canadian national identity. Wanda touched on the subject of race and national identity when she remembered someone saying to her

that they were Canadian. I had this totally shocked idea of being Canadian. I was like c’mon Wanda! I’m thinking that’s really bad. Why would I be shocked that someone who *looks* (italics mine) Sri Lankan would say they are Canadian?

The instructors revealed that they were aware of the relationship between the traditional view of who looks Canadian and the changing face of Canada.

In workshop # 1 and # 2, there were six cultural groups identified: Native, South Asian, Brazil, Turkey, Aboriginal, and Afghani. By the end of the 14 weeks, 18 groups were mentioned in workshop # 3: Iran, Idle No More (Native), Central America, Arabic, Asian, States, Quebec, Catholic, Palestinian, Europe, Syrian Afghani, Asian, Sri Lankan, Tibet, China, Russia, and Africa. The instructors identified more groups and spoke comfortably and confidently about various cultures after a discussion about the

Multicultural Policy. When I asked the instructors why they had not mentioned race, Darren responded by saying that “no one wanted to be called racist.” I asked if pointing out racial differences was tantamount to being perceived as racist and Darren said, “Yes, because we have been taught that pointing out differences is rude.” Pressure to be politically correct was a muzzle in terms of the instructors being able to engage in discourse about diverse contexts more fully.

Selena acknowledged:

In terms of Canada, English is the first language and French is the second language and there are many, many other languages which are spoken here in Canada. They are all obviously welcomed by everyone. So in terms of language, [Canada is a] multicultural and multilingual place where you can find different languages. Even in restaurants being posted on or churches, to make people feel more comfortable.

She sees being Canadian as being bilingual as well as multilingual and feels “the language they speak is what their culture is all about.” She concluded by saying:

Students from different countries are Russia, Afghanistan, or Africa or Europe and Asia all come together and they try to find solidarity in terms of learning the language. So learning the language is the key and progressing is the key. So defining culture in the classroom to me is that trying to build on progressing where we are living in a different country with people from different cultures. You know live a life where we are living in peace at the same time trying to get to know one another and get to know different cultures.

At the end of workshop # 3, Selena, Darren, and Wanda all concurred that language equals culture.

Summary of the Chapter

The findings of this study reveal there was greater learner engagement as a result of using the funds of knowledge strategy. Some of the learners in Wanda's class wrote a paragraph each to say how much they enjoyed talking about global issues. They repeatedly used the words "useful" and "interesting" in their written pieces. It appears that using global education does result in a more inclusive classroom. On the part of the instructors, there was a reduction in ethnocentrism. Two out of four instructors agreed in the Likert scale questionnaire that Canada was "too nice" in accommodating religious rights. However, by the end of workshop # 3, the instructors had stopped citing Human Rights as a response to learners' comments and started responding in a more reflective way about the validity of viewpoints that were different and even contradictory to Canadian norms. The instructors' responses were based more on individual learners' reactions and they were quicker to reflect on the validity of their own assumptions. In fact, the instructors revealed that learner responses provided an opportunity to learn from cultures from around the world and share in learners' perspectives. When Wanda gave an example of a conversation she had with an immigrant woman about being Canadian, she shared how she felt challenged to question her assumptions about how to define a Canadian citizen in terms of skin colour as well as self-identification. Darren in the last workshop also commented on how knowledgeable the learners were in terms of "multiple languages and skills." There was a shift in terms of perceiving learners and their cultures, opinions and experiences, not as deficient but as valued sources of information.

Using the funds of knowledge strategy and critiquing Human Rights, Immigration and Multicultural Policies did improve instructors' attitudes towards ESL learners. Using critical MCE strategies did show a reduction in ethnocentrism.

In Chapter Five, I will provide some insights into the implications of my study by referring to literature theories of the funds of knowledge and my own experiences as an educator.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I discuss the findings from the themes. At this point in the generic qualitative study, I hope to use reflexivity by “being aware of and openly discussing (my) role in the study in a way that honours and respects the site and participants” (Creswell, 2008, p. 485). I will (a) discuss the limitations and the context of the research, (b) examine the practical and systemic challenges of integration, (c) reflect on the implications of the study, (d) make recommendations for future research, and (e) respond to the research questions. In conclusion, I advocate for the use of ESL classes as a forum for the integration of immigrants as opposed to assimilation.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study is limited because it is a sample of only four ESL instructors who self-identified as wanting to improve their intercultural skills. They are predisposed towards recognizing the importance of seeing people through a cultural lens. Further, based on the fact that I have self-reported data from the focus group interviews, the instructors could be exaggerating information, embellishing conversations, and giving certain ideas undue prominence. Conversely, they may have failed to include aspects that may be perceived as not important. Collecting self-reported data may have encouraged selective memory among the instructors.

In terms of timelines, I had only 14 weeks to complete my research because I am not a full-time researcher. I would have preferred to study the efficacy of the funds of knowledge over a period of 1 school year. In terms of having a background of data, there cannot be a confirmation of my findings due to a lack of prior research. As well, on my part, my bias would be that I perceive ethnocentrism to be a negative aspect in the

classroom. However, I do not think this affected the findings because I made an effort to focus on GE principles where we discussed Canadian content as a way of scaffolding learning. The purpose was an integrative approach rather than promoting one culture but seeing all differences as equal. By using GE to talk about culture first in a global sense and linking the information to Canadian content, I believe it was possible to show how ethnocentrism can be used to leverage learning for instructors. I made an effort to reflect on Vygotskian principles in the PD.

In terms of systemic limitations, access to the classroom was limited because observation of teachers in the classroom is strictly forbidden by the union. The data gathering process had to be curtailed because I could not confirm that the strategy was actually used by the instructor in the classroom. It would have been beneficial for me to do observations in the classroom to verify not only the usage of the funds of knowledge strategy but also how the PD was actually delivered in the classroom.

Context

The research took place at a site in a large urban centre in Ontario. The area was developed as a middle class neighbourhood in the 1960s that became gentrified in the early 2000s. Today, the riding encompasses one of the richest neighbourhoods in the city as well as one of the poorest. The school is a large adult ESL centre with approximately 100 staff and 3,000 learners plus satellite locations along the main street corridor. The administrators, instructors, clerks, and custodians are politically connected male and female baby boomers. Recent changes in immigrant education management regarding intake of learners into service provider organizations by the federal and provincial governments have significantly altered the power structures in the school.

Many schools are largely controlled by office staff who work on the frontlines and function as the primary gatekeepers. Specifically in newcomer classes, office staff are responsible for assessing and placing adult learners into classes. Some of the office staff had dual roles in schools as instructors and functioned as assessors as well, which increased their status. Because adult education is a business, the number of learners that an instructor can retain is significant in terms of being valued, respected, and promoted. Thus, office staff hold the power in their hands to make or break instructors.

Occasionally, administrators ask office staff for input regarding hiring. This is tacitly acknowledged among ESL instructors and one of the implicit rules observed in schools. The head custodian and caretakers also function as key controllers of public spaces. The subculture of schools can be perpetuated by this key inner circle. When new staff arrive at a school, they can be taught the assumptions and “allowed to enter the inner circle of the group, where group secrets were shared” (Schein, 1992, p. 13). This trifecta of the principal, administrative assistant, and custodian can form a monocultural monopoly on the control of public spaces such as schools.

I began working at ULC 22 years ago. I was the first non-White immigrant hired to work as an instructor at ULC in the coveted daytime slot. My perception of myself was that I would be able to offer immigrants a unique brand of support because I am an immigrant and have insider knowledge of the immigrant experience as well as the added bonus of growing up in Canada, which allows me to have outsider knowledge of the Canadian experience. Teaching ESL was, in my view, a vehicle for me to help immigrants and my main focus was immigrant services, rather than just teaching grammar. I also saw myself in a noble and altruistic light.

The students in the higher levels at ULC consisted mainly of foreign-trained professionals from all over the world. As I worked with these newcomers over the last 18 years, I heard a great deal of frustration about systemic barriers in Canada. I intuitively sensed Foucault's idea that knowledge equals power because "people can build power by gathering pertinent information" (Fowler, 2004, p. 34). I reasoned that having knowledge about Canadian systems would help my learners overcome barriers. I hoped that my students would be able to obtain "control of information" (Fowler, 2004, p. 34) from my class and, consequently, gain power over their new lives in Canada. I tried to empower my students by teaching them about medical, legal, and educational systems. For a time, my students were quite pleased and eventually asked me for more help. The learners' questions led to many conversations about identity development, integration, and assimilation. Over and over I heard the phrase, "When I go out, I will be Canadian. When I am at home with my friends and family, I will be *myself*." This phrase, repeated by Russian, Persian, and Asian learners, disturbed me because I felt that I was getting very successful at churning out fake Canadians. I also saw that many White European immigrants experienced very few barriers to employment once they achieved their academic credentials. I began to feel perturbed about my own role in education. In some ways, learning English was emancipating some immigrants by creating career, social, and employment opportunities. But, I grew uncomfortable with my own teaching even as I struggled to articulate my thoughts and feelings. Slowly over time, I began to change my delivery to eliminate any proassimilation language, promote differences as equal, encourage learners to express aspects of the first country, use their first languages in classrooms, and explore their developing identities. I felt that the opportunity to be

“yourself” in a public space was an important part of the service I was providing in class. I disavowed promoting any stance: integration, assimilation, or individuality. I adopted an attitude of sharing information and encouraged dialogues by asking questions. There is a relationship between power and ethics in which there should be respect, commitment to valid information, and freedom of choice for the less powerful (Fowler, 2004). The response to this type of delivery was overwhelmingly positive and I was content that I had achieved an ethical form of English language program delivery as well as supported my students in a deeper, more gratifying way.

However, when I talked to my colleagues, I learned that almost all instructors felt that the purpose of ESL classes was to assimilate newcomers into Canadian culture. Surprisingly to me, even the ethnic teachers who had been hired after me were amongst the strongest proponents of assimilation. When there are International Day celebrations, many ESL instructors oppose the promotion of the expression of cultural diversity. Instead, they feel that learners should be assimilated and taught Canadian celebrations. Over the last 25 years, I have met perhaps a dozen instructors who believe that preserving cultural roots is just as important as learning about Canada. But generally speaking, most ESL instructors are proassimilation.

Discussion

Culture for the purposes of this study is simply defined as “shared assumptions” (Schein, 1992, p. 7). In the larger context of educational institutions, as well as the individual classrooms, the subculture of schools is proassimilation. There are few visual representations of the learners’ first countries, cultures, or the ethnic enclaves inhabited by newcomers. Occasionally on bulletin boards, classes are advertised and Canadian

holidays promoted. Even more rarely is there an archive documenting the history of the diverse subculture of neighbourhoods. Many instructors have all been working together for 10 to 25 years and can be perceived as a culture sharing group that “has developed shared values, beliefs, and language” (Creswell, 2008, p. 473). For this reason, I felt it was important to begin the workshops with an emphasis on GE because the instructors would likely be more willing to talk about geopolitical issues as well as problems that emerged when culture was brought into the classroom if they focused on issues external to Canada and Canadian culture. Because the assumption of the instructors at ULC was proassimilation and assumptions are “emotionally invested in and seen as right” (Schein, 1992, p. 12), I had hoped that instructors would find the first workshop a safe place to springboard the discussion of the role of culture in the classroom from a GE perspective external to Canada and later discuss internal policies in Canada from a critical MCE stance.

Rather than sharing facts and promoting the policies, I felt it was necessary to teach instructors about human rights, immigration, and multicultural policies from a critical MCE perspective. I wanted the instructors to critique the hidden agendas behind the policies and analyze how the policies actually play out in our learners’ lives. In order to accomplish fostering a greater awareness of social justice, I used music from pop culture. By using music, I hoped to appeal to the instructors’ empathy towards their learners to help the instructors realize that immigrants feel anger towards Canadian systems that disempower them by not acknowledging their knowledge, skills, and experience. First, I juxtaposed the *It’s a Small World* video with the *Black or White* video as an ironical contrast of two visions of globalization: the idealized version by

Disney of the White middle-class dream and the dramatized version by Michael Jackson of the African-American experience. I hoped to prompt a discussion about race, diversity, and power. Second, in order to critique immigration policy, I used the song *Holiday* by Green Day to foster an awareness of governmental oppression. Third, I attempted to start a conversation about multiculturalism by showing a picture of a woman wearing a Canadian flag hijab. In order to critique human rights, I tried to show how the policy has been basically reduced to litigation about headgear in the form of lawsuits regarding the turban or hijab by using a video clip from the movie *Breakaway*. The instructors did not respond in any depth to the video and because I did not want to control the discussion, they moved on to talking about instructional strategies. However, it was the songs that appeared to penetrate the instructors' consciousness that there was more going on in diverse ESL classrooms beyond a naïve desire to integrate into Canadian society by newcomers. It appeared that using GE and MCE to foster an attitude that would encourage critiquing Canadian policies that affect our learners' lives was a successful way to reduce ethnocentrism.

The instructors almost immediately cited misogyny and media stereotypes as a recurring issue. They had an awareness of the issues with globalization and the implications among diversity in terms of media influence. The teachers recognized that internationalization “is essential to the subjugation of the oppressed, as presented to them by well-organized propaganda and slogans, via the mass ‘communication’ media – as if such alienation constituted real communication” (Freire, 1970, p. 140). As well, the changing role of women has been referred to by researchers (O’Sullivan, 1991), as to exacerbating tensions between East and West relations. On one hand, Western views

reflect the idea that women should have equal employment opportunities while traditional Eastern perspectives uphold family values over personal self-fulfillment. In terms of instructors' responses about traditional attitudes towards women in the classroom "if we understand the dynamics of culture, we will be less likely to be puzzled, irritated, and anxious when we encounter the unfamiliar" (Schein, 1992, p. 3). In this way, GE can function as a pathway to discuss the changing role of women around the world and the consequences for the traditional family hierarchy. In terms of MCE, there can be a critical feminist perspective offered to illustrate the positives of the feminist movement, as well as the negatives, including the lack of racial inclusion in the feminist movement. Further, there can be the Freirian critique that the dominators in society try to portray themselves as liberators of women and men (Freire, 1970). GE and MCE may be appropriate pathways for instructors to deal with conflict in the classroom when dealing with culturally defined gender roles and media stereotypes. By using GE and MCE perspectives, hopefully instructors increased their confidence level to facilitate conversations about many topics that they might have avoided in the past and approached the sensitive topics with a more critical attitude towards Western assumptions.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the study, from my point of view, was the topic that the instructors avoided: race. All the instructors are employees of a school board in southern Ontario. When international incidents occur, there is an attempt by the board to diffuse sensitive topics from becoming volatile issues in the classroom by printing guidelines and encouraging communicating sensitively to the students from various parts of the world. This may have led to an overvigilance in terms of how the instructors expressed themselves about diversity issues. There is also a power issue

because board employees, including myself, must defer to board policies which bind all staff to protocols that forbid doing or saying anything to harm the image of the board.

Although ethnic groups were identified by the instructors, it was interesting to note that race was mentioned only once during the workshops. Furthermore, the video by Michael Jackson, *Black or White* was released in the early 1990s during the racially charged atmosphere of the Rodney King trial. The beating of Rodney King took place on March 3, 1991. *Black or White* was released in November 1991. In April 1992, when the L.A. riots erupted over the acquittal of the officers who brutally beat Rodney King, 53 people were killed. There were no references made as to the historical context of when the video had been released by the instructors. As well, no one referred to the Black Panthers or their pursuit of justice through violence or the symbolism of Michael Jackson's morphing into a black panther. I had hoped to probe the instructors to see whether anyone had an awareness of critical race theory. Instead, the instructors asked to watch the video twice and appeared to reflect quietly after watching the video for the second time. The intensity of the last 4 minutes seemed to catch instructors off-guard. The angry tone in the song *Holiday*, also seemed to have an impact on the instructors. They asked questions as to why the musicians sang about a "holiday" that sounded fun, but actually levels an accusation against society as being consumed with superficial pursuits while the government oppresses people. The songs expressed rage, which I felt was an important feeling associated with injustice and would scratch the surface beyond putting on a positive attitude with a happy face. Although the instructors appeared thoughtful and quiet, they did not appear uncomfortable. Instead, there appeared to be

growing consciousness that interracial relations can be oppressive and exploitive, not just in a historical context, but in the present as well.

In between the PD and the debrief session, there were 11 weeks during which instructors had time to reflect on GE and MCE in terms of social justice as pertaining to ESL classrooms while they implemented the funds of knowledge strategy. When instructors used the strategy, it appeared to foster openness towards diverse cultures in the classroom because instructors were more prepared to converse with learners, offer more self-directed learning, and allow more freedom of personal expression. Most important were the adult learners' responses to GE and the funds of knowledge strategy. Like the Sweisfurth (2006) study, the instructors found a similar dynamic where learners' rising levels of interest and, consequently, teacher interest in global issues increased in the classroom because "many students responded with empathy and enthusiasm to topics of a global nature, and were very keen to get involved in their own time – generally more so than most other teachers" (Sweisfurth, 2006, p. 47). In diverse classrooms and schools, interconnectedness is even more important because "creativity emerges by putting disparate ideas together or by connecting different and diverse minds, or both" (Hargreave & Fink, 2006, p. 163). Similar to Darren's comment, another teacher stated that "there is a 'wealth of opportunity' to 'use' the expectations to drive a global citizenship education agenda in any subject area" (Sweisfurth, 2006, p. 47). In fact, there was an acknowledgement of culture as the elephant in the room that if the leader, or in this case the teacher, does not manage cultures, "those cultures will manage them" (Schein, 1992, p. 15). Teachers who attempt to avoid cross-cultural issues may end up creating more conflict in the classroom if discussions are not managed properly. By

fostering a classroom environment that is open to cultural and racial diversity, there is an opportunity to stop avoiding meaningful topics and interact on a more personal level.

Another important point in developing cross-cultural skills is learning to manage culturally based divergent views from an assets-based perspective. From a Vygotskian viewpoint, cultural conflict can be used to springboard learning, and culturally based diverse perspectives offer an opportunity for both teacher and student learning. The response to the research questions:

1. How will intervention based on global and multicultural education principles and Moll et al.'s funds of knowledge practices facilitate inclusive cross-cultural interactions and/or affect teachers' instructional strategies?
2. How will learning about multicultural, immigration, and human rights policy from a critical perspective affect ESL instructors' attitudes towards ESL learners?

would be that the instructors began to perceive that Canadian assumptions had a role to play in cultural conflict in the classroom when they critically examined their own existing beliefs and ideas. In this study, the funds of knowledge strategy was useful in developing the instructors' cross-cultural quotient in terms of opening up the lines of communication between students and teachers because the learners' responses towards GE were so positive.

Literature Theories

Classroom practices are predominantly based on the banking concept of education that is based on a teacher's reality. According to Freire (1970), the teacher "expounds on a topic completely alien to the existential experiences of the student" (p. 71) and the

student is filled with deposits of knowledge from the teacher. In terms of policies, the instructors had a sound understanding of the various policies that affect learners' lives, but they used the policies as a response to conflict in the classroom. Encouraging the instructors to view human rights, immigration, and multicultural policies from a critical and analytical perspective was the first step in building a praxis based on MCE. There was an effort made to present the importance of viewing immigration, multicultural and human rights policies to reflect critical MCE principles because Bryan's (2009) study on a national-level policy titled, *Planning for Diversity: The National Action Plan Against Racism* (NPAR) found that the policy actually increased feelings of otherness and did not result in inclusionary practices. The banking concept stifles creativity and discourages critical thinking because "the banking approach to adult education, for example, will never propose to students that they critically consider reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 74). The next step would be to encourage the learners in the higher levels to critique the policies, voice their opinions, and express how the policies have played out in their lives. Unfortunately, there was not enough time to study the impact of critical MCE on the learners. But, when MCE was used to critically examine human rights, immigration, and multicultural policies that directly affected ESL students' lives, instructors did become aware of the fact that current bias against knowledge gained from other countries is perceived pejoratively and that the policies were not necessarily in the best interests of immigrants even though, on the surface, the policies appeared to offer rights to immigrants in Canada. Viewing policies from a critical perspective is an essential part of developing praxis as opposed to providing PD that merely disseminates information about immigration, multiculturalism, and human rights.

Questioning why knowledge from cultures from around the world is seen as “less” was an important step in gaining awareness of ethnocentrism. A further step would be to examine colonial attitudes in education. The “conscientizacao” was increased because the instructors in the “creative praxis of the new society, (began) to perceive why mythical remnants of the old society survive in the new” (Freire, 1970, p. 159). They questioned why Canadian experience is valued over experience from certain countries, why some countries are favoured, and why bias against newcomers is unexamined. Thus, the role of critical MCE can be seen as an effective pathway to reduce teacher ethnocentrism, especially when critiquing policies. Instructors were able to develop their praxis in terms of reflection on and justification of putting inclusive cross-cultural strategies into practice.

The funds of knowledge strategy is not only antithetical to the banking concept in education but it encourages instructors to question their own assumptions about cultures and ethnocentric attitudes. It promotes the democratization of education instead of colonial attitudes because “the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who in turn while being taught also teach” (Freire, 1970, p. 80). Further, “students – no longer docile listeners – are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher” (Freire, 1970, p. 81). Rather than being seen in the traditional hierarchical relationship between student and teacher, instructors should act “as sympathetic observers with an attitude of understanding towards what they see” (Freire, 1970, p. 110). In this way, learning in the classroom through the funds of knowledge strategy occurs for both students and teachers.

Democratization is further possible in education when dialogue is encouraged. According to Freire (1970), dialogue is an “existential necessity” (p. 88) that is the foundation of cooperation. Racial stratification, where only one group of one race dominates and allows only a small handful of voices to be heard is not conducive to fostering cooperation. Instead, discouraging alternate viewpoints can result in marginalized communities becoming reactionaries because

the educational, dialogical quality of revolution, which makes it a ‘cultural revolution’ as well, must be present in all its stages. This educational quality is one of the most effective instruments for keeping the revolution from becoming institutionalized and stratified in a counter-revolutionary bureaucracy; for counter- revolution is carried out by revolutionaries who become reactionary.

(Freire, 1970, p. 136)

In contrast, cultural synthesis is where people come from another world “to learn *with the people* (italics mine) about the people’s world” (Freire, 1970, p. 180). Cultural synthesis can reflect postmodernism as narratives are expressed. Without a postmodern atmosphere conducive to inclusion, monoculturality in education can become a venue for clericals, custodians, instructors, and administrators to oppress those who already do not have a voice, especially among diverse adult learners who do not speak English.

Implications

In the context of increasing standardization in education, an instructors’ ability to use inclusive cross-cultural strategies has become increasingly important. Researchers found that “in the present international climate, global citizenship issues are on the verge of eclipsing everything else – but that schools have not caught up with this reality”

(Sweisfurth, 2006, p. 47). However, there are two universal tensions “between teacher agency and the structure they work within, and the imperative of survival of our global village” (Sweisfurth, 2006, p. 50). Unfortunately, “standardized education reform has managed public education like a machine” (Hargreave & Fink, 2006, p. 163) and done little to value fostering the individuality and creativity of the teacher. In fact,

standardization reform has destroyed too much diversity, threatening educators’ capacity to acknowledge and adjust to the variable needs of their diverse students, to maintain improvement over time, and to respond resiliently when the next change or crisis comes upon them. (Hargreave & Fink, 2006, p. 173)

Educators need to be aware that racialized communities face a mobilization bias where there is a

double task at school: learning the cognitive material that is explicitly presented to them and deciphering the implicit but unfamiliar ‘codes’ in which it is embedded. This mobilization bias against their effective participation in the classroom often leads to frustration, alienation and failure. (Fowler, 2004, p. 35)

Conversely, a lack of sensitivity towards diversity due to standardization can result in oppressing learners by not acknowledging mobilization bias. Standardization can also result in internalized oppression and self-hatred. When Denzin (1997) spoke of the twin crises of representation and legitimization, he was responding to profound changes in our society, such as becoming more multinational, joining a world economy, and changing demographics to include more racial groups. These factors have created a system of power, prestige, privilege, and authority that serves to marginalize individuals of different classes, races and gender in our society (Creswell, 2008, p. 478).

Standardization is “the educational equivalent of imposing monoculture in the natural world” (Hargreave & Fink, 2006, p. 166). The monoculture represented in standardization is Western White culture. The idea that students must achieve a prescribed utilitarian standard promotes the idea that “West is best” or “White is right” attitudes. Standardization in education perpetuates an invasive subversive force to monoculturality because in order “for cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority” (Freire, 1970, p. 153). Educational climates that are highly standardized among cultural diversity can be seen as promoting internalized oppression and even self-hatred for immigrants’ cultural roots. At the very minimum, standardization promotes a denial of self in public spaces such as schools.

However, in the context of many schools differentiated instruction, teacher creativity and sensitivity to learning styles are encouraged. Despite an environment that can promote individuality, most staff in educational institutions are predominantly White. The positions of explicit authority (principals and teachers) and implicit power (administrative assistants and caretakers) are often held by White staff. Even in a climate that can foster teacher creativity and offer latitude in terms of teaching, there may still be an environment of proassimilation fostered by the monoculture of teacher and administrator demographics. In the larger realm of education, the “entire Canadian province of Ontario has almost no district directors (superintendents) of colour” (Hargreave & Fink, 2006, p. 166). The idea that administrators should “value the richness of cultural diversity among their employees and find ways to capitalize on the collective intelligence of all their people” (Hargreave & Fink, 2006, p. 163) becomes an

elusive goal when educational staff are from one culture and one race. Monoculture does not produce an environment that is conducive to dialogue or alternate viewpoints and “the whole educational system was one of the major instruments for the maintenance of this culture of silence” (Freire, 1970, p. 30). As a consequence, there is a lack of dialogue between cultures and it creates oppression by suppressing alternate viewpoints, especially when the positions of power are held by one race. Thus, an educational system can become the enemy (Freire, 1970) of groups underrepresented in local school staff and board hierarchy. Not only do practices in the classroom need to be inclusive, but a school environment that promotes power sharing is conducive to inclusion. The conclusion that can be made at the final stages of this study is that since standardization in educational systems and monoculturality among school staff at all levels can support racial stratification and perpetuate oppression through the educational system, there is an even greater need for GE and MCE.

Recommendations

GE and MCE principles can be an effective response to standardization and monoculturality in systemic terms. GE and MCE can also be a response to teacher ethnocentrism on a classroom level and useful in creating greater awareness of individual differences among cultures as equal. As demographics have created the need for immigration in the West, it is possible that demographics will also provide the solution. European and North American populations are currently declining and are being replaced by immigrants from around the world. The tipping point is defined as the point at which an issue, idea, or product crosses a certain threshold and gains significant momentum, triggered by some minor factor or change (Dictionary.com, 2014). The term has been

widely used in a number of fields such as the study of the movement of matter in physics and the study of the spread of infections in epidemiology. As described by Gladwell (2008), Morton Grodzins applied the term in sociology in the 1960s when at a certain point when one more Black family moved into the neighborhood, a White flight took place. Similarly, maintaining White Eurocentric hegemony may become difficult when the tipping point occurs. Gladwell further explains that Thomas Schelling and Mark Granovetter described collective behaviour in terms of integration of neighbourhoods and racial segregation to show that local communities were tolerant to diversity up to a point and then a mathematical percentage for racial tolerance in neighbourhoods was calculated. Given that there may be a racial preference for one's own groups, it would be wise to invest in some concepts of social justice, GE and MCE in education as diversity increases globally. Otherwise, the formerly oppressed may become oppressors due to a fear of freedom from stereotypes. But rather "people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation" (Freire, 1970, p. 47) that helps pursue a complete humanity. Awareness and respect for viewpoints and a willingness to give validity to views that are contrary to cultural assumptions, are aspects that should be pursued in education as a way of preventing continued racial hegemony.

Educators who work among diverse cultures need to develop inclusive practices by encouraging and supporting the communities and neighbourhoods where they are situated. Communities and community leaders should be involved in development planning that is "holistic, consultative and participatory" (Giles, 1997, p. 67). Instead, there are divide and rule tactics among ethnic groups since unity, organization, and

struggle are dangerous to the oppressor because it leads to liberation and “oppressors do not favor promoting the community as a whole, but rather selected leaders” (Freire, 1970, p. 143). Ethnic representation through tokenism is an example of a divide and rule strategy. Schools need to support the ethnic communities that make up the neighborhood and

locally managed schools will have to individually plan the development of their particular niche in the educational marketplace, identify the type of school that they intend to become, and develop a range of services for their various intended client groups. (Giles, 1997, p. 13)

Administrators and instructors need to ask “Why do we exist as a school?” (Giles, 1997, p. 26). If one aspect of English language learning is to promote integration, then the pathways of GE, critical MCE and culturally inclusive instructional strategies need to be promoted, as well as equitable hiring practices. If assimilation is valued, then standardization in classrooms and monoculturality among school board hierarchy will be promoted. Among diverse neighborhoods, when we answer this question of ‘why’ ESL classes exist, then we can look at the ‘how.’

Conclusion

The justification for including cross-cultural strategies, such as the funds of knowledge strategy, in classrooms is not just to make learners feel good. There is a similar parallel which can be drawn from the Aboriginal experience with the immigrant experience. Native students attended residential schools, were forced to assimilate and not allowed to speak their mother tongue. The results of assimilation among the Aboriginal community can be seen today in terms of the high suicide rate, mental health

issues, and the breakdown of the family structure. Thus, inclusive practices are a necessary part of antioppressive education and move away from the conquest/colonial mentality of the past. Today, newcomers are facing marginalization because they do not have Canadian experience and their education, skills, and experience are not recognized in Canadian systems. Immigrants attend ESL classes in the hopes of finding a better life in Canada. If ESL instructors continue to promote assimilation and do not make an effort of being culturally inclusive, immigrants may feel marginalized even further. Louis Riel is an example of someone who fought against English hegemony in Canadian history. Rather than plead insanity as a defense, Riel chose to be executed against a charge of high treason saying, "Life, without the dignity of an intelligent being, is not worth having." Perhaps it would be prudent to listen to a voice in Canadian history from someone who was willing to give up his life to fight for his cultural, linguistic and biracial rights. In the same way, newcomers may feel their experience is worth having in Canada when immigrant voices are heard.

References

- Allen, J., & Cars, G. (2001). Multiculturalism and governing neighborhoods. *Urban Studies*, 38(12), 2195–2209.
- Allen, M. (2007). Effective opportunity and democratic deliberation. *Political Studies Association*, 27(2), 83–90.
- Alphonso, Caroline & Hammer, K. (2013, February 19). Toronto school board push a hiring setback for white women. *Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/toronto-school-board-hiring-push-a-setback-for-white-women/article8863642/>
- Alviar-Martin, T., & Ho, L. (2011). “So, where do they fit in?” Teacher’s perspectives of multi-cultural education and diversity in Singapore. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, 127–135.
- Anderson, S. E., & Ben Jaafar, S. (2006). Policy trends in Ontario education. *ICEC Working Paper #1*. Toronto, Canada: OISE.
- Baumgartner, L., & Johnson-Bailey, J. (2008). Fostering awareness of diversity and multiculturalism in adult and higher education. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 120, 45–53.
- Bell, A. (2007). *Policy, ecoSchools and operations: Laying the groundwork for ESD in the Toronto District School Board*. Toronto, Canada: York University SEDA.
- Block, S. (2010). *Ontario’s growing gap: The role of race and gender*. Ottawa, Canada: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

- Bryan, A. (2009). The intersectionality of nationalism and multiculturalism in the Irish curriculum: Teaching against racism? *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 12(3), 297–317.
- Carjuzaa, J., Jetty, M., Munson, M., & Veltkamp, T. (2010). Montana's Indian education for all: Applying multicultural education theory. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 12(4), 192–198.
- Choi, J. (2010). Educating citizens in a multicultural society: The case of South Korea. *The Social Studies*, 101, 174–178.
- Clark, V., & Creswell, J. (2010) *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. (2008) *Educational research* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Dadzie, S. (2005). Learning for diversity. *Adults Learning*, 17(3), 8–9.
- Daniels, H. (2005). *Introduction to Vygotsky* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Dei, G. J. S., James, I. M., Karumanchery, L. L., James-Wilson, S., & Zine, J. (2000). *Removing the margins: The challenges and possibilities of inclusive schooling*. Toronto, Canada: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Denevi, E., & Carter, R. (2006). Multicultural seminar: A new model for professional development. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 8(2), 18–24.
- Dictionary.com (2104). *Tipping point*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/tipping+point?s=t>
- Ensign, J. (2009). Multiculturalism in four teacher education programs: For replication or transformation. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 11(3), 169–173.

- Epstein, S. (2010). Who are your friends? Complexities in multicultural education. *Urban Review, 42*, 39–57.
- Fowler, F. C. (2004). *Policy studies for educational leaders: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice-Hall.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Gibson, M. (2010). Are we ‘reading the world’? A review of multicultural literature in globalization. *Multicultural Perspectives, 12*(3), 129–137.
- Giles, C. (1997). *School development planning*. Devon, UK: Northcote House.
- Gladwell, M. (2008). *Malcolm Gladwell’s email explains the tipping point*. Retrieved from <http://nypress.com/malcolm-gladwells-email-explains-the-tipping-point>
- Goonewardena, K., Rankin, K., & Weinstock, S. (2004). Diversity and planning education: A Canadian perspective. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research, 13*(1), 1–26.
- Hargreave, A., & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Boss.
- Hertz-Lazarowitz, R., Zelniker, T., & Azaiza, F. (2010). Theoretical framework for cooperative participatory action research (CPAR) in a multicultural campus: The social drama model. *Intercultural Education, 21*(3), 269–279.
- Holm, G., & Londen, M. (2010). The discourse on multicultural education in Finland: Education for whom? *Intercultural Education, 21*(2), 107–120.
- Johnson, R., & Onwuegbuzie, A. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), 14–26.

- Jonsdottir, E., & Ragnarsdottir, H. (2010). Multicultural education in Iceland: Vision or reality? *Intercultural Education*, 21(2), 153–167.
- Kuchapski, R. (1998a). Accountability and the social good: Utilizing Manzer's liberal framework in Canada. *Education and Urban Society*, 30(4), 531–545.
- Leedy, P., & Ormrod, J. (2005). *Practical research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Lucas, A. (2010). Distinguishing between multicultural and global education: The challenge of conceptualizing and addressing the two fields. *The Clearing House*, 83, 211–216.
- MacLennan, H. (2003). *Two Solitudes*. Toronto, Canada: New Canadian Library.
- McCann, P. (2003). Global village or global city? The (urban) communications revolution and education. *Paedagogica Historica*, 39(1/2), 165–179.
- McGlynn, C. (2009). Integrating education: Parekhian multiculturalism and good practice. *Intercultural Education*, 20(4), 299–310.
- McLaughlin, E., & Neal, S. (2007). Who can speak to race and nation? *Cultural Studies*, 21(6), 910–930.
- McLuhan, M. (1962). *Gutenberg galaxy: The making of typographic man*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Moll, L., Gonzalez, N., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities and classrooms* New York, NY: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

- Mujawamariya, D., & Mahrouse, G. (2004). Multicultural education in Canadian preservice programs: Teacher candidates' perspectives. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 50*(4), 336–353.
- Nussbaum, M. (1996). *For the love of country*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Osler, A., & Starkey, H. (2000). Intercultural education and foreign language learning: Issues of racism, identity and modernity. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 3*(2), 207–221.
- O'Sullivan, B. (1999). Global change and educational reform in Ontario and Canada. *Canadian Journal of Education, 24*(3), 311-325.
- O'Sullivan, M., & Vetter, D. (2007). Teacher-initiated, student-centered global education in a K to 8 school. *Journal of Teaching and Learning, 4*(2), 13-28
- Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2010) *Artifactual literacies: Every object tells a story*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press
- Plano Clark, V. L., & Creswell, J. (2010) *Understanding research: A consumer's guide*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Richardson, T. (2011). At the garden gate: Community building through food: Revisiting the critique of “food, folk and fun” in multicultural education. *Urban Review, 43*, 107–123.
- Rios-Aguilar, C. (2010). Measuring funds of knowledge: Contributions to Latina/o students' academic and non-academic outcomes. *Teachers College Record, 112*(8), 2209–2257.
- Rose, A. (2000). Which way adult education? The complexities of culture and action. *Adult Learning, 11*(1), 30–31.

- Rowell, J., Sztainbok, V., & Blaney, J. (2007). Losing strangeness: Using culture to mediate ESL teaching. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 20(2), 140–154.
- Schein, E. H. (1992). *Organizational culture and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Schoorman, D., & Bogotch, I. (2010) Moving beyond ‘diversity’ to ‘social justice’: The challenge to re-conceptualize multicultural education. *Intercultural Education*, 21(1), 79–85.
- Shariff, F. (2008). Straddling the cultural divide: Second generation South Asian identity and the namesake. *Changing English*, 15(4), 457–466.
- Shorten, A. (2010). Cultural exemptions, equality and basic interests. *Ethnicities*, 10(1), 100–126.
- Spencer, V. (2008). Language, history and the nation: An historical approach to evaluating language and cultural claims. *Nations and Nationalism*, 14(2), 241–259.
- Spinthourakis, J., Karatzia-Stavliot, E., & Roussakis, Y. (2009) Pre-service teacher intercultural sensitivity assessment as a basis for addressing multiculturalism. *Intercultural Education*, 20(3), 267–276.
- Sweisfurth, M. (2006). Education for global citizenship: Teacher agency and curricular structure in Ontario schools. *Educational Review*, 58(1), 41–50.
- Tan, E., & Lefebvre, H. (2010). Tuning frequencies of multicultural education objectives to distinct society perspectives: Two teacher candidate interviews transmitted through narrative inquiry. *Intercultural Education*, 21(4), 379–394.

- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- United Nations. (2000). *Human development report 2000*. Retrieved from hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-developmentreport-2000
- Vasquez, O. (2007). Latinos in the global context: Beneficiaries or irrelevant? *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 6(2), 119–137.
- Visser, M. (2012). *Multicultural education in Ontario's teacher education programs*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Brock University: St. Catharines, Canada.
- Wright, A., & Tolan, J. (2009). Prejudice reduction through shared adventure: A qualitative outcome assessment of a multicultural education class. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 32(2), 137–154.
- Yalnizyan, A. (2010). *The rise of Canada's richest 1%*. Ottawa, Canada: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
- Zembylas, M., & Vrasidas, C. (2005). Globalization information and communication technologies, and the prospect of a 'global village': Promises of inclusion or electronic colonization? *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 37(1), 65–83.
- Zhenzhou, Z., & Postiglione, G. (2008). Making globalization work for Chinese higher education by building bridges between internationalization and multiculturalism. *Asian Ethnicity*, 9(2), 133–150.

Appendix A

Workshop #1

OBJECTIVE – To find out if the funds of knowledge concept is an effective way to deal with ESL Instructors' ethnocentrism.

ACTIVITY – The instructors will work in pairs to use a word web to write down concepts of culture and answer the question about what strategies they are using now. They will answer two questions verbally in a focus group of four on tape:

1. What issues are associated with globalization?
2. How does the global village affect the classroom?

LESSON- The instructors will learn about the basic concepts of global and multicultural education and learn how to elicit funds of knowledge in a classroom through conversations about daily habits, worship rites and community practices. (see PowerPoint presentation titled workshop #1)

FOLLOW-UP – Instructors will reflect on how to implement the funds of knowledge strategy into their existing daily lesson plans.

Appendix B

Likert Questionnaire

1 = completely disagree

10 = completely agree

1. Canada's immigration policy is designed every 5 years.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Canada's immigration policy is based on global humanitarian needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Canada's immigration policy is based on population demographic needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Canada's immigration policy is based on labour needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. The number of refugees permitted to enter Canada is directly related to employment needs in the service sector.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. The number of skilled workers (foreign-trained professionals) permitted to enter Canada is directly related to Canadian economic needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Canada is the first destination choice for immigrants around the world.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Canada competes for immigrants from countries such as America and Australia.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Canada faces increasing competition from Europe for immigrants.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. The Multicultural Policy was designed to make Canada more marketable to potential immigrants.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. Canada has a fair and just Human Rights policy.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. Canada is “too nice” in terms of accommodating diverse religious rights.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10