

TOWARD RELEVANT IMMIGRANT PEDAGOGY: TEACHER AND STUDENT  
INTERACTIONS IN AN URBAN CLASSROOM

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TOWARD RELEVANT IMMIGRANT PEDAGODY: TEACHER AND STUDENT  
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One in five children in schools today are from immigrant families and speak a language other than English. Research reveals many teachers in urban schools feel inadequately prepared to meet the unique needs of these students. Teachers lack research-based knowledge about culturally relevant teaching and differentiated instructional strategies that benefit all learners. They do not understand issues such as ethnicity, poverty, racism, cultural and linguistic identities, and immigration. Few studies have described the nature of the learning experiences of English Language Learners (ELLs) and immigrants in urban high schools.

Using identity, sociocultural, and self-efficacy conceptual frameworks (relevant immigrant pedagogy), this qualitative case study focused on classroom interactions and instructional efforts of two teachers in an English 10 class in an urban high school. The researcher observed class activities, took field notes, interviewed teachers and students, collected instructional planning documents, and photographed student artifacts and interactions. One teacher in the classroom had an English as a Second Language (ESL) certification and extensive professional development to increase her competency as a teacher of immigrants. The other teacher had English Language Arts certification.

Findings indicated that relevant immigrant pedagogy was an expansive instructional framework which transformed ELLs and immigrants to grow in their construction of self and identity, self-efficacy, sociocultural consciousness, and academic rigor within a period of five months despite the prescriptive curriculum from

the district in a restricted environment. The urban teachers displayed skills, zeal, and commitment to building a community of learners of all ability levels in class and bridged the gaps between immigrants and non-immigrants. All students grew together in their learning and socio-emotional experiences and became advocates and helpers for one another, not competitors. The conclusions suggest that it is possible to improve the educational programs for immigrant students and English Language Learners through well-developed research-based instruction, and proposes a model for effective urban teacher education.

Beth Bergoff, Ph.D., Chair

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## Definition of Terms

*Cross-Cultural Education*: Synonymous to transnationalism or inter-culturation which embodies a comparative analysis of different cultures from different nations (Muller, 2002).

*Differentiated Instruction*: Instruction skills with the ability to differentiate learning tailored to individual students and offer them multiple ways of gaining academic proficiency (Iddings, 2009).

*Diversity*: A variety of peoples, races, ideas, cultures, languages, nationalities together which encompass acceptance and respect (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005)

*English Language Learners (ELLs)*: Students whose native language or language in their homes (L1) is a language other than English. This study is operating based on the demographic fact that the majority of ELLs were born in the United States.

Analysis of the Bureau data by Lad & Braganza (2013), reveal that nearly three-fourths of the school-age children of immigrants were born in the United States, and approximately one-fourth were foreign born. According to Samway & McKeon (2007), of those school-age students born outside the United States, 38 percent were from Mexico, 25 percent from Asian countries and the rest from Latin America, Europe, and other parts of the world. In other words, this challenges the assumption that most ELLs are born outside the United States, and most ELLs are recent arrivals since many states like California, Texas, Florida, Colorado, New York, Illinois, Indiana, Nevada show a record number of ELL enrollments from their school districts (Samson & Collins, 2012; Samway & McKeon, 2007).

*Immigrants:* Noncitizens that are either lawfully or not lawfully (undocumented) admitted to stay in the United States on a permanent basis (Darder & Torres, 2014; Lee, 2012).

*Immigrant Education:* Curriculum oriented toward immigrant instructions tailored to tolerance, expressiveness, and collaboration with other cultures which may result in prejudice reduction (Exposito & Favela, 2003; Muller, 2002).

*Interaction:* The activity of being with and talking to other people especially in our case ELLs with one another and ELL teachers and ELLs which affect or change each other or one another (Heath & Street, 2008; Madison, 2012). This term is critical in this inquiry because the interaction patterns between a teacher and student and teacher expectations were observed and analyzed together. According to Valencia (2011) these interactive patterns could be culturally or/and historically driven or influenced by other forces one could draw from.

*L2:* Second language or students who are nonnative speakers of a language (Samway & McKeon, 2007).

*Native Language (LI):* First or native language - in this case English (Samway & McKeon, 2007).

*Non English Proficient (NEP):* Those newcomers of English who are just beginning to learn the language (Samway & McKeon, 2007). This group was included in the study.

*Refugees:* People who have been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. Due to their previous trauma, most governments including here in the U.S. provide work permits and permanent residences to these

groups of people easily within a short period of time (less than a year) (Lopez & Lopez, 2010; Patel, 2013). However, this research is not meant to emphasize the *refugee* status of the people under study, nor even the immigration legal basis of any students involved.

*Sociocultural consciousness*: In depth understanding that human being's ways of thinking and frames of reference, are deeply influenced by many factors among them, race or ethnicity, social class, culture, and language (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

*Undocumented*: Nationals without proper legal documents for residency (Ogbu & Simons, 1998; Knight & Watson, 2013).

*Undocumented status*: The same as unauthorized which connotes a person who is not a United States citizen and is present in this country without legal authorization. The federal government mandates states to provide equal public education to undocumented immigrant children through the 1982 Supreme Court rule of Plyer v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (Lopez & Lopez, 2010). However, for this study, this group of students will be included with the term immigrants due to its sociopolitical sensitiveness and per advice from the researcher's site.

*"Urban" School*: From Latin terminology *urbs* which means *city*, the term urban is used not as a code for a failing school but pertaining to nearer or within a large city. Situated five miles from an urban area connotes that the school is within an area with a large population of people, very diverse compositions culturally, linguistically, racially, ethnically, religiously, economically, and even with a deep historical and sociopolitical significances (Matsko & Hammerness, 2014).

*World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment-WIDA Scale*: Five performance

definitions for the K-12 English language proficiency standards with 1) entering phase, 2) beginning, 3) developing, 4) expanding, 5) bridging (Echevarria & Wooding, 2006; WIDA, 2013). From entering process phase, to 5, bridging phase the student is deemed to have attainment of state academic content standards accordingly. The language proficiency levels explore the expected performance and carefully describe the aspects ELLs can perform within each domain of the standards. Significantly, each language proficiency standard addresses a specific context for language acquisition like instructional and social settings as well as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (Echevarria & Wooding, 2006; WIDA, 2013).



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In recent years, statistics have shown that the United States is becoming more diverse than ever, mainly due to an increase in the immigrant population. The growth of immigrant populations in the United States has significantly impacted the educational system (Clarkson, 2009; Gordon, 2002; & Lad & Braganza, 2013). Students from immigrant families make up a large and fast growing segment of the student population (Lee, 2012). One in five students in public schools in the United States are English Language Learners (ELLs) (Samway & McKeon, 2007). This illustrates why teacher education programs must provide training for new teachers on the diversity of students they will encounter on a day-to-day basis (Borrero, 2013; Cervantes & Hernandez, 2010; Orozo-Suarez & Orozo-Suarez, 2009; Passel, 2011). In many cases, secondary teacher preparation curriculum centers on content methods, which are general and undifferentiated. As a result, this curriculum often fails to address the specific needs and concerns of immigrant children and ELLs (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Goodwin, 2002).

Moreover, students from immigrant families are very diverse in terms of ethnicity, race, class, religion, language, immigration status, social class, and even their English proficiency levels (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Garret & Holcomb, 2005; Goodwin, 2002; Lee, 2010). Research by Cavan (2008) and Lee (2012) revealed that immigrant ELLs score lower on standardized tests, graduate from high school at lower rates, and drop out of high school at higher rates than their native English-speaking peers. For these reasons, some scholars have argued that the high dropout rate of immigrants is the result of a number of factors including language barriers and lack of

adequate support, which slowly leads to a decline in academic achievement (Borjian & Padilla, 2010; Garret & Holcomb, 2005; Gordon, 2002; Passel, 2011; Patel, 2013).

Responding to these concerns, many educators are embracing research-based knowledge about culturally relevant instructional practices and differentiated teaching strategies that benefit learners in any setting (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). However, changing demographics make it essential for urban teachers to understand key issues such as ethnic identity, poverty, immigration, racism, and cultural and linguistic identities (Darder & Torres, 2014). Similarly, research by Samson and Collins (2012) revealed that many teachers in urban schools are still not equipped to address the unique needs of ELLs and recently arrived immigrants. Many scholars contend that knowledge about teaching, curricular theories, and instructional strategies are universal, thus good teaching transcends any setting. However, urban teachers also need to be prepared to understand specific issues pertaining to their settings (Anyon, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Hammerness & Matsko, 2013; Noguera, 2006).

According to Samson & Collins (2012), the rapid increase of immigrants and ELLs has not been matched by sufficient growth of instructors' understanding and preparedness in how best to plan and carry out good instruction. Recent research shows that the achievement gap related to students' Basic English Proficiency (BEF) levels has widened between ELLs and native speakers of English. It is presumed that this gap will get wider over time (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2014). Although other factors, such as a student's socioeconomic background, may contribute to this widening gap, research has consistently shown that the lack of proper preparation for teachers in urban schools significantly impact students' outcomes (Goodwin, 2002;

Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Urban schools would benefit from improved urban teacher preparation programs, which produce teachers who are prepared to work with immigrants and ELLs. These schools need high quality teachers who can improve the educational outcomes for struggling and marginalized ELLs and immigrant students (Delpit, 1988; Samson & Collins, 2012). Therefore, it is essential that urban teacher preparation programs invest in preparing teachers who understand these dynamics. Urban schools must provide teachers with appropriate tools, skills, and best practices for supporting immigrants and ELLs in their unique learning challenges (Garret & Holcomb, 2005; Goodwin, 2002; Patel, 2013). What is at stake here is the future of the United States' workforce, which draws from the millions of students who are not well prepared to function in the American social, economic, and political environment (Calderon, Sanchez, & Slavin, 2011).

### **Background of the Study**

Human migration is an inherent characteristic, and yet a highly contentious issue nationally and even globally because it cuts across social and global sociopolitical policies (Graff, 2010). For example, the media currently highlights anti-immigrant sentiments and new laws that are driven by security concerns. In the United States, racist depictions of immigrants, especially those who are undocumented, are deeply interwoven into all sectors of American society (Patel, 2013). The increased demand for border patrols, accusations that immigrants are taking American jobs combined with recent attacks in the United States and Paris (France) have inflamed people's attitudes and behaviors towards immigrants. These prospects however, harbor unjust sentiments and

prejudicial attitudes and behavior toward immigrants which result in further marginalization.

As a result, educators must be ready to respond to these challenges. Teachers who have absorbed these prevailing ideologies of the dominant culture surrounding immigration may feel a sense of resistance and disengagement toward immigrants and even culturally and linguistically diverse student populations (Apple, 2004). Therefore, contemporary issues in education and schools must always include conversations about immigration, which has shaped our past, explains our present, and enriches our collective identity as a nation (Graff, 2010).

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examines the nature of experiences of ELLs and immigrant students at Thomas Aquinas High School. This urban school is located near downtown in a large city in a mid-western state. The study focuses specifically on how classroom teachers were able to support this population of students in their learning processes. How do teachers make sense of and carry out instruction for this group of people in today's urban classrooms? How is the institutional context, especially the classroom and school climate, impacting and supporting learning and individual growth?

This study does not aim to make a comparison or contrast or even exemplify the experiences of immigrant students and ELLs against any other student population. Instead, it will use ethnographic methods to make immigrant and ELLs' experiences visible through teacher-student interactions, student-student interactions, teacher planning documents, students' artifacts, and interviews. The study fills a significant gap in the educational research of immigrant students and ELLs in urban high schools by focusing

on a specific urban classroom, its teachers, and its students and their shared learning experiences (Sleeter, 2013).

### **Research Questions**

One of the most significant tasks of any research study is to develop meaningful research questions. A researcher like myself needs to consider both the substance and form of the questions in order to go to the bottom of the inquiry (Yin, 2009). For example, using qualitative inquiry (Merriam, 2009), a substantive question might focus on what beneficial experiences accrue to urban teachers, ELLs, and immigrants in an educational context. A formative question would ask how the benefits are produced? Why did urban teachers, ELLs, immigrants, state and federal governments, and concerned citizens seek these benefits? (Yin, 2009).

In this study, I will seek to answer this substantive question:

*What is the nature of urban students' experiences, especially English Language Learners and immigrants, during Grade 10 English class at Thomas Aquinas High School?*

There are two additional formative questions that will guide this study:

- How does instruction support learning in this class with immigrants and English Language Learners?
- How does the school climate support learning in this class with immigrants and English Language Learners?

## **Significance of the Study**

This study makes a substantial and original contribution to the field of K-12 and higher education in various ways. First, since Goodwin's (2002) and Garret & Holcomb's (2005) exploration into the proper instructional needs for immigrant students in public schools, there has been no detailed examination of the nature of experiences of immigrant students and ELLs in urban high schools. Additionally, research in education dealing with pedagogy geared towards immigrant students and ELLs tends to be more general and undifferentiated, thus lacking many specifics (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Samson & Collins, 2012). Third, this study aims to add knowledge to understanding better what effective teacher preparation may look like for immigrants and ELLs in urban teacher education. This case study illuminates the nature of immigrants' and ELLs' experiences in one Grade 10 classroom and provides insight into ways instruction and classroom climate affect student learning, especially by problematizing the disparities and opening a window on practices and experiences that contribute to the achievement gap (Delpit, 1988; Noguera, 2006).

Furthermore, it is important to note that this research was aligned with Dewey's (1904) fundamental paradigm of experience and education, making visible the connection between the nature of personal, academic, social, emotional, physical, and ethical experiences of immigrants and ELLs and class instructional practices in an urban classroom.

Fourth, this study contributes to critical narratives that give depth and demystify concerns related to immigrants and ELLs in education. Additionally, the findings of this study may be of interest to policy makers, educators, federal and state governments,

school districts, parents, and all concerned citizens seeking new ideas and solutions for improving the educational programs for immigrant students and ELLs through well-developed research-based principles and a model for effective urban teacher preparation.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter began with an exploration of the unique needs of recently arrived immigrants and ELLs (Lee, 2012). This population of students is growing more prevalent and diverse in United States schools, yet teachers are often ill-prepared and need to improve their instructional capabilities and the school climates for teaching immigrants and ELLs. While teacher preparation programs have embraced research-based knowledge about culturally responsive teaching for diverse learners and differentiated pedagogical skills (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Delpit, 1998), changing demographics have made it essential to understand deeper issues related to poverty, immigration, ethnicity, racism, and cultural and linguistic identity (Noguera, 2006; Patel, 2013).

In addition, the substantive question explored the nature of urban students' experiences, especially ELLs and immigrants during Grade 10 English class at Thomas Aquinas High School. This study aimed to carefully examine the instructional support and the climate of the school. My goal, as researcher, was to collect reliable data and carry out critical analyses that add knowledge to a growing body of scholarship about effective urban teacher preparation (Sleeter, 2013). Educators who are uncritical of the prevailing ideologies of the dominant culture surrounding immigration may feel a sense of resistance and disengagement toward immigrants and culturally and linguistically diverse student populations (Apple, 2004). Therefore, this study aimed to emphasize that contemporary issues in education and schools must always include conversations about

immigration, which has shaped our past, explains our present, and enriches our collective identity as a nation (Graff, 2010). Moreover, understanding the experiences of immigrants and ELLs in an urban classroom could boost overall efforts to improve low-income students' skills in higher education, thus making progress toward closing the achievement gap (Delpit, 1988; Noguera, 2006).



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Rationale for the Study**

There is growing concern in the United States about how teachers and schools can address the unique needs and experiences of immigrants and ELLs, particularly those in marginalized and impoverished communities. Researchers (Colegrove & Adair, 2014; Espinosa, 2013) report that immigrants and ELLs experience disproportionate amounts of strict teaching and punishment, and learning environments wherein they have little or no influence, are culturally marginalized and silenced, and are not supported in their identity growth and development. Although questions regarding immigrants and ELLs, their learning experiences, and the preparation of teachers have been asked before, the literature does not provide clear guidance to address the challenges students face today (Espinosa, 2013). The literature does not clearly demarcate the differences between the unique needs of students of color, culturally and linguistically diverse students, minority students, and immigrants and ELLs (Valencia, 2011). To be specific, Goodwin (2002) contended that:

Although teacher educators expressed concern in the literature with changing demographics due to increased immigration and articulated the belief that teacher preparation needs to respond to these changes, they tend not to differentiate immigrant children from children of color, diverse children, culturally and linguistically students, and minority children. This point was supported by an examination of 15 teacher education texts discussing the preparation of teachers for diversity or the development of multicultural educators, which revealed that the terms "immigrant", "immigration", or "immigrant education" were completely absent from the subject index of 10 volumes . . . Literature that did focus specifically on the education of immigrant students tended to be skewed toward language issues and second language learning (p. 160).

This chapter examines the theoretical framework and other research related to the study. Specific attention is paid to identity theory (Kroger, 2007; Taylor, 2002),

sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1994), which are the three domains of relevant immigrant pedagogy. Under this umbrella domain of relevant immigrant pedagogy, these three theories were explored with explanations on how they shaped the study. This was followed by what we know about research on identity and relevant immigrant pedagogy, sociocultural theory and relevant immigrant pedagogy, and self-efficacy and relevant immigrant pedagogy. The chapter also includes information related to gaps in the research, the need for additional research, and concluding remarks.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy**

In this case study, I used the term “relevant immigrant pedagogy” as an umbrella term which encompassed all the theoretical and pedagogical elements discussed in this framework chapter. Immigrants and ELLs have distinct experiences that require relevant teaching practices (Muller, 2002). By my definition, relevant immigrant pedagogy serves as a vehicle for linking schooling and culture, and for prompting students to engage in inquiry and reflectiveness (Berghoff, Blackwell & Wisheart, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995). This is because their voices and the nature of their experiences are distinctively different from students of color and everybody around.

Effective urban teachers who practice relevant immigrant pedagogy must share responsibility for excellence in students’ achievement and avoid deficit thinking (Muller, 2002). Furthermore, teachers must have empathy for those who are marginalized due to social, political, economic, and structural forces—often reflected in the curriculum (Apple, 2004). Relevant immigrant pedagogy requires all teachers, including ESL

teachers to be well prepared to fundamentally know themselves well in order to reach out and get to know others, never afraid to reach out to diverse groups and cultures (Sleeter, 2013). In content knowledge, these teachers need to know and practice rigorous cutting-edge techniques and have robust knowledge of curriculum content that is both global and specific (Darling-Hammond & Snowden-Baratz, 2007). In working to improve schools, their motto must be to improve democratic ideals and build a just and sustainable environment (Sleeter, 2013). Grounded on Dewey's theory of experience and education (1904), teachers must prepare and deliver their instructions in line with the vital and organic connection with ELLs and immigrants' personal experiences. They must build their pedagogical content knowledge based on inclusive and equitable teaching practices that are responsive and accountable to all (Loughran, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2000). They have a mission to stand up, acting on their power to ensure that the classroom is a safe space for all students including those who are marginalized in society (Cavan, 2008).

Because this analysis aimed to enrich our understanding of how to effectively teach ELLs and immigrants in urban schools, relevant immigrant theory was an important theoretical framework and a relevant tool for analysis. As I developed my conceptualization of relevant immigrant pedagogy, I built on three educational theories: identity theory (Kroger, 2007; Tylor, 2002), sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1994). These theories have informed my thinking about relevant pedagogy for immigrants and ELLs as well as teacher and student interactions in an urban classroom. They informed how I saw, analyzed, and conceptualized teacher-student interactions, student-student interactions, and the climate of the school. Together,

they explained the essence of what relevant immigrant pedagogy was in this research study.

### **Identity Theory**

Identity theory contends that each human being is unique because upon being born we are endowed with the ego, the id, and the superego. The ego is oriented externally; the id is oriented internally (intrapsychic); and the superego is neither externally nor internally oriented, thus has its own genetic roots and energy. These three balance one another and form who we are (identity). They are characterized by their unique process; they have their own pattern of development and their own energy (epigenetic principle) (Kroger, 2007). In other words, all these form the self which is reflective and can take itself as a subject. The self can also make meaning to itself in many ways in relation to others, thus the process of self-identification (Kroger & Marcia, 2011; Taylor, 2002). Ultimately, the core of identity theory is the categorization of the self as an occupant of a position, the incorporation into the self of the meanings and expectations associated with that position and its performance (Kroger, 2007; Taylor, 2002).

Given this conception of identity, individuals neither solely adapt to the society nor does the society mold a human being (the self) into its pattern, but rather the society and the individual form a unity within which a mutual regulation takes place (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). For example, during growth, the ego goes through self-reconstructive process to make itself strong from handling the tasks of development from within and outside itself, thus reformulating its essence. In essence, the person's identity is the same but a new self at the same time (Kroger, 2007).

This study is framed using identity theory because the self which is the essence of identity has four key components called: "personal identity, personal esteem, collective identity, and collective esteem" (Taylor, 2002, p. 11). These provide important foundations for the urban teachers prepared today in order to be effective. Inherent in this identity theory are conceptions that all teachers have to be effective in teaching ELLs and immigrant students. Furthermore, understanding identity formation would propel teachers to grapple with themselves as cultural beings. As professionals, they would also develop knowledge of their students, their strengths, their weaknesses, and their challenges in order to connect well with their home situations (Howard, 2006). In other words, self-knowledge is the foundation of being a great teacher in a diverse urban environment because unexamined life could be a danger not only to students taught but also to individual growth and their profession (Palmer, 2007). Nonetheless, self-knowledge can broaden and deepen their understanding of other cultures, help an individual go inside themselves and look at their preconceived notions and come to understand the cross-cultural experiences of the immigrants, the marginalized ethnic minorities, and realize their invisibility in the curriculum and ultimately become agents of change (Cavan, 2008). Similarly, through the underpinnings of identity theory, teachers will genuinely search for their authenticity which can enhance the development of their personal integrity and faithfulness to their call as teachers (Sleeter, 2013). In fact, teachers will come to know that teaching is not only an academic obligation, but also a moral one, since self-knowledge and self-awareness will help them to connect well with their personal and interpersonal wellbeing which in turn will have great effects on the way

they build relations with diverse students including immigrants (Lenski, Crawford, Crumpler & Stallworth, 2005).

Significantly, I believe that identity formation of teachers deepens the development of their own identity, culture, and sense of belonging needed to be effective in the classroom. Correspondingly, teachers with a positive identity of themselves will transfer that to students who really need it in order to have the best educational experience in the classroom. In the classroom, students care deeply about learning when they are confident that their contributions matter through affirmation and praise (Palmer, 2006). I selected identity theory for this study as part of the definition of relevant immigrant pedagogy because classroom instructions and interactions with dominant discourses perpetuate the status quo, thus oppress the marginalized ELLs and immigrants which results in negative self-perceptions (Cavan, 2008).

### **Sociocultural Theory**

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) contends that learning is a social process because it comes about through interaction with society and culture. That means social interaction is very critical for the development of cognition. For this reason, sociocultural theory will provide a very important framework in this inquiry because the external social world of teachers has impacted how they see the world and see students. Moreover, all human activities take place in cultural contexts, mediated by language, beliefs, values, and symbols, which must be systematically understood (Harrison, 2009). In this way, it is imperative for urban teachers to understand their own sociocultural identities so that they come to realize the deep seated connection between the school systems and the society and how these schools are continually reproducing these social inequities that are

alienating the marginalized low income students stratified in urban environments (Sleeter, 2013).

Furthermore, using Vygotsky's zones of proximal development (ZPD), urban teachers could be inspired to provide the marginalized urban learners/immigrants/ELLs with "scaffolding" to support their evolving understanding of knowledge domains and development of complex skills (Teemant, 2014). In other words, these teachers will learn to be experts in grasping that children learn from their interactions with society and their culture and with proper assistance, they can learn even more. Sociocultural theory will help urban prepared teachers quickly know that collaborative learning and discourse modelling are perfect pedagogical strategies to support children's intellectual knowledge and skills of learners and at the same time facilitating intentional learning (Berghoff, Blackwell & Wisheart, 2011; Cavan, 2008). Moreover, this embodies acknowledging the use of learner's preexisting knowledge that is derived from cultural and personal experiences is important because it gives students access to effective learning (Sleeter, 2013). However, teachers will come to know that their roles are not to make students fit into the school system, but for the school to fit into their culture, thus helping them connect learning in school to their daily lives' experiences outside the school environment (Cavan, 2008).

### **Self-Efficacy Theory**

The third theory incorporated into the definition of relevant immigrant pedagogy is the theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy connotes one's belief in his/her capabilities to organize and execute a planned action to manage prospective situations. This signifies that it is these personal beliefs, attitudes, and cognitive skills that

determine how individuals behave, feel, and think. Bandura stated it is not about a systematic planning for an action which matters but how goals, tasks, and challenges are approached. Individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy look at difficult and challenging problems as mere tasks to be mastered and implemented. This attitude therefore encourages them to develop a deeper interest and eventually form a stronger sense of commitment to have the job done. Additionally, when people with a stronger sense of self-efficacy meet adversities and disappointments, they usually recover very quickly and keep on moving. However, the opposite is true for those with a weaker sense of self-efficacy. They tend to avoid difficult tasks, focus on their failures, and eventually lose confidence in their personhood and their abilities.

I selected Bandura's self-efficacy theory as part of a larger definition of relevant immigrant pedagogy because I believe that teachers with a very strong sense of self-efficacy will transfer their abilities, skills, and knowledge to ELLs and immigrants. They have very high abilities to perform at a highest level and may adopt new strategies to perform better and get a more positive outcome from their classes. In other words, it is imperative to instill a strong sense of self-efficacy to ELLs and immigrants so that they are inspired to attain new heights in their new environment. Furthermore, teachers with a very high-self efficacy will incorporate the most effective ways of creating a strong sense of self-efficacy to their students through their mastery experiences (Bandura, 1994). In that way, it follows that all students in class develop and build robust beliefs in their personal efficacy and become academically successful in the classroom.



## **Educational Research Literature**

Given my focus on an urban high school, a search of the educational research related to how high school immigrant students and ELLs experience instructional support and how the school climate supports their learning was conducted. This topic was also researched in relationship to identity, sociocultural consciousness, and self-efficacy. Six electronic data bases: Educational Research Complete, EBSCO host, ERIC, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and American Educational Research Association website (AERA) were searched. The search was refined to only peer reviewed journal articles from 2000 to present. This search yielded 72 possible articles and two books. After close examination, it was determined that 14 articles, one book chapter, and one book were relevant to the study.

### **What Do We Know from Research about Identity Theory and Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy?**

Students in a classroom need a positive sense of their own identity in order to thrive. Are researchers and teachers attuned to this principle? At stake here are the immigrants and ELLs who remain the fastest growing segment today in our United States public schools (Samway & Mackeon, 2007).

Current literature emphasizes that teachers need to teach the whole person and not a small segment of their entity (Delpit, 1998). According to Howard (2006), some teachers tend to impose their own beliefs on students in the classroom which brings down the morale of their students who already have scars due to cultural deprivation and marginalization. It is imperative for teachers to look at their student's life experiences and the curriculum through the eyes of the students. Apple (2004) suggested that teachers

need to stand back and be critical of the curriculum which spreads hegemonic tendencies and further marginalizes the minority's identity. Additionally, he suggested that teachers should invite students to be involved in the problem solving and identity assignment practices.

Delpit (2006) researched relevant pedagogy for minority students, and her guidelines can be applied to immigrant students and ELLs. She challenged the “one-size-fits-all” approach to classroom instruction has not worked well, especially in today's linguistically and culturally diverse student population. So teachers need to help students develop a greater sense of positive identity by empowering them to be knowledge experts through providing them with opportunities to choose a topic, research on it, and make class presentations. In this way, students experience identity formation and become a part of the solution in a classroom (Delpit, 1998).

Taylor (2002) acknowledged in his research that teachers need to understand not only their students' personal identity, but also their collective identity in order to support them well in academic, social, and emotional pursuits. This is mainly because, without these opportunities, schooling experiences which occupy many hours and years of our minority students become irrelevant. Significantly for most disadvantaged groups, formal schooling is bewildering because parents who are new arrivals and less educated have no clues of the systematic set of identity guidelines to their children.

Additionally, research by Patel (2013) revealed that individuals' gender, class, ability, race, and even socioeconomic class shape their identities and behaviors along with how they are positioned. Both teachers and students' identities are shaped in line with gender, class, ability, race, and socioeconomic class. In a classroom full of

immigrants and ELLs, teacher's individual interactions, respect, and dialogue matter in making students secure, comprehensively learn, and thrive.

Patchen (2005) focused on experiences of recent immigrants and their classroom participation. In this research, Patchen realized that in order to meet the educational needs of adolescent immigrants, both teachers and researchers must integrate students' perceptions of participation in the classroom. However, he found that it was difficult to find the right answers because immigrant students felt insecure due to the threat of peer evaluations, and even at times both teacher and peer humiliation. He shared this summary of the students' experiences in his findings:

Absent relationships with their peers and their teachers, students couldn't know what to expect, or really what was expected of them. Always needing to be right, or to know the correct answer stifled the potential for critical inquiry and interest, while blunting the development of participatory possibilities beyond answering questions when asked. Even general participation practice was conceptualized in a very specific way.....If teachers called on them specifically, they would feel compelled to respond; otherwise, they remained silent. (p. 45).

A research study by Cavan (2008) unveiled issues of identity struggles by three high school female students. These students felt marginalized culturally and were not accepted by their peers and teachers as such. This experience was hurtful because "each participant revealed a negated identity development through rejections of language, culture and self" (p. 170). These students were unhappy with the school, unmotivated, angry, and aggressive. Their identities were those of non-successful students because they never learned to see themselves in a positive light.

Valencia (2011) explored Chicano schools failures due to "educational oppression" (p. 3). This oppression is so deep compared to other students of color that Valencia defined this failure as vast as "persistently, pervasively, and disproportionately

low academic achievement" (p. 4). Valencia explained further that Chicano students' identity crisis has been shaped through history due to their status as a conquered people during 1846-1848 war, which led to language suppression and cultural exclusion. Chicano schools' failures are persistent due to language suppression as a conquered people and cultural exclusion. This has been a source of identity crisis and perpetuated unhealthy schooling conditions and outcomes for all Chicano immigrants.

### **What Do We Know from Research about Sociocultural Consciousness and Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy?**

Learning is a social process because it is a product of culture and society (Vygotsky, 1978). This means that relevant immigrant instructional practices generally reveal sociocultural consciousness that students need to thrive (Sleeter, 2013). In this case, socially conscious teachers build on the personal and cultural strengths of the learners, deepen their understanding of the curriculum from multiple points of view, and make the classroom community inclusive and inspiring (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). In this way, teachers become sensitive to the learning needs of newcomers through culturally responsive pedagogical practices (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). Are researchers and teachers attuned to these principles which so many immigrants and ELLs need?

Culturally responsive pedagogy helps teachers to increase comprehension when working with diverse learners (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Culturally responsive pedagogy includes preparing students for rigorous work by focusing their attention on their cultural processing and engaging them in interactive practices that allow them to develop the necessary proficiencies to relieve them from cultural disorientations and stress (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Within this framework, sociocultural

learning has the intention of creating a community of learners where all diverse students feel safe, secure, and valued (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Cochran-Smith and Fries (2008) found that socially conscious teachers learn to better understand their own sociocultural identities, which in turn increases caring, compassion, and the empowerment of their students. Ultimately, it is through socio-cultural consciousness that teachers come to know that the United States educational system gives false and misguided promises to some and privileges others. It is their role to challenge these conceptions and side with these marginalized students, especially immigrants (Gonzalez, Plata, Garcia, Torres & Urrieta, 2003). Students, too, experience and develop this sociocultural consciousness through their teachers.

Bennett (2001) suggested that sociocultural consciousness in education is similar to multicultural competence. Bennett defined multicultural competence as teachers' development of "dispositions of open-mindedness and the absence of racial or cultural prejudice, and knowledge about the worldviews and funds of knowledge associated with various cultural groups, as well as the diversity within and across ethnic groups" (p. 191). Thus, teachers develop their individual competence in a multicultural classroom by opening up to various cultural and linguistic groups and are able to interpret their symbolisms and meanings (Schultz & Coleman-King, 2012). In this way, students also demonstrate multicultural competence by having the proper knowledge and conviction of their own ethnic identity (Gay, 2000).

Additionally, research by Zasyepkin, Zborovskii, and Shuklina (2013) revealed that teachers who integrate sociocultural philosophies in their classroom are more open to parent and community engagement. Thus, students ultimately benefit because knowledge

is exchanged in multiple systems – the home, the community, and the school itself. These researchers also found that when teachers collaborate with newly arrived immigrants and work with them between home and school by developing a home-school literacy project, there is higher scholastic achievement. Both Chuang and Gielen, (2009) and Iddings (2009) also found evidence clearly confirming that when teachers and culturally and linguistically-different parents work together and are involved in the community, student achievement, attendance, and standardized test scores increase.

In a study of Korean immigrant students, Choi, Lim, and An (2011) focused on how new Korean immigrants experienced learning social studies and how their backgrounds shaped their experiences in United States schools. The authors used a mixed methods approach through the use of surveys and in-depth interviews with 43 Korean students from both urban and rural areas. The idea for this inquiry was to examine their perceptions about the nature of history and social studies, and their experiences of learning social studies in the classroom. Results indicated that students faced difficulties in constructing meaning in American history and engagement, and thus developed negative perceptions about it. Here are the three major challenges they met:

1. Lack of English proficiency, background knowledge, and American patriotism.
2. White, American-centered perspectives and marginalization of their country of origin.
3. Teachers' lack of care and disengaging pedagogies (p. 1).

The findings of this study point to major disconnects between the sociocultural understandings of the teachers and students. The teachers needed to be more culturally conscious of the backgrounds and learning needs of their immigrant students.

Villegas and Maria (2002) discussed what it means to be a sociocultural conscious teacher for diverse students. In their views, sociocultural consciousness means "understanding the people's ways of thinking, behaving, and being are deeply influenced by such factors as race/ethnicity, social class, and language" (p. 22). Without this concept, the authors emphasized that teachers cannot cross and permeate the boundaries of their students in class. Furthermore, teachers need to understand how the social system operates and reproduces stratification. This entails that they develop a deeply critical mindset, which may make them side with the oppressed groups in society.

The sociocultural point of view includes sensitivity to the needs of adult immigrants and ELLs (Johnson & Owen, 2013). Thus why, they recommended that teachers should promote candid explorations of topics relevant to students' lives and develop a caring presence for students. Additionally, students need to be challenged academically through interactive engagement that allows them to develop proficiencies and relieve stress. Specifically, the authors shared that adult students' need "validation through caring, valuing cultural experiences and integrating the learner's native language skills in order to succeed" (p. 1).

Klein (2008) focused on the sociocultural instruction strategies of newcomers in North American classrooms with students who spoke more than one language. Through the findings, her advice was to get more from ELLs by making them feel welcome not only through words but also by actions in the classroom. Secondly, instructors should examine instructional methods and apply only those that are relevant and effective. And her final advice was to avoid any anxiety in the classroom by implementing fun activities such as drama and role plays in daily situations.

In a study focused on essays and testimonies from immigrant children Gonzalez, Plata, Garcia, Torres and Urrieta (2003) explored many hardships faced by immigrant children with the intention to increase sociocultural consciousness and empathy among future teachers. In one of the testimonies, immigrant students expressed their struggle for survival in a very hostile and judgmental United States educational system, where they experienced emotional pain from alienation and cultural deprivation.

Nur and Hunter (2009) explained what it meant to obtain excellence in education for immigrant students in urban districts. With an increase in immigrant populations, the authors advised school districts to be ready for this situation by creating learning experiences suitable for them. Through their findings, the authors recommended that school districts recognize not only the linguistic and cultural needs, but also the socio emotional and psychological needs of students. Furthermore, they recommended grouping immigrant students into manageable learning environments, districts in order to easily provide individualized programs that focus on academics, language acquisition skills, and personal daily needs. Additionally, they expressed that teachers hired must value diversity, build strong connections with students, and use a curriculum that reflects students' experiences and values.

Finally, King Miller (2015) explored sociocultural consciousness and relevant immigrant pedagogy through educational strategies. She found strategies that could be used to support female students of African descent in their pursuit of education and careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Observing that STEM careers have been dominated by White folks for a long time, King Miller (2015) conducted a qualitative case study on Afro-Caribbean females in STEM who have



immigrated to the United States from Panama. Using the "descriptions of four strategies and behaviors of effective teachers that align with Ladson-Billings's culturally relevant pedagogy and Gay's culturally responsive teaching" (p. 1), she found that high standards and expectations of students paid off and teachers were deemed effective when they inspired their students with a positive mentality. Additionally, she also clearly came to know that culturally responsive teachers today need to create an environment that supports learning, belief in students, and active research projects.

### **What Do We Know from Research about Self-efficacy and Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy?**

Students in the classroom need a strong sense of self-efficacy in order to thrive. A sense of self-efficacy can be defined as when students are confident in their abilities to successfully meet academic goals (Guskey, 1988). In other words, there is a strong correlation between a higher teacher efficacy and students' own sense of self-efficacy. Similarly, urban children, immigrants, and ELLs today need teachers who can help develop their sense of self-efficacy. According to Pajares (1996) a teacher's judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of students' learning is important, even to students who are left behind and seemingly lack motivation. Thus, student learning and motivation are relevant reinforcements to teaching action. Are researchers and teachers attuned to and reinforced on this principle? This is crucial in today's educational environment because millions of immigrants and ELLs in our public schools need educators who are self-efficacious (Sleeter, 2013).

According to Watson (1991), self-efficacious teachers raise student engagement and academic efficiency to culturally linguistically diverse students. Additionally,

Watson found that efficacious teachers have higher persistence in dealing with struggling students and work harder to achieve their instructional goals. Klassen's study (2004) confirmed this in an examination of the mathematical efficacy beliefs of 270 students (both Canadian immigrants and natives) in a Grade 7 class. In both cultural groups, self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of their performances.

Peguero and Bondy (2011) researched self-efficacy and relevant pedagogy for minority students, and suggested that their guidelines can be applied to immigrant students and ELLs. They suggested that students with the desired goals have a great relationship with their teachers who act as role models, mentors, and sources of support and encouragement. So teachers need to help students develop a greater self-efficacy by empowering them to be knowledge experts, providing them with a positive learning environment, and creating a climate of high expectations. Moreover, "relationships with teachers is an important factor toward improving educational achievement, motivation, cognition, emotional, and social development, prosocial behavior, and self-esteem" (p. 166). In this way, students experience self-efficacy formation and receive the transformation needed (Mezirow, 1989).

Four researchers have studied self-efficacy at the college level. Fan and Mak (1998) explored the construction and validation of measuring self-efficacy in social settings experienced by colleges in educational institutions in Australia. The researchers used a sample of 228 undergraduates, among whom 91 were native Australians, 90 were also natives but with non-English speaking background, and 47 were immigrants. The researchers found that four factors mattered: 1) the absence of social difficulties, 2) social confidence, 3) sharing interests, and 4) friendship initiatives. Majer (2009) explored the

correlation between self-efficacy and academic progress among ethnically diverse first-generation urban community college students. With the increase in grade point average (GPA) among college students, the findings proved that “self-efficacy for education is an important cognitive resource among ethnically diverse students attending community colleges, whose immigrant generation status might have an impact on their educational success” (p. 1).

Poon (2014) found race and social pressure shaped the career choices of Asian American college students and immigrants. She expressed that immigrant parents push their children higher for fear of shame and peer pressure. Her findings "help elucidate how race and the social context of immigrant adaptation can affect the occupational trajectories of Asian Americans and other children of immigrants in the United States, regardless of their educational achievement and socioeconomic status" (p. 1). In an interesting study pointing out the challenges with teacher education programs, researchers Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010) found the majority of students lacked self-efficacy for teaching ELLs and even their mentors were not providing proper guidance in this respect. At the college level, students did best when their self-efficacy was high and multiple factors affected and improved their self-efficacy.

Ndika (2014) found many immigrants, and ethnic/racial minorities face complex challenges in the acculturation process in very pluralistic and diverse settings. This may cause some psychological problems due to psychosocial stressors. From the sample of 104 Nigerians living here in the United States and the others who live in Nigeria, self-efficacy scores showed that immigrant Nigerians have higher self-efficacy scores than those in their motherland. This is the only study wherein immigrants and natives were

compared. It is worth remembering that many immigrants leave the motherland because they are not experiencing success or fulfillment. They have to build on the strengths they bring with them to succeed in the new country.

In conclusion, research clearly demonstrates that teachers with high self-efficacy are more confident about their ability to overcome challenges and apply higher efforts to help students reach their maximum level of academic performance (Watson, 1991). Students, too, can become highly efficacious, set higher goals, and utilize extraordinary strategies to reach their goals (Guskey, 1988). In other words, students with high efficacy are more engaged, more focused, set higher goals, and work harder to reach them.

### **The Need for Research**

I have created a unique framework for this research study which focuses on the notion of relevant immigrant pedagogy as a key construct for studying and understanding immigrant students' experiences. Relevant immigrant pedagogy, as is defined in this study, depends on three theoretical domains: 1) identity, 2) sociocultural consciousness, and 3) self-efficacy. The review of literature to explore each of these domains has yielded some clear direction about the need for further research.

### **We Need Research that Focuses on Immigrant Identity Experiences**

The works of Delpit (2006), Howard (2006), and Apple (2004) emphasize the terms "people of color," "minorities," and "culturally and linguistically diverse people." Although these categories sometimes include immigrants and ELLs there is still a need to analyze the specific identity experiences of ELLs and immigrants in the classroom and how the instructions support these experiences.

Valencia (2011) made a strong case that Chicano schools' failures are persistent due to language suppression as a conquered people and cultural exclusion. This has been a source of identity crisis and perpetuated unhealthy schooling conditions and outcomes for Chicanos. Knowing how important this history is, more studies are needed about experiences of other immigrant group identities besides Chicanos.

Furthermore, the literature in this section acknowledged the difficulties caused by identity struggles of immigrants and ELLs in schools, especially three high school female students under inquiry by Cavan (2008). She acknowledged that her three female immigrant students were denied acceptance, language, and culture, which proved to have revealed negative devastating effects to their identity development.

However, none of these studies took place in specific classrooms setup specifically in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school English language class. Cavan (2008), who was a foreign language teacher, conducted this research while meeting students outside the school premise and even over the weekend.

### **We Need Research that Focuses on Sociocultural Consciousness**

Although research supports the need for sociocultural consciousness in the classroom with immigrant students, there are still limited studies that describe this phenomenon convincingly based on data (Goodwin, 2002; Samson & Collins, 2012). Many authors (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Gay, 2000; Klein, 2008; Lucas & Grinberg, 2008; Villegas & Maria, 2002) have explored the needs of teachers for diverse students to create pedagogy based on teachers' understanding of how the social system operates and reproduces stratification. Teachers need to develop a critical mindset which

enables them to better teach the oppressed groups in the society. However, few studies illuminate this perspective.

Choi et al. (2011) explored how new Korean immigrants experienced learning social studies in both rural and urban schools, giving no insight into what went on in the classrooms or schools. Studies like this one lack appreciation of the importance of the sociocultural perspective on teaching and learning. Johnson and Owen's (2013) study was the closest amongst all to demonstrating this need, because they found that when teachers become sensitive to the learning needs of adult immigrants and ELLs by promoting candid explorations on the topics relevant to student's lives, life changing experiences emerge. However, their research was limited to only adult immigrant students and the data was not collected in a school-based setting.

Just recently, King Miller (2015), explored the educational strategies that may be used to support female students of African descent (immigrants) in their pursuit of education and careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Again, her views were limited to people of African descent and STEM classes.

### **We Need Research that Focuses on Self-efficacy**

The studies I have cited show that generally the higher the self-efficacy of a teacher, the more it is transferred to students in the classroom. However, literature does not speak specifically about immigrant students in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school English class. Nor do we find studies specifically about the learning experiences of immigrant students in specific classrooms with specific teachers. The majority of students' experiences explored in the literature are more general and undifferentiated, lacking the diverse experiences of immigrants and ELLs (Guskey, 1988; Majer, 2009; & Watson, 1991).

Although Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010) were close in exploring self-efficacy and relevant immigrant pedagogy, as they inquired on how prepared are the United States pre-service teachers to teach ELLs, their research is limited to preservice teachers who were doing student teaching in schools. Likewise, research by Majer (2009) came close to exploring how teachers' self-efficacy is a very important resource for the success of the ethnically diverse students and immigrants, but their study focused on community colleges. Furthermore, Klassen (2004) and Ndika (2014) also attempted to explore self-efficacy of immigrants mainly from South Asian countries and Nigeria respectively. However, all these fall short due to their focus limited to only one or two immigrant groups.

As said before, many of these studies conceptualize immigrants and ELLs as a racially diverse umbrella group, or as English as Foreign Language, and Limited English groups of students (Klein, 2008). To address these gaps in the current literature, this study explores and interprets the nature of the experiences of immigrant and ELLs in an urban 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school class. Through interviews, observations, and other qualitative research strategies (see Chapter Three), the researcher unveiled different experiences of immigrant students from different backgrounds. For example, this study examined the experiences of dislocation of some immigrants from the war-torn country of Iraq; the previous schooling experiences of some immigrants from Mexico; and the experiences of non-immigrant ELLs, and how school climate affects their classroom progress.

Additionally, this study focused specifically on how classroom instruction and teachers are able to support diverse immigrant population of students and ELLs in their

learning processes. How do teachers make sense of and carry out instruction for this group of people in today's urban classrooms? How is the institutional context, especially the classroom and school climate, impacting and supporting learning and individual growth in this 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school class?

Through interviews, document collections, rigorous assignments, progress reports, and observations the researcher also analyzed the self-efficacy of teachers and their impact on ELLs and immigrant students at Thomas Aquinas High School Language content class. Using relevant immigrant pedagogy as the conceptual framework which is an umbrella domain of self-efficacy theory, this inquiry tried to reveal how teachers can improve self-efficacy experiences of students in a classroom. For example, what is the nature of the vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1994) that can increase self-efficacy to these ELLs and immigrants? What verbal persuasions of the teacher have a higher expected outcome? What is the nature of the goal setting and reward that are appropriate for ELLs and immigrants in this 10<sup>th</sup> grade English content class? The findings of this study will contribute to what we know about immigrants and ELLs in urban high schools, a place where there is a real gap in the research of our field.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter began with an exploration of the background foundation of the growing concern in the United States about how teachers and schools can address the unique needs and experiences of immigrants and ELLs, particularly those in marginalized and impoverished communities (Colegrove & Adair, 2014; Espinosa, 2013). The researcher utilized the relevant immigrant pedagogy as the theoretical framework which is the umbrella domain of three other theories which are the foundation of this research.



Using identity theory for this study as part of the definition of relevant immigrant pedagogy, the researcher believed that the self-knowledge of teachers can broaden and deepen their understanding of other cultures, go inside themselves and look at their preconceived notions, and come to understand the cross-cultural experiences of the immigrants, the marginalized ethnic minorities, and realize their invisibility in the curriculum and ultimately become agents of change (He, Phallion, & Chan, 2008).

Furthermore, sociocultural consciousness is important for urban teachers because the external social world of teachers impacts how they see the world and see students who are different from them, especially marginalized students like immigrants and ELLs. Moreover, all human activities take place in cultural contexts, mediated by language, beliefs, values, and symbols which must be systematically understood (Harrison, 2009). In this way, urban teachers need to understand their own sociocultural identities so that they come to realize the deep seated connection between the school systems and the society and how these schools are continually reproducing these social inequities that are alienating the marginalized low income students.

In addition, self-efficacy as the third domain of relevant immigrant pedagogy was very crucial because it has huge effects in instructional and learning outcomes of not only diverse urban students but everybody (Guskey, 1988). Moreover, teachers with a very high-self efficacy will incorporate the most effective ways of creating a strong sense of self-efficacy to their students through their mastery experiences (Bandura, 1994). In that way, it follows that all students in class develop and build robust beliefs in their personal efficacy and become academically successful in the classroom.

In using the three theories to define relevant immigrant pedagogy, this chapter has unveiled the gaps in literature concerning the nature of identity experiences, sociocultural experiences, and the self-efficacy experiences of immigrants and ELLs, and how instructions from well-rounded teachers support their learning in class. At this point of writing, research informs us that the majority of teachers in the United States feel inadequately prepared when encountering the unique needs of ELLs and immigrants (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010; Lee, 2012; Samson & Collins, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative that the learning experiences and needs of immigrants and ELLs are listened to and seriously taken into consideration in any future educational endeavor (Darder & Torres, 2014).

Using the terminology of Valencia (2011), there is the persistent status quo of "educational oppression" (p. 1) of immigrants and ELLs through oppressive personal attitudes and oppressive institutional processing that reproduce lower academic output and higher dropout rates among ELLs and immigrants. Therefore, these oppressions could be a distant past only if we use robust research-based principles in providing solutions.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

### **Methodology**

In order to explore the nature of immigrants and English Language Learners' experiences during one 10<sup>th</sup> grade English language content class, a qualitative case study design was used. This design helped frame a rigorous foundation of what it means to be an effective urban teacher today, a seasoned teacher who is effective in theory and practice for immigrants and ELLs who are the fastest growing population in our schools (Samway & Mckeon, 2007). This design drew on the characteristics of qualitative research, thus observing and analyzing the lived experiences (Merriam, 2009) of immigrants and ELLs in their natural classroom setting, and explored how the instructions and the school climate support their overall learning experiences. This chapter therefore begins by describing the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative case study design, and then provides a summary of the research design with the tools used. Then, it transitions into details of the inquiry like setting, participants, methods of data collection overview, data analysis, establishment of trustworthiness, and morality involved in the research process.

### **Philosophical Underpinnings of Qualitative Case Study Research Design**

In order to explore the experiences of seven immigrant students and ELLs in a classroom with two teachers (one with ESL certification and the other with English Language Arts certification) a qualitative case study approach was adopted (Merriam, 2009). This is because, by nature, qualitative research operates with the paradigm that "meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world" (p. 5). The researcher observed the processes of how immigrant and ELL students' interacted

and were engaged in a classroom, and asked questions aligned to understanding their lived experiences and how instruction supported learning in this setting.

Correspondingly, a qualitative case study approach embodies an in-depth exploration and analysis of a specific aspect that is "intrinsically bounded" (Merriam, p. 41). In this case, this scenario fits this inquiry because as Merriam (2009) stated:

If the phenomenon you are interested in studying is not intrinsically bounded, it is not a case. One technique for assessing boundedness of the topic is to ask how finite the data collection would be, that is whether there is a limit to the number of people involved who could be interviewed or a finite time for observations. If there is no end, actually or theoretically, to the number of people who could be interviewed or to observations that could be conducted, then the phenomenon is not bounded enough to qualify as a case (p. 41).

The research is therefore intrinsically bounded to ELLs and immigrants, and seven individual cases of ELLs and immigrants were collected with two teachers as participants in this study. Furthermore, data collection occurred intensively during the first six weeks of classroom observations and continued up to five months of periodic visits to the classroom and teachers. In this way, case study as a qualitative design helped explore what it meant to plan for instructions, interact meaningfully with ELL students and immigrants, and assess their learning progress in an urban classroom. As an inquiry, case study makes it easier to have an in-depth exploration of the individual teachers in a classroom, observing class activities, interviewing them, and at the same time situating myself in the context to get details from the authentic viewpoints of the participants (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, this inquiry was in line with what Denzin and Lincoln (2005) defined qualitative inquiry as:

A situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of

representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world...Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials-case study; personal experience, introspection, life story; interviews; artifacts; cultural texts and production, observational historical, interactional, and visual texts-that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individual' lives (pp. 3-4).

According to Merriam (2009), there are three characteristics that define case studies that are central and relevant to this inquiry: 1) looking at a particular situation, 2) having a set of detailed description, and 3) thorough explorations of a situation in order to bring about new meaning and new understanding on the part of the readers. That means, unlike other explorations, case study reports are vivid and situated, and readers often feel emotionally moved with events at hand. In this case, the researcher was thoroughly involved in examining minute events in detail and documenting both the complex interactive teacher-student characteristics and assessment strategies used from the planning stage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Presumably, this situated detailed exploration in this particular setting would bring new meaning and understanding to the events at hand.

### **Summary of Study Design and Tools Used**

As a researcher, I worked with students and teachers to reconstruct the exclusive nature of immigrants and ELLs' experiences within one 10<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts content urban classroom at Thomas Aquinas High School. I conducted a qualitative case study in which multiple sources of data including classroom observations; focus group interviews with students; semi-structured interviews with teachers; audio recording of

classes; and the collection of instructional planning documents, students' progress records (grades), and students' artifacts were analyzed.

In going through the process, one thing which became clear to me was that, as a researcher, I may not have a goal of finding answers but to be in the shoes of the participants and work toward understanding each and every one. That means, when I started this inquiry, I knew that I had to keep an open mind, considering the new themes and concepts which might emerge along the way (Stake, 1995).

On the other hand, during the beginning phase of this research, I could be tempted to be carried away in the process, but my research questions and prospectus that were carefully formulated kept me focused. That is why during data analysis phase, I continued to dig through the data concepts and then used short hand codes that linked my data to research questions, and at the same time connected the evidences with multiple questions (Merriam, 2009). Consistent with Patton (2002), I was aware that the descriptive phase of analysis was the foundation of research practice because data was interpreted with guiding questions generated from the conceptual framework and literature review.

Furthermore, I knew that as a qualitative case study design (Merriam, 2009; Stakes, 1995), this study was timed (six intensive weeks and continued visits up to five months) and bound by a single case (immigrants and ELLs students' in one 10<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at Thomas Aquinas High School). For that reason, as the analysis process progressed, I continued meeting the two teachers and conducted one observation per month so that we could continue discussing the emerging themes. Consistent with

Mertens (2012), these meetings served as member checks in order to establish the validity of the themes developed.

### Summary of Design and Tools Used

<b>Theoretical Perspective:</b> Relevant immigrant pedagogy (Identity; Sociocultural; and Self-efficacy theoretical frameworks)
<b>Overall Grand Question:</b> What is the nature of urban students' experiences, especially English language learners and immigrants, during Grade 10 English Class (ELA) at Thomas Aquinas High School?
<b>Data Collection:</b> Audio-recording of teachers and students during classes, participant observation with field notes, instructional planning documentations, teacher and students interviews, documented progress records (progress grades) and students' artifacts.
<b>Data Analysis Methods:</b> Thick rich description and in-depth exploration of patterns and themes (Creswell, 2009, Merriam, 2009; and Yin, 2009)

Sub-question 1	Guiding Questions for Analysis
<p>How does instruction support learning in this class with immigrants and English Language Learners (ELLs)?</p> <p><b>Research Foundation</b> Identity (Kroger, 2007; and Taylor, 2002); Sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978); and Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is the principle of identity materialized in the instructional practices in English 10 at Thomas Aquinas High School?</li> <li>• How do the features of sociocultural theory materialize in instructional tools and learning in the English 10 content classes?</li> <li>• To what extent, if any, is the self-efficacy of teachers reflected in the instructional teaching and learning?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sub-question 2</b></p> <p>How does the school climate support learning in this class with immigrants and ELLs?</p> <p><b>Research Foundation</b> School Climate Research Physical climate, Socioemotional climate, and Learning and ethical climate (Thapa, Cohen, Higgins-D'Alessandro &amp; Guffey, 2012 and Wang, Haertel, Walberg, 1997)</p>	<p>Physical Climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the teachers' role in stabilizing and destabilizing the physical climate for learning?</li> <li>• How, if at all, do learners use class work or assignments to promote and spread a safe environment around school and even beyond?</li> </ul> <p>Socioemotional Climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What nature of support exists in different areas of the school?</li> <li>• What is the teacher's role in the stabilizing and destabilizing of socioemotional climate?</li> </ul>

	<p>Learning/cognitive and Ethical Climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is the school environment committed or not committed to students' cognitive and moral/character development?</li> <li>• What do teachers know about their students' prior experiences?</li> <li>• To what extent does relevant pedagogy framework provide opportunities for teachers to use their knowledge, skills, self-efficacy beliefs in shaping learning and character values of students' life experiences?</li> </ul>
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### **Setting**

For this study, I chose to work in a large urban high school that followed a traditional academic calendar. The school is within five miles of downtown. It is one of several high schools in the school district which spans a large urban geographical area. The population in this school district is very urban, with large housing disparities, mostly low-income people with very few upscale apartments. The southern and northern boundaries of the district are bordered with more affluent wealthy suburban districts. At the time of my research, the school served students from grades 7 to 12 with an enrollment of 1,210 students. Of these, 60 percent identified as Black, 20 percent identified as Hispanic, 13 percent identified as White, 4 percent identified as Multiracial, and 3 percent identified as Asian. Among this group of students, 13 percent identified as English Language Learners (ELLs), with 71 percent of students participating in a free or reduced-price lunch program (State Department of Education, 2015).

Emails were sent to both the school districts and to the faculty members asking for help in identifying a site for this research. Leads were very slow, but eventually one faculty member with whom I shared research interests came forward and introduced me



to the ESL Curriculum Resource Director of the district. The process then evolved quickly in finding a school and teachers willing to participate in this research.

I decided to focus on one 10th grade classroom for this study and used purposeful sampling (Mertens, 2012). I was able to find teachers who were graduates of a Midwestern urban university, one who taught high school ESL and the other ELA, who were willing open their classroom to me. Additionally, I wanted a very culturally, linguistically, ethnically, and racially diverse population of students in the classroom; more specifically, I wanted immigrants from different nations, some ELLs (natives born here but speak one or two languages at home), and general urban students as such. The class I found met this research criteria.

### **Participating Teachers**

The initial search for teachers to work with was more difficult. One teacher I knew well declined to participate and another who committed to help me did not follow through. I sent many emails and spoke with some principals. Luckily a professor of mine facilitated this process and the district personnel identified the school and the teachers who matched my research interests. Our initial meeting was very cordial, with her expressing interest in growing knowledge. At the same time, this school was trying for the first time to see the value of co-teaching in language arts class (English 10). I had an option to choose a different English class, but the idea of having two teachers in a single classroom, one with ESL and the other with ELA certification piqued my interest. The two participating teachers were in their third year at this school, and both were graduates from a mid-western urban university. Ms. Jones was highly qualified with ESL and

foreign language expertise with a master’s degree. Mr. Hastings was ELA certified with a bachelor’s degree.

### **Participating Students**

In August of 2015, I officially asked twenty-six students to participate in the study. All students were enrolled in Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings' 10<sup>th</sup> grade English class in the fourth and fifth period. Although all students were involved, ultimately seven students participated in this study along with the classroom teachers (See Table 1). The students were selected based on their enrollment, diverse nationalities, attendance (availability), and upon teachers and researcher's agreement. This class included Iraq immigrants, Africans, Hispanics, and many more, which touched the core of this project. In this way, I purposively selected this class and students so that such data would give voice of the lived experiences and realities of all of them and at the same time provide a thick, rich description of the phenomena under inquiry (Mertens, 2012).

Table 1

#### *Teacher and Student Participants*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Race Gender</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>Phenotype</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>
Jones	White Female	Small town in midwest USA	Light skinned, slender, dark hair	ESL Teacher  Spanish Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Language Certified</li> <li>• ESL Certified</li> <li>• Master’s degree from Midwestern University</li> </ul>
Hastings	White Male	Small town in midwest USA	Light skinned, muscular	English Language Arts Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA certified</li> <li>• Bachelor’s degree from Midwestern</li> </ul>

Students					
	<b>Race Gender</b>	<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Phenotype</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>WIDA Scale Grade</b>
Julissa	Hispanic Female	Honduras	Yellow skinned, thin with dark eyes	ELL student (immigrant)	Level 1.9 Grade 10
Sabeen	Iraq Female	Iraq	Thin with long, gentle hands, wears a scarf	ELL student (immigrant)	Level 2.1 Grade 10
Carlos	Hispanic Male	Mexico	Short, thin clean cut young man	ELL student (immigrant)	Level 1.8 Grade 10
Quang	Vietname se Male	Vietnam	Short, thin with moderate dark hair	ELL student (immigrant)	Level 2.1 Grade 10
Elizabeth	Hispanic Female	Mexico	Yellowish, short and little round with shoulder- length hair	ELL student (immigrant)	Level 4.2 Grade 10
Jaylen	African American Male	USA	Tall, muscular with long dreadlocks	African- American dialect (non- immigrant)	Level 4.1 Grade 10
Arturo	Hispanic Male	USA	Tall with facial hair	ELL student (non- immigrant)	Level 2.4 Grade 10

*Note:* Source: WIDA scale Retrieved and adapted from [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)

Table 2 displays the 2014-2015 student demographics for the school. By immigrants in this context, I meant noncitizens that are either lawfully or not lawfully (undocumented) admitted to stay in the United States on a permanent basis (Darder & Torres, 2014; Lee, 2012). In addition, as for ELLs, I mean those from linguistic and

culturally diverse families who are born here (United States citizens) but come from families that speak languages rather than English (Samway & McKeon, 2007).

Table 2

*Student Demographics*

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Thomas Aquinas High School</b>	<b>State average</b>
Black	60%	12%
Hispanic	20%	10%
White	13%	72%
Multiracial	4%	4%
Asian	3%	2%
Native American or Native Alaskan	0%	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%	0%
<b>Students by Group</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>State average</b>
English Language Learners	13%	5%
Special Education	28%	14%
Female	44%	49%
Male	56%	51%
Students participating in a free or reduced-price lunch program	71%	46%

*Note.* Source: All information was retrieved from <http://www.doe.in.gov>

**Institutional Review Board**

In order to obtain Institutional Review Board approval for this research, I followed the guidelines and requirements of my university and then I met with and

gained the support of both the principal of the school and the school district personnel, according to the school district policies. Permissions were sought from all parents and teachers through letters (see Appendix B & D). Then I addressed the whole class and asked students through their teachers to help with signatures from parents. In the consent forms for teachers, parents, and students, I tried to guarantee the participant names to be confidential by assigning pseudonyms, which were kept separate from my field notes (Creswell, 2009).

### **Data Collection**

Data is one of the most important parts of the research study because without compelling data, it is difficult to build a strong case. As a qualitative researcher, I looked at data with thick descriptive paradigms as guidance, while at the same time aligning them with the research questions (Stake, 1995). On the other hand, I looked at the same data with openness so that I obtained as much description as possible which allowed other emerging themes to avail themselves in line with the lens of relevant immigrant pedagogical theory.

During this study, I included many data sources to insure I would have different forms of evidence and multiple data sets for triangulation (Mertens, 2012). My data collection included fifteen class observations in ELA classrooms, three focus group interviews with students, collection of documents from teachers, three semi-structured interviews with teachers, six informal interviews with teachers, and classroom audio-recordings (See Appendix F). I was convinced that multiple data sources provided multiple perspectives and also provided rich, thick descriptions of the nature of experiences of ELLs and immigrants.

## **Observations**

I observed fifteen class periods in order to gain access to the nature of immigrant students and ELLs' learning experiences, teacher and student interactions, and the assessments aspects during the English classes. During observations, I collected field notes and completed an observation rubric (See Appendix E). I also collected an audio recording during my observations so that I had three forms of data--field notes, observation rubric, and audio-recordings of each observation. These different types of data related to classroom experiences insured that I could reconstruct any rich dialogue or meaningful interactions to help answer the research question.

## **Interviews**

Soon after observing and audio recording, I had an informal interview with teachers in the classroom. During this, we discussed the observations and field notes in order to conceptualize the experiences of students in the classroom, and at the same time double check both assessment methods and students reactions and clarify any unanticipated events in the classroom. The chance to interview students, which usually took almost an hour, was fun and full of experiences. Teachers were very helpful with their presence during the focus group interviews with students. During these three interviews, I wanted to better understand their background, personal interests, and how they felt about their learning and the climate of the school. I received help from the teachers in the classroom because some immigrant students had very limited vocabulary, and a foreign language teacher who was very fluent in Spanish helped with translation. For both teacher interviews and students' focus group interviews, I used pre-set questions (See Appendix D) in order to guide conversations and clarify themes that emerged.

The first semi-structured interview with teachers was conducted during the time and place that was most convenient to the participants. I used a digital recorder to record each interview. This interview was relaxing and open-ended. I was able to share my insights, and at the same time allow the co-researchers to speak openly and at length about their personal experiences, self-efficacy, and what they see as meaningful interactions in class. All three interviews took approximately ninety minutes each. Moreover, each interview served a purpose and reflected data that were comprehensive and related to answering the research questions. The project's research theoretical frameworks (relevant immigrant pedagogy), the climate study, and the literature review informed all interviews.

### **Documents, curriculum resources, and physical artifacts**

The final set of data collected included documents and physical artifacts given to me by the two participating teachers. These documents included lesson-planning documents, some curricular resources, emails, responses from class “aha moments,” progress grades, and even their own personal reflections. Additionally, my reflective journals were also used in this inquiry.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Using the Guiding Questions**

The bulk of data analysis was conducted using the interactive model by Miles and Huberman (1994) and the three guiding questions established in Chapter One and also displayed on the summary designed table on page 39 and 40. Data was analyzed for themes developed, and I extracted the meanings about the nature of ELLs and immigrants

in the class. From there, I followed the sequence of the interactive model by Miles and Huberman explained below.

### **Interactive Model from Miles and Huberman**

Miles and Huberman (1994) developed a comprehensive interactive model of analyzing data that assists the researcher to reflect and explore a visual reference on how data can be safeguarded, tracked, and tackled (see Figure 1 below). For example, following the components of the interactive model below, the analysis of each of the interviews followed the process of data reduction, data display, and verifying and drawing conclusions. The data reduction phase from the interviews was simplified and organized into more easily manageable components over three phases. In the first phase, thus level one, the interview was transcribed (Merriam, 2009). In this phase, significant information was noted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Then each sentence or group of sentences was examined and given a label with a descriptive name.

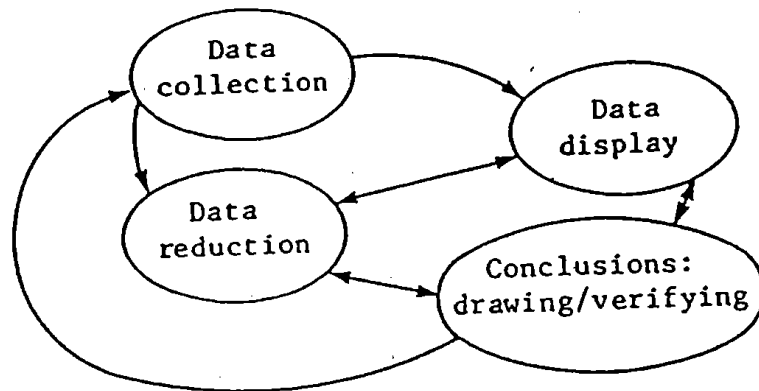
Next the data was simplified further through phase two, or second level coding process. In this aspect, the first level descriptive codes were merged into similar coded units and form categories, and these categories were given another pertinent label (Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this sense, I did line by line coding of interviews and clustering the themes together. Then I eventually sought to further simplify the data with the third level, or phase three, coding in which similar conceptual themes were further merged and given a more abstract conceptual label (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Miles and Huberman's data display embodies mapping out phase two and phase three categories on a chart in a simplified form. This chart displays how the categories are



situated and shows their relationships to each other or one another (Merriam, 2009). Next, key themes were identified from each interview and developed into patterns and merged. The concluding phase of coding drew merged concluding themes from interviews, compared them across, and offered propositions from the emerging themes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

**Figure 1.** Data Analysis: Interactive Model from Miles and Huberman



*Note:* Source: Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 12)

**Initial processing of data.** A large amount of data was collected, which could be challenging without a clear guide to the process. So, my strategy was to organize and analyze the formal data first through the guiding questions, then the coding process and analysis. Using the Miles and Huberman data display process, data was transcribed using NVIVO9 qualitative software (see Appendix F). This data included field notes, interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and documents. All documents were stored electronically and backed up on an external drive.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), this is the data reduction stage. This is open coding stage one whereby data is named and identified with open codes. Then using

the guided questions, I re-read and reworked to find more specifics. Then I coded it still using general categories.

**More Focused coding, Stage Two.** In line with Creswell (2009) and Merriam (2009) data analysis must align itself with the theoretical frameworks to avoid the analysis from straying. Therefore, this step focused more on relevant immigrant pedagogy as the umbrella theoretical framework. I went through the data and looked for words, actions, and ideas in line with the identity experiences of teachers and students (Kroger, 2007; Taylor, 2002), sociocultural experiences (Vygotsky, 1978), and their self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1994). Then I began with these categories in mind and searched for evidence that addressed each idea.

**Axial coding, Stage Three.** This is the most important reduction stage of data because, after studying and sorting data into categories as described above, I now had a clearer sense and meaning which allowed me to organize teacher and students' stories and understand in a new way and see how these were related to each other. Then I selected and put categories together, developed themes, merged, and provided actual coding (Merriam, 2009). This phase was followed by the verification process from the original data set and thus drew conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

### **Establishing Trustworthiness**

In a qualitative case study, both Mertens (2012) and Merriam (2009) agree that a case is regarded to meet trustworthy requirements if the findings correlate a close reflection of what the participants have described to the researcher, who is the primary research instrument. That means when the researcher and the participants have biases that are not appropriately monitored, ethical principles may be breached (Mertens, 2012). For

that reason, Carspecken (1996) and Madison (2012) emphatically proposed the connection of data and whole research within the conceptual framework by ensuring that the data and findings are consistent, transferring the results without generalizing, and having the researcher acknowledge his/her reflexivity within the process in order to increase the trustworthiness of data. This study sought to enhance trustworthiness through four aspects: 1) triangulation, 2) member checks, 3) peer debriefing, and 4) long-term involvement (Mertens, 2010). Triangulation included using multiple sources of data collection. Member checks were utilized by verifying information from other members if possible. Peer debriefing was utilized during the phases of data analysis and conclusion drawing in order to verify the plausibility of emerging findings (Mertens, 2012). As for long-term involvement, the researcher aimed at a long term commitment and multiple contacts with participants from six weeks of research and continued up to five months so that different perspectives could be revisited (Madison, 2012).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter described the details of a case study focused on understanding the nature of immigrant students and ELLs learning experiences in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade English class. This study employed the characteristics of qualitative case study design. This case study approach was fitting because according to Merriam (2009), case studies look at a particular situation, have a set of detailed descriptions, and thorough explorations of a situation in order to bring about new meaning, and new understanding on the part of the readers. That means, unlike other explorations, case study reports are vivid and situated. The researcher was thoroughly involved in examining minute events in detail and

documenting both the complex interactive teacher-student characteristics and assessment strategies used (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

This inquiry took place in a single content classroom in a very large urban high school. Data collection included observation, audio-recording, interviews, field notes, instructional planning documents, students' artifacts, and served as the foundation for thorough description, interpretation, and analysis. The analysis of the school climate and classroom learning experiences were central foci, viewed through the lenses of identity growth, sociocultural consciousness, and the self-efficacy of immigrants and ELLs. The two teachers' instructional support and self-efficacy in the classroom were also examined

During the data analysis, I was aware of the emerging themes and remained open minded to themes and interpretations that went beyond my framework, watching for new paths as they emerged. Additionally, throughout the research process, I was conscious and strategic about my decision to ensure trustworthiness. I have utilized honesty and attention to details for all participants. I used pseudonyms for participants and maintained confidentiality. All participants reviewed and signed consent forms acknowledging that they could withdraw from the study at any time with no negative effects (See Appendix C). Member checks and data triangulation (Mertens, 2012) continued to be the norms in this process.

## CHAPTER FOUR: TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE ENGLISH 10 CLASSROOM

In this chapter, I will situate this research within the English 10 classroom of Ms. Jones and her co-teacher Mr. Hastings at Thomas Aquinas High School, looking specifically at the curriculum and units of study, daily lesson planning and lesson formats, and the classroom procedures. This urban high school has struggled to solve typical urban school problems like excessive discipline, a high dropout rates, bullying, and low academic performance, especially for ELLs and immigrants, for many years. According to the [State] Department of Education (2015), the school's overall performance grade in 2014-2015 was a low D. Only 37 percent of students from the school enrolled in college immediately after high school graduation compared to the state average of 64 percent. Additionally, Thomas Aquinas High School had 69 percent of graduates who needed remediation or help in strengthening basic skills, while the state average was 31 percent. It was a requirement for every student at the school to take a test after completing English 10. Students had to pass this end-of-course test required by the state to graduate from high school. In the four years before this study, as few as one out of ten students passed this end-of-course test and the pass rate was even lower for ELLs and immigrants. The school district administration tried to disrupt this pattern of failure by implementing a pacing guide, prescribed curriculum, and multiple practice tests, but these measures had been largely ineffective.

At the beginning of the school-year of this study, the school administration decided to try something new, a co-teaching arrangement for English 10. My study was conducted in this class which was Period 4, running from 9:47 to 10:32 a.m., Monday

through Friday. In this chapter, the analysis of the data is described with a focus on how the teaching and learning in this English class was impacted by this new phenomenon of co-teaching practice.

A few days before I began my research, Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings forwarded me this email in order to remind me and prepare me to observe the focus on testing in their school:

Attached are passes for students in your Success Period that will be taking the test this week. Today, Tuesday, they need to take the mandatory Practice Test this week. Please give the students their passes. Explain to them that if they have two stapled together, they will need to take **BOTH** practice tests during the periods assigned. Express to them how important this practice test is and that it will help them when they take the actual test later in the week.

Once you have passed out all of the passes, please have a student return the passes of absent students to me **BEFORE THE END OF FIRST PERIOD IN MY ROOM**. Thanks for all of your help. And let me know if you have any questions or concerns (Departmental email communication, 09/01/15).

In another segment of the email, the two teachers reminded me that English 10 is unique because it is a required course for graduation which that means all students as per district policy are required to have a minimum passing score of 360 (Parent/student handbook, 2015/16). The teachers also mentioned that the curriculum provided by the district was very prescriptive and test-oriented and not well suited to the needs of the students in the class.

Given the dynamics of this urban school, I was curious to find out how the classroom instruction and teachers were able to support ELLs and immigrants in their learning processes. How would the teachers make sense of and carry out instruction for the students given these constraints. As a teacher educator and a researcher, I was eager to look at units of study, lesson plans, teaching strategies, and class procedures under the

assumption that these teachers, who were consciously trying to disrupt systemic patterns of failure, would make transformative learning possible. I knew the choices the instructors made within this environment, full of constraints and challenges, would shape ELLs and immigrants' experiences.

In this chapter, I will share ethnographic snapshots of this classroom which span a period of five months and authenticate the nature of the curriculum, lessons, and daily procedures. The chapter begins with: 1) an overview of the units of study taught, 2) a narrative account of my first day in the classroom, and 3) details about Unit One and Unit Two. I discuss this first view into the classroom and share my interpretation and analysis of what I saw, using my theoretical framework for Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy developed in Chapter Two. I continue with a close look at lesson planning and lesson formats followed by analysis, and finally examine and discuss the daily procedures.

### **An Overview of the Curriculum and Units of Study**

To begin the exploration of the classroom experiences of the students and teachers, I reviewed the data and generated the following description of the curriculum I observed in the classroom. The major topics outlined in the English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum Guide were short stories, essays, district prompts, writing genres, career explorations, immigration, and identifying and writing about different characters. These themes and objectives were aligned with the ELA standards of the state.

The first month included short stories and essays about the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. Martin Luther King. Students were introduced to the concepts of civil rights and human rights, and explored why these are the essential components of being a human in a global social and economic society. To get started, the teachers provided

selections of abstracts of the speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Washington D.C in 1963 from an online collection. They also assigned students to read a text about the myths about enrolling immigrants from a book by Samway and McKeon (2007). Students discussed the myth: “*Schools should ask for proof of citizenship, resident visas or social security numbers when enrolling second language (L2) students*” (p. 9). Students debated this topic and then were asked to read the views of the 1982 Supreme Court ruling, Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202, that prohibited public schools from asking for documentation of any student’s legal status. The first month of ELA curriculum also focused on preparing students to take standardized tests. Students spent more than a week in training to respond to the district’s writing prompts which included writing four to five paragraph essays with an introduction, body, and conclusion. They also were being prepared for the standardized assessments from the state.

The second month began with discussions of American values and reflecting on the following questions:

- How do literature and nonfiction texts reflect American values?
- What is the American Dream and how has it changed over time?
- In what ways does the American Dream mean different things for different people, and is it an achievable dream?

The students read the story, *The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family* by Yoshiko Uchida from the prescribed textbook (Hall, p. 536-544). The students also read about the Japanese Internment camps in the 1940s and compared that experience with the Holocaust.



ELA curriculum of the third month focused on writing, specifically writing to district prompts, and including introductions and examples of figurative language. Students also completed a climate study project. The fourth month was the busiest because teachers were preparing for both school and district exams. However, the teachers were able to teach about personification, characterization, and career explorations. For each of these topics, the teachers introduced essential vocabulary terms and explained the significance of the various literary devices and their appeal. Students were later asked to read passages and identify personifications, figurative languages, and characterizations.

The last month was dedicated to plays, the elements of plays, and their significance as cultural artifacts. Teachers put forward three essential questions:

- What are the elements of a play?
- How can little decisions have big consequences?
- What evidence does the author use to convey tone? How does this affect the mood of the reader?

Teachers shared with students the different elements of the play like drama, comedy, theatre, stage authors, characters, settings, plot, dialogue, monologue, soliloquy, plot, and settings. Students watched a video biography of William Shakespeare and used their phones and computers to do a scavenger hunt page. They also did the same with Romeo and Juliet Scene 1 Act 1.

### **My First Day in the Classroom**

It was a Monday morning in mid-August with hot temperatures in the high 80's at 9:20 a.m. when I arrived at the school to begin my research of English 10 at Thomas

Aquinas High School. I was sitting in a waiting room, close to the school secretary. Where I sat, the air was cool and filled with the sounds of the office nearby and the footsteps of high school students in the corridor. I closed my eyes, visualizing what might lie ahead for me a researcher at this school. I had been communicating through email with the teachers, and I recognized Mrs. Jones as she stepped into the room. She greeted me with a big smile and took me to the second floor classroom where the data would be collected.

The walls of the room were packed with pictures of students accompanied by brief personal histories, different cultural artifacts, flags from many different countries, and job-of-the-week posters. There was a library of books in many different languages representative of the various students and some audio equipment. My researcher pulse quickened as I saw Mr. Hastings entering the class. I realized it was time to start my ethnographic observations. Within minutes, the two teachers lined up by the door, waiting for the twenty six students to arrive. I too got myself prepared fast, asked a few questions of the teachers, and sat down to observe the students arrival.

On the screen at the front of the room, this message appeared: *The unit for these two weeks is "Tough Text."* Ms. Jones immediately introduced the topic by putting forward the following driving questions for the unit:

- How do you become an active global citizen in experiencing languages and cultures in multiple settings?
- How can someone develop awareness of other cultures?
- How can cross-cultural factors help me grow in awareness of identity and self-worth?

After this she gave the class a warm-up question, asking them to write down three facts they knew about immigration. She told them if they could not remember three facts they could ask their neighbor or look up some facts on their iPhone. During the five minutes the students were given to answer the question, a group of three students at the back started talking about the immigrant students in the class, saying things like, “Man, she is from Venezuela.” “That girl is from Iraq. What a shame.” “Look, she is from Mexico, wow!” “Really? She is from a remote area of Guatemala?” They laughed loudly.

Ms. Jones stopped them and started providing all the students with a mini-lesson by explaining the importance of diversity not only for that class and school but also for our nation. She proceeded by letting all students in class introduce themselves to the class, sharing where they came from originally, the language they spoke, and telling the class their ideas about their own culture and beliefs. After this Ms. Jones introduced the objectives of the day, “Our content objective is to demonstrate mastery of vocabulary, tell the story and answer questions. Our language objective is to learn to fluently conduct an interview with an ELL or immigrant.” Ms. Jones then showed a YouTube video clip which portrayed American first immigrants crossing the sea to Boston and Virginia. Then she posed the question: “Why did these immigrants migrate from England?” During the discussion, I learned that a social studies teacher had been invited to the prior class to give the students background knowledge about the first immigrants. Using this information, the students provided very good answers to the question. Then Ms. Jones posed another question, “What makes people migrate today?” Students again had many good answers as they mentioned economic pressure, looking for a better life, persecution, and even looking for better schools and education.

After this, the two teachers divided students into two groups and read two different passages. The group with Ms. Jones read a selection from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, by Dillard (2013). The group with Mr. Hastings read an abstract from *Myths and Realities* by Samway and McKeon (2007). When the groups came back together, they shared what they had read, identifying seven different vocabulary words they liked. They were instructed to use these words in sentences for submission at the end of the class and told that these sentences would be graded. Additionally, during the group's presentations, Ms. Jones asked each language group to come up with the word for "dream" in their home language and explain to the class why dreams in their native country are important. She also asked them to consider how the essence of their native dream could be transferred, applied, and facilitated in the American situation.

### **The Remainder of Unit 1**

The next week, Ms. Jones invited a guest speaker from the Excel Immigrant Welcome Center. Her aim was to provide students with resources for their upcoming project about immigration and cross-culturalism for presentation in the classroom. During the speaker's presentation, Ms. Jones and a student, Jaylen, had a difference in opinion because he was telling another student next to him that he did not like immigrants because his father told him that they take American jobs. Ms. Jones took him out of the classroom and explained to him that she knows many immigrants who are very good and work very hard and do not depend on the government or any other individuals. The majority of immigrants come to the United States because they need to make a better life for their families. Mr. Hastings followed them outside the classroom and later they all came back. Then Mr. Hastings took over and explained to the class the importance of

accepting and appreciating others and other cultures. At the conclusion of the class, the two teachers thanked the visitor for coming to class, and the whole class clapped in appreciation.

To complete the unit of study, the teachers asked students to write a suitcase essay (what would they bring in their suitcase if they were immigrating to the United States), and they began a research project which required them to interview a recent immigrant and present this person's story about immigration. Mr. Hastings connected students with the Excel Immigrant Welcoming Center director, who in turn connected them to ELLs and immigrants adults for their data collection for their power point presentations.

### **Unit Two: "Tough Texts" and Civil Rights**

Unit Two was mostly facilitated by Mr. Hastings. He started by asking students the differences and similarities between civil rights and human rights. After three minutes of silence, students shared with the class what they wrote. Then he explained the content objective of this unit:

- To know and share stories about civil and human rights in the past and present
- To read the passage and retell verbally what they understood

The language objectives for this unit were:

- To use differentiated supports and their dictionaries to define, draw, and write sentences with the new vocabulary
- To use previewing techniques to make written predictions about a text.

After that Mr. Hastings shared a YouTube video about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech. The video was repeated twice. At the end, he asked all students to write two

sentences about what they had understood from the speech, explain their thoughts to the class, and then post their written comments on the wall (worth ten points).

In preparation for the next class, Ms. Jones provided a textbook reading strategy template to help students with the “tough text” reading for next week. She briefly explained all steps needed for students to follow through when reading and analyzing a text from: the preview stage, setting a purpose for reading, choosing note taking strategy, reading and taking notes, reviewing the notes, and answering the questions as a self-test. In order to assess the week’s work, Mr. Hastings provided the exit cards to all students which were graded.

The following week, students were asked to share a story about their encounter with civil rights or human rights anywhere in school or home or elsewhere. All students freely shared their stories in groups and wrote their narratives on the wall with their names on it. By the end of the unit, students were given an “I have a Dream” text of Dr. Martin Luther King Junior’s Speech Then using the template given, students were asked to answer the following questions:

- Name any two shameful conditions which Dr. King’s speech helped dramatize.
- Give examples of three rights which Dr. King said were prescribed in the constitution.
- Explain the meaning of the following terms as found on page three of the speech:
  - a) Dignity
  - b) Discipline
- Write down any two dreams Dr. Kings mentioned on the last pages of his famous speech.

Mr. Hastings asked students to submit the work for grading by the end of the week.

### **Discussion of the Curriculum and Units of Study**

In this section, I will discuss how the curriculum and units of study I observed in the English 10 class co-taught by Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings met the needs of the immigrant students and ELLs in the class and impacted the ELLs and immigrants' learning, identity, and self-efficacy beliefs. To do this analysis of the curriculum and units of study, I returned to the notion of Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy, drawing on the sociocultural framework and literature reviews about identity and self-efficacy. Given that lens, I realized that the curriculum units implemented by the teachers were rigorous. ELLs and immigrants in their class achieved academic progress, literacy development, self-efficacy, and positive personal identities. As I see it, even though the teachers confided to me that the rigid curriculum and focus on testing from the district ruined their attempts to inspire students, my interpretation has been more positive on this. Although there is some room for them to grow, they did teach effective units of study.

To begin with, the two teachers evidently backed the school district's prescriptive curriculum and the district mandated testing. They used the district curriculum as it was provided to them because it set up the potential for invigorating lessons about immigration and cultural differences. Both teachers often shared the objectives of the day with the class in order for students to identify and comprehend the fundamental points of the unit of study. For example, during the video clip about the first American immigrants, Ms. Jones stated that the driving questions were: "How do you become an active global citizen in experiencing languages and cultures in multiple settings? How can someone develop awareness of other cultures?"

Another example was the driving question which Ms. Jones used, “How can cross-cultural factors help me grow in awareness of identity and self-worth?” This question is in line with the sociocultural framework/model described in Chapter Two. Additionally, her selection of the abstract about the earliest Pilgrims in America and exploration of their struggles until they found their footing on their new found land brought awareness of the difficulties immigrants face. She began with powerful stories for both native urban students and ELLs and immigrants for their identity and self-efficacy formation and growth. She and Mr. Hastings were not only providing literacy and academic tools, but they also fostered the development of identities and self-worth. Ms. Jones’ class was an open class to teachers from other disciplines. The coming of social studies teacher for a speech about the first settlers gave the students the understanding of the rich history of the foundation of this country which made them grow in their self-awareness and identity as American citizens as well as also global citizens.

Also, the teachers were not confined within the classroom four walls, but they went beyond and invited community guests from Excel Welcome Immigration Center and leaders of different vocational schools to share with students with about potential academic and social pursuits. Ms. Jones provided opportunity for students’ awareness of other cultures, thus enabling respect and at the same time developing their literacy abilities in social settings.

In Unit Two, Mr. Hastings’ unit objectives were meaningful because his aim for the class was to “know, share stories about civil rights and human rights, and retell verbally what they have understood.” He set out to reinforce literacy skills for academic and social purposes (Echevarria, & Wooding, 2006). The sharing of human rights and



civil rights experiences among students including the presentations not only affected how students saw themselves and others, but also ignited awareness in how they looked at their immigrants and ELL colleagues in class. Mr. Hastings was able to use Dr. King's speech to provide an avenue for ELLs and immigrants to get to know their human rights and civil rights so that they could advocate for themselves and gain confidence.

In their co-teaching, I found that the teachers were able to use strategies in the units to help all students achieve fair and equal opportunity to learn and think critically, including ELLs and immigrants. Data showed that the unit on human and civil rights was an eye opener to ELLs and immigrants who grew in critical thinking. Furthermore, I observed that the units were contextualized to reflect and be sensitive to the community and cultural norms. Teachers invited guests from the community like the Excel Welcome Immigration Center and included that as part of the learning process. Additionally, they included many activities, reflections, assignments which reflected and respected diverse cultures in the classroom. Correspondingly, although this has not been directly mentioned in the unit explorations, I overheard again and again, in class and also the four interviews, the words "rigor for all." I interpreted the focus on that concept to mean the teachers believed in students' right to be challenged and learn critical content knowledge.

Educational research makes it clear that it is essential that the literacy instruction be meaningful to students. To accomplish this, teachers must become reflective practitioners (Berghoff, Blackwell & Wisheart, 2011). This is exactly how the units were organized and delivered. The teachers worked on building language skills through authentic opportunities for ELLs and immigrants to be critical of their surroundings, the school system, and the societal values. They modeled their view that teachers need to

speak up and not to support the status quo. Moreover, they assigned community research projects which demonstrated their respect and support for inquiry-based learning.

The units of study also showed the teachers' ability to show no preferential treatment to students, a key to building community. I observed both teachers encouraging students to work together, share personal experiences, and build bonds. The teachers' self-efficacy and their proactive identities were evident in their work as a team. They clearly set goals, agreed on content, and did evaluations together. In the units described here, the two teachers coordinated very well, providing an exemplary role model for students in the class. They worked on class and research projects side by side and complemented each other in small and large group activities.

### **Teacher Lesson Planning and the Typical Lesson Format**

English 10 at Thomas Aquinas High School served a diverse group of students. The two co-teachers were faced with a variety of levels of English acquisition and divergent academic needs based on the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic variation of the students. This class had both native English-speaking students as well as ELLs and immigrants from various nationalities who needed a predictable lesson plan format. Adapted from the prescribed district curriculum guide, the two teachers used a "Sheltered ELA Lesson Plan."

During our interviews, the two teachers shared with me that they usually met twice a week to plan the lessons together for the whole week and for self-reflection. During the planning stage, they discussed the needs of the students, including each of student's funds of knowledge (home language, cultures, ethnicity, and previous schooling). The two teachers ensured their lesson provided vivid examples of the

instructional elements that could promote the linguistic and academic development of ELLs and immigrants. Their lessons started with a Learning Target/s (Objective). This stated what the students would know and be able to do as a result of the lesson. This also included the relationship aspects of the lesson to students. The teachers tried to frame the lesson's outcome from the perspective of their students' worlds. They also deliberated on why these outcomes would be essential for their students' future learning. The teachers continually revisited the academic standards from the district and the state, so their teaching met the expected academic standards.

Then the teachers discussed the "hook." This was a provocative question for students to reflect on as part of the introduction to the lesson. From there, they considered texts, examples, activities, and tasks. Together they evaluated the proposed learning experiences, asking themselves how helpful they would be. They also talked about the Resources/Materials. This included the technology and media tools used to deepen the students learning.

As lesson plans were committed to writing, the teachers considered whether there would be access and engagement for all the students. They considered all aspects of student diversity and learning preferences as they attempted to create plans that would ensure that all students would have access to and be able to engage appropriately in this lesson. This was a crucial part of their planning because it produced differentiations and accommodations (Echevarria & Wooding, 2006). They practiced evidence-based strategies for differentiation for all students, especially ELLs and immigrants.

## Sample Lessons

Below are two sample lesson plans, one from Thursday October 22, 2015, taught by Ms. Jones and another from Tuesday, December 1, 2015 about “Characterization” which Mr. Hastings conducted. They provide evidence of the consistent effort and coherent, predictable format the teachers incorporated into their lesson plans.

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Thursday October 22, 2015

Lesson Plan from Ms. Jones

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**Objective:** Read and finish the story “Uprooting of a Japanese-American family” by Uchida.

**Language Objective:** Recognize familiar vocabulary and verbally answer questions about the way the author introduces events and chronological development of the characters’ feelings.

**Standards Used:** 9-10.RN.2.3: Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

**Notes:** Curriculum Resource Book page 536-544 from the handbook which includes a list of questions for students. PPT with visuals, 1-10 feelings and culture shock scale.

**Hook:** Could \$20,000 be enough to convince you to move into a horse stable for a years?

Students will have five minutes to write yes or no and provide a reason.

**Me/Modeled** (I do it, You watch): Ms. Jones discuss the bell work. Front load information about reading with pictures about the text, then provide a brief history lesson and instructional conversations about why Japanese internment camps may have seemed necessary at the time.

(Ten minutes)

**Guided** (You do it, I help): Divide into two groups with one teacher each. Work through the text, highlighting the order of things, having students rate Uchinda’s feelings about the new camp as she goes through the experience using a scale of 1-10, mentioning the culture shock scale and its stages: honeymoon, frustration, adjustment,

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and mastery by using actual literal scales and visuals to express the feelings the characters are experiencing.

(30 minutes)

**Differentiation/Accommodations:** Level 1 and 2 students with Ms. Jones with their activities challenging but at their own pace. Level 3 and 4 with Mr. Hastings, faster pace and also challenging.

**Closing Task or Skill:** Students complete their work and submit for grading.

**Assessment:** Exit ticket: Short answer response to the students' choice of 2 out of three listed questions. (Low point value) Formative.

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Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Lesson about "Characterization" created by Mr. Hastings

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**Objective:** Identify the different aspects of characterization and give examples.

**Language Objective:** Write guided notes about characterization, practicing examples together as a class.

**Standards Used:** District and State 10.3.: Explain how voice how voice and choice narratives affect characterization and tone, plot and credibility of a text.

**Notes:** PPT, guided notes, video clips, piece of paper for characterization, climate study and survey.

**Hook:** Write a paragraph describing a character from a movie or book that they really like. It could be from any book or story from their native land. They have five minutes to do this in five to seven sentences.

**Me/Modeled** (I do it, you watch): Ms. Hastings and Ms. Jones discuss the bell work. They also discuss the skill of the week as prescribed by the district. Then later explained to students about the school climate and then quickly filled out the climate survey.

**We/Shared** (I do it, you help): Mr. Hastings introduce characterization and using guided notes and power point, walk students through the essential information, showing clips of movies and writing out some of the examples as well. Then as

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students take notes, Ms. Jones took over and explained the different characters from

You Tube videos:

Protagonist character 2:01: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzgEgKwG0o4>

Antagonist Character at 1:06-2:01 and round and flat character at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2azHzldWZ>

**Few/Guided** (You do it, I help): Students find a partner whom they have never worked with to discuss the characters and explain where they could fit in and why.

**Differentiation/Accommodations:** Level 1 and 2 students were with Ms. Jones with their activities challenging but at their own pace. Level 3 and 4 were with Mr. Hastings, faster pace and also challenging.

**Closing Task or Skill:** Student Product Completed: Students completed their work and submitted for grading. Two verbs explaining their character were displayed on the wall after class presentation.

**Assessment:** Exit ticket: short answer response to the students' choice of 2 out of three listed questions. (Low point value) Formative.

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### **Discussion of Lesson Plans and Lesson Formats**

Ms. Jones's lesson plan clearly shared that the objectives of her lesson were to "recognize familiar vocabulary and verbally answer questions about how the way the author introduces events and the chronological development of the characters' feelings." During the text analysis, she asked students to jot down Uchida's feelings about the new camp using a scale of 1-10 in culture shock scale and its stages. I could see that Ms. Jones was teaching not only the literary skill of academic language, but also materializing the principle of identity in her instructional practices. By using those four stages of "honey moon, frustration, adjustment, and mastery" in scale, students were internalizing those feelings and connecting them with their journey of learning the second language, being

acclimatized to American culture, and also their journey of being fully absorbed in the American socioeconomic life.

Another aspect of identity was evident during the ten minute modeling time toward the end of the class. During this time, Ms. Jones asked students to choose any of the four words in the scale above and using their native dictionaries, students should draw a picture of it and explain to the class both in English and their native language. I found this very amazing. It really made students feel good and respect their language and also who they are.

When I entered the class on October 22, I saw the following sentence on the screen and also on the walls of the classroom: “I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.” This sentence was repeated throughout the class that day. For example, during bell work discussions, Arturo (an ELL student) was having difficulties spelling an English term and Ms. Jones immediately recited the above sentence. I consider this statement a reflection of her self-efficacy and who she is. She really wanted to transfer these values to her students for them to succeed not only in her class, but also in life.

Mr. Hastings’ lesson plan and teaching also reflected a focus on both academic and personal self-knowledge. His goal was to identify the different aspects of characterization and practice examples of this skill in class together. Additionally, Mr. Hastings asked students to write a paragraph describing a character from a movie or a book they really liked in five to seven sentences. When one student asked if she could use a Spanish character, Mr. Hastings was more than happy with that idea and asked all students to do the same if they wanted. I definitely consider this type of teaching

inclusive, meaningful, and supportive of developing students' multicultural identities. Not only did Mr. Hastings promote academic and literacy development for ELLs and immigrants, he also created a successful learning environment in which immigrants and ELLs were experiencing inclusive pedagogy. When he discussed the YouTube video about dynamic and static characters, the video made this statement about a static character, "It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals." Mr. Hastings posed three questions to students about this:

- Which character is static?
- Explain how the voice is affecting the credibility of this individual character?
- Please rate yourself from 1 to 3 where you are when it comes to this statement ranging from 1) Not true for me, 2) Very true for me or 3) Exactly and extremely true for me.

### **Lesson Plan Analysis**

Clearly, the lesson plans and lesson format valued students' past experiences, home situations, and school culture in which the process of learning and growth took place. The teachers displayed congruent attitudes, skills, and behaviors of valuing diversity, ability to have cultural self-assessment and used their instructive plans as vehicles for multicultural identity (Rogoff & Gutiérrez, 2003). For example, Ms. Jones asked students to look for words in their native language in a native dictionary, draw a picture representing it, and share with the class. Mr. Hastings encouraged students to use any famous character they knew, even a Spanish character, in their exploratory assignment.



Correspondingly, the teachers used strategies to help students achieve fair and equal opportunities to learn. They carefully chose the artifacts, books for use which were linguistically and culturally responsive. In the classroom, teachers provided dictionaries for all students' languages for use during classes. And during an interview, the teachers explained to me that when assessing ELL's academic achievement and immigrants, equity for them meant looking for clues that they know and can do with no interference from their literacy levels and language proficiency.

Furthermore, my interpretation was that the lesson format displayed a great deal of well elaborated content knowledge and engagement in literary content and skills (Howard, 2006; Ladson-Billing, 1995). From the data, teachers were constantly mentioning the phrase "rigor for all" in the classrooms. Not only that, the teachers showed complete acquisition of content and skills in what they were doing and accomplished all this through challenging tasks and situated pedagogic styles (Ladson-Billing, 1995). For example, in introducing the topic of characterization, Mr. Hastings carefully explained the original explanations of the terminology characterization and provided many examples to help students understand.

Additionally, the teachers displayed self-reflectiveness by challenging their own beliefs, values, cultural practices, and structures around instruction (Delpit, 1988). During class explanations about the Japanese internment camps in the 1940s, the teachers were critical with this history and sympathized with Uchida's feelings while in the camp.

Similarly, data showed that the teachers displayed excellent interpersonal skills with all diverse learners, which in return promoted constant trust and enhanced community building (Sleeter, 2013). I witnessed homogenous grouping of students

during the climate study exercise and in many presentations in class, and observed a mixture of native and immigrant students coordinating and presenting together in class.

Lastly, I found the co-teaching approach was very beneficial for both teachers and students because it brought about the omnipresence of teachers for students' learning and at the same time teachers modeled the respect for differences, interdependency and conflict resolution skills (Echevaria & Wooding, 2006). For example, during differentiated teaching, the two teachers addressed different study skills and learning techniques to Level 1 and 2 students where with Ms. Jones and Level 3 and 4 were with Mr. Hastings. Moreover, the two teachers met twice a week for lesson preparation and self-reflections and enriched each other culturally and also their students.

### **Classroom Procedures/Daily Structures**

In assessing the nature of instructional strategies that support learning in classes with immigrants and ELLs at Thomas Aquinas High School, 10<sup>th</sup> grade English, it was essential to understand the classroom procedures followed inside the building. These procedures involved daily tasks, expectations, and activities from entering the class to exit. From the fifteen classes the researcher observed, the procedures were almost the same each day. Below is an example of how the class was organized and prominent procedures followed:

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#### **Daily Schedule (Procedures) for English 10**

**Class Period: 4**

**Time: 9:47 a.m. - 10:35 a.m.**

1. Door Welcome
  2. Hook/Warm-Up Prompt
  3. Instructor Modeled: Discussing bell work in groups
  4. Discuss Objectives of the day and expectations
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5. Introduce the lesson, routines, activities and the tough text and how it will be used throughout the week
  6. Instructional Conversation in groups  
Class is split into two groups according to levels. Level 1 and 2 with ESL teacher and 3 and 4 with ELA teacher
  7. Closing task Students' product-presentations/ posters
  8. Exit tickets
- 

Each day an agenda was written on the board for students to reference when they entered the room. Then the two teachers lined up, greeted and welcomed students at the door with smiles and a handshake. Students in the meantime were asked to pick up work sheets and exit tickets before they sat down. Ms. Jones usually provided them with a “hook,” a provocative question, which they were to reflect on and write about for three to five minutes. This was followed by “bell work” discussions in groups. After the lesson was introduced, objectives were emphasized and a series of activities, routines, and expectations were provided to students. The “tough text” for the week was introduced (this usually came from the school district) and proper guidelines on how to go about reading it were outlined. From there, the class was split into two groups for instructional conversations. Then during the closing task, students submitted a product for the day which could be a presentation or posters. Then “exit cards” came last, a part of the teachers' assessment of learning.

I give an example here of the class of Week 13 and explore how the procedures worked. As usual, the two teachers lined up, welcomed, and greeted students at the door. After the last student sat down, I saw a policewoman step in and speak with the two teachers. The news was that one student from school (not from this class) was missing.

There was concern that she might have disappeared at night with a boyfriend and fled to Florida. The policewoman was informing the teachers that this was an open case with the Federal Bureau Unit (FBI). After the policewoman left, the class resumed with Ms. Jones reminding students that they have a test every Friday, and it was essential for them to prepare well. She reminded them that teachers have a moral obligation to help them do well. Later as a reminder, she read to them the classroom rules and regulations which must be followed with no exception. Some of the classroom rules were:

- Respect to teachers and classmates
- No bullying, intimidation, threats are accepted at any cost
- Homework must be submitted for grades promptly
- Students should prove they are working hard to pass English 10 which is a requirement for graduation
- Proper dress code must be followed in this class
- Attendance to this class is a must and be responsible to what you do
- Possession or distribution of illegal or controlled substance is not accepted
- Signals for attention: When I need your attention or someone is saying something not appropriate I will ring the chimes as a warning to stop and look at me, and listen for directions
- Before exiting the class, clean up your table, walk quietly out after dropping off your exit card.

Later on, copies of the rules were given to students as a new contract which they all signed and pinned in their notebook. Then students were given three minutes to check their grades, which she hung on the wall and asked them if they had any questions,

comments, or concerns. Ms. Jones also reminded them that those grades were only a reflection of the assignments and tests submitted. And once others submitted their remaining work, their grades would go up. Mr. Hastings too reminded students that each class and its procedures were a sequence of the whole week. He gave an example of that week stating that Mondays are the days when a new topic is introduced focusing on vocabulary reinforcement. Tuesdays, the class procedures and curriculum work focused on current events articles-news ELA that reflect values and papers for current events were hung on the bullet board. Wednesdays, Mr. Hastings reminded students about the writing prompt from the district which they continued to work on with examples and templates on Thursday. And Fridays were usually for revision and tests.

After this, Ms. Jones took over and introduced the hook for the day from the lesson on Figurative Language: “What does, ‘Go with your gut’ mean? This is an example of an idiom. What is an idiom?” Students reflected for five minutes and then discussed the bell work. She also explained to the class the required skill of the week. Then, she introduced the figurative languages for the week like alliteration, similes, and creating examples of each. This was followed by an assignment in which students were asked to work individually on two examples of terms and submit for grading. They were also reminded that the next Friday test would be based on these terms and examples. This was followed by exit tickets, as usual at the end of class.

### **Discussion of the Classroom Procedures and Daily Structures**

These classroom procedures indicated how identity and self-efficacy development were supported by the daily proceedings. The welcome gesture, cultural affirmation, and smiles before the class were acknowledged by the students as culturally affirming and

embracing of their well-being and multicultural identity. The kindness, empathy, rapport, and expressiveness of Ms. Jones, frequently spoken in Spanish were also acknowledged to be a huge boost to their morale and identity affirmation. At the same time, students learned to be accountable through contractual agreements which they signed in class. In focus group interviews, students agreed how the rules and regulation and the symbolic signing of the contract worked to help them in how they see life and pushed them to be accountable, a new value.

In terms of self-efficacy, the class was full of motivational writing on the wall and moreover, both teachers expressed these motivational speeches often. At the beginning of the class, both teachers read aloud on the wall this statement: “If others can do it, then I can also do it 100 percent!!!” I found this very motivating for this student population who needed self-efficacy to do well in class and also learn to function in their new country. Additionally, the “hook”/warm up expression which Ms. Jones introduced was a typical self-efficacy doctrine in the class. Asking students to reflect and share about the idiom “Go with your gut” led to intrinsic confidence for the students. In explaining to the class, Mr. Hastings’ remarks added more flavor to it when he contended that confidence makes humans beings able to succeed in whatever circumstances. At the end of this class, he gave them advice to have clear goals and follow through those goals because “there is nothing which is difficult for wise people.”

The lining of teachers at the door to welcome students with a handshake, showering them with cultural phrases and affirmation, and, evidence of cultural celebrations in a form of art displayed from Asia, Central America, and Middle East translated in different languages qualified these teachers as culturally competent. Because

of their competency, these teachers respected students' home language which acted as a bridge to their English language acquisition (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Additionally, the teachers were aware that students needed the best from what they have. During one of the interviews, the teachers expressed that many of these students come from undesirable or very sensitive situations. And they acknowledged the drive the students have and their tendency to motivate them even more to be better teachers for them. In other words, the teachers believed that the students deserved a great education because many of their families came to the United States hoping their children would have more opportunities. Hence, they were duty bound to a serious obligation to ensure that they were getting that education for which and their families had sacrificed so much. They had what I am interpreting as academic efficacy/competency.

Furthermore, the teachers had the ability to critique cultural norms, morals, and values (challenge main stream knowledge). During my interview with the two teachers, they professed critical reflectivity by suggesting that the district needed to recognize the needs of ELLs and immigrants who were the fastest growing population at this time. Furthermore, they also suggested that in the teacher preparation programs, new teachers need to be prepared to speak up and not support the status quo which perpetuates systemic oppression.

Correspondingly, the teachers showed no preferential treatment of one group over the other. In the beginning of the semester, I observed minor rifts between immigrants and non-immigrants in class. However, because the spirit of community building was omnipresent among teachers, this became a distant past. During bell work discussions, students shared personal experiences and worked together as knowledge seekers and not

as competitors (Delpit, 1998). The two teachers shared the podium in explaining the classroom rules and good procedures, including discipline. The two teachers supported each other and complemented students when they did well. This co-teaching spirit came to be a role model for students.

Lastly, the teachers revealed that they used strategies to help students achieve fair and equal educational opportunities to learn, and at the same time, help them think critically (Bennett, 2001). I call this equity pedagogy because the two teachers emphasized in class that they wanted all students to have the same opportunity to learn, and therefore no bullying was accepted at all costs. Mr. Hastings pointed out that the dean will be called immediately if bullying is evident in any class.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have analyzed the teaching and learning in the English 10 classroom of Ms. Jones and her co-teacher Mr. Hastings. This included an overview of the curriculum and units of study with a detailed description of my first day in the classroom and specific learning engagements the teachers provided for the students. Then the ways the curriculum and units of study connected to the notion of relevant immigrant pedagogy by drawing on the sociocultural framework and literature reviews about identity and self-efficacy was discussed.

I also described the teacher lesson planning and the typical lesson format in which the two co-teachers were faced with a variety of levels of English acquisition and divergent academic needs based on the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic variation of the students. To effectively do their instructions, the two teachers used a “Sheltered ELA Lesson Plan” which they adapted from the prescribed district curriculum guide.



In the discussions phase of lesson plans and lesson formats, I explored how both teachers' lesson formats exemplified the identity piece, sociocultural values, and development of self-efficacy. Overall, their teaching reflected in-depth academic proficiency and personal self-knowledge. I also described how the teachers valued students' past experiences, home situations, and school climate in the ways the learning and growth took place. They used inclusive strategies to create fair and equal opportunities to learn academic content and scaffold the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency in the students.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE STORY OF THE TWO TEACHERS

### **How Do Teachers Make Sense of and Carry Out Instruction for ELLs and Immigrant Students in Today's Urban Classrooms?**

When I began this research study, I made a deliberate plan to collect data which would help me see and understand the ways in which the teachers engaged with the students and with one another. Over the course of five months, I audio-taped the teachers' classroom instruction, interviewed them and held informal conversations, collected field notes and lesson plans, as well as class artifacts and documentation. All of this data allowed me to consider the knowledge, experiences, and ideologies guiding Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings as they made their instructional decisions. In telling the story of these two teachers, I have used many quotes from the data, believing that their voices would bring authenticity and legitimacy to the findings.

My analysis in this chapter links back to my conceptual framework for relevant immigrant pedagogy which included the notion that positive identity development, healthy self-efficacy, and a sociocultural view of learners and learning are critical ingredients to successful teaching of ELLs and immigrant students. I used those elements of the relevant immigrant pedagogy framework as my lenses to analyze the data and present a profile of each of the teachers.

The chapter starts with stories about the backgrounds and life experiences of these teachers. Then the ways their identities and self-efficacy materialized in their co-teaching instruction is discussed. Finally, I use the sociocultural framework to see how these teachers thought about engaging all students with opportunities for fair and responsive learning.

## **Ms. Jones**

Ms. Jones lived in a suburb about 10 miles from Thomas Aquinas High School. She was a native of the Midwestern state where the study took place, and attended local schools. She was tall, slender, and confident in all aspects. Ms. Jones' path to teaching had been unconventional. When she was in middle school, she walked across the street to an elementary school to help one of her former third grade teachers grade papers, organize her room, and conduct reading groups. During an interview, she expressed that teaching had always been something she enjoyed doing, but for years she was unsure about that calling. While studying Spanish at an urban university, she began a full-time internship as a Language and Cultural Orientation Instructor for an immigration support center. Her duty required her to teach English to recently-arriving adults, tending to their unique needs, and seeing how their knowledge directly translated to a more successful life for them and their families. This ignited her desire to teach.

Shortly after graduating in 2010 with a degree in Spanish, she obtained a license in Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and set off to teach English abroad. She moved to South Korea to teach English in a low-income school. She learned some Korean and worked hard to maintain her Spanish skills by reading every day and participating in online language exchanges. During that time she also began teaching English online and mentoring children at orphanages and after school programs. In the meantime, her desire to get better at teaching was growing exponentially. She found her mind consumed in literature about language acquisition and spent each weekend volunteer teaching. Though she was lauded as an excellent educator, her mind consistently returned to the fact that she was not yet a "real" teacher. This experience

solidified her desire to become a licensed educator but her return date in July was too late to begin a teaching program.

As a result, she returned and secured a position as a Spanish bilingual assistant at an urban elementary school in this Midwestern city. She volunteered for every available opportunity within the ESL department and began taking her Praxis exams so she could apply to an Urban Teaching Fellows Program. She eventually became certified and earned her Master of Arts in Teaching at an urban university in the Midwest. She was in her third year of teaching at Thomas Aquinas High School as an ESL teacher for grades 7 to 12. When I asked her what strategy made her a successful teacher, she said:

When students enter my room at the beginning of the year, they see a room of firm expectations, deep commitment to their success, and overwhelming enthusiasm. What I give my students is more than a lesson. I show them I care. I reach out to each and every one of their families. I call to celebrate their successes. When I am feeling particularly proud of them or having a ponderous moment about how happy I am to see them, I tell them they are why I get out of bed. I give teaching everything I have but have learned to take care of myself in the process as well. I am sweet as pie to all and known as being firm in my expectations and not budging with things like inappropriate language and cell phone use. (Interview Transcript, November, 2015).

Additionally, Ms. Jones expressed that her proudest moments and contributions to education are steeped in student work and are a reflection of her students' success. She was very proud of having a highly functioning classroom; behavioral management plan; and a clear, organized, transparent way of grading, providing her students with make-up work and communicating with feedback when there were errors. She also expressed her pride in her work with students who saw college as an insurmountable task. She supported these students by working with the after-school Senior College Prep group. She shared that it was very exciting to see the students she prepared walking across the

stage at graduation. Ms. Jones shared that her motto was to communicate with everyone in the building because everyone had something to contribute. When it came to teaching as a profession, Ms. Jones said that she found it easy to have a cheerful personality because she really loves her career. She really loves to teach.

### **Mr. Hastings**

Mr. Hastings was raised in a rural community in the Midwest. He graduated in 2009 from an urban university with a bachelor's degree in Language Arts. Then he worked as the poetry editor at the same urban university literary magazine for a year. After that, he found a job as a supplementary instructor at the community college in the same urban city for two years. According to the interview data, Mr. Hastings taught Reading, Writing, and English 111 at the college. After his successful certification process with the state, Mr. Hastings started working with an urban school district, teaching English Language Arts (ELA) at Thomas Aquinas High School, grades 7 to 12. During our first interview, Mr. Hastings expressed how thrilled he was to come back to this school where he was now in his third year. When I asked him what strategy made him a successful teacher, he said:

Apart from genuine interaction with students, I like to assign homework on weekly basis. I give my English students a packet which includes a writing prompt, grammar review, and vocabulary each Monday that is due the following Friday. At the beginning of the year, I do have high expectations for students. I tell them to attend class on time and be prepared to learn. Students who practice good work habits, do their personal best, and fully participate in class are rewarded. If a student is absent or tardy, I encourage them to make-up missed work. I encourage them to take responsibility for their learning and know what work has been assigned.” (Interview Transcript, October, 2015).

Evidently, Mr. Hastings enjoys his job and spends most of his time reading, writing, and childrearing. He currently lives on the east side of the city with his wife and three children.

### **Ms. Jones and Identity**

My interpretation is that Ms. Jones believed that a teacher's identity was a very important foundation of being a great urban teacher, especially for ELLs and immigrants. This is because knowledge-of-self brings depth to who we are and enhances us to greater understanding of others and other cultures (Taylor, 2002). Her lesson planning and class procedures reflected this. In our third interview, I asked Ms. Jones, "what does the term 'identity' mean to you, and how does it affect the way you interact and treat your ELLs, immigrants, urban students, and all students at large?" This was her answer:

I believe identity is how we see ourselves. I think identity definitely affects the way I interact with students. I see myself as a loving, caring, serious, and rigorous teacher, and I hope that is reflected in my interactions. Additionally I love learning about my students' identities, whether it be their cultural or ethnic background or their music tastes, tattoos, and friends. Understanding this identity allows me to make a personal connection with my students and push them academically.

During our second interview, I asked her, "How do you think your students have been helpful in the process of building your self-concept and academic growth?" She replied:

My students give me a purpose, and when they succeed, I succeed. They have definitely helped me learn and build my self-concept because as each grading period passes, as each new group of students graduates, I see my work in them. My self-concept is a continuously changing and growing concept, and I know that my students have been integral. When I need to know something for them, I learn it. When I am curious about how to deal with a new situation, I learn how to do it on behalf of them.

### **Ms. Jones and Self-efficacy**

Ms. Jones believed that teachers' personal beliefs, attitudes, and cognitive skills determined how they behave, feel, and think. Observing Ms. Jones and interviewing her, my data clearly illustrated major strength in her self-efficacy skills. She expressed this through her classroom management style, her passion to plan and execute her actions in class, and her confidence and initiatives. I heard this aspect transferred to her students time and again in the following statements: In life and education as such, you can handle whatever comes your way with determination.

When I had a chance to ask her for the rationale behind this and how her background prepared her on building her self-efficacy skills, she said, "My experience in South Korea taught me a lot. I have seen how the world is and what you can do with determination. Now, I believe that I can do anything."

### **Mr. Hastings and Identity**

Mr. Hastings also believed that teacher's personal identity was the foundation of being an effective teacher. During our informal conversations, he expressed that teachers were people first, whether in lesson planning, instructional conversations, or assessment practices. For him, students inspired him each and every day. This made him look at teaching not as a job, but the work of his life. During instructional activities, he felt motivated by students and their identity formation and dedication to their studies. In our final interview in January, I asked him to reflect on his identity formation, and he shared:

Teaching ELLs and immigrants has really erased making assumptions from my world. I never know where my students came from, their pain and their pride, unless I ask. I really try not to assume. Some situations are sensitive, and I tread lightly. But just knowing that all of my students have a story has really helped me grow. I learn more about where they are from, why they came, and all of the politics and policies that surround each step

of that journey. It has made me more socially aware of the world around me and sharing that knowledge with my students, even when it is a small piece of the world, shows that even though I may not understand fully, I am trying. My identity has grown and keeps growing as I continue sharing my identity with them. (Interview Transcript, January, 2016).

### **Mr. Hastings and Self-efficacy**

Mr. Hastings believed that a teacher's belief in organizing and conducting activities in class had a powerful connection with the output. He even acknowledged that self-efficacy was an important element to behavioral change, because teachers may not adopt new teaching strategies if they have doubts about their abilities. He tried to work closely with Ms. Jones to increase his self-efficacy when dealing with ELLs and immigrants, since he had never worked with this population before this position. During our informal meeting in October, Mr. Hastings reported how he struggled with students to do their assignment when Ms. Jones was away for testing duties. He could not get students listen to him, follow directions, and submit the required assignment. For him, the game changer was working side by side with his co-teacher. He gained confidence in his own self-efficacy.

### **Teaching from a Sociocultural Framework**

It this section, I share my analysis of the teachers' commitment to a sociocultural framework despite the pressure of the prescriptive curriculum, district and state mandated testing, and the restricted environment of learners.

### **Ms. Jones**

I have observed Ms. Jones in fifteen classes and also had four formal interviews and close to a dozen informal ones (See Appendix G). Through all of these, I saw that she displayed congruent attitudes, skills, and behaviors of valuing diversity, ability to have



cultural self-assessment, and conscious of cultural dynamics in inter/intra-cultural situations. She was very adaptive to diverse cultures and took initiative to know about her students' home cultures (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Rogoff & Gutiérrez, 2003). Without doubt, she was a culturally conscious and competent individual. Time and again, Ms. Jones easily interacted with all cultural groups, immigrants and ELLs. She incorporated culturally relevant literature in class with underlying statements of individual student cultural affirmation. She used culturally relevant assessment practices including assessment in students' native languages (See Appendix A).

Data from November, during the lesson on figurative language, showed that Ms. Jones asked students this warm up question in which they had to jot down the points and later share in groups: "Go with your gut.' What does this mean?" I witnessed some students in the corner having some problems in understanding this statement. During individual writing, she went over there and used her Spanish fluency to explain step-by-step what she meant. Then, she also went to a Korean student and tried some Korean words to clarify this assignment. I saw the beaming confirmations on the faces of students as a sign of satisfaction in using their native language to understand the concepts. She then continued to share some traditional ideas on the role of reading the tough text for the day and how to respond to questions that were based on that text. Additionally, in all lessons observed, she asked students to think about how to apply the information to their culture and home situations. Interested in this ability to be bi-cultural at times, I asked her about her formative experiences related to ethnicity, immigration status, race, and socioeconomic status during our January final interview. She had this to say:

I did not grow up in a very diverse setting but learning another language (Spanish) personally opened me up to more groups of people and allowed me to better communicate with people. Once I realized that language wasn't a barrier but more of a door just waiting to be opened, I became more interested in different cultures. In my undergraduate studies I became incredibly interested in labor studies and Latino culture. This prompted me to look even deeper into social issues. When I volunteered with the [immigration agency], I was blown away by how many cultures live and work in the Midwest. This was really the game changer for me. I knew I wanted to work with different cultures, become more active in the immigrant communities, and learn more about local politics and policies that affect people from all walks of life. (Interview Transcript, January, 2016).

Another strength I observed in Ms. Jones was her focus on rigor for all students. She displayed a great deal of content knowledge, and used skillful pedagogical styles to engage her students. In instructional group discussions, her classes were always very interactive with all students highly involved. With her experience with immigrants and work permit paper work while in South Korea, Ms. Jones showed and enacted knowledge of cross-curricular values and legal rules pertaining to ELLs and immigrants. Her motto of high expectation in all lessons emanated in the assignments and assessment practices she provided.

As I reviewed my data, I saw that one week in September, Ms. Jones taught a highly interactive class on the unit based on differences between civil rights and human rights and how humanity is fundamentally and morally bound to understand, implement, and advocate on them. Her academic efficacy and knowledge of other cultures were systematically blended with robust examples from Korean imagery, Mexican symbolisms, and Honduran music which she displayed in class. The class was like a show of some sort with all students speaking about how to take care of one another as a global society and the motto of unity in diversity. This dramatic and majestic display was

far reaching to most immigrant students who knew for the first time what human and civil rights were and how to be a part of the activism for oneself and also for others. The most dramatic and interesting event of the lesson was when one ELL-immigrant student who never spoke any English proudly volunteered to read his six-line poem about human rights in his Honduran native language to the class and later spoke, line by line, its meaning in English. The poem systematically expressed what it meant to be academically responsible to others, not only in class but also in any environment they found themselves because we are all members of one global family.

Ms. Jones believed in building a community of learners by showing no preferences for one group and facilitating trust among students (Ladson-Billing, 1995). In her classes, I constantly heard reassuring words to all students and the activities of using other learners as teachers. During the lesson on gothic writing and William Faulkner on a December 4, Ms. Jones opened with students sharing their cultural stories, comparing them to the story William Faulkner wrote about the Southern Jim Crow era and rural life in the south. Then she paired the students in twos, and they shared vocabulary, read relevant texts, and helped each other do the spelling test. They practiced collaborative partnership in learning rather than working as competitors. During our final interview in January, 2016, I asked her what building a community of learners meant to her, and here is her reply:

Building a class community is an excellent litmus test for successful teaching. I do this in my class with a firm belief that human connections are great for growth. We all need each other and learning can't take place in a vacuum of human connections. Thus why I try everything to foster a reassuring sense of belongingness to all students, encourage them to work collaboratively and even resolve conflicts with fairness and peace. (Interview Transcript, January, 2016).

Additionally, my data analysis showed that Ms. Jones was able to use strategies to help all students achieve fair and equal opportunities to learn and think critically (Bennett, 2001). I observed Ms. Jones not showing any preferential treatment to students in class. She held firm rules morally bound for everybody and all students participated equally. In classes, I observed her scaffolding evenly. In a later conversation, I asked her how she related the prescriptive curriculum to equity pedagogy and she replied that during week 11, the topic Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights movement touched the core principles of what it means to be in America in the past and today. It was good to consider how education and its curriculum intersect these notions now and the future.

Ms. Jones valued co-teaching. She acknowledged that while co-teaching in a real sense can be difficult because one person could dominate, the two teachers' omnipresence was good for students. She acknowledged that the two teachers were trying all they could. The only temptation she mentioned was that she was recently chosen to be a departmental leader of ESL. And this could limit her time to continue the co-teaching, which she fully embraced:

I see co-teaching as a creative way to connecting with and supporting the other teacher to help all students learn even much better. It is not easy because we are prepared to teach by ourselves in class. But this a perfect model because some students are freer with one teacher over the other and hence make the class interesting and more complete. Our grade 10 class is surely benefiting a lot and more complete this year because of this interesting phenomenon of collaboration. (Interview Transcript, January, 2016).

Despite her successes with instruction, Ms. Jones was critical of the school district and the curriculum she was expected to teach during English 10. During our informal conversations after class on January, 8, 2016, Ms. Jones complained that the school

district handed the curriculum and pacing guide to the teachers as if it were a gospel truth and expected no modification of it. Specifically, she criticized the curriculum for ELLs and immigrants for being presented in a deficit model, which she expressed was hurtful. As for the testing syndrome, she fully believed that too much testing was detrimental to the students because it halted any instructional innovations.

### **Mr. Hastings**

He also believed and revealed his attitudes, skills, and behavior of valuing diversity in class. Learning more from his co-teacher, Mr. Hastings' beliefs in cultural competency were based on the notion that "teaching immigrants and ELLs was not only content acquisition or knowledge dissemination but also cultural orientation that must be carefully and zealously done and even furthered through advocacy." (Teacher Interview Transcript, November, 2015). As an ELA teacher who had limited background interaction with ELLs and immigrants and other cultural groups, Mr. Hastings willingly participated in interactions with all cultural groups, immigrants and ELLs. In teaching, he sporadically tried to provide cultural affirmations and used culturally relevant practices in class. During a November class, he showed that he learned a few Spanish words which he used to encourage students. In January, I asked him if he was happy with his teaching of the ELL and immigrant students. He reflected:

My English language Arts (ELA) background did not provide me with so many avenues to work with ELLs and immigrants nor even had a rigorous cultural diversity class during my teacher preparation program. Honestly, faced with my own in experiences and the exigencies of language and cultural pluralism, I have had limitations on my part and I thank Ms. Jones for her support. This has been a very transformative and eye opening experience for me and I continue to learn a lot on this aspect. So therefore, I am growing on this aspect. (Interview Transcript, January, 2016).

Mr. Hastings displayed a great deal of literacy content knowledge, engaging classes with skillful pedagogical styles (Echevarria & Wooding, 2006). He believed and held high expectations for all his students with the phrase “rigor for all” mentioned during classes. During our second interview in October, I asked Mr. Hastings how he prepared and assessed rigorous and effective lessons in such a diverse class with different levels of language ability. He answered by saying:

As an ELA teacher, I really know my stuff and I really capable to engage all learners in developing their higher order of thinking, identify their strengths and apply to their day to day lives. But teaching ELLs and immigrants is a new ball game because my experience in this scenario is limited. So working together with Ms. Jones is a great asset for me to develop on this and I am learning more each and every day. (Interview Transcript, October, 2015).

In a related conversation, Mr. Hastings shared that he spent nine years completing his bachelor’s degree, and he came into the field already red hot critical. Evidently, he challenged his own beliefs, values, and cultural practices and the structures around. In his teachings, I observed his instructional practices which included active dialoguing, questioning, and building on responses from students in order to deepen their understanding. Furthermore, his assignment and assessment practices were always authentic and situated because he recognized the current problems of ELLs and immigrants in schools and used them in practice. He criticized his teacher preparation program for ignoring diversity courses or multicultural education courses which caused him to have limited knowledge about cultural diversity. His teacher preparation program only offered one diversity course that lasted for a week, which was not enough to have in-depth knowledge to substantially support the diverse classes of today’s schools in America.

After Mr. Hastings taught a class about Dr. King's speech, I asked him why this topic was important to urban kids, especially ELLs and immigrants. He explained:

I believe that students must know the history of America, history of slavery, prejudice and discrimination and only through that it's when students will grow to the full and respect America as it is today. Furthermore, students need to actually know the history of civil rights in order to see themselves as human beings and advocate for themselves. (Interview Transcript, October, 2015).

He also spoke about being critical about the whole education system during our final interview in January as follows:

It is good that all teachers know that our education here is oppressive not only to minorities but hurts the weak and favors the rich. Education is the source of stratification here in the U.S. Look the public schools are being privatized for money to go back to the rich. Look at the labeling and grades given to schools, e.g. F- for failing schools. This is ridiculous! And again, in teacher preparation programs, diversity/multicultural education courses are being limited because the system does not want people to open their eyes wide and be critical. (Interview Transcript, January, 2016).

Mr. Hastings showed tremendous skill, zeal, and commitment to building a community of learners of all backgrounds and ability levels in class. He treated all students with passion, kindness, rapport, and dignity (See Appendix A). He had firm rules abiding to all students when it comes to class discussions so that everyone should participate equally. Learners engaged in literacy interactions with dignity and pride and not as competitors but as a learning community (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003). After a class observation in October, 2015, I had a chance to ask him the rationale for building a class community, and this is what he said:

I believe in building a class community right from the beginning of the semester. This is because a successful classroom community always promotes positive social skills and academic achievement to all learners. Evidently, culturally and linguistically different students learn best when they feel that they are part of a class community and also school community. I do carefully plan and practice for this community building

during my group sessions in class because it pays off in learning where individuality is enhanced and everybody feels accepted. (Interview Transcript, October, 2015).

Mr. Hastings's instructional strategies were chosen to help all students achieve fair and equal opportunity to learn (equity pedagogy). In all the classes I observed, Mr. Hastings did not show preferential treatment of some or different students based on race, gender, immigration status, cultural and linguistic heritage, nation or creed. He created an environment where every student felt safe and respected. This security was evident each time before the class officially began when students were free to communicate their native languages with no one silencing them. For example, during a December 4 class, Mr. Hastings noticed that only a handful of students were actively participating, and he said to the class, " We teachers believe in giving everyone a voice in class, so we need your help please."

During week 12, Mr. Hastings was working with these essential questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between Holocaust and the Japanese internment camps?
- Analyze the passage about Holocaust and Japanese internment camps and find out the author's main claim and the evidences that support the main claim.
- How does the evidence build and develop the main claim above?

He implemented equity pedagogy through team building and students sharing ideas with one another as well as with teachers (See Appendix H). He began class with this warm up question: "Do you think there could ever be another Holocaust or Japanese internment camp? Why or why not?" Each student was asked to sit quietly and write points from the questions he posed. Then, the two teachers went around for ten minutes



checking how the students were doing. Next, he asked the class to count off from one to four for group work. The randomly chosen groups came together to discuss their answers and exchanged the responses for another ten minutes. Then, each member shared his/her partner's responses to the class. According to Darling-Hammond & Bransford (2005), many years of research and practice support the use of group discussions to focus on different students' strengths, styles, and abilities. These discussions encouraged students to become more accepting of classmates who are different.

Another strength of Mr. Hasting was his good working relationship with Ms. Jones. They worked as a team in setting course goals, content, and assessment procedures. In many instances, while Ms. Jones took center stage in providing instruction, Mr. Hastings moved around the classroom assisting individuals and observing particular behaviors. I found this useful because students received individual help in a timely manner (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). For example, during a mid-November class, Ms. Jones worked with students in understanding idiomatic language, onomatopoeia, and alliterations in preparing them for a tough text assignment for Friday while Mr. Hastings was distributing papers for contextual examples and explorations. Occasionally, I observed Mr. Hastings keeping students on task when Ms. Jones was in front of the classroom or busy assisting others. He actually kept the class calm by watching over other students who might disrupt the flow of the class.

During the second interview in October, I had a chance to ask the two teachers about their co-teaching. He answered:

At first, during the beginning of the year, we did curriculum mapping together where we collected, recorded, and analyzed the related concepts and skills including assessment procedures for each goal to be taught in line with the district and state standards. Since then, each week we plan

the lesson together and share both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes. The normal procedure in this class is that, students have a notebook which they grab as they enter the room, shaking hands as they come in and then they begin on bell work. Everyone has the same question but students at this point know what is expected of them when it comes to length and details. Students sit at a table with others at the same approximate level of English proficiency as them. They work through “stations” each day: vocabulary, reading with the co-teacher which also includes an accompanying worksheet or analysis of some kind, sustained silent reading, and a weekly writing prompt. We start the class as a large group and move to working in small groups, “stations.”

Mr. Hastings was aware that as a co-teacher, he was a support to all students and at the same time, a model for the students. As a partner, he established and developed trust, proper communication, respect, rapport, and problem solving abilities with Ms. Jones.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have profiled the two teachers, showing their commitment to the positive identity development, self-efficacy, and agency of students despite the pressure of the prescriptive curriculum and mandated testing. The collaboration between the two teachers was beneficial to students as the teachers supported each other and students with cultural competency, academic efficacy, classroom community building, equal opportunity to learn, and critical reflectiveness. As partners, the two teachers established and developed trust, proper communication, respect, rapport, and problem-solving abilities with each other. They also became role models to the ELLs and immigrants in the class.

Both teachers spoke of their dedication to teaching all students and made it a priority to support ELL and immigrant students by incorporating culturally relevant learning resources, holding high expectations, and providing meaningful feedback to

students. They built a community of learners in class, and even looked to the community beyond the classroom for support and connections. Both teachers used inquiry and critical reflectiveness to drive learning and purposefully used inclusive strategies to create fair and equal opportunities for students to learn academic content (See Appendix H). In the next chapter, I will share the profiles of seven students which will further help to illuminate the impact of these co-teachers of English 10.

## CHAPTER SIX: THE NATURE OF STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

This chapter is perhaps the most important in this dissertation because this chapter focuses on the experiences and voices of the students. During the five months I spent in the classroom, I sought out the student voices and opinions in many different ways because I wanted to understand how they interpreted their own experiences. I wanted to provide “voice” to the ELLs and immigrant students in the class and to chronicle the cultural discontinuities they faced on a daily basis. I was interested in the ways students with different backgrounds, nationalities, and culturally and linguistically diverse identities experienced the curriculum and instruction in this urban school.

There are seven students profiled in this chapter. To create each account of their stories and to trace their development as learners and productive citizens, I used multiple data sources including: audio-recordings of fifteen class sessions; transcriptions of three focus group interviews; field notes; informal conversations; and numerous student artifacts such as written assignments, presentations, and student work posted in the room (See Appendix F). I kept this data set manageable by selecting seven students from the Grade 10 English class as a purposeful sample. Five of these students were ELLs and immigrants. Two students were not immigrants, even though one was an ELL. My analysis involved coding the data with a focus on four areas: construction of identity and self, self-efficacy, sociocultural consciousness, and academic achievement. I looked for themes and evidence of growth in each of these areas.

The most notable finding based on this analysis was that all seven of the students showed observable and meaningful growth between September and January (See Appendix J). In this chapter, I have written descriptive explorations and interpretations of

each student's growth. The students changed in positive ways related to their self-esteem and assertiveness. They gained new perspectives about their environments at school and in the community. Their aspirations for graduating and moving into substantial jobs improved. And they deliberately worked to make the most of their opportunities to learn because they saw education as the key to their futures.

My study, like the research of Cavan (2008), shows that immigrant identities are both fragile and complex. Urban teachers like Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings can become role models for and facilitators of students' academic and social and cultural transformations (Valencia, 2011). There is evidence in the students' profiles that this is exactly what happened in this case study.

The next section of this chapter contains seven student profiles. Each profile provides background information about the student; observes the student in the context of the curriculum and instruction; uses the student's shared opinions and observations to characterize their experience in the class, school, and community; and concludes with my descriptive interpretation of the student's progress. I have also compared the relative progress of these students and put them in sequence starting with the ones who still have the greatest distance to go and ending with the ones who appeared most successful in their daily school lives.

### **Individual Student Profiles**

#### **Carlos: ELL-Immigrant Student**

Carlos came to the United States from Mexico (ELL-immigrant) four years before the study. His native language was Spanish and he was 17 years old. He qualified for free lunches. In appearance, Carlos was a very clean cut young man, short and thin, with

stylish hair. He often wore a gold diamond gun necklace with his white collared uniform shirt and tight-fitting pants.

During the first focus interview, Carlos told us he wanted to work as a cashier or anything to get by. He was not sure about going to college. According to the yearly access test, his ELL proficiency level was 1.8. Carlos was very resistant to learning English. His teachers shared that he had never spoken a word of English to them even though they expected this during many graded activities in class. He copied notes in class and interacted with teachers and his classmates if he could do so in Spanish.

Carlos and his cousin Mauro were both brought to the United States by their mothers--two sisters who left Mexico together with the boys. Both boys, Carlos and Mauro, had large scars on their faces in the same place. Carlos lived with just his mother and had no other siblings living with him, just his cousin and his aunt.

**Carlos's experience in lesson about personification.** The class had just finished reading about figurative languages. In these figurative languages, students were asked to identify similes, metaphors, onomatopoeias, hyperboles, and personifications. The culmination of this project was a presentation of a personal story by students due within two days. Carlos thought about using the ideas of personification in his personal story so that he could get the message across and let people know who he was and be understood. Here is a segment of his story he shared with the class:

When I was in Mexico in the first grade, people did not like me because I was too thin, with a scar, and looked lazy. My father sent me to a private school nearer by and I experienced the same. People used to ask me, why are you here, you ugly boy? Some attempted to hit me. Teachers were not really on my side. Fortunately I have come here in the United States. I am learning a lot in this school since my being here. I just learned about how words can describe something which is not. I am a person who has been here in the United States for four years now. I am a person who am

learning another culture, I am a person who has a past. I am a human who struggled in the sea and upon my arrival, I was lucky that my piece of paper was stamped and allowed to enter here in the United States. I saw so many friends and relatives pushed away and refused entry at the border. My father who died a year ago was not allowed to enter and I sadly will never see him again. I know two languages and learning this third language (English) at this school is not easy. I feel good to be here and lucky to be in this class and this community. I thank my teacher for translating accurately my Spanish to good English like this. I am growing with you and I appreciate your help in this process of growth. I love this school and am learning a lot. Thank you all for accepting me here, your hugs, smiles, welcome artifacts, and everything mean a lot to me. I know that people can personify me but I am who I am and this is my past. Thank you. (Translated by Teacher from Spanish).

There were two minutes of silence after him narrating this story. Then Mr.

Hastings asked him, “What does this mean to you about your identity and what is ahead of you?”

Here is what Carlos said:

I have learned to respect others and have courage to say yes to my identity. With my experience, I know that for others to take actions and stand up for me, they must hear my voice, my story and interpret my concerns. Teachers too can understand my motivation from hearing who I am and where am coming from. This is the only way I can advocate myself as for now as I continue to grow in this great land.

During the third focus group interview, I reminded Carlos about this story and asked him what more he had learned since then. He shared:

I learned more about what I can do as a human being, my dignity, my human rights, my civil rights, and how I can step up for myself and for others. I became aware of the value of education for my life and wanted it be replicated to everybody locally and globally... I have gotten a new perspective on how to get what I want which I thought was not possible before. . . I learned more from my teachers who were calm, compassionate, and confident in their abilities in dealing with me, sharing these values through personal reflections and assignments. I learned more about the American politics and values and world politics which made me know what is going on and how I can maneuver my ambitions and be a successful individual both locally and globally. . . Through group assignments of sharing my experiences with friends, doing

a project on personification and later telling a story about my growth to the class gave me confidence in my abilities and came to know immediately that life after high school is open and possible for me.

**Teacher assistance during lessons.** Carlos felt the teachers were very helpful for his growth and supportive all the way. He liked the collaborative aspect, although he blamed himself for sticking to Spanish speakers because of language problems. He praised how his teachers were abreast with factors affecting ELLs and immigrants like personal family factors, previous schooling factors and the difficulties of transitioning to new cultures (cross-cultural factors). For example, during the second focus group, I asked him about his experiences with the climate in the classroom with the following question, “In what ways are your teachers helping or not helping you to have a sense of belongingness and self-esteem?”

Carlos responded:

Teachers in this classroom are my mentors, and I feel like I identify myself with them so much. They are my building blocks to my life and I feel protected and happy in everything. This school environment protects a sense of belongingness and self-esteem, and I trust my ELL teachers so much. All my teachers are constantly focused and help me to become assertive, critical minded and help me speak up for myself. For example, if I don't understand something, I can ask my teacher in Spanish, and she will not cut me off or look down on me. It's amazing to be in such a school and above all finding such teachers.

**My interpretation of Carlos' experience.** Carlos had experienced life before in his own native country and it was amazing to find himself at a better place where he was having positive growth. Initially, listening to his personal story, I thought no wonder he seems shy and disorganized and does not speak any word for the first two periods. It took him several weeks to slowly open up. As the semester progressed, Carlos started to participate in class. My interpretation was that Carlos was just discovering his new self



and identity in two ways: a) seeking support from his teachers with whom he was very close and some friends and; b) having a vision. He now really valued education and was becoming assertive in what he wanted. Carlos started to value education in his life slowly. He acknowledged that where he was from people do not value education, but here he discovered his beliefs as a human being, values, and rights through education. He recognized that education was the way to improve his life in general and was increasingly confident that he would graduate high school.

Carlos went from seeing himself as a cashier to wanting to be a mechanic after he graduated—specifically an airplane mechanic. He told me that he was aware that the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs in science was very huge, “But I will make it,” he continued. “I want to improve my English and also my science classes so that I can pursue this dream I have.” This self-efficacy was unprecedented for him considering his background.

Carlos’s sociocultural identity developed as well. Carlos was doing well as compared to the beginning of the semester. He had a group of friends and was now relating well. After class one day, Carlos asked his teacher a question in Spanish. The teacher encouraged him to speak some English because he had been very resistant to speaking English. I was glad the teacher told him she would grant his wish for a schedule change form if he asked in English. Which he did. From there Carlos began really putting forth more effort. He acknowledged that he needed to actually speak English to really learn the language. His English rapidly improved and he gained new friends.

Carlos’s English improved every time I visited the class. During my last visit in March 2016, I found him quite academically competent. When an assignment required

students to read a passage and then reflect on the theme, Carlos listened along and translated the following short story into Spanish for another student who understood less:

Ulysses spent all of his free time reading books and felt that he was very intelligent. One day a nice student from his class asked him if he wanted to go sledding and Ulysses responded, "I've read about sledding in books, and it sounds miserable. No, thank you." On another day, a different friendly student asked Ulysses if he wanted to go out for hotdogs after school. Ulysses responded, "I've read that hotdogs are filled with rat parts and pig bellies. No, thank you." Nobody asked Ulysses to hang out again, but he did read about friends in his books.

After reading the story Carlos told his teacher that the theme was that books are not worth reading. I prompted him to dig a little bit deeper and asked him what was the character's problem? On his own, in English, Carlos was able to answer the question, "having an experience is better than reading it in a book." He pulled evidence from the text, was able to reflect back on what he read, and got a "bigger picture" than his first response. He then helped his classmate by explaining how he came up with it in Spanish and helped him write it in English on his paper as well. Additionally, his progress grades improved since November. He had F in September and October, then D- in November, then B-, in December, with his final grade at B- which was much better than where he was (See Appendix K).

### **Julissa: ELL-Immigrant Student**

Julissa was from Honduras (ELL-immigrant). She moved to this Midwestern city almost two years before the study. Aged sixteen, her native language was Spanish. She resided in low socio-economic housing and qualified for free lunches. In appearance, Julissa was thin with long brown hair and dark eyes. She had stained teeth, perhaps due to poor dental hygiene. During the first focus group interview, Julissa expressed that she wanted to work at the amusement park as the attendant; she was not very sure of going to

college. At the beginning of the semester, Julissa had been skipping her English class a lot, but after the teachers' consultation with her parents, her attendance improved.

According to the yearly access test, her ELL proficiency level was 1.9. Her teachers and friends described her as quiet, slow paced, and very shy. During her spare time, she liked to listen to Reggae music. Julissa had a job as a cashier which kept her out until midnight three days per week.

**Julissa's experience in civil rights and tough text units of study.** Julissa seemed to be animated with teachers' strategies during the units of study which she described as very helpful and caring. She said:

In Honduras, teachers do not care much like here. When am late, it doesn't matter, when I don't come to school, no body calls me or my parents. And during examinations, there are no really preparations and no help from teachers. Thus why I feel so good now and would like to go further and be helpful to both this country and also where I was born. When I came here, I wanted to work more and school less because I have to help my family to live. Relatives back home need help and I do send them money too. Thus why my attending was not good, but now I think I know what it means to be here at school.

During our first focus group interview and my class observations, Julissa looked very shy and withdrawn and spoke very little. However, as time went by, she slowly found her voice and overcame some of her shyness. Her fear was disappearing. In the later conversations, I asked her how she thought the curriculum was helping her build her self-esteem and self-concept. I wondered if she had ever felt denied identity growth in class or in the school as whole. She replied, "Yes, she was growing." She said she related most with the units on characterization and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement. She told me, "I think in this culture, it is good to stand up and advocate for yourself, because if you don't do that, everyone will run on you." Upon

questioning her, she clarified that she admired Dr. King and his message. She mentioned that American education is not perfect. In fact, at times it is not fair at all. But she felt comfortable at Thomas Aquinas. She expressed how she liked the school climate in this way:

I like the school environment. Teachers are very friendly and helpful to me. The school rules are clear and easy to follow for my learning and also emotional growth. I feel respected here and my language too is respected. At first I did not want to be challenged so high academically because this is not what I was used to. But now I like the expectations that are very high for everyone.

In January during the Tough Text Unit, the class was analyzing poems focused on various themes. I was impressed that Julissa was able to convert a part of the story (what they were calling the “main idea”) into a theme. Concerning the main idea, she said, “It was a rainy day, and mom had to get creative to keep the kids from getting too bored.” Working in a group of two other students who did not speak Spanish (something Julissa would have never done in the past), they came up with and she delivered aloud, “Moms always find a thing to make us happy.” I asked her if this was something from her life, and she smiled and said yes, that moms are always being creative to make their kids happy. The fact that she was able to not only work with non-Spanish speakers, chose to deliver what she came up with, and asserted it once again, was a huge marker of growth for her.

In my early focus group and observations, Julissa was not sure what she wanted. Actually, she expressed that she wanted to work at the amusement park as the attendant and not very sure of going to college yet. However, as time went on, she was increasingly becoming self-assertive in what she wanted. During our discussion, she showed

seriousness about improving her English skills and her listening comprehension skills. By January, she had decided that she really wanted to go to college to become a psychologist and expressed her interest in helping people with mental illnesses.

During our focus group meetings, Julissa expressed that she wanted to share some of her reggae music with the class for when the class worked independently while listening to music. This was an improvement from her shyness and withdrawn behavior. She was improving her communication skills because she could freely talk with others and now had many friends. She had become sensitive to the feelings of others around her. I believe she was improving and becoming very used to her living in this city. When I asked her, she said that she had so many friends and frequently was texting on her phone. She also loved her home country of Honduras and talked about it often, smiling when students call her “Catracha” which means “a girl from Honduras.”

**My interpretation of Julissa’s experience.** I saw Julissa grow from being a very shy individual to sociable and having many friends. She really developed her construction of self and identity throughout this semester. By January, she was able to work very well with non-Spanish speaking students and explained to them the main themes in English. Furthermore, Julissa was even able to question the American system of education which she recognized was fair for everybody. Not only was her critical thinking growing, but also her academic competency. She recognized the value of education, liked to study, and her grades improved. From the grade book, her monthly grade for September was F, October was D-, November was D, and December was C+, with her final grade up to B because she did very well on the final district benchmark examination. She demonstrated an understanding of what it means to be respectful to

others and care at the same time being proud to be a girl from Honduras (Catracha). I observed her in class being proud when her friends called her Catracha. Based on my interaction with Julissa, it seems to me that her self-efficacy too was growing. She had become more assertive in what she wanted. For example, her insistence to work hard, be fluent in English, and eventually be a psychologist in order to help people with mental illness was a step in the right direction. She had also developed trust in her teachers whom she saw as role models.

### **Arturo: ELL-Second Generation Immigrant Student**

Arturo's case was different because he was born in the United States (ELL-nonimmigrant), but his parents were from Mexico. At a young age, Arturo went back to Mexico with his father and mother and came back about eleven years ago. When he came back, Arturo was held back in first grade because he was diagnosed with a cognitive disability and put in special education. At 19, Arturo is tall with facial hair. His native language is Spanish. During our interview sessions, Arturo shared that he was an only child who lived with his father who spoke only Spanish. His mother died two years earlier from cancer, and Arturo admitted that things had been different since then. He and his dad were making new traditions since their mom was part of their traditions before she died.

The teachers noted that Arturo was incredibly kind, attentive, and dedicated to learning. He was aware he had trouble reading and writing and worked very hard to improve his skills. Arturo, like the others qualified for free and/or reduced priced lunch and his ELL proficiency was leveled at 2.4 (very low in reading and writing). He called another teacher his grandma and stayed after school for every tutoring opportunity, as

well as came on Saturday to attend the tutoring. After high school, Arturo expressed that he wanted to do anything to support his family even as a farm worker and laborer. He loved playing soccer and played on the school's team until he stopped attending practice and games to focus more on studying.

**Arturo's experience in the lessons about Japanese Internment Camps.** Arturo appreciated the lesson plan format utilized at Thomas Aquinas High School English 10. There were three areas which he looked forward to in each lesson: a) the instructional conversation part of the lessons, b) the twelve minutes of accommodation/differentiation part of the lesson, and c) the mixed group and individual assignment part. For example, on October 27, 2015, a Tuesday class, he was excited by the Few/Guided segment of the lesson (You do it, I help--the instructional conversations). During this part, the class was discussing in groups the differences and similarities between the Holocaust and the Japanese internment camp. Arturo said, "I like the discussions. They bring awareness that our history is not perfect and we should always be critical and defend one another when things are drifting astray."

After these discussions, Arturo also expressed happiness with the assignment in which students worked through the text, highlighting the order of things, and having students rate Uchinda's feelings about the new camp using a scale of 1-10, mentioning the culture shock scale and its stages: honeymoon, frustration, adjustment, and mastery by using actual literal scales and visuals to express the feelings the characters are experiencing. During our focus group interview, I asked Arturo why he liked this assignment and also how he thought the discussions impacted the class relationships. He had this opinion:

Discussing the feelings of the people in internment camps brings the message really home. That means, it is not only the paper assignment which is speaking to me but the paper work has become personal. I began to feel with the people in history and this is important because we avoid making such mistakes again and become good neighbors of another. The other thing to talk about is that, by discussing and analyzing the culture shock scale, I develop not only my literary skills, but also my comprehension, and communicate information and concepts for academic purposes. For the class, I think by listening to this, we become one and fight for the same cause in life. I think our class will become more united now.

Arturo also shared that he liked the last minutes when the teachers focused on accommodation/differentiation because he liked to help other students in class who were struggling. "I really feel glad when I am helping classmates in their work when they struggle. I have been there. So it make me so happy and fulfilling to do this," he said.

Arturo also enjoyed discussing current events every Tuesday class which was connected with the tough text (reading) for the week. Every Tuesday, there was a board where the teachers put printed articles of current events-news ELA that reflected the topic within the unit. He said:

This makes me be in touch with current events of the nation and even global news. That means I am able to make connections, thus access and connect information through various media which can strengthen my language proficiency and cultural knowledge.

**My interpretation of Arturo's experience.** Arturo had transformative experiences at Thomas Aquinas High School. He talked about the instructional conversations which helped him develop good writing and speaking skills in English. He was also aware that the current events board made him have a deep connection with the outside world; develop awareness of other cultures; and examine, experience, and reflect on the relationships among products and perspectives of other cultures. I remember Arturo was shocked when he saw on the board a printed current news that the one child



policy in China was being outlawed. First, he was not aware that China had such a law, nor did he know why it came into being. He was intrigued by the whole discussion.

Secondly, Arturo grew a lot in his construction of identity and self. During our first focus group interview and class observations, Arturo looked shy and withdrawn and spoke very little. However, as the year progressed, he started to participate more in class. He brought interesting insights to the class discussions. In the later conversations, I asked him how he thought the curriculum was helping build his self-esteem and self-concept and if he has ever felt denied identity growth in class and school as whole. I was not surprised with his optimistic reply. He said that he was doing well here and liked the climate and teachers love him. In the classroom, he said that he related most with the topic of careers. He said he had discovered a new perspective and wanted to do things by himself and lead a better life in the future. From my perspective, Arturo was building his identity and persona through education and self-reliance. He realized that education is a key to his life and leaves no stone untouched.

Arturo gained confidence in himself throughout the duration of the study. During the first focus group interview, he wanted to do anything even as a farm labor just to survive and help his family. Now he wanted to be a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) professional when he graduated. He talked about college but primarily wanted training to install and monitor HVAC systems. He was already preparing himself so well to pass. During one of the focus groups, I asked him, why did you choose this school and why education instead of working, as he was already doing now? Arturo said, "Education is a way to improve life in general and I really need it at this time in order to support myself and be self-reliant and my family."

Furthermore, he expressed that he liked this school's culture of tolerance and academic rigor, and could not wait to graduate from this historic school. He said, "I am already looking forward to walking across the stage." He was incredibly positive about his future. He developed wonderful relationships with his teachers and frequently talked about his memories in classes with his favorite teachers like a former math teacher who he said, "Really taught me math."

One day I encountered Arturo in the hall, and he was so excited to break this good news:

I am starting a new job at a new pizza shop. You know I was unhappy with the Walmart job because they cut my hours after the holidays, and I need to start saving for an HVAC program. I can't do that if I'm only working a few hours a week.

I congratulated him for that. It was his determination and clear goals now that enabled him to look for a better paying job for him to save for his vocational training as an installer for HVAC.

In class, despite his struggles and his disability status, Arturo was progressing well. He worked hard and wanted to do well. With his job and ambition to go for HVAC training, he knew that he needed to work hard and obtain a high school diploma. From mid semester, he began attending tutoring twice a week in order to improve his grades. He even stopped playing soccer which he really liked so that he could press on and do well. I heard him telling Ms. Jones that he was really tired after working from 6.00 pm to 12.00 am last night, and she told him that she was proud of him. He smiled and said "thank you" and walked out. His progress report showed his improvement. He had an F in September, C- in October, C+ in November, and B in December. His overall grade

including all submitted assignments was B. This was a good sign of progress in his academic competency which was the fruit of his hard work and resilience.

**Sabeen: ELL-Immigrant Student**

Sabeen was from Iraq (ELL-immigrant) and had been at the school about two years ago. Aged eighteen, her native language was Arabic. She and her family were staunch Muslims who practiced their faith meticulously. Because she was living in a low socio-economic status, Sabeen qualified for free and reduced lunch. In appearance, she was short, thin, wore a scarf, and had long and gentle hands. During the first focus interview, Sabeen expressed that she was not sure what she would do after high school although she was open to working as a Home Health Aide or even a nurse assistant. Regarding attending college, Sabeen expressed that possibility with little confidence. For example, this was her reply during our focus group interview, “Going to college is a great idea and lucrative possibility. I am always thinking about that although in my culture, women are not encouraged to go further than high school.” According to the yearly access test, her ELL proficiency level was 2.1.

Sabeen loved babies and her family. She liked mentioning how much she loved spending time with her family. In a classroom, she frequently displayed pictures of her cousins and friends’ babies. During our focus group interview, Sabeen explained how horrible ISIS was and how she and her siblings fled Iraq due to violence. She had a brother and sister also in the same class. She was reasonably focused, and did her work with smiles all the time. Sabeen got engaged over winter break in an arranged marriage to a 25 year old man. She was excited about that. Her family had met her soon-to-be husband, but she had not, which she shared as a tradition. She loved sharing Arabic

words with teachers and others and practiced Islam. She and her siblings missed school occasionally for Muslim celebrations. On some occasions, she talked about her culture, her learning experiences, and what school meant to her. Her attendance was okay, and she was respectful and sociable.

**Sabeen's experience with classroom procedures.** Sabeen was happy by how well she was received and welcomed in class. The lining of teachers at the door to welcome students with a handshake, showering them with cultural phrases and affirmation, had been huge for her. During our first focus interview, she expressed this:

When teachers line up, smile at me and give me such a genuine handshake is huge for me. It really shows that I am loved, am cared for and I am really apart of this class, this school and this community. At first, I hesitated and ask myself, is this real? In my culture, handshakes are not common, they are reserved to dignitaries like kings, headmen, mayors and make public in very special occasions. And for me as a young Iraq woman, it's like a dream to have someone give me a hand shake. I am really speechless with this warmth, acceptance and cultural affirmation.

Sabeen was very impressed with the class procedure of teaching through conversation (Teemant, 2014). She compared how she was taught in Iraq where teachers just lectured and gave students homework with very minimal assistance or scaffolding. She felt the English 10 teachers were very helpful to her, and assisted her very well academically and morally in a genuine way. Specifically, classroom conversations had been huge and transforming for her because she felt respected as people listened to her views in class. During a lesson on characterization in December, the teacher asked the following question: "How would you describe your character this semester? Are you round, static, flat, dynamic or antagonistic? And how do you compare yourself to a time before?" Sabeen replied:

I feel like that I have grown and I am different this time. I am not static any more. I am dynamic. I have changed in my thinking about life. I have grown in knowledge, and I now know that I have power to contribute something to this class, this school, and even beyond. I think I now know myself well than before. My classmate, teachers and school have made me grow and believe more in myself. I was shy and had lower grades and now I am better.

Ms. Jones asked her further, “So if your teacher or someone else wants to write a story about you, would you chose to be written as an individual character or stereotype, and why?”

Sabeen answered:

I am an individual, and grew up in a specific environment in Iraq and I speak Arabic, and I have my specific gender too, so my way of thinking, my dressing, my likings are different. So I like to be written as an individual. I definitely don’t like to be written in stereotypes. I think someone writing me as stereotypes is disrespectful.

During our third interview, Sabeen described how the traditional classroom procedures were effective at Thomas Aquinas School English 10 Class. Sabeen gave an example from Week 13 where Ms. Jones reread the rules and made the students sign a contract which they stapled into their notebook. She reflected:

I feel that the rules during classes must be read for students to remember and everybody to adhere to. For example the rule against bullying is an excellent example. Although I have not seen it here, but I was bullied in Iraq in class dominated by boys. I told the teachers and he did not take any action. The rule of tardiness are great and I think I am improving on that. I remember that for the first and second tardies, documentations are done followed by parent conference. This was done to me and I no longer do that. I think a class of rules is a success story because it provides equal opportunity to learning and makes an environment like this one free of discrimination and prejudice. I am really glad that I am here and I feel blessed to be here.

**My interpretation of Sabeen’s experience.** Sabeen’s positive outcomes revealed how good she felt within this community, this class, this school, and how all this

enhanced her learning. She looked at the classroom rules and regulations as helping her and all students be responsive and grow as responsible citizens. She perceived her improvement in English and grew in her construction of her identity and self. She constructed her identity in such a way that her liking of babies had been transformed to a career of being a helper as a pediatrician. I observed for the first few months of school she used her phone like a lifeline for translations, especially when writing, and had little confidence in what she was capable of producing. Toward the end of the study, I observed that she very rarely used her phone for translations and was much more confident in what she wrote. Sabeen had grown because I could see that she was now taking criticism and nudges in the right direction very well. She was definitely finding her voice and overcoming shyness. I heard her mention to her teachers, and also during our first focus group meeting, that ISIS is real and the immigration for her family was not a choice but a necessity as she and her family had to flee. She spoke about the horrors of living in Iraq with terrorist groups threatening her family's way of life and expressed sadness over personally knowing people in pictures and videos of beheadings and mass executions. At Thomas Aquinas, she felt safe and was overcoming fears and feelings of isolation. Sabeen seemed to be making more friends and was more willing to talk to other groups of friends in the school as opposed to previously when she only really talked to her sister. She was growing and seemed to be acclimating to life in the city fairly well, though she was moving soon to live with her new husband in a different city.

Academically, Sabeen worked hard and wanted to do well. Her English was improving tremendously. With her ambition of becoming a pediatrician, she was motivated to work hard. She was determined to do well not only in class, but as wife and

have a comfortable future. She once said in class that although her culture does not support girls' education, she was determined to do well and be self-reliant. This also showed with her grades going up all the time. She had Bs in both September and October, then A- in November, and completed with an A in December. Her final grade was A- on the transcript.

I had a chance to talk to Sabeen together with her teachers concerning her future prospects. One of her teachers asked her in my presence if she would be moving soon to join her new husband. She told us that she would be moving at the end of January. Then the teacher and I told her that we were really worried she would not keep attending school and she said, "Don't worry, I will go to high school in my new city." Then I asked her if this was important to her and she said yes and even her family supported this decision. She also reiterated that even though she will be married, she will still try to attend college. I told her it will be difficult to do that with new duties and living in a new city. She said she did not care and that she would still go anyway. This shows how determined this young woman was to continue her education. She became clearer about her goals and wanted to graduate high school and go to college to be a pediatrician.

**Quang: ELL-Immigrant Student**

Quang lived in Vietnam (ELL-Immigrant) prior to moving to the Midwest three years ago. He relocated here with his mom looking for a better life. His mother was a single mom with two jobs and also enrolled at a local community college for English classes while taking some accounting courses. According to our last focus interview, Quang spoke Vietnamese, with a thick dialect of Hue since he hailed from the central part of his native country. Just like all students in this class, Quang had low socioeconomic

status. In appearance, he was short with moderately dark hair; he was tough skinned with dark eyes. At eighteen, his English access level was 2.1 and constantly improving. Quang liked to talk about his faith, Catholicism and the history of Catholicism's persecution in the 1798's in his native country. In his free time, he liked shadowing his mother whom he was really very close to. He also likes doing his homework, playing soccer, and hanging out with friends:

For Quang, schooling was his priority from the word go. He said,

I want to improve my English. We have no ends meet and no relatives here and school is what can make me share the American dream. Thus why I am working hard and improving my English. I like math, science, and social studies and I want to go to college and become a pharmacist.

Reflecting on his move, he said:

I am glad I am here in the United States, and also sad. I miss our strong community life. I miss our original traditional foods, whole chicken while celebrating Tet (Vietnamese New Year). We celebrate Tet for three days praising and honoring our ancestors.

**Quang's experience in classroom procedures.** Each day, the classroom procedures were the same. There was an agenda written on the board for students to reference, then the two teachers lined up, greeted and welcomed students at the door with smiles and a handshake. Students in the meantime were asked to pick up worksheets and exit tickets before they sat down. Ms. Jones usually provided them with a hook question on which they reflected and wrote for three to five minutes. This was followed by bell work discussions in groups. After the lesson was introduced, objectives were emphasized and the series of activities, routines and expectations were provided to students. However, on November 30, the class procedures were a little bit different to the delight of Quang. There was colorful music by a famous musician from Vietnam, *Justa Tee*,



playing when the students entered the class. This ignited his interests. And among the handshakes, there was another person, Mr. Como who came for a presentation about careers. Ms. Jones launched the unit's driving questions: What are the things you need to be able to do on your own after high school? How does your job impact the life you will live after high school? And what are the benefits and consequences of spending versus saving? While the class was busy, engaged in writing, Quang asked where the teacher found this good music. He appreciated listening to this. It took him back to where he was three years ago. Then he asked about the visitor, who happened to be a pharmacist. This added to his delight. He was really excited and asked so many questions about this career on this day. One of the questions he asked was about different pharmacy jobs here in the United States and the salary scale. He was comparing to Vietnam where the top job most was Pharmaceutical Business Unit Director with the highest pay, followed by Pharmaceutical National Sales Manager, and then Pharmaceutical Product Manager. It was his concern to know this so that he could choose proper courses now, through college and also decide whether to remain here in the United States after his education or go back home. When the class ended, Quang went to the visitor asking him for his contact information.

The next few days, the class worked on posters for individual job interests, using online searches and budget activities. On the presentation day, Quang and his colleague were the second to present their Power Point entitled, Jobs of the Centuries. Quang presented different jobs, clarifying how much individuals get paid per year and how good it is to work in new research and help people get better. He mentioned about his cousin back home who was saved because a pharmacist, who was also a researcher, discovered

advanced medicine for cancer. At the end of the class, he thanked everyone including the teachers for allowing him to stand and talk. “This really give me confidence and my shyness is going away slowly” he said. One student asked him if this career choice was due to his financial situation. His answer was no. He reiterated that he wanted to use his skills and talents to make a difference in research to discover new drugs and make the world healthier. He also said, “I am also worried about Zika virus too and want to help more in future and eradicate it once and for all. Please come and join this movement!”

**Learning and ethical climate.** In another conversation during the second focus group, I asked Quang if the school climate was conducive to his career advancement and also personal growth. I asked him to provide examples if possible, and this is what he said:

This school offers everything for everyone to grow and meet his goals. The lesson about careers and jobs of the week’s posts on the bulletin board are really incentives. Look at the music I listened weeks a few ago, it reminded me of Vietnam where I was born and I like the cultural connecting pieces of it...it’s neat! Concerning examples, I can say, I like the story telling part in class where we share stories about our cultural heritage. I think telling my story to the class about Vietnam, sharing norms and relations about cultural knowledge, our symbols to classmates is empowering for me and gave me confidence.

**My interpretation of Quang’s experience.** Quang was a unique ELL-immigrant compared to all others. First, his focus on community was very strong. He had formed a belonging in the community especially with his mother. Maybe this was typical of Vietnamese culture. Even during informal conversation, Quang spoke about how closely-knit or cliquish the Vietnamese community was, and he actually had an extreme bond with his mom. In one of the interviews, he said that he shadowed his mother which signified how strong their bond was. Secondly, his construction of self and identity was

already strong prior to Thomas Aquinas High School and had only been perfected and enhanced. He spoke about his career as a pharmacist right from our first focus group interview through the next five months. Moreover at eighteen, he seemed to be clear already about his talents and skills and his prospects. He really wanted to depend on himself in the future, and his self-esteem was very high.

Quang was aware and appreciated his teachers who were using cultural words, pictures, music, and even dictionaries for students who spoke other languages. He had used a Vietnamese dictionary in class provided by teachers and also enjoyed music from his country of birth. He appreciated that Ms. Jones had used encouraging phrases from his native language which he felt good and motivated each day for the class.

On careers and choices, Quang demonstrated what it meant to be of service and share the talents with the global community. His intra-cultural experiences made him realize that we are called to service not only for our own sake but to serve the world and make it a better place as global citizens. And lastly, Quang knew what it meant to work hard and get good grades. He was a hard worker and never missed a class. His grades went from A- in September to A as his final grade. He was someone who was easily motivated. He praised the instructional methods and interactive patterns in class which he said were respectful to different ways of learning. He praised the school climate that promoted achievement and good performances by giving rewards, praises, and public displays. He even remarked, "I was chosen to go for a trip to the urban top research campus because of my good behavior and good academic performances for the past two months. This is really great and I like it." Quang found English 10 and Thomas Aquinas

School a good fit for his life. And the other students benefited from being seated next to a positive minded person like Quang and having good teachers who were his role models.

**Elizabeth: ELL-Immigrant Student**

Elizabeth was from Mexico (ELL-immigrant). According to school records, she made her first entry into United States schools about two years before the study. Aged fifteen, her native language was Spanish. She qualified for free and/or reduced lunch. In appearance, Elizabeth was short and a little round, shoulder-length hair, and always smiling. During the first interview, Elizabeth expressed that she still was not sure what she would do after high school, although she was considering either carpentry or home health aide. About going to college, Elizabeth expressed that possibility with less confidence. She said:

Going to college is a possibility, you know what, but let us wait and see. It is important to cross one river then rest and look forward to what is next. At the same time, parents, and siblings need help to pay rent and live life. That's why I have two jobs currently.

Elizabeth explained how much she was afraid in her native country of the gangs. She used to walk for almost two miles to school and was really afraid of them. She heard of her friends prior who were traumatized by them. Now since she is in the United States she thinks life is better and does not want to think about that again.

According to the yearly access test, her ELL proficiency level was 4.2. Her teachers described her as open and so devoted to her boyfriend. She definitely made him a better student. She insisted on staying after school with him for tutoring with an ESL teacher on Tuesdays, and checked in daily to see how he was doing in class. Elizabeth loved cute things like animals and talked about them quite often. She seemed to be a

good student, cheerful with all of her teachers and classmates. She was open to constructive criticism and worked hard at learning English.

**Elizabeth's experience in two units of study.** When Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings explained about the horrors Japanese suffered in the 1940s because their native country was fighting against the United States, Elizabeth was shocked. She asked, "Where was the United Nations when all this was happening?"

Ms. Jones answered that the United Nations was not fully organized at that time. It was the League of Nations which was formed in 1919 after the First World War, and that organization was not effective at solving the problems. That was one reason the League of Nations was abandoned and United Nations was created. Mr. Hastings also followed up stating that sometimes the United Nations, as a body, does not want to intervene on internal affairs. Elizabeth's comment at the end was, "life sometimes is not fair." All students in class answered yes to her comment. This was followed by a quick silence before Ms. Jones distributed a conversational topic: If I were an immigrant, what would I bring and why? The two teachers asked students to do a conversational sharing, before preparing for a presentation which they were to submit as an assignment for grading. For the next few days, the class worked on this topic in groups. On presentation day, Elizabeth was the first to be asked to present the PowerPoint on behalf of three others. The title of the PowerPoint was What I Would Bring.

Elizabeth explained that she would bring mainly traditional food and recipes which she really missed. The first on the list was what she called pozole. This was the food she and her family liked to eat during New Year celebrations and other big feasts like birthdays. She also mentioned about bringing mole. This she said was a chicken in a

kind of red or green salsa. It could be eaten with rice or tortillas. The last traditional food she mentioned in her PowerPoint were tacos. Elizabeth salivated and said that these were so good. They can be eaten with salsa, onions, and even beans. “They are so original and not fake ones which I see around here,” she said. Then at the end of the presentation, she asked if there were questions.

Ms. Jones, asked, “What did you learn from this assignment about yourself?”

Elizabeth said:

Home is best. I miss the environment. I miss friends. I miss my relatives. I miss the community spirit in a small village in Mexico where we all know one another. I am glad that the teachers here are bringing the community spirit in this class. I think I can make this my new home too.

From her statements, many other students nodded with agreement including the teachers.

The following month, Mr. Jones introduced the topic of characterization which Elizabeth really liked. She liked especially the written assignment about the question: Did I grow this semester? For her, this assignment gave her chance to reflect on her beliefs and rediscover her values and life’s meanings. She wrote, “I think I was given chance to reflect, reevaluate my life as such, and develop a vision in my life.” Furthermore, Elizabeth said that it is important for individuals to do what they really believed in and then they would be happy. When I asked her what she meant by this during our formal conversations, she said that she meant working hard in class and becoming a determined visionary through education.

**My interpretation of Elizabeth’s experience.** Elizabeth developed into a critically reflective human being. During the discussions of the story about the Japanese internment camps, she was the only person to ask where the United Nations was. This also showed that she had at least a good grasp of social studies, especially global history.

She also mentioned fairness. From my perspective, this showed that the classes were transforming her to be a critical student. In other words, the equity pedagogy implemented by teachers in class was bearing the fruit of critical thinking on the part of Elizabeth.

Secondly, the assignment and presentation connected deeply with her as an immigrant. Her reply to Ms. Jones meant she missed home and at the same time was able to accept the reality of belonging to two worlds and two cultures. In a way, Elizabeth was able to construct her identity and self in her new environment, new home of the United States. In our first focus group interview, Elizabeth described her life as just fine. However, I could see myself with her few comments that day that she had potential. She looked to be open minded and highly motivated, but could not articulate more. It was like something was pulling her backwards or a certain pressure slowing her. I had a chance to ask her what she thought about the curriculum. Is it helping her to grow and build her self-esteem and self-concept or not? I had to wait for this moment because previously, she showed signs of slowness and lack of confidence. I knew that this time, she was ready to say it all. Like all other students in this study, she expressed gladness with the class and school climate and the curriculum.

In my early focus interview, Elizabeth was not enthusiastic to say what she wanted to do after high school. She expressed little confidence about completing high school and really had no enthusiasm of going to college. However, during subsequent class observations and focus group interviews, she started growing in confidence and expressed that she wanted to be a licensed nurse practitioner or scientist. Evidently, Elizabeth developed those possibilities and knew how to get them. She developed

confidence and grew in self-esteem. Furthermore, she started making a lot of connections in class. Toward the end of the semester, the class was discussing themes and one teacher asked students to tell the class about their favorite movie and what the lesson or moral of the story was, which students later learned was the theme of a book or movie. Elizabeth expressed that she loved the movie Titanic and that the lesson or moral of the story was that “it doesn’t matter if you’re poor or rich, anyone can fall in love.” I see that she had really grown a lot in her confidence since September, sharing out her feelings in class and using them to make real connections to the content.

Overall, Elizabeth was a successful student who was very cheerful with all of her teachers and classmates. She was very open to constructive criticism and worked hard at learning English. Compared to the beginning of the semester, Elizabeth was improving and more engaged in class, and asked questions if she did not understand. She was also always concerned with the feelings of others and acclimatizing well to American life. All these strengths contributed to her academic growth. She saw how important education was and even encouraged others, like her boyfriend, to work hard. She herself was an A student every grading period, starting in September.

**Jaylen: ELL-African American Special Education Student**

Jaylen’s situation was a unique case because he was an African American born in the United States (ELL-nonimmigrant) with native parents. At eighteen, Jaylen was tall and muscular with long dreadlocks. He also qualified for free lunch due to his socioeconomic status. Jaylen recently had been classified as a special education student because of his impulse control. He had issues staying awake in class sometimes, though when he was paying attention he was very attentive, volunteered a lot, and produced



insightful work. His school record showed that other teachers had a lot of trouble with him. Teachers and other students described seeing him cussing out other teachers and even punching his locker. In the hallways, he talked about smoking marijuana and was often late for classes. His locker was directly across the hall from the classroom. He frequently spent time at his locker, talking really loudly with his friends. During our focus interview sessions, Jaylen expressed that he liked spending time with friends, playing football, and participating in wrestling. After high school, Jaylen said he wanted to do anything to support his family even as a bartender or home care aide. Jaylen told me that he did not like to talk about his prospects after high school, responding “I believe in one thing at a time, and slow but sure. You never know what comes next even tomorrow.”

**Jaylen’s experience in civil rights and immigration units of study.** During the first half of September, Mr. Hastings mostly facilitated the unit about civil rights. He started the unit by asking students the differences and similarities between civil rights and human rights. After three minutes of silence answering this question, Jaylen asked, “Did the United States sign a children rights declaration of the United Nations yet?”

Mr. Hastings asked him, “How did you know that?”

“My friend who is studying social studies and political science in college explained this to me last month” he responded. The class continued sharing about human rights and civil rights. Then after the video of about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Speech, the teachers asked all students to write two sentences on what they understood from the speech, to explain their thoughts to the class, and then post it on the wall for ten points. Here are the two sentences Jaylen wrote:

- Now is the time that justice should be a reality for all people of God.
- I have a dream that one day people will struggle together, go to jail together and stand for freedom together.

Then he explained to the class before posting it on the wall, “Guys, you know, civil rights issues have not yet ended.”

The following week, students were asked to share a story about their encounter with civil rights or human rights anywhere in school or home or elsewhere. Jaylen shared a story with a title: Civil Rights Issues Have Not Ended. In this, he described his neighbor who was driving a car with a suspended license. When the police caught him, he was searched further and found with drugs and given a Felony D and taken to jail. His wife and two children were now suffering because he was the only breadwinner in his family.

Later in the hallway, I asked Jaylen how he thought his article affected the class. He said, “I think the class will be more united and develop critical stance to the injustices happening around with my explanations.”

When Ms. Jones introduced a unit assignment about immigration soon after the civil rights unit, I heard Jaylen saying, “My God this unit can be boring!” Other students laughed at this comment. However, it ended up really not like that for him. Ms. Jones introduced an assignment where each student would discuss and do research on his encounter with an immigrant or ELL and provide a brief report to class. So for the whole week, students were working on this project. When time came for presentation, I heard Jaylen sharing this story which changed his life:

My neighbor was complaining loudly that his town which is a few miles away from the urban center is now filling up with too many immigrants. He said, “Because of this our living standards will be lower and I don’t

want to this change here in town.” However, in contrast, an adult who was walking down the street just relaxing, stopped and spoke very well about the immigrants. In fact, he was a business owner and he said that his Iraq and Rwandan employees are very reliable, very hardworking, and really dedicated to their families and their livelihood. He liked them and would do anything for them. That adult continued saying that immigrants have shared with him their horror of sufferings including losing their loved ones, friends, language, culture, food, and even their daily familiar environment, which is not easy.

Jaylen concluded, “This story is neat, and I found it very inspiring. . . I really have come to understand what immigrants go through.”

**My interpretation of Jaylen’s experience.** My interpretation of Jaylen’s experience was that he further developed his critical consciousness. Stating that civil rights issues have not ended signified that. He also developed social activism by using assignments and what he learned and translated them into actions in the community. There was an organic connection between learning and personal experience. The learning experience about immigration affected Jaylen’s attitude and understanding and opened him up more to others. The sharing of stories about immigrants and the problems they meet in learning a new language and new culture transformed him, and eventually he became an advocate for them.

Jaylen was an average student. His case was typical of urban students today, specifically students of color. He began the school year with behavior issues, such as talking loud in class, not paying attention, missing classes, cursing friends and even teachers, and even rumors of smoking weed. Typical of public schools, he was recently diagnosed with impulse control and had trouble getting himself out of that mindset. During the first focus group interview and class observations, he looked sleepy and disoriented. When I asked him why he chose this school and how the curriculum was

helping or not helping him build his self-esteem and self-concept, Jaylen said that he liked coming to school. He had met friends and was growing in knowledge. He really liked the teachers, staff, and students working together for the sake of the progress of students. In his own words, “this school values human connections no matter who you are, where you come from or the color of your skin.”

As time went on, I saw him growing in confidence and mentioning about graduating high school. And his behavior was improving. He had so many issues early in the year with focusing and in skipping class. But as the semester progressed, he gradually changed. He became more focused. He changed his post-graduation goal to wanting to be a car mechanic and eventually owning his own shop. He also grew in academic competency. At first he seemed to care less about his grades. Of course, his attention waned at times during class and during any week, he would be fully engaged in discussions one day, and another day would tend to try to sleep or not participate due to his disability. But he realized he needed to work hard and one day after class, he was inquiring about after school tutoring which was a turning point for him.

Jaylen’s grades also improved. He had a D in September, C+ in October, B+ in November, and A in December with his final grade an A. Moving forward, Jaylen needed to have continually bolstered self-confidence. He needed to be encouraged to cultivate good relations with his teachers who were his mentors, but he was becoming a respectful human being and it was good to see him grow in his learning and character.

## **Discussion of Students' Growth Using the Theoretical Framework**

### **Identity**

Identity is about finding meaning in one's life in a given context (Kroger, 2007). In this case study, through my conversations with the students, interviews, looking at their artifacts, class reflections, and assignments, I found out that they all discovered a renewed sense of themselves and became new beings in this new environment. They became part of the community through actions, narratives, and examining their daily lives. Students' ongoing construction of their identities significantly enhanced their willingness to express freely how they felt and how they were changing as individual human beings.

### **Sociocultural**

Sociocultural framework embodies that the foundation and springboard for learning is always the students' experiences and their strengths which they bring to the classroom (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003). Students in this case study realized that knowledge was understood as cultural, and learning was social because it involved individuals' social and cognitive interaction with the society (Vygotsky, 1987). In other words, it was evident that all students grew in their sociocultural consciousness especially in becoming bonded to one another as one class. They became a real community of learners and not rivals or competitors despite their differences in culture, ethnicity, nationality, and language. Moreover, students were open to one another and other cultures, and were free to tell the story about their country of birth and their unique experiences. Because of their openness to other students and teachers, students grew in knowledge and excelled academically. For example, Carlos who was really lagging

behind improved tremendously when he started opening to scaffolding from the teachers. All in all, this increase in academic performance through trust and dependency on one another (community building) in the classroom came as the result of growth in the students' sociocultural consciousness.

### **Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy embodies a belief in one's capabilities to organize and pursue actions in order to effect certain outcomes, and at the same time having a perception that the situation is manageable and can be controlled (Bandura, 1994). Data revealed that all seven students gained self-efficacy related to their learning, growth, performance, and goals. The effects of the amount of effort, persistence, and resilience grew tremendously. Also, the data revealed three domains of self-efficacy: a) becoming more assertive in what they wanted, thus being able to speak up for themselves; b) becoming more self-reliant, thus increasingly becoming more hopeful and confident in achieving what they want, an aspect which they thought was impossible before, this entails that students became increasingly more confident about their future and; c) recognizing more about the value of education, thus seeing it generally as the transformative endeavor for improving one's life. In other words, students were able to articulate their future goals and how they valued education. They all appeared to be more confident, freely participating in class, asking very good questions, and being assertive about what they wanted in their lives then and after high school.

Students' experiences highlighted how they saw themselves as transformed, as persons who continuously made meaning as they engaged in their class, school, and the

community. Similarly, their transformative experiences were evident when students came to understand and realize that it took personal strength to leave home.

### **School Climate**

Based on the transcripts, the responses students provided showed that the school climate was safe, welcoming, and conducive to learning. That entailed that students enjoyed being a part of this school and the atmosphere. They developed their full identity pertaining to this school with its rules, regulations, and norms regarding the expected behavioral standards. As a researcher in this context, I collected students' climate data in four domains: physical, social emotional, sociocultural, and learning and ethical. All four of these climate domains were explored to see how they affected the overall learning, identity, and growth of the focus students.

All in all, the findings suggested that students experienced a very good climate at this school. Students actually perceived themselves as full members of Thomas Aquinas High School and English 10. Students' assignments fostered reflective experiences and discourses which allowed ELLs and immigrants to picture themselves in a positive light and to accentuate their strengths.

### **Analysis of Differences in Growth as Learners Among the Students**

This section focuses on the differences among the students. How were they each unique? How did the curriculum and teaching provide them with equitable learning opportunities? While it was evident that each of the focus students made positive progress, they were not all starting or ending at the same level of relevant growth. I was able to assess the comparative progress of the students by creating a continuum rubric with the categories of emerging, developing, and enacting. I looked at each student across

four areas of growth: 1) identity and self, 2) self-efficacy, 3) sociocultural beliefs, and 4) academic progress. I used the descriptors I created for the rubric to analyze the growth and potential for growth of each student.

Based on this analysis, I could see how the students were differently positioned for success in school, in their daily lives, and in the future. The analysis allowed me to sequence the students, starting with the ones with the greatest distance to go as learners (emerging) and ending with the ones who appeared most successful in their daily school lives in terms of their construction of identity and self, sociocultural consciousness, self-efficacy and the academic performance (enacting) (See Table 3 and also Appendix L).

Table 3

*Rubric for Assessing Student Growth*

<b>Area of Relevant Growth</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Enacting</b>
<b>Identity and self</b>	Is able to display signs and attitudes of a renewed sense of self Can somehow articulate who s/he is and what s/he wants as a human being; Treats all cultural groups as individuals with respect	Shows good sensitivity in displaying signs and attitudes of a renewed sense of himself/herself; Some critical reflectiveness toward life and the surroundings; Sees self as player to class, school and community; Can articulate who they are and what they want as a human being, getting to know some rights and dignity as a human being; Has satisfactory	Shows excellent enactment of signs and attitudes of a renewed sense of himself/herself; Critically reflective toward life and the surroundings; Sees self as an excellent contributor to class, school and community; Articulates very well who they are and what s/he wants as a human being; Knows his/her rights and dignity as a human being; Strong understanding of others and their



		understanding of others, their cultures	cultures; Excellent use and value of home language and invites others in sharing knowledge in class
	Displays some self-confidence; Little evidence of determination and independence in thinking and acting; Not sure of what is next after school	Displays positive beliefs in self; Developing a sense of determination and independence in thinking and acting; Beginning to challenge his/her own beliefs, values, cultural practices and structures around; Reasonably confident on ability to contribute in class, school, and community; Sees self with some confidence as a global citizen	Displays very confident beliefs in self; Strong sense of determination and independence in thinking and acting; Challenges own beliefs, values, cultural practices and structures around; Very confident in abilities to contribute to the class, school, and community; Confidently see themselves as global citizens
<b>Self-efficacy</b>			
	Demonstrates some interpersonal skills with diverse fellow students; Finds it hard to talk to others sometimes; Displays some sympathy; Minimal trust to others and even teachers; Difficulty with volunteering if needed	Developing student-teacher relationships with good fluidity; Demonstrates interpersonal skills with diverse fellow students; Can generally talk to others; Generally trustworthy; Likable and sensitive to the needs of others; Open to others and their help; Able to volunteer if needed	Developing student-teacher relationships easily and quickly; Demonstrates excellent interpersonal skills with diverse students; Easily talks to others; Is trustworthy; Very likable and sensitive to the needs of others; Very open to others and their help; Ready to volunteer any time if needed
<b>Sociocultural beliefs</b>			
	Displays only basic content knowledge; Not always engaged	Displays some useful content knowledge; Shows	Displays a great deal of content knowledge; Very
<b>Academic progress</b>			

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during class; Poor grades (D or F); Completes only a few assignments; Seldom takes advantage of tutoring sessions in school; Lacks motivation or engagement in content and skills; Does not really value education	some enthusiasm; Often engaged in class; Good grades (C or B); Does assignments in class if motivated; Sometimes takes advantage of tutoring sessions in school; Works hard to do well and sees basic value of education	enthusiastic; Always engaged in class; Excellent grades (A); Carefully does all assignments in class; Takes advantage of tutoring sessions in school; Displays engagement in content and skills, Works very hard and does well; Values education
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**Carlos**

Carlos struggled a lot at the beginning of the semester in his construction of identity and self, self-efficacy, sociocultural consciousness, and academic competency. He started at the low emerging level because he could not articulate who he was and what he clearly wanted in life. Additionally, Carlos had fewer interactions with others and did not show signs of trusting his classmates and his teachers. However, he grew slowly in the mid semester to the early stages of the developing category in spite of differentiation and scaffolding techniques the two teachers used to motivate him in class. By the end of the semester, he had modest growth to the middle of the developing category because he evolved by showing good sensitivity toward others and displayed some beliefs in himself and what he wanted to do in future. He showed some evolving independence in his thinking by articulating his beliefs about human rights and dignity. He even performed well in class with a final grade to B- , up from an F at the beginning of the semester. However, compared to the rest, he had the greatest distance to go (see Appendix K and L).

**Julissa**

Julissa, like Carlos, struggled a lot at the beginning of the semester in all categories. She started as low emerging because she had no clear sense of what she wanted to do in life. In class, Julissa was hardly talking to others and had minimal interaction with teachers. Academically, she also struggled and was not ready to use tutoring opportunities available at the school. However, in the middle of the semester, she moved to the developing level of the chart. For example, she started to work harder in class and came to realize the value of education. She generally mingled with friends and asked questions and developed trust with her teachers. By the end of the semester, she moved further moving toward the end of the developing category beyond Carlos. This was because she was doing satisfactorily well academically with a grade of B; she mingled well; and she even volunteered in class if needed.

**Arturo**

Arturo, too, despite being a native, had a troubled beginning with the lowest grades and characteristics of an emerging learner. His parents' travel to Mexico was a disruption, plus his special education status affected him. However, during the middle of the semester, he capitalized the opportunities of class tutoring, the good school climate, and equitable teaching and learning which prompted him to surge to the middle of the developing category in all domains. He generally showed fluidity in developing relationships with peers and teachers. He developed trust and became sensitive to the needs of others. Furthermore, he became clear on what he wanted after school and worked hard to achieve that every day (HVAC mechanic). Evidently, his zeal, attentiveness, and dedication to learning and growth propelled him further toward full

realization of the developing category and he almost made it into the enacting category by the end of the five months. His confidence and zeal earned him a grade B and overall, Arturo was a more self-actualized student than Carlos and Julissa.

### **Sabeen**

Sabeen ranked number four overall. She began modestly well in her construction of self and identity within the developing category, because she already displayed some evolving understanding of who she was and what she was capable of doing. Her sociocultural beliefs and self-efficacy were in the emerging level according to the standard qualities because just like the last three students she was shy, did not take initiative to know others and their cultures and articulate her wishes for the future. She could not easily develop trust of others and teachers, perhaps due to her cultural experiences in Iraq.

Academically, Sabeen was doing much better than the others with a B. However, during the middle of the semester, Sabeen became motivated by the curriculum and teaching strategies and showed generally good enactment of the characteristics of a successful student. Among others, Sabeen began to see herself as a player in class, school, and community. Toward the end of the five months, Sabeen even moved closer to enacting stage, because she articulated well who she was and became a determined visionary person. She became sociable and liked to ask for help from teachers and friends. She saw herself as a confident global citizen through her contributions in class. She realized that she could transfer what she cared for in life (love for babies) to service others by aspiring to be a pediatrician. She also pulled her overall academic grades to A- from B.

## **Quang**

Compared to all others, Quang began with the highest construction of identity, self-efficacy, and sociocultural beliefs. On the categories of student growth, he was already in the developing category. For example, he knew exactly what he wanted to be in the future, a pharmacist. He had a strong Vietnamese community and his mother and friends supported him. In class he already showed potential through his hard work. During the middle of the semester, he pulled toward the enacting category in all categories, very comfortably maximizing his performance as a student. By the end of the semester, Quang appeared to be the most successful of the students in terms of his construction of identity and self, sociocultural beliefs, self-efficacy, and the academic competency. He moved to the enacting category and his final grade was an A.

## **Elizabeth**

Elizabeth had the strongest academic competency with an A from the beginning to the end of five months (see Appendix K). Just like all immigrants, she struggled a bit with her construction of growth and identity, self-efficacy, and sociocultural consciousness at the beginning of the semester. She began lower in the developing category, because she did not know what she wanted to do in life after school and was shy and at times lonely. However, she quickly picked up by the middle of the semester until the end of the five months reaching close to the enacting stage. Elizabeth used the equitable learning opportunities, curriculum, and teaching strategies in expanding her knowledge base, sociocultural beliefs, self-efficacy, and identity in all categories. She developed a sense of humor, showed excellent enactment of signs and attitudes of a renewed sense of herself, and was very confident in her abilities to contribute to the class,

school, and community. Her final semester grade was an A (see Appendix F) which brought her success in her daily school life.

### **Jaylen**

Jaylen was arguably the most improved student in terms of his construction of identity and self, sociocultural beliefs, self-efficacy, and the academic competency.

Jaylen began the semester on the developing level. He articulated an evolving renewed sense of himself. He interacted well with others and saw himself as a player in class despite his special education status and his deficit views about immigrants.

Academically, he began with D, then moved to C+, then B+, and eventually completed with an A. Needless to say, just like Elizabeth, Jaylen began with a lower self-efficacy because he had serious doubts about completing high school. However, he performed increasingly better from the middle of the semester up to the end of the five months. He used the opportunities of good teaching modelling, scaffolding, instructional differentiation, the curriculum, and the good climate in school to his advantage, moving in the end to the enacting category.

### **Looking at the Participants Altogether**

Although data analysis revealed all seven students had growth in their construction of sociocultural identity, academic competency, self-esteem, and their learning development, it is important to note that ELLs and immigrants, just like any other minority group, experience systemic oppression in how they are perceived or treated in the society as deficit persons. It matters how students learn to respond to this. According to Ogbu (1998), community forces constitute one of the important factors that influence minority students' school performance. These forces vary from instrumental

beliefs about how they interpret schooling, the climate of the school, social capital (friends, teachers, family, membership), and cultural capital (intellectual skills, cultural goods, and dispositions). To be specific, the pattern of adaptation of immigrants and ELLs to the United States education cannot be exactly the same. It is unique. This is because their academic competencies, self-efficacies, and sociocultural identity constructions are intersected by societal and cultural factors like gender, generational grouping, group or community aspirations and expectations, parental engagement, and even individual student interests (Garret & Holcomb 2005; Sua'rez-Oroco, Sua'rez-Oroco, & Todorova, 2008).

For these reasons, I have emphasized the uniqueness of each focus student and discussed how each participant fared in this class. It is significant to note the ways Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings carefully examined and got to know more about their students, their families, communities, home life, and their immigrant group views, so they could build instruction and scaffold learning based on students' experiences, previous schooling and knowledge, and their assets and skills. The growth of each student was enhanced by the relevant instructional techniques, interventions, and assessment practices (Pasco, 2003; Valencia, 2011).

In the end, I believe Quang (Vietnamese) and Sabeen (Iraq) ended up with the most developed senses of action toward final accomplishment (enacting level). These two immigrants had the symbolic capital of personal growth and trajectory of the formation of will which set them apart (Pasco, 2003). They had a clearer vision of who they were and quickly adapted to diverse cultures and had an agency of getting to know others and their

cultures. They respected their values, beliefs, their personalities, and the personalities of others.

These two were followed by Elizabeth (Mexican) who was also in the enacting stage. Elizabeth began in the lower range of the developing category because she could not articulate well what she wanted to be after school and kept to herself without associating with others early in the semester. However, she eventually achieved great strides and evolved to know her clearer purpose in life and respect for her values, beliefs, personality, and desires. The rest of the class ran strongly in the developing range.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter opened with profiles of the seven focus students. In these distillations of the data, I provided students' voices and opinions to show how they interpreted their experiences in the classroom, and also at Thomas Aquinas High School. I felt the validity of this study would be better if their words and concerns were included in the analysis. In profiling the seven focus students, I gained insight into the diversity of this urban school. The focus students came from uniquely different educational and linguistic backgrounds and nationalities. Using their words about their experiences in the units of study and classroom interactions, the profiles show how the students and their learning experiences were both unique, but similar all at once. I described similarities and differences of their experiences including some tensions they experienced as they discovered themselves and became determined visionaries.

The group of focus students included two students who were not classified as ELLs or immigrants by the school. Arturo (Mexican American) and Jaylen (African American) were included in the study because they represented other minority status



students in the school. In this chapter, it was evident that relevant immigrant pedagogy was equally valuable to these minority students.

Four significant findings were discussed in this chapter using the student profiles and theoretical frameworks of this study:

1) As a group, the focus students evidenced growth as learners. The students grew in their construction of identity. They developed a set of beliefs and values and saw their environment in a new way with new prospects (sociocultural understanding). They grew in their self-esteem and came to believe in themselves more. They discovered that education was key to their lives, and it required hard work and rigor to get good grades.

2) As individuals, the focus students made relative progress toward being fully effective students and future community members. The students were on a continuum of development ranging from emergent (just beginning to have confidence and agency) to developing (more confidence in their knowledge and interactions) to emerging (fully confident and capable of being a successful student and future citizen).

3) The English 10 class became a community of learners. The curriculum and instruction included sharing stories about problems immigrants and ELLs face. At times, there was tension between nonimmigrants and immigrants in the class, but it was significant to note how students began to champion for their classmates. The students realized it requires great personal sacrifice to leave one's native home. They developed empathy for one another, sincere care, and social action awareness for community activism in order to give back to the community. (See Appendix L).

4) The school climate supported student growth. The focus students felt the school climate felt physically safe, interactive, promoted relationship building, a sense of

belonging, self-esteem, and the highest ethical standards for rigorous learning and self-fulfillment (Thapa, Cohen, Higgins-D'Alessandro, & Guffey, 2012).

The climate and overall learning experiences transformed the students not to fear diversity but embrace it with dignity, confidence, and pride. As the result, they came to be dedicated to value sociocultural differences and developed a class project of advocacy for others on campus which they facilitated to involve the surrounding community. They amazingly became one, depended on one another, and grew together not as competitors but in trust and helpful to one another in their learning process.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

As a researcher, I was extremely fortunate to build a trusting relationship with two teachers who were actively practicing relevant immigrant pedagogy as I defined it in my theoretical framework. While my major purpose was to understand the experience of the ELLs and immigrant students in this urban high school, the co-teachers of English 10 opened a window into their classroom which allowed me to also see the nature of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Their personal stories and interviews provided insight into their beliefs, assumptions, aspirations, and frustrations. My ethnographic portrayals of the teachers, the profiles of the seven focus students, and the evidence of the students' academic and personal growth came together to provide a coherent narrative about the complexity of this urban high school. I only analyzed data from seven students, but it was impossible to miss the fragile nature and complexity of the students' experiences, whether they were ELL, immigrants, or otherwise labeled. I will always be very grateful to all the participants of this study.

Overall, the co-teaching I observed in this study was extremely effective. The two participating teachers were both in their third year at this school. Both were graduates from a local university recognized for its strong urban teacher preparation programs. Ms. Jones had expertise in English as Second Language (ESL) and foreign language instruction, while Mr. Hastings was licensed to teach English Language Arts. The two teachers had different strengths and preparation, but they worked together to model culturally relevant teaching. They were engaged in inquiry and critical reflection. They became role models for the students and created a community of learners within the classroom. Both these teachers were highly dedicated as professionals and committed to

teaching all students in this urban setting. They created fair and equal opportunities for students to learn academic content. They scaffolded the students' development of positive identities, self-efficacy, and sociocultural agency. They accomplished this excellent teaching in spite of pressure from the school district to forefront test preparation and a prescriptive curriculum. As partners, the two teachers established and developed trust, communication, respect, rapport, and problem-solving with each other.

Seven focus students were chosen to participate in this study. These students were selected based on their enrollment in English 10, their diverse nationalities, their interest in participating in the study, and discussions between me and the teachers. It was my goal as a researcher to get a representative sample of the diversity of students at this urban school and to hear about their lives in their own voices. In the end, the group of focus students included two students who were not ELLs or immigrants, but members of minority groups who generally fare poorly in educational systems across the nation. I shared four important findings about these students in Chapter 6:

- 1) They all made observable growth as learners.
- 2) Their progress was spread out on a continuum of developmental characteristics.
- 3) The English 10 class became a community of learners.
- 4) The school climate supported student growth.

I considered the experiences of the students to be transformational in that they moved from fearing diversity to embracing it. They took on community support projects (social action) and came to trust and help one another in their learning processes. None of this was simple or automatic, but given effective instruction over the period of five months,

all the students developed more personal agency, sense of community, and academic success.

### **Limitations**

I used multiple strategies to increase the trustworthiness of this study. However, no researcher can claim his study is free of limitations. The most obvious limitation of this study was the lack of transferability of the outcomes that emerged. The narratives and findings of this study will always be specific to Thomas Aquinas and not generalizable to all urban schools. It is also worth noting that the teachers were co-teaching, and this might not be possible in all schools. Co-teaching is complicated. For example, Cook & Friend (2012) explained six different models of co-teaching including: a) One Teach, One Observe--One teacher teaches while the other collects data; b) Station Teaching--Instructors teach in different small groups; c) Parallel Teaching--The class is divided, and teachers instruct two groups; d) Alternative Teaching--A small group of students are selected for intense instruction by one teacher; e) Teaming--Both teachers teach class together in a fast paced manner; and f) One Teach, One Assist--One teacher teaches and the other assists individual students in class. With so many variations, co-teaching can be difficult and very complicated. This is not a practice which can be generalized to all urban schools.

My personal biases, as a teacher educator and an African immigrant who has become a naturalized citizen of the USA, also impacted this study. I came into this research with much knowledge about immigration, ELL status, visa applications, types of visas, including the history of assimilation patterns in the U.S. schools. I have

consciously avoided letting my positionalities and experiences override my data interpretations and the inquiry process.

Another limiting factor was the selection of the participants. I was happy to locate two teachers, one ESL specialist and an English teacher, and a very diverse student body with immigrants from all over the globe, yet no selection process is perfect. I wished I had more time to get to know the students better. As a researcher, I was fully absorbed in observing and recording data. My interactions with students, even in our informal discussions and focus groups, were limited. The focus group interviews were conducted with the help of the teachers. They helped me with translations since some Spanish speaking students were not fluent enough in English.

Finally, while this study was specific to immigrant students and ELLs, I did not specify their immigrant statuses like refugee, HB-1 visa, or any other. I was warned by the school district administrators not to disclose or explore the immigration status of the students. So any analysis of the impact of student's immigration status was not in this study, even though such information might have added insight into ways to improve the conditions for immigrant students and reduce disparities rampant in school systems today (Sleeter, 2013).

## **Principle Findings**

### **Teacher Instruction**

The first six findings were drawn from the instructional strategies I observed in class, instructional planning documents, my field notes, audio-recordings, and interview transcripts. I found that the teachers braved the prescribed curriculum from the district in a restricted environment and were able to:

- a) Use inclusive strategies to create fair and equal opportunities to learn academic content.
- b) Use inquiry and critical reflectiveness to drive learning.
- c) Incorporate culturally relevant learning resources and experiences.
- d) Hold high expectations and provide meaningful feedback. They viewed the immigrants and ELLs as diverse in talent and ability just like any other group of students and set appropriate, challenging learning goals.
- e) Build a community of learners wherein every student found his or her voice and acceptance. Teachers showed rapport, empathy and willingness to bridge the gaps between immigrants and non-immigrants, including linguistic, cultural, racial, nationality, and gender differences.
- f) Scaffold the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency. Through their shared responsibilities, teaching, and evaluation and assessment of students, they became role models to their students. (See Appendix J).

### **Teacher Support**

Teachers needed networks of support from within and outside the school. They knew they were on a continuum since learning never stops. During interviews, the teachers acknowledged that they benefited greatly from professional development opportunities within the school and those initiated by the district. They felt the need to look to the community beyond the classroom for support and connections. Although the two teachers had good support from each other, they opened up to other teachers, school administrators, and district supervisors to perform well. They realized the importance of building a community of support beyond the classroom. They also reached out to parents,

career experts, and examination experts for help and input. They even reached out to the legal experts to understand federal and legal laws pertaining to immigration policies in conjunction to their role as teachers.

### **Student Learning**

I found relevant growth in student learning despite the test driven curriculum in four categories:

- a) They became assertive and grew in their identities. They discovered their own beliefs and values and saw their environment in new ways with new prospects.
- b) They grew in their self-esteem. They came to believe in themselves more and became determined visionaries.
- c) Students developed intra- and interpersonal skills. They became more engaged in class and asked questions if they did not understand. This was huge because they became receptive to scaffolding from the teachers which was a tool that encouraged their growth in learning. They were concerned with the feelings of others and acclimatizing well to American life.
- d) They discovered that education was the key to their lives and worked hard to achieve good grades. They became open to scaffolding by their teachers and help from others in class. (See Appendix J).

### **Implications of the Findings**

#### **Teachers' Instructional Practices and Dispositions**

The importance of teachers' dispositions and instructional practices cannot be underestimated. Other studies have confirmed that fair and equitable dispositions combined with effective pedagogy of engagement produced positive effects on ELLs and



immigrants in schools (Cavan, 2008; Lee, 2012). Specifically, when the instructional approaches were culturally centered and promoted higher expectations, ELLs and immigrants experienced positive growth in their construction of self and identity and academic efficacy. Additionally, where teachers expressed care, rapport, higher self-efficacy, and used inclusive strategies to create fair and equal opportunities to learn, ELL students and immigrants experienced rapid transformational growth that met their teachers' aspirations. Of special significance, these changes in class at Thomas Aquinas were experienced not only by ELLs and immigrants but all the students. Within the individual student profiles, I saw a student with an African American dialect and also a Hispanic American both growing in self-efficacy and the construction of self and identity just like all others.

Educational research affirms that teachers' dispositions play a huge role in instructional practices and overall educational outcomes of students (Sleeter, 2013; Villegas, 2007). Teachers' personal habitual inclinations, attitudes, beliefs, and temperament have huge effects on how students learn and succeed.

Historically, students from low-income and racial/ethnic minority groups have scored lower on achievement tests, been over-represented in special education programs and lower academic tracts, and dropped out of high schools at a higher rate than their white, middle-class peers (Sleeter, 2013). Immigrants and ELL students in this study, however, reported that their teachers treated them with respect, facilitated the classroom as a community of learners, and designed their activities in a conversational model. This made a huge impact to their academic, social, and emotional learning. To be specific, there was

relevant growth in their academic achievement, identity development, and sociocultural agency.

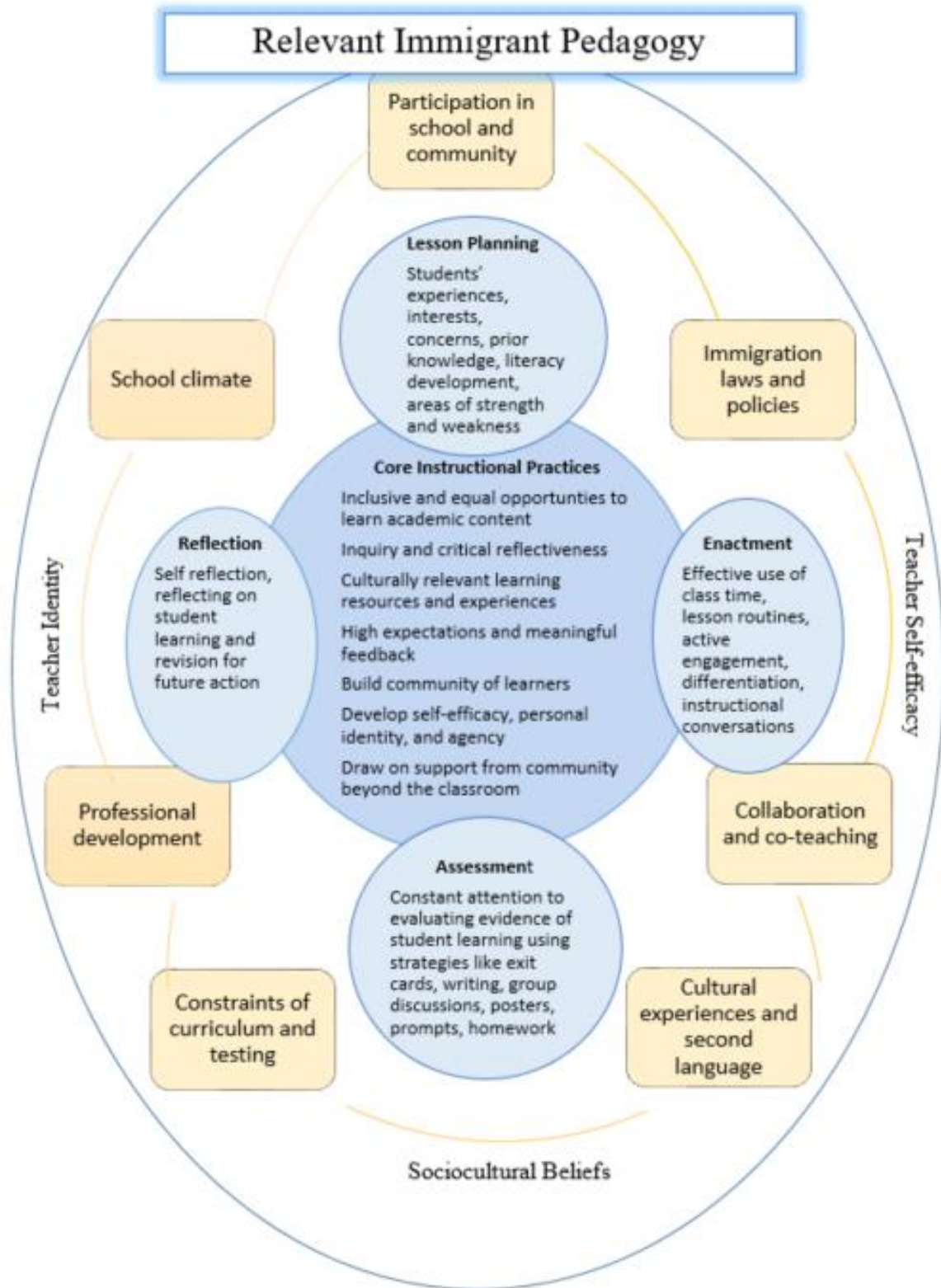
This suggests teachers could improve their teaching by integrating new activity with prior knowledge, introducing critical stance toward the status quo, and promoting conversational strategies at a higher rate (Berghoff, Blackwell, & Wisehart, 2011). In such classrooms, students can achieve academic efficacy and come to believe in themselves. When this “pedagogy of engagement” (Dotger, 2015) is fully implemented, teachers grow in their conception of identity and positive dispositions which in turn supports the positive identity growth and learning of all students in class.

### **Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy Model**

The following model (Figure 2) captures the big picture of how the core instructional practices of relevant immigrant pedagogy intersect with an ongoing cycle of instruction and assessment and the constraints and affordances of the school context. At the base of immigrant relevant pedagogy lies the teachers’ identities, self-efficacies, and socio-cultural beliefs. Great teaching depends not only on methodology and ideology, but also on teacher identity engagement (Danielewicz, 2003) which enables teachers to see teaching as a profession which is a state of being. It is not as simple as putting on a mask and acting on stage. Teachers need to understand they teach based on who they are. A teacher’s positive identity development has good effects on students in class. A teacher’s sociocultural beliefs are also important because students learn from their interactions with society and their culture. Teachers need to be prepared to scaffold students’ social interactions so they can stay positive and productive, as well as critical of the status quo. And finally, it has been shown that teachers with a very strong sense of

self-efficacy can transfer their abilities, skills, and knowledge to ELLs and immigrants in class (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010).

Figure 2. Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy



**Core-Instructional practices.** At the center of relevant immigrant pedagogy are instructional strategies which were found to be viable in the findings of this study. These practices are: a) inclusive and equal opportunities to learn academic content, b) inquiry and critical reflectiveness, c) culturally relevant learning resources and experiences, d) high expectations and meaningful feedback, d) build community of learners, e) develop self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency, and f) draw on support from community beyond the classroom. Like the researchers McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh (2013), I found that instruction enacting these core practices led to interactive, ongoing learning. These practices honored students' ideas about content and provided dignity and respect for the differences among the individual learners. The teachers were attentive to variation in students' strengths and needs and used assessment information in furthering individual learners' development. In English 10, the students grew in their learning and their construction of their identity and self and became able individuals determined to succeed.

**Instruction and assessment cycle.** Teachers who want to implement relevant immigrant pedagogy need to follow a process of planning, enacting, assessing, and reflecting on their teaching. In each stage of this process, there is a key question to consider:

Lesson Planning: What are students supposed to know and acquire?

Enactment: How is learning taking place (being enacted)?

Assessment: What did students actually learn?

Self-reflection: How did my instruction help/not help me and students grow in identity, sociocultural, self-efficacy, and academic proficiency? And how can I improve my practice?

The instruction and assessment cycle as it is described in this model was constructed from both what I saw the teachers doing in this study and educational research about effective teaching. I describe each stage in the following sections.

*Lesson planning stage.* Studies have shown that lesson planning is a critical component of enacting an effective lesson (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Ginsberg, 2005; Hiebert, Morris, Berk, & Jansen, 2007). During lesson planning, it is imperative that teachers prepare with a goal in mind of supporting all students especially immigrants to learn. According to Hiebert, Morris, Berk, & Jansen (2007), when teachers specify learning goals in any teaching episode, they will be able to know how this particular instruction achieved or inhibited students' growth and academic efficacy. Additionally, lesson planning becomes even more effective when it is prepared with the context in mind. This is because contextual lessons that connect to school and students' lives are most meaningful (Temmant, Leland, & Berghoff, 2014). When teachers integrate new activity with students' prior knowledge from home, captivating interests, their language and school context, the students are motivated and their learning achievement is higher (Ginsberg, 2005).

*Enactment stage.* By enactment, I mean effective use of class time within the activity of live instructing (Mc Donald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh, 2013). Researchers have named this stage as another crucial one because there is a lot of interaction and engagement with ELLs and immigrants (Samway & McKeon, 2007). During the enactment stage, teachers must continuously reflect on this major question: How is learning taking place or being enacted? By continuously reflecting on this question, teachers are able to adjust to meet the needs of individual students, without delaying the

enhancement of learning. It is during this stage that teachers introduce lessons, routines, and activities with clear goals. Then, teachers use differentiated instructional strategies and instructional conversations to teach through conversation in class (McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh, 2013). Mr. Hastings and Ms. Jones also set up routines like using a class agenda or asking “driving questions” followed by the routine of writing individually and then getting into groups to talk and share. These kinds of predictable and engaging strategies have been proven effective in many contexts (Cook & Friend, 2012; Echevarria & Wooding, 2006).

In differentiated instructions, immigrants and ELLs are grouped according to their levels of English proficiency, followed by instructional conversations. During instructional conversation, the lesson is designed and enacted in a very interactive manner with students talking at a higher rate than teachers while teachers carefully listen to assess and help students to understand concepts (Teemant, Leland & Berghoff, 2014). Enactment infused with core instructional practices have been very effective in enhancing students’ learning (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003).

*Assessment stage.* Effective teaching of immigrants and ELLs must empower them to become independent learners, through immediate feedback. Research on this has produced good results because teachers design classes with assessments that match learning objectives and methodologies that lessen sources of biases that can harm the outcomes (Ginsberg, 2005). According to Ginsberg (2005), assessment procedures which provide clear criteria for success with grading policies to everybody in class are motivational because teachers engage students in understanding and showing them superior work including robust descriptive feedback. Furthermore, teachers need to

gather enough evidence of learning by providing multiple ways of assessing in order to reach the required standards.

Results from this study too have revealed that the assessment strategies of exit cards, group writing projects and presentations, posters and displays including homework prompts have worked well and increased immigrants and ELLs' outcome. In order to provide more success, Hiebert, Morris, Berk, & Jansen (2007) have recommended that teachers during this stage continuously reflect on this major question: What did students actually learn? By continuously reflecting on this question teachers are able understand the learners' progress immediately, adjust and guide planning. Moreover, where learning goals are specified like this, teachers unveil to what extent each student has learned and are able to set goals for their learning.

*Reflection stage.* The final component of the proposed relevant immigrant model involves the prospects of self-reflection and reflecting on students' learning and conducting revision for future action. During this stage, teachers are engaged in introspecting about the whole process and their identity, learners' strengths and their needs in order to promote their growth. They construct a hypothesis that links teaching to immigrant students' learning. Successful teachers have used these major questions in their reflection and achieved great results: "How did my instruction help or not help me and my students grow in identity, sociocultural, self-efficacy, and academic pursuits? And how can I improve my future practices?" These questions improved learning success because teachers developed crucial judgment about when and how to engage learners in analyzing their own outcomes and setting concrete goals for their learning prospects (Hiebert, Morris, Berk & Jensen, 2007).



## **Teacher Preparation Programs**

The results of this inquiry imply that teacher preparation programs today need relevant conceptions regarding conceptual repertoires of diversity and constant engagement. According to Milner (2010), the curriculum taught must unmask the assertion of color blindness, cultural conflict, myths of meritocracy, deficient thinking and lower expectations which are prevalent prior entering the teacher education program. Teacher preparation programs (TPP) must bring awareness to candidates that teachers may hinder K-12 students' learning opportunities when they fail to consider that how their own race and that of their students affect their learning in class.

Furthermore, on issues of meritocracy, TPP must unveil institutionalized and systemic practices such as racism, sexism, classism, and discrimination that exist both in the society and classroom and how these influence education (Sleeter, 2013). In that way, new teachers will come to be careful not to blame marginalized students for realities beyond their control (Milner, 2010). They will instead design and enact instructions with clear goals, careful listening, higher participation from students, and proper assessment strategies with meaningful feedback (Dotger, 2015).

Teachers need to be well prepared for rigorous relevant content area knowledge and also how to transfer those skills and aspirations in clinical practice in authentic settings (McDonald, Kazemi & Kavanagh, 2013). This implies that the curriculum in TPP must be robust and at the same time put into practice in authentic classrooms with K-12 teachers of record. In authentic classroom, teacher educators can model teaching practices with pre-service teachers while classroom teachers watch. Then, teachers and preservice teachers work on an activity, anticipate students' responses and develop

questions and answers. On the other hand, teachers enact a conversational class with K-12 students while teacher educators watch with their preservice teachers and immediately provide feedback. However, toward the end, classroom teachers, together with preservice teachers, reflect on what they have learned and set up better plans for future class instructions.

The collaborative study of pedagogy suggested for teacher education programs is in line with the findings in this study. Ms. Jones had enormous practical field experience with immigrants and ELLs and a master's degree in urban education. She even went overseas (South Korea) to teach for a year which gave her the robust growth in her profession, cultural competency, critical reflexivity, and self-efficacy. She had the background she needed to do well with ELLs and immigrants. Mr. Hastings learned a lot from her. The opportunity for co-teaching was helpful for both him and the students.

### **Teacher Education Programs based on Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy**

In the following section, I review what researchers have suggested are key components for a teacher education program that prepares new teachers to teach relevant immigrant pedagogy. For an overview and additional explanation of these critical elements, please see Appendix I.

**Careful selection process of candidates.** Urban teacher programs should begin with an early admission screening process wherein carefully constructed questions reveal the dispositions of candidates. The program needs to find applicants who believe that all students can learn (Sleeter, 2013). Schools of education preparing urban teachers should make it clear on their website and program materials that they emphasize social justice matters in teacher education. The moral and ethical dimensions of teaching obligate

urban teachers to teach all students fairly with dignity and respect (Villegas, 2007). Moreover, history tells us that the U.S. educational system has favored one group while pushing the others, especially the lower income, racial/ethnic minority groups to the margins (Sleeter, 2013). During the in-person interview which is built on to the admission process, interviewers carefully seek credible evidences of applicants' beliefs about the educability of all students despite their socio-economic status, language, cultural, ethnic or racial makeup, nationality or creed. They are looking for candidates who can grow toward into that perspective (Villegas, 2007).

**Improved Urban Education Program.** Kennedy (2016, p. 16) describes the problem teacher education programs face in preparing urban teachers:

As teacher educators, we have never agreed on a curriculum for teacher education. Overtime, our programs have vacillated between providing the knowledge and dispositions that are prerequisites for teaching, on one hand, and on the other, detailing the specific practices that teachers should be using. In either case, we err toward didactic instruction, presenting our knowledge and our recommended practices as conclusions.

We may teach bodies of knowledge such as socio-cultural theory, learning theory, or motivation theory, all of which are relevant to teaching, and yet fail to connect these bodies of knowledge to any specific teaching problems, so that teachers retain these bodies of knowledge as compartmentalized and separate from their experience.

Many scholars agree that teacher preparation programs comprise a disjointed body of theoretical curriculum for learning to teach and also the pedagogy of teacher education (Kennedy, 2016; Sleeter, 2013; and Socket, 2009). McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh (2013) suggest that creating a common language and incorporating collective activity will help improve the practice of new teachers.

My urban curriculum program module would follow Milner's views (2010) that include relevant conceptual repertoires of diversity. That means once admitted into

teacher education programs, the curriculum taught to preservice teachers must unmask the assertion of color blindness, cultural conflict, myths of meritocracy, deficient thinking, and low expectations which are prevalent prior entering the teacher education program. In that way, teacher preparation can engage students in coursework with opportunities for preservice teachers to develop skills, dispositions, and knowledge that unveil institutionalized and systemic practices such as racism, sexism, classism, and discrimination that exist both in the society and classroom. Student will learn how these influence education (Villegas, 2007).

My proposed urban program would embody two aspects in pedagogy: pedagogy of formation of identity, self-efficacy, and sociocultural development; and pedagogy of enactment in authentic settings and rigorous content knowledge (Dewey, 1904; McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh, 2013). I believe that relevant urban educational program must be built toward building pre-service teachers' identity development, self-efficacy, and sociocultural development. Programs must help students develop self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence as teachers, including their sociocultural development as future teachers (Danielewicz, 2001; Pasco, 2003). Additionally, programs must be built on rigorous relevant content area knowledge and also the ability to transfer those skills and aspirations to clinical practice in authentic settings (McDonald, Kazemi & Kavanagh, 2013).

**Urban based field experiences.** The third component of the proposed model is urban based field experiences. Research has revealed that relevant field experiences have successfully been able to build bridges between theory and practice for recent graduated teachers (Sleeter, 2013). Moreover, field experiences become even more positive and

developmental when aligned to course content done at the university (Milner, 2009). In this research study, the results have revealed what I have brought to light in this program module: a) rigorous practicum immigrant preparatory experience b) robust critical urban education content knowledge c) more hands-on exposure with immigrant students and ELLs in a local school setting.

**Faculty mentoring and group support net-work.** The fourth component of the proposed module involves primarily a comprehensive support network from faculty mentors. Literature review has revealed the correlation between being an effective urban teacher for the first five years and continued mentoring and professional support throughout (Garret & Holcomb, 2005; Loughran, 2006). The notion of mentoring denotes the ongoing systematic community affair where pre-service teachers are assisted to reach out to others, gain knowledge and experience of how to work with diverse students especially immigrants in theory and practice. According to Loughran (2006), mentoring helps student-teachers to create ways of building critical conversations so that the actions followed lead to substantial progress based on goals set. In this way, through mentoring, pre-service and in-service teachers realize that teaching is a public good which prepares diverse generations to live in a socially just society (Garret & Holcomb, 2005). For that reason, my urban teacher preparation program components would model mentoring of pre-service teachers so that they learn through examples on how to work with immigrant students through observation, critique, and reflexive practices (Loughran, 2006). Mentors will help impart special skills to pre-service/in-service teachers through ongoing support, follow-ups, and refine their relationship skills, attitudes, and rapport to immigrant students in their practices (Loughran, 2006; Milner, 2009).

**Ideal teacher goal-set attributes.** In all educational program settings, candidates bring with them their personal, intellectual experiences about the globe, their thoughts, and feelings. However, in my program the final component of the proposed model is the well-established goal set for teachers who are well prepared as scholars professional, nurturer professional, the clinician professional and moral agent-professionals (Dewey, 1904; Sockett, 2009). As scholar professionals, urban teachers will be prepared with robust urban educational principles of both pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Cavan, 2008). As nurturer professionals, teachers will be prepared to care, nurture, and bring rapport to the vulnerable and disfranchised especially urban students, immigrants, and ELLs and know that their role is also to advocate for them (Villegas, 2002). As a clinician professional, my proposed urban teachers start with the work of the public teachers in a democratic society whose social purpose among others will be to work toward critical reflectivity and social justice. Their ideal character is brought about from their strong belief that knowledge assumptions, truths and beliefs and educational integrity must be based and guarded through rigorous collaborative research (Sockett, 2009). And lastly as moral agents, my program will model teachers to be well-prepared urban teachers who are defenders of moral integrity and integrate academic and moral virtues in class for exemplary development and growth of kids in class as good citizens of the globe.

**Learning never stops.** Teachers are in continuum. They will be given tools through professional development, seminars and collaborative inquiry to enrich themselves throughout their career (Berghoff, Blackwell & Wisheart, 2011; Loughran, 2006).

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

This qualitative research study was not designed to generalize all ELLs and immigrant students nor to exemplify them against all other minority groups. It was however intended to provide a snapshot of the experiences of urban students, especially ELLs and immigrants that have been conspicuous through instructional conversations, interactions of two highly qualified teachers, one ESL certified and one ELA certified at one particular class of urban high school. In light of these findings, I suggested the urban teacher preparation model that begins with the initial careful selection process of candidates, improved urban education program, urban based field experiences, mentoring, and goal oriented ideals of teacher attributes (see Appendix I). However, I recommend that future research be done to see how the model could transform urban teachers in their pursuits as effective teachers in class with ELLs and immigrants and also how students' social, cultural, symbolic capital, their nationalities, individual profiles, parental care, and other circumstances play a role in their growth.

Furthermore, during individual teacher data analysis, I noted that the instructor with ESL certification with foreign experience and certification and also higher education (master's degree) performed better in many categories than the one with ELA certified, no foreign language experience and with Bachelor's degree. For example, I noted that students suffered in class management and behavior in the absence of ESL certified teacher. Nevertheless, their good collaboration and co-teaching skills made a huge difference to students and the ELA certified teacher gained more confidence and skills day after day in the course of five months. The association of these factors need to be further explored.

Additionally, the findings in this study suggested that the core instructional practices used by teachers like: a) inclusive and equal opportunities to learn academic content (equity pedagogy); b) culturally relevant learning resources and experiences (centered instructions); c) high expectations and meaningful feedback (academic competency/rigor); d) draw on support from community beyond the classroom e) building community of learners and e) critical reflectiveness and inquiry; g) scaffolding identity, self-efficacy and agency (see Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy Model Fig. 6), effected great results to ELLs and immigrants in class after infusing them in lesson planning, lesson enactment, assessment, and reflection. However, more research is needed in using this model in other authentic settings apart from the Midwest where this study took place. In other words, more research is needed on how learning to teach ELLs and immigrant students can be linked to the course work and the overall Urban Teacher Education Program.

And lastly, the results of this study implied that pedagogy of the formation of sociocultural identity and self-efficacy enacted in authentic settings resulted to relevant immigrant students and ELLs' growth in their construction of self and identity, self-efficacy, sociocultural development and academic efficacy. Further exploration is needed to see if the same could be true to one specific immigrant group like Asians or Africans in the another location other than the Midwestern urban context in which this research was conducted.



## **Professional and Personal Take-Aways**

The findings from this study are informative about how to effectively structure relevant immigrant pedagogy for classroom teachers, students, teacher educators and administrators.

### **Classroom Teachers**

The key professional take-aways for teachers are that they should be aware that they are on a continuum of growth in sociocultural, self-efficacy and identity. That means when preparing lessons they need to use inclusive strategies to create fair and equal opportunities to learn academic content. This can be achieved through preparing lessons that allow students to talk and write in the first language and set up tasks that allow them enter at their level.

Secondly, teachers need to be builders of the community of learners in class where individual students find their voice and acceptance. Teachers need to respect cultural knowledge and involve parents and home situations. They should be the ones who bring about care, rapport, and advocate for their students (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Teachers need to hold high expectations and provide meaningful feedback to all students. As scholars of content knowledge, they must be professionally driven, and focus on rigor for all. Teachers need to use inquiry and critical reflectiveness to drive learning. This entails using collaborative inquiry and making good use of collegial participations to enrich themselves and at the same time be able to challenge mainstream perspectives. They need to look to the community beyond the classroom for support and connections. Relevant immigrant pedagogy becomes the ultimate vehicle for them to scaffold the development of self-efficacy, personal identity and agency.

## **Students**

For students, relevant immigrant pedagogy means accepting their sociocultural identity, self-efficacy, and using the units of study, lesson plans format and class procedures to enhance their transnational identity. They need to be aware that they are active agents in the learning process who should be eager to shape their own learning experiences and overall growth. That means the knowledge, skills, and experiences they get should be used to educate others and the community around. In other words, students need to practice the academic rigor developed in class and carry out class assignments by participating in local and international affairs. At the same time, just like teachers, students need to develop critical reflectiveness and get to know that learning never stops (Loughran, 2006).

Additionally, as second language and cultural learners, students need to be aware of respecting the cultural knowledge of others and participate in community building in class and school as whole. That means, they also need to advocate for themselves and others in this respect.

And finally, in their construction of identity and self, students should seek support from their teachers who are their mentors, seek support friends, and have a long term vision of being self-reliant in life.

## **Teacher Educators (Including Myself)**

A key professional takeaway for me and all teacher educators is the need to advocate for learning and growth experiences of immigrants and ELLs not only in urban schools but everywhere. As educators, we need to know the immigration laws and policies and use them to improve educational outcomes of our ELLs and immigrants. We

need to disseminate knowledge that relevant immigrant pedagogy is an instructional approach which depends on the identity and self-efficacy of a teacher. Correspondingly, we educators need to know that relevant immigrant pedagogy embodies developing professional development opportunities that incorporate culturally relevant learning resources and experiences. That means, providing a teacher education curriculum that has lesson plans which allow instructional conversations and writing in their L1 (first) language. In addition, educators need to be aware that relevant immigrant pedagogy embodies creating units of study that respect intellectual and cultural knowledge despite the constraints of the curriculum and testing demands. In this way, teacher educators come to understand and promote a curriculum that supports the units of study and lesson plans which support inquiry of both teachers and students. And lastly, teacher educators need to be aware that enhancing our profession means to look to the community beyond the classroom for support and connections. This connotes that relevant immigrant pedagogy embodies facilitating the education of the community around.

### **Administrators**

For administrators, one of the major takeaways is to self-evaluate whether the personal attitudes, cultural values, institutional process, and even the outcome effects of my profession are acting as educational oppression or not. According to Valencia (2011), some specifics to be evaluated for example are: cross cultural aspects, how they look at the curriculum, school climate, and the overall success and retention of ELLs and immigrants. Relevant immigrant pedagogy cannot be intensely focused on test scores but rather providing equitable conditions within the school or district that promote learning for all students (Sleeter, 2013).

Relevant immigrant pedagogy means pouring resources and supporting teachers in professional development that deepens the identity and self-efficacy of teachers. The school must provide the human, physical, and socio emotional, ethical and learning climate necessary to help all students, especially ELLs and immigrants to thrive. Administrators need to encourage schools to raise the prestige of home language by supporting teachers' use of lesson plans which allow students to talk and write in the first language and set up tasks that allow them enter at their level. Relevant immigrant pedagogy connotes supporting a balanced assessment system that is reflective of standard achievement while keeping in mind other factors like oral language and literacy development, sociocultural forces and personal and family factors (Samway & McKeon, 2007).

### **Final Thoughts**

I was fortunate to conduct this study in a school and classroom where relevant immigrant pedagogy was in practice. I saw co-teaching that was effective even though the teachers had different preparation and strengths. I only had data from seven students, but it was impossible to miss the fragile nature and complexity of ELL and immigrants students' experiences in this urban schools. I was reminded of the importance of education as a public good in a democratic society, especially for ELLs and immigrants. Relevant immigrant pedagogy proved to be transformative for both teachers and students. This study highlighted how core instructional practices of equity, culturally relevant resources, rigor, community, inquiry, and critical reflection became a form of advocacy for the immigrants and ELLs in class. All seven focus students in this study grew in their construction of self and identity, self-efficacy and academic efficacy as the result of the

two teachers who engaged in competent instructional approaches and respectful, meaningful class interactions. Furthermore, these principles and practices have proven to work well with other urban students, including an African American and a Hispanic American.

During daily lesson observations, I noted that the two teachers' pedagogy was based on inclusive learning practices that respected all learners and their individual differences. They provided meaningful, and yet very challenging learning experiences that included ELL and immigrants' experiences, their beliefs and values. They supported students by using self-assessment and grading policies that were accurate and fair to everybody (Ginsberg, 2005).

When I began this study many months ago, I entered Ms. Jones and Mr. Hastings' class with theoretical knowledge and abstract principles. Over the course of five months, I realized the importance of bridging theoretical and experiential knowledge with authentic practices and meanings in a specific context (Dewey, 1904). The findings in this study grew out of a classroom where pedagogy and learning were visible, and my theoretical framework served me well as a lens for viewing relevant immigrant pedagogy. Based on my experiences in this classroom, I am clearer than ever that urban teacher preparation programs are essential to the democratic and socioeconomic prospects of this nation (Ladson-Billings, 2000). ELLs, and immigrants need highly effective teachers like the two in this study (Clarkson, 2009; Delpit, 1988). When developing units of study, classroom procedures, and lesson plans, these teachers integrated academic language and literacy instructions with clear objectives that connected to students' experiences and needs (Echevarria, & Wooding, 2006).

Learning to teach today must involve learning to value immigrants as assets with individual uniqueness, cultural pluralism, and emerging new lifestyles (Borjian, & Padilla, 2010). Urban teacher preparation programs have a crucial role to play in shaping attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions of candidates who will touch future generations in the classrooms (Cavan, 2008; Patel, 2013). We know many of the critical components needed in a good urban teacher education program: careful selection of candidates, improved theory and content in the curriculum, a rigorous urban based field experience, careful mentoring, and well defined goals for teachers' attributes and abilities.

Beyond teacher preparation programs, we need educators in the schools who advocate for ELLs and immigrants. Schools and districts must work diligently to reduce and eliminate prejudice, biases and provide equal learning opportunity for ELLs and immigrants, thus minimizing the huge patterns of inequalities. A good education should be a public good with the potential to integrate everybody into the socioeconomic and political sphere of American life.

APPENDIX A  
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION RUBRIC FOR URBAN TEACHERS

Qualities	Emerging	Developing	Enacting
<b>General Definition</b>	Some if not a few elements of the standards are enacted	There is a general good enactment of the activities that are satisfactorily done	There is a skillful and very satisfactory enactment of the standards
<b>Cultural Competency</b> <b>(Ladson-Billings, 1995; Rogoff &amp; Gutiérrez, 2003; Villegas &amp; Lucas, 2007)</b> <i>(Displaying congruent attitudes, skills and behaviors of valuing diversity, ability to have cultural self-assessment, conscious of cultural dynamics in inter/intra-cultural situations, adaptability to diverse cultures and take initiatives of knowing surrounding cultures)</i>	Is able to at least create a culture of learning across culture, recognizing differences; avoids dispositions of exotizations; treat all cultural groups as individuals with respect and some passion.	Shows good sensitivity to individuals and group differences both in linguistic and cultural traits; Has a satisfactory understanding that culture has great effects on students cognitive learning; displays of some good knowledge of the surrounding culture and its influence on individual students	The teacher loves and accept one's culture and others Very satisfactory brings cultural traits of students in class as a vehicle for learning Very satisfactorily affirming cultural knowledge by inviting community residents for sharing Excellent use and value of home language and invites cultural scholars to share knowledge in class
<b>Academic Competency/Rigor</b> <b>(Dewey, 1904; Howard, 2006; Ladson-Billing, 1995)</b> <i>(Displays a great deal of content knowledge, enthusiasms; displays engaging in</i>	Provides some quality standards for students; shows that s/he has some great deal of contents knowledge and pedagogical knowledge; Able to design some	Generally shows satisfactory good enactments of pedagogical skills; Displays some knowledge on the curriculum in a cross-cultural set up; displays that s/he knows some legal rules for	The teacher show enthusiasm very satisfactory; Bring exciting events in class; Very satisfactory challenging lessons (High standards)

<p><i>content and skills, has a complete acquisition of content of skills in the subject and accomplish all this through challenging tasks and situated pedagogic styles)</i></p>	<p><b>challenging activities.</b></p>	<p><b>schools and how to relate to urban students including Ells and immigrants; Shows some knowledge of child development</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives are met very satisfactory Show academic responsibility to all students ; shows very strong belief that scaffolding can facilitate learning; displays that s/he satisfactory knows legal rules for schools and how to relate to urban students including ELLs and immigrants; Shows robust knowledge of child development</b></p>
<p><b>Critical Reflectiveness and inquiry stance (Berghoff, Blackwell, &amp; Wisheart, 2011; Delpit, 1988; Darling-Hammond &amp; Bransford, 2005; Zeichner, 1983).</b> <i>(Displays self-reflectiveness by challenging his/her own beliefs, values, cultural practices and structures around; Is aware that individual assumptions are constructed in culture and historical circumstances; shows the ability to</i></p>	<p><b>Shows some authenticity; can identify some problems and offer some suggestions; Can recognize some social, economic and political inequities; provides some practical and reflective assignments</b></p>	<p><b>Shows general satisfactory authenticity; can identify problems and satisfactory offer some good suggestions; Can satisfactory recognize social, economic and political inequities; Can satisfactory provide practical and reflective assignments</b></p>	<p><b>The teacher has a proper conception of self (authenticity) Ability to critique cultural norms, mores and values (challenge main stream knowledge). Can very satisfactory identify a problem, critique it and offer excellent suggestions (problem solving). Recognize social, economic and political inequities Beliefs in inquiry oriented learning</b></p>



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*see, judge and act even outside the box; Have the spirit of inquiry through collaboration for the sake of establishing the validity of truth)*

**Builder of a Community of learners/ Social relations (Dewey, 1904; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Ladson-Billing, 1995; Sleeter, 2013; Zeichner, 1983)**  
*(Can demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills with all diverse learners and promotes constant trust; Likable and brings sensitivity to student's needs, respect for everybody, dependable, has empathy; Shows that s/he understand the values and life of others)*

**Shows some fluidity in developing student-teacher relationship building; some constant demonstration of the connectivity with all students; some encouragement of students to learn collaboratively and show them that they are somehow all responsible to one another's learning in theory and practice; showing some care, valuing of diversity and social justice**

**Generally Shows good fluidity in developing student-teacher relationship building; generally constant demonstration of the connectivity with all students; Good general encouragement of students to learn collaboratively and show them that they are all responsible to one another's learning in theory and practice; Generally showing satisfactory care, valuing of diversity and social justice**

**and collaborative inquiry  
Very satisfactory provides practical and reflective assignments; Very satisfactory shows that learning never stops**

**The teacher has very satisfactory positive view of others.  
See themselves as members of the community  
Very satisfactory develops a community of learners; Very satisfactory promotes noncompetitive spirit or no individual achievement is enforced to students;  
Very satisfactorily shows care, values diversity and social justice considerations ;very satisfactorily collaborates with students, other teachers ,and members of the community ; highly favors putting theories into practice**

<p><b>Collaborating in scaffolding the development of identity, self-efficacy, and agency (Durgunoglu, &amp; Hughes, 2010; Muller, 2010)</b> <i>Scaffold the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency in their instructions and interactions by, showing skills of working together in sharing and planning in a classroom (collegial planning) which acts as a model to students in class; sharing the responsibilities of scaffolding students to meet their learning, emotional and career goals.</i></p>	<p><b>Good and show some constant demonstration of Scaffolding the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency in their instructions and interactions; good working relationship, generally connects well with the other ( collegiality)</b></p>	<p><b>Generally shows very good demonstration of scaffolding the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency in their instructions and interactions; very good working relationship, amicable and complements well in all settings</b></p>	<p><b>Exceptional skills of scaffolding the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency in their instructions and interactions; working together, very responsible and complements the other very well in all instructional and preparation stages; exceptional scaffolding techniques and opportunities for students to meet their learning, growth, and career goals.</b></p>
<p><b>Equity Pedagogy (Peguro &amp; Bondy, 2011; Samson &amp; Collins, 2012)</b> <i>Using strategies to help students achieve fair and equal opportunity to learn; interactions with no show preferential treatment of some or different students based on race, gender, immigration status, cultural and</i></p>	<p><b>Shows some good strategies in helping students achieve fair and equal opportunity to learn; makes some good provisions for students to learn; knows some assessment values of diverse cultures.</b></p>	<p><b>Generally shows good strategies to help students achieve fair and equal opportunity to learn, makes good provisions for individual students to learn; knows how to assess values of diverse cultures.</b></p>	<p><b>Very satisfactorily using strategies that help all students achieve fair and equal opportunity to learn; makes appropriate and timely provisions for individual students; brings multiple perspectives and robust appropriate</b></p>

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*linguistic heritage,  
nation or creed;  
Creating an  
environment where  
every student feel  
exceptionally safe  
and respected.*

---

**assessment  
practices fittingly.**

## APPENDIX B RECRUITMENT

### **Email to Recruit Teacher Participants**

Dear Teachers

I am an educational researcher from IU School of Education at IUPUI, a PhD. Candidate in the urban education program. I am in the process of designing a research project to be implemented for six weeks starting this semester. In collaboration and through mentorship with my dissertation chair, I want to work with you in order to find out more about what helps urban children, immigrants, and ELLs to effectively learn.

In this inquiry entitled, *Toward Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy: Teacher and Student Interaction in an Urban Classroom*, there will be no significant changes to the class daily routine except that I will be present as a researcher to observe, take field notes, and record the normal tasks and interactions. I am looking forward to exploring what it means to plan for instruction, interact meaningfully with students, and assess student learning and the school climate through classroom instruction.

If you decide to participate, we would need to meet two or three times before the inquiry begins to discuss the expected standards, your instructional plan, and what you see as meaningful interactions in the classroom. I would like to be in your class for six weeks, thus two weeks at the end of October, two weeks near the end of November and two weeks during the middle of January, 2016. During this time, I would be taking field notes and capturing the class conversations with audio recorders.

As a university researcher, I am required to obtain KC IRB-approved consent forms from your students' parents due to FERPA regulations. I am doing this research study to find out more about what helps urban children, immigrants, ELLs to effectively learn. The

findings will hopefully shade some light on whether or not urban teachers need to learn more out of their programs to be effective to ELLs and immigrants, thus developing principles and modules for effective urban teacher preparation program. I am hoping with this to help schools be better places for learning, so I will analyze the data I collect in your classroom, mining it for insights and examples of learning excellence I can share with other parents, educators, and community members.

Please give this opportunity some thought and get back to any of me with your questions.

Thank you,

Benedict Adams, PhD Candidate, IU School of Education at IUPUI

### **Letter to Parents**

Date

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Your child's teacher has volunteered to participate with IUPUI PhD student of Urban Education Studies, Benedict Adams, in trying to find out more about what helps urban children, immigrants, ELLs to effectively learn. There will be no significant changes to the class daily routine except that I will be present as a researcher to observe and record the normal tasks and interactions.

I will be in your child's classroom for six weeks thus, thus two weeks at the end of October, two weeks near the end of November and two weeks during the middle of January, 2016. I would like to observe the class, take field notes, and audio record class conversations with a voice recorder and not video. I will be coordinating this research work with your child's teacher and using audio recorders to capture much of the learning

activity that goes on when small groups of students interact with the teachers and one another.

I will take away and analyze data from your child only if you give permission to include him or her in our study.

I respectfully request that you read the *Informed Consent Statement* included with this letter. If I can include your child as a participant in my study, please sign one copy of the consent form and return it to school as soon as possible. The second copy is yours to keep.

If you have questions you wish to discuss, my contact details are: [REDACTED]

Regards,

Benedict Adams,

Researcher, Urban Education Studies, Ph.D. Candidate, IUPUI

### **Message from a Teacher to Parents about the Study**

Dear Parents,

The class has something to look forward to this semester. We will be joined by a Ph.D. Candidate of Urban Education Studies from IUPUI who is doing his research for his dissertation entitled: *Toward Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy: Teacher and Student Interaction in the Urban Classroom*. This inquiry will explore what is involved in planning, interacting, and carrying out effective instructions for English Language Learners and immigrants. The findings will be used to develop a framework and research based modules for effective teacher preparation programs in urban schools.

As a highly qualified teacher, I volunteered to participate in this study. I am so excited about the prospects and the contribution this will make to urban teacher preparation

programs and all schools as such. You will be getting a letter with more details about this and a consent form. I hope you will feel comfortable giving your permission to the researcher to collect data about your child's learning during his visit in our classroom. We all share a wonderful opportunity to make a contribution to excellence in education.

APPENDIX C  
CONSENT FORMS

Notification form: Parents

**INDIANA UNIVERSITY STUDY INFORMATION SHEET FOR**

**Toward Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy: Teacher and Student Interactions in an Urban Classroom**

You are invited to participate in a research study exploring what it means to plan, interact, and carry out effective instructions for English Language Learners and immigrants in an urban classroom. You were selected as a possible subject because your child is a student at Northwest High School who is taking ESL classes. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have.

The study is being conducted by Benedict Adams, a Ph.D. Candidate and Dr. Beth Berghoff, who is the dissertation chair.

**STUDY PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to explore what it means to plan, interact, and carry out effective instructions for English Language Learners and immigrants in an urban classroom. The findings will be used to develop a framework and research based modules for effective teacher preparation programs in urban schools.

**PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:**

Your child is not going to be asked to do anything that he or she is not already doing in the class during this six-week study, but the research will involve audio recording in class using a voice recorder (not video) for six weeks: two weeks at the end of October, two weeks near the end of November and two weeks during the middle of January, 2016.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS**

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study, as it will be carefully coordinated with your child's teacher to be seamless part of the class instruction. There is a risk that your child might feel nervous or shy when a researcher watches or records him or her working with other students or asks questions about his or her work and learning.

The presence of an unfamiliar person or voice recorder can make children feel shy or distracted. While students are used to recording devices in the classroom, the researcher will explain and get to know the students a little bit before introducing the device and explain their purposes in collecting work. The researchers will also be extremely sensitive to the response of students. If a student shows signs of discomfort, the data collection will stop so the learning is not compromised.

Be assured that the researchers are educators who are accustomed to working with teachers and children. They take the dignity of each individual and risks seriously. So all recorded information will be kept very confidential. The audio recordings will be kept for five years and data will be encrypted and hard copies will securely be locked in office cabinet.



All publications or presentations based on this study will be produced strictly for educational purposes such as developing modules for teacher preparation programs in urban schools and use pseudonyms for the schools, teachers, and students. No identifiable information, such as your student's name or personal information will be included in any publication or presentation.

There is also a risk of loss of confidentiality.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Your identity will be held in confidence in reports in which the study may be published.

Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include groups such as the study investigator and his/her research associates, the Indiana University Institutional Review Board or its designees, the study sponsor, and (as allowed by law) state or federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), etc., who may need to access your medical and/or research records.

All documents, artifacts, and electronic recordings collected in the data set related to this research will be stored in locked filing cabinets for the sole use of the co-researchers. Data will be kept for five years.

## **PAYMENT**

Your child will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

## **CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**

For questions about the study, contact the researcher Benedict L. Adams at [REDACTED] or Dissertation Chair, Beth Berghoff at [REDACTED].

For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact the IU Human Subjects Office at [REDACTED].

## **VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with Northwest High School. Your child's educational activities (including grades and class standing) will not be affected in any way by their participation in this study.

Consent Forms: Teachers:

## **INDIANA UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR**

### ***Toward Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy: Teacher and Student Interactions in the Urban Classroom.***

#### Form for a Participating Teacher

You are invited to participate in a research study of exploring of what helps urban children, immigrants, ELLs to effectively learn. The findings will hopefully shed some light on whether or not the urban teachers need to learn more out of their programs to be effective to ELLs and immigrants, thus developing principles and modules for effective urban teacher preparation program. You were selected as a possible participant because you teach at a participating high school and are a graduate of an effective urban teacher's preparation program. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

The study is being conducted by Benedict L. Adams, a Ph.D. Candidate of urban education studies at IUPUI, supervised by Dr. Beth Berghoff from IUPUI who is the dissertation chair.

#### **STUDY PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to explore what it means to plan, interact, and carry out effective instructions for English Language Learners and immigrants in an urban classroom. The findings will be used to develop a framework and research based modules for effective teacher preparation programs in urban schools.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:**

- Observe your class activities and take field notes for six weeks, thus two weeks at the end of October, two weeks near the end of November and two weeks during the middle of January, 2016
- Help to provide some course materials.
- Be audiotaped (no video) in the context of these activities.
- Be interviewed three times for at least forty minutes each about the impact of the overall project.

#### **RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:**

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study, but it is possible you might feel uncomfortable being audiotaped during classes. You may be asked to contribute time for the preparation, which may change your normal routines. The researchers are educators who are accustomed to working with teachers and children. They take the dignity of each individual and risks seriously. So all signed forms, documents (data as such) will be kept very confidential. The audio recordings will be kept for five years and data will be encrypted and hard copies will securely be locked in office cabinet.

You can always tell the researchers you feel uncomfortable and do not care to participate in any part or the entire research project. The researchers will work with you to minimize any negative feelings or experiences related to the research.

All publications or presentations based on this study will be produced strictly for educational purposes such as developing modules for teacher preparation programs in

urban schools and use pseudonyms for the schools, teachers, and students. We may use audio that are identifiable and have you contact us if you do not want this to happen.

### **BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:**

There is no direct guaranteed benefits, however this proposed study aims to find out more about what helps urban children, immigrants, ELLs to effectively learn, thus making substantial and original contribution to knowledge about urban teacher preparation, students and learning.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. If audio tapes of you or your work are to be included in educational publications or presentations, you will be asked for permission. I cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. The principal investigator who is my supervisor, Dr. Berghoff will make all research records available to the Indiana University Institutional Review Board or its designees and your personal information may be disclosed if required by law to state or federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

All documents, artifacts, and electronic recordings collected in the data set related to this research will be stored in locked filing cabinets for the sole use of the co-researchers. Data will be kept for five years.

### **COSTS/PAYMENT**

There is no cost or payment for participating in this study.

### **CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**

For questions about the study, contact researcher: Benedict L. Adams at [REDACTED] or Dissertation Chair, Beth Berghoff at [REDACTED].

For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact the IU Human Subjects Office at [REDACTED].

### **VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with the co-researchers, or with Indiana University.

### **TEACHER'S CONSENT**

In consideration of all of the above, I give my consent to participate in this research study.

I will be given a copy of this informed consent document to keep for my records. I agree that my child may take part in this study.

**Teacher's Printed Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

## **INDIANA UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR**

### ***Toward Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy: Teacher and Student Interactions in the Urban Classroom.***

#### Form for Parents

Your child is invited to participate in a research study that will take place in his or her classroom. All students in this class are invited to participate, because your child's teacher is participating. The research is being conducted by Benedict Adams, a Ph.D. Candidate and Dr. Beth Berghoff, who is the dissertation chair. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to let your child participate in the study.

#### **STUDY PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to explore what it means to plan, interact, and carry out effective instructions for English Language Learners and immigrants in an urban classroom. The findings will be used to develop a framework and research based modules for effective teacher preparation programs in urban schools.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:**

If you agree for your child to participate, he or she is not going to be asked to do anything that he or she is not already doing in the class during this six-week study:

- Actively participate in class and with a partner or in a small group.
- Be audio recorded in class using a voice recorder ( not video) while working for six weeks, thus two weeks at the end of October, two weeks near the end of November and two weeks during the middle of January, 2016.

#### **RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:**

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study, as it will be carefully coordinated with your child's teacher to be seamless part of the class instruction. There is a risk that your child might feel nervous or shy when a researcher watches or records him or her working with other students or asks questions about his or her work and learning.

The presence of an unfamiliar person or voice recorder can make children feel shy or distracted. While students are used to recording devices in the classroom, the researcher will explain and get to know the students a little bit before introducing the device and explain their purposes in collecting work. The researchers will also be extremely sensitive to the response of students. If a student shows signs of discomfort, the data collection will stop so the learning is not compromised.

Be assured that the researchers are educators who are accustomed to working with teachers and children. They take the dignity of each individual and risks seriously. So all signed forms, documents (data as such) will be kept very confidential. The audio recordings will be kept for five years and data will be encryption and hard copies will securely be locked in office cabinet.

All publications or presentations based on this study will be produced strictly for educational purposes such as developing modules for teacher preparation programs in urban schools and use pseudonyms for the schools, teachers, and students. We may use audios that are identifiable and have you contact us if you do not want this to happen.

### **BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:**

There is no direct guaranteed benefits, however this proposed study aims to find out more about what helps urban children, immigrants, ELLs to effectively learn, thus making substantial and original contribution to better understandings of ELL students and learning.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:**

All children in the classroom will be included into this study. However, if a student does not want to be in the study, he or she will participate in the class. Every effort will be made to diminish any differences between the students who participate in the study and those who do not. The researcher's presence in the classroom will be strictly for data collection and analyzing from students whose parents consent to their participation in the study. There is no consequence for nonparticipation.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Efforts will be made to keep your child's personal information confidential. All publications or presentations based on this study will be produced strictly for educational purposes such as developing modules for teacher preparation programs in urban schools and use pseudonyms for the schools, teachers, and students.

I cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Someone reading a publication or watching a presentation based on this study might recognize your child in the audio, as those records are impossible to alter. So if you do not wish for your child's audio recording to be used, contact the research team. Also, university researchers must make all research records available to the Indiana University Institutional Review Board or its designees, if required by law, and state or federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

All documents, artifacts, and electronic recordings collected in the data set related to this research will be stored in locked filing cabinets for the sole use of the co-researchers. Data will be kept for five years.

### **COSTS/PAYMENT**

There will be no cost or payment for participating in this study.

### **CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**

For questions about the study, contact researcher: Benedict L. Adams at [REDACTED] or Dissertation Chair, Beth Berghoff at [REDACTED].

For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact the IU Human Subjects Office at [REDACTED].

**VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. Your child will receive the same instruction in his or her class regardless of whether you choose to have him or her participate in this study. Data related to your child's learning will be collected and analyzed only if you sign this consent form. If you give consent, you may also ask that your child be removed from the study at any time. Simply express your wishes to one of the researchers named above.

**PARENT'S CONSENT**

In consideration of all of the above, I give my consent to participate in this research study.

I will be given a copy of this informed consent document to keep for my records. I agree that my child may take part in this study.

**Child's Printed Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Printed Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX D  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

**Interview Protocol 1: Teachers**

**1. Background: Lead off question:**

Could you please tell me about yourself, how you came to be interested in being a teacher, what life was for you as a young individual till you decide to be here?

Can you tell me how you decided to join the faculty here, your expectations on this diverse environment and how you are coping so far?

Can you tell me how you became interested in ELLs and working with immigrant students? Did you have any influence from parents or any immigrants in your life?

Tell me about your first year at this school after you graduated? So far, how are things going?

Can you take me through a typical day for you here at School?

**2. Philosophy of Teaching:**

Describe your experience in the teacher preparation program? Contrast, the best experience and the worst experience you had in the program?

If you could improve the program, what could you do?

How would you describe your philosophy of teaching today as compared to when you just graduated?

Can you describe to me what class management is for you now?

How is your teaching now? What are your expectations this semester?

**3. Nature of Experiences and Engagement**

How would you describe the level of engagement of different groups of students in this ELA class so far?

What do you think is leading to their engagement or lack of engagement?

Please describe to me the dynamics in all students' groups-ELLs, immigrants, natives?

Would you please describe to me how the school, parents, and community could play a role in this process?

#### **4. General Questions:**

Knowing what you know now, as you look back on the time that you've been here so far, is there anything that you would do differently as a teacher for ELLs and immigrants?

Please could you describe one of the challenging experiences with students, parents, and community and explain how you dealt with it?

Is there anything that I haven't asked you about that you think I should?

### **Interview Protocol 2: Teachers**

#### **1. Identity Questions: Lead off Question:**

Tell me how things are going for you since we talked last time?

How do you keep a healthy self for your effective human functioning in your busy professional and personal life?

In what ways is your personal journey as a teacher transformative to students in class, parents and the community around?

Can you describe to me how the knowledge about other cultures especially immigrant students and their home experience made you know more about yourself and hence prompted growth in your professional and personal life?

Please describe to me what has been your formative experiences related to race, ethnicity, immigration status, socioeconomic status etc., since you started this program up today?

Tell me how you could measure growth in problem solving skills in yourself and your students? How can a well prepared lesson help you with that growth?



To what extent do you think you can deal efficiently with unexpected problems especially when dealing with immigrants and ELLs?

## **2. Sociocultural consciousness:**

Learning is a social process because it comes about through interaction with society and culture, and teaching is facilitating because the space between students and teachers is active and fully alive. So in a typical instruction class, how would you plan and deliver a planned lesson in a way that you bring cultural traits of students in class as vehicles for learning?

Explain to me how you would express sociocultural consciousness in your class through 1) your class room management style; 2) instructional delivery; 3) content; 4) assessment practices

Can you describe to me what cultural competency means to you? How to implement cultural competency in a class of diverse learners especially immigrants and ELLs?

Could you please describe any one of the challenging experiences you met in implementing academic competency in class? Explain how you dealt with it?

How would you describe growth in sociocultural consciousness in yourself as an urban educator today?

## **3. Self-efficacy:**

When you are planning for this class, what are the levels of your goals, you had in mind and knowledge related to your students in mind?

Tell me about the cultural and academic background of all your students in your class.

How is your confidence in your ability and skills related to student engagement and a climate of high expectations?

How is your planning for this class different from the planning you do for any other class before?

Explain to me with an example, how certain are you that the skills and contents in this class are relevant locally and globally?

#### **4. Builder of a Community of Learners:**

Can you tell me how you would demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills with all your students?

Please describe one challenging experience with building social relations you have met with your students and how you dealt with it?

Please tell me your strategy for constructing mutual relationships with parents in everything including decision processes? How did you deal with the challenges which crop in?

Describe how you have evolved in developing a community of learners in your class which has so many competitive students, different characters; high variations of intellectual skills, including variations in English language ability?

Describe how is building a community of learners made you become more fully human over time within your role as teacher, nurturer and scholar?

Describe using your own experience what characteristics of good teachers should be for ELLs and immigrants?

#### **5. General Questions:**

We talked about this some last time, but I'd like to ask about it again: Can you tell me how you became interested in becoming ELL teacher and immigrant students? Why is this important for you?

Let me ask you to think about the next several years that you'll be spending here;  
What are you looking forward to in your time here?  
What are you concerned about?

Could you please tell me how your program of study helped you affirm yourself as an effective urban teacher of ELLs and immigrants? And how do you think the program helped you to affirm the identities of your students?

Describe to me how your program of study (learning to teach) has assisted you to develop critical consciousness, self-efficacy, and pass it to your students in class?

In this age of high-stakes accountability, what would your views be on the successful or effective urban teachers program to immigrants and ELLs?

Can you tell me what social and personal and even pedagogical change has developed in you throughout your journey as a teacher up today?

To what extent do you think your students in this class will connect this lesson to their prior knowledge and experiences?

What advice would you give to young teachers who would like to follow your steps?  
Do you have any questions you'd like to ask me?

### **Interview Protocol 3: Teachers**

#### **1. Identity Questions: Lead off Question:**

Teachers teach what they have and who they are. How is your identity portrayed in your lesson planning and interactions, instructional processes, and student assessment? How do you connect your identity and students' prior experiences?

To what extent do you envision your students integrating reading, writing, listening and speaking skills during your content classes? How do you think your identity plays a role or does not play a role in that?

Do you become frustrated at times when dealing with your students? What mainly brings about your frustrations and how do you deal with it? Do you think your teacher preparation program prepared you well with that? How?

How do you think your students have been helpful in the process of building your self-concept and academic growth?

How is your identity portrayed when you are adjusting the curriculum in this context?

To what extent do you feel confident in providing a positive learning environment and create a climate characterized by high expectations?

## **2. Sociocultural consciousness:**

When preparing/planning your lessons; how do you construct yourself in terms of the high-stakes accountability standards required today with the values, beliefs of your diverse students? (or how do you connect these two?)

To what extent is the lesson plan effective, rigorous and engaging for all learners when designing it?

What does good/effective instructions mean to you?

How do you know that the students have understood the lesson taught?

Traditional pedagogy has been criticized for assimilating immigrants and ELLs into the main stream culture rather than valuing their individual differences and prior knowledge and experiences. To what extent do you think your instructions have been distinct, thus portrayed a balanced sociocultural immigrant pedagogy?

## **3. Self-efficacy:**

Provide to me at least two case scenarios/vignette/story/narrative which portray your confidence in skills to effectively communicate with parents and guardians of immigrant students or ELLs.

Please describe in what way you have felt comfortable in reflecting on the new information provided by your co-teachers and students, demonstrated your ability to apply new ideas to your own practice? Would you mind, providing any example on that? Please provide a case summary or narrative of how you helped an ELL/immigrant student go through acculturation process/social life/cultural shock. How did you see or measure growth at the beginning of term, middle and end of term/semester? How did you as a teacher feel at the end?

#### **4. General Questions:**

Describe to me a significant narrative (story) in class in which society values, beliefs or cultural traits of students, yourself or other students have meet. How has that been a learning experience for both of you and students?

Explain how you as a teacher seem to have grown in socio consciousness? What about your students? What has contributed to this growth?

Give me a case scenario in which your perspective has changed after planning and instructing a unit and done post assessment practices?

No teacher preparation program is perfect. In fact the curriculum or schools or teacher preparation programs in literature are being blamed for educational disparities systemic today in our schools. Please point out seven to ten themes or points which you have seen in your preparation as ESL teacher which are irrelevant, or spread educational oppression, or lead to school failure of ENLs, or spread disproportionality?

Here is a paradox in education today concerning immigrants. According to Kao, Vaquera, & Goyette, (2013); and Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008), the more the children of immigrants assimilate, the likelihood of educational problems and failure

increases. Do you think your experience in this project has made a difference in students?

Describe how or how not?

Is there any question you want to add on this?

### **Focus Interview Prompts for Students**

#### Interview Protocol 1: Identity and Physical Climate

#### **Grand Question: Tell me more about yourself.**

##### Prompts:

Tell me how you identify yourself ethnically, racially, culturally, and linguistically?

Where you and your family are from originally?

Describe your experiences with your identity as ELL or immigrant here at school. What role is the community here, your family and friends do to enhance this experience?

Describe your general school climate experience here at TAS?

Explain to me how you feel in terms of your safety at this school?

Specifically, tell me about your interactions with peers, groups and your safety on this school property?

How is the staff and faculty here impacting your time in school?

Describe to me your thoughts about school's climate and philosophy about diversity?

Explain, what it means to you being denied a healthy identity development"? Tell me if you ever felt like this at this school? How did you deal with it?

Please share with me your thoughts about cultural pluralism in your school?

Tell me about your life before coming to this school at TAS?

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Outside the school, what are your hobbies?

What are your goals?

Why do you think it is important for you to come here and study?

Interview Protocol 2: Sociocultural, Self-efficacy, and Socio-emotional Climate

**Grand Question: Tell me more about your experiences at this Community High school.**

Prompts:

How do you experience your ELL or immigrant status differently in different areas of school environment?

Tell me more about your interactions on school environment?

Do you feel visible on school environment?

You are using technology in this class. Do you think it is helpful to uplift you? How and why?

Tell me more about diverse student groupings on campus?

Explain to me the ideal social climate at this school?

Explain to me what it means to have the ideal sense of belongingness and self-esteem?

In what ways are your teachers helping or not helping you to have a sense of belonging and self- esteem?

To you, what does it mean to have a school that prioritizes diversity and welcomes all cultures?

Tell me what self-esteem means to you?

Have you ever felt low self-esteem here at school? If so, what made you feel like that?

What do you think multicultural awareness or growth means to you?

How do you think the school climate is vested in promoting or not promoting multicultural awareness?

Explain to me your ideal socio-emotional climate at this Community High School?

Tell me how this learning experience has made you a different person in this school, locally, and globally?

Interview Protocol 3 Wrap up/Exploring Learning and Ethical Climate

**Grand Question: Tell me more about your learning, instructional strategies and ethical climate at your School.**

Prompts:

How is the school environment committed or not committed to your learning as ELL or immigrant student?

Have you experienced road blocks to your academic growth? How did you overcome them?

Tell me more about the school's learning climate and how individual learning growth and assessment practices are respected?

In lesson delivery, do you feel you have enough support with contents paced appropriately? Why?

During your content class, what part of activities and interaction did you find most satisfying?

Tell me your experiences with the two teachers' interactions, assessment styles, and a variety of tasks they provided? How helpful or not helpful was it for you?

What parts of the project helped you most with learning not only English but being more human and function in this American life and even globally?



What impact has the school's ethical climate have on you as ELL or immigrant?

How do you know that your school encourages high academic expectations?

What do you think good planning, good teaching, and effective assessment mean to you as ELL or immigrant?

Is there anything else that you would like to share?

APPENDIX E  
STRUCTURED OBSERVATION-TEACHER EFFICACY

**Observation Rubric**

1. Preliminary observations of the setting/class arrangement: Keep note of the physical environment. How the room looks like, any decorations, the nature of the lesson taught, the format (lecture, one to one or small group)? And keep note of the racial/ethnic or demographics of the students.
2. Write a comprehensive description of teachers' instructions, the interactions patterns, student responses and other events in the classroom.
3. Upon completion of observation, ask the teacher about any lingering questions and thank the teachers for their time.
4. As soon as possible, describe your impressions of the classroom observed with special focus on the followings:

**-How would you Characterize Professional Dispositions of Teachers?**

- a. Committed to students of all background and ability levels and fosters inclusiveness.
- b. Full of initiatives, enthusiasm and very confident
- c. Treat all students with passion, kindness, rapport and dignity
- e. Friendly and all business
- f. Warm/cold to some students
- g. Give some specific examples from your observation about your impression

**-How would you describe the Teachers' Knowledge over Cultural Competency?**

- a. Evidence of interactions with all cultural groups, immigrants and ELLs
- b. Statements underlying cultural affirmation
- c. Culturally assessment practices were used in class including some native language

- d. Displaying attitudes, skills and behaviors of valuing diversity.
- e. Not really aware or developing, and emerging good sensitivity to individual cultural and group differences
- f. Give some specific examples from the observation about your impression

**-How would you describe Academic Efficiency of the Teachers and the Management style?**

- a. Displays a great deal of content knowledge, engaging in content and skillful pedagogic styles
- b. highly interactive with all students/ high lecture with few interactions
- c. Enough literature used grounded on all cultures/ Not enough literature used grounded on a variety of cultural groups
- d. Shows satisfactory knowledge of cross curricular set up and some legal rules on ELLs and immigrants/ shows enacted knowledge of cross curricular set up and legal rules on ELLs and immigrants.
- e. Warm/cold and moderate efficiency.
- f. Give some specific examples from the observation about your impression

**-How would you characterize the Instructors' Critical Reflexivity and Personalized Learning?**

- a. Display self-reflectiveness by challenging their own beliefs, values, cultural practices and structures around.
- b. Have a spirit of inquiry through collaboration for the sake of establishing the validity of truth.

- c. The lesson is developmentally appropriate and reflects student's strengths, interests and diverse needs/ not developmentally appropriate and doesn't reflect diverse students' strengths and interests
- d. Activities in class address multiple styles of learning and attract attention/ Activities in class do not address multiple styles of learning and do not attract attention.
- e. Assignments and assessment strategies are authentic/ not authentic and recognizes/does not recognize current problems of ELLs and immigrants in schools.
- f. Give some specific examples from the observation about your impression

**-Describe the responses of Learners during the session?**

- a. Highly engaged/bored
- b. Focused on one teacher/ focused elsewhere
- c. Very quiet/ disruptive and noisy
- d. Some folks dominating/none dominating
- e. None of the above
- f. Give some specific examples from the observation about your impression

**-Did you observe preferential treatment of some or different Students?**

- a. Individual students were preferred and treated differently
- b. Differences by race
- c. Differences by gender
- d. Differences by immigration status
- e. Differences by cultural and linguistic identities
- f. Give some specific examples from the observation about your impression

APPENDIX F  
DATA COLLECTION CHART AND ANALYSIS

**Data Collection Chart and Analysis**

**Grand Question: What is the nature of urban students' experiences especially, English Language Learners, and immigrants during Grade 10 class at Thomas Aquinas High School?**

<b>Sub Questions</b>	<b>Data Collection Strategies</b>	<b>Data Analysis Strategies</b>
How does instruction support learning in this class with immigrants and English Language Learners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Curriculum resources</li> <li>• Instructional planning documents ( lesson plans)</li> <li>• Observations</li> <li>• Audio-recordings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NVIVO 9 qualitative research software</li> <li>• Strategic guided questions as found on page 50-51</li> <li>• Miles and Huberman interactive Model ( 1994)</li> </ul>
How does the school climate support learning in this class with immigrants and English Language Learners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Work samples,</li> <li>• Observations of immigrants and ELLs</li> <li>• Individual case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NVIVO 9 qualitative research software</li> <li>• Strategic guided questions as found on page 50-51</li> <li>• Miles and Huberman interactive Model ( 1994)</li> </ul>

APPENDIX G  
INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Month	Day	Activity
September	14 –Monday	Class Observation and audio recording and Teach. Intv.1
	15- Tuesday	Class Observation and audio recording
October	20 –Tuesday	Class Observation and audio recording
	21-Wednesday	Class Observation and audio recording and St. Focus Intv.1
	23-Friday	Teach. Intv. 2
	26-Monday	Class Observation and audio recording
	27-Tuesday	Class Observation and audio recording
November	9-Monday	Class Observation and audio recording; and St. Focus Intv.2
	10-Tuesday	Class Observation and audio recording
	30-Monday	Class Observation and audio recording
December	1- Tuesday	Class Observation and audio recording
	2-Wednesday	Class Observation and audio recording
	4-Thursday	St. Focus Intv.3
	7- Monday	Class Observation and audio recording
	8- Tuesday	Class Observation and audio recording
	14-Monday	Teach.Intv.3
January	8-Monday	Class Observation and audio recording, Final group St. Focus and Teach-Intv.

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February	2-Tuesday	Class Observation and Member checks
March	16-Wednesday	Final Class Observation and Member checks

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*Note:* St. Focus Intv.: Student Focus Interview. Teach. Intv.: Teacher interview

APPENDIX H  
CODES AND THEMES

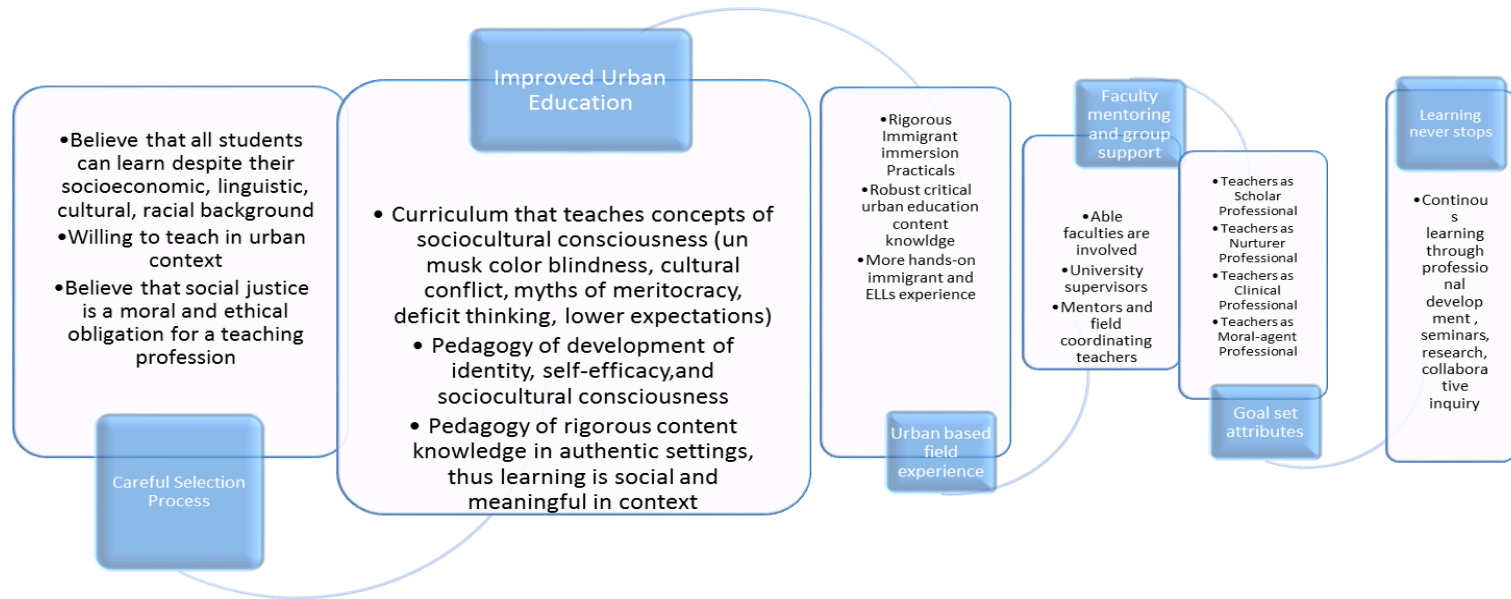
Code Description	Code Symbol
<b>Students' Relevant Growth Experiences</b>	<b>SGEXP</b>
Relevant Growth Experiences: Academic Competency	RGE: AC
Relevant Growth Experiences: Self-efficiency	RGE: SE
Relevant Growth Experiences: Construction of Identity and Self	RGE: I & S
Relevant Growth Experiences: Socio Cultural Development	RGE: SC
<b>Core instructional Practices</b>	<b>CIP</b>
Cultural Competency/ Culturally Centered Instruction	CC
Academic efficacy/competency	AE
Critical Reflectiveness and Inquiry Stance	CR&I
Builder of Community of Learners	BOCL
Equity Pedagogy	EP
Building Community Beyond Classroom	BC
Scaffolding identity, self-efficacy and agency	SIA
<b>Individual Teacher Comparison</b>	<b>ITC</b>
Teachers need network of support	TS
Teachers are in a continuum	TC
<b>Relevant Immigrant Pedagogy</b>	<b>RIMP</b>
<b>Program Model for Urban Education Program</b>	<b>PMUEP</b>

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Final Stage: Codes Collapsed to Themes



## APPENDIX I PROGRAM MODEL FOR URBAN EDUCATION PROGRAM



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### Quick Explorations of the hierarchy:

1. Careful Selection Process
2. Improved urban Education program is divided into two categories: Curriculum of conceptual repertoire of diversity and Pedagogy of teacher education ( see explanations in the diagram)
3. Urban Based Field Experiences embodies rigorous immigrant immersion practical experiences, robust critical urban education content knowledge, and more hands-on immigrant and ELL experience.
4. Faculty Mentoring and Group support net-work
5. Goal-set Teacher attributes: Scholar professional, Nurturer professional, Clinical professional and Moral-agent professional.
6. Learning never stops. Teachers are in a continuum

APPENDIX J  
TABLE OF THE SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

<b>Components</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>
<b>Teachers’ Nature of Instruction ( Core instructional Practices)</b>	Teachers used inclusive strategies to create fair and equal opportunities to learn academic content. For example;	Equity Pedagogy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions did not show preferential treatment of some or different students based on race, gender, immigration status, cultural and linguistic heritage, nation or creed</li> <li>• Created an environment where every student felt safe and respected.</li> <li>• Pacing the lessons appropriate for students levels,</li> <li>• Activities integrated all language skills, a variety of techniques were used to make the content clear,</li> <li>• Gave chance to those who did not speak to do so in the middle and toward the end of class.</li> </ul>	
	Incorporated culturally relevant learning resources and experiences by	Culturally Competency/culturally centered instructions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming handshakes, relevant cultural artifacts,</li> <li>• Voicing cultural affirmation,</li> <li>• Lessons contextualized to reflect culture,</li> <li>• Students’ language incorporated into learning environment,</li> <li>• Sensitive to community and cultural norms</li> </ul>	
Hold high expectations and provided meaningful feedback by	Academic Competency/Rigor	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believing that all students can learn at a higher level</li> <li>• Focusing on high risk</li> <li>• Planning lessons at their level</li> </ul>	
	Used inquiry and critical reflectiveness to drive learning by	Critical Reflective

- 
- Critical with district to respect needs of students,
  - Said no to supporting the status quo which is alienating or oppressive,
  - Instructions lay out which included active dialoguing, questionings and building on responses from students in order to deepen their understandings,
  - Teachers challenged their own beliefs, values and cultural practices and the structures around

Build a community of learners wherein every student finds his or her voice and acceptance. For example,

Community Building

- They showed no preferential treatment of individual students or groups
- Lessons were designed for students to work together
- Students share personal experiences

Scaffold the development of self-efficacy, personal identity, and agency in their instructions and interactions. For example,

Identity, self-efficacy, and agency

- Showed skills of working together in sharing and planning in a classroom (collegial planning) which became a model to students in class
- Shared the responsibilities of scaffolding students to meet their learning, emotional and career goals
- Meet twice a week evaluating and assessing instructions for future action so that they provide students space to gain social capital.

**Individual  
Teacher  
Comparison**

Teachers need networks of support from within and outside.

Collaborative Inquiry

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- 
- They came to like the idea of collaborative inquiry
  - Teachers acknowledged to have benefited a lot from professional development practices within the school and those initiated by the district in this set-up.

Look to the community beyond the classroom for support and connections. Realized that learning never stops. For example,

- Acknowledged the importance of rigorous ELL and immigrant experience and more hands on exposure
- Reached out to parents, career experts, immigration experts, examination experts for help and in put

Community building beyond classroom

**Students’  
Relevant  
Growth  
Experiences**

- They became assertive and grew in their self-concept.
- Discovering a sense of beliefs and values and saw their environment in a new way with new prospects,
- Opening up, volunteering and participating more in class, seeking support from teachers ( looking at them as mentors),
- Having a vision of becoming self-reliant in their future

Construction of identity and self

- They grew in their self-esteem.
- They came to believe in themselves more and became determined visionaries,
- Developed determination to have a better future and started looking

Self-efficacy

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and preparing for better paying jobs

- Students developed intra and interpersonal skills. Sociocultural consciousness
  - They became more engaged in class and asked questions if they did not understand. This was huge because they became receptive to scaffolding which was a tool that encouraged their growth in learning.
  - They were also became concerned with the feelings of other and acclimatizing well to American life
  - They discovered that education is the key to their lives and worked hard and achieve good grades. Academic competency/rigor
  - They became open to scaffolding by their teachers and help from others in class (developed academic competency)
-

APPENDIX K  
STUDENT'S RELEVANT GROWTH: ACADEMIC COMPETENCE

	<b>Sept. Grade</b>	<b>Oct. Grade</b>	<b>Nov. Grade</b>	<b>Dec. Grade</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
<b>Julissa</b>	F	D-	D	C+	B
<b>Arturo</b>	F	C-	C+	B	B
<b>Carlos</b>	F	F	D-	B	B-
<b>Quang</b>	A-	A	A	A	A
<b>Jaylen</b>	D	C+	B+	A	A
<b>Elizabeth</b>	A	A	A	A	A
<b>Sabeen</b>	B	B	A-	A	A-

APPENDIX L  
CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES AMONG STUDENTS

<b>Relevant Growth: Construction of Identity</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Emerging</b> <i>(Displays some if not a few elements of the standards are enacted or noticing potential of standards are enacted)</i>	<b>Developing</b> <i>(There is a general good enactment of the capabilities that are satisfactorily done, or some evolving in nature)</i>	<b>Enacting</b> <i>(There is a maximum performance standard and very satisfactory enactment or action toward final accomplishment)</i>
Julissa	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes		
	Mid Semester		Yes	
	End of five Month Semester			Yes
Arturo	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes		
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five month semester			Yes
Carlos	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes		
	Mid Semester		Yes	
Jaylen	End of Semester			Yes
	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes	

	Mid Semester		Yes	
	End of five month semester		Yes	
Elizabeth	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes	
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five month Semester			Yes
Quang	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes	
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five month semester			Yes
Sabeen	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes	
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five month Semester			Yes
<b>Relevant Growth: Self-efficacy</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Enacting</b>
Julissa	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes		
	Mid Semester		Yes	
	End of five		Yes	



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Arturo	month semester <b>Beginning</b>	Yes		
	Mid Semester		Yes	
Carlos	End of five month Semester <b>Beginning</b>	Yes		Yes
	Mid Semester		Yes	
Jaylen	End of five month Semester <b>Beginning</b>			Yes
	Mid Semester		Yes	
Elizabeth	End of five month Semester <b>Beginning</b>			Yes
	Mid Semester		Yes	
Sabeen	End of five month Semester <b>Beginning</b>	Yes		Yes
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five			Yes

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Quang	month Semester <b>Beginning</b>		Yes		
	Mid- September			Yes	
	End of five month semester				Yes
<b>Relevant Growth: Socio-cultural Consciousness</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>		<b>Enacting</b>
Julissa	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes			
	Mid Semester		Yes		
	End of five month Semester			Yes	
Arturo	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes			
	Mid Semester			Yes	
	End of five month semester			Yes	
Carlos	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes			
	Mid Semester			Yes	
	End of five month Semester			Yes	
Jaylen	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes		
	Mid Semester			Yes	

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	End of five month semester		Yes	
Elizabeth	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes	
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five month Semester			Yes
Sabeen	<b>Beginning</b>	Yes		
	Mid Semester		Yes	
	End of five month Semester			Yes
<b>Quang</b>	<b>Beginning</b>		Yes	
	Mid Semester			Yes
	End of five month semester			Yes

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Zeichner, K. (1983). Alternative paradigms of teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(3), 3-9.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**BENEDICT L. ADAMS**

### EDUCATION

**Indiana University, Indianapolis, IN, September, 2016**

Ph.D. in Urban Education Studies  
Minor: Teacher Education

**Research Interests:** Teacher Education and Culturally Responsiveness, Teacher Preparation and Diversity, Culturally Responsive Assessment and Evaluation Practices, Urban Education Studies and International Migration, Critical Ethnography and Case Study Designs, Curriculum and Instruction, and Secondary Science Methods.

**Indiana University, Indianapolis, IN, December, 2012**

Master of Science in Secondary Education

**Suffield University, Twin Falls, ID, August, 2005**

Bachelor of Art in Education  
Minor in Science Education

### UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Associate Instructor: IU School of Education at IUPUI, Indianapolis, Indiana,**  
August, 2015-Present

- Developed the curricular framework, modules, and co-taught Middle School STEM Methods Class of Woodrow Wilson Scholars and Transition to Teaching Candidates (EDUC-S509).

**Associate Instructor: IU School of Education at IUPUI, Indianapolis, Indiana,**  
August, 2013- May, 2015

- Developed and taught the undergraduate fundamental course called: Examining Self as Teacher (EDUC-F 200)
- Developed the curricular framework and co-taught Middle School Content Methods Course for Transition to Teaching Students and Woodrow Wilson Scholars (EDUC-S 505).

**Practicum: Practical Instruction and Research, IU School of Education at IUPUI,**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana, Aug, 12- December, 12**



- Conducting practical internship instructions with Secondary Undergraduates of Teacher Education Students in a Diversity and Learning Course (EDUC-M322).
- Observed the classroom with active participation for my qualitative research project entitled:  
Preparing pre-service teachers to understand the values and concepts of diversity in their classroom practice.

**College Instructor, St Boniface College, Namibia, South West Africa Jan, 99-Dec, 00**

- Developed a curriculum for the undergraduates which included scientific methods of research skills, research design and project evaluation.
- Taught sociology and social problems to a class of 40 students of diverse background and this included instructions like sociological approaches and interpretations, conflict theory and structural functionalism.
- Assessed and evaluated students' progress according to the syllabus and course objectives.
- Prepared the coursework and co-taught Biology to a class of 30 students

**College Instructor, University of Namibia, South West Africa Feb, 98- Dec, 98**

- Designed a curriculum for the undergraduates in Introduction to Ethics, Biomedical Ethics and Moral theology.
- Taught Educational Scientific Methodology which included qualitative data collection strategies, perishable art of writing up to research proposal.
- Solely managed a class of 40 students which involved monitoring and evaluating their academic progress in meeting University college standards and degree requirements.
- Conducted end -of- semester dismissals deciding which students would no longer be enrolled in the university educational program.

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- Adams, B., & Portillo, W. (2014, May 22). Immigration, citizenship, language, and power. Presented at Critical Race Studies in Education 8th Annual Conference at Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, TN.

- Adams, B. (2014, September, 20). Policies for Culturally Responsive Assessment and Evaluation. Round Table Session presented at the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment Conference at the College of Education at Urbana, Chicago, Illinois.

### **ALTERNATIVE PUBLICATIONS**

- Adams, B. (2014, February 2). Urban Education Reform: Past, Present, Future. Blog authored through KI Eco Center. Retrieved from [kiecocenterorg.ipage.com/.../the-character-of-urban-education-reforms-from-1890-1940-past-as-compared-to-21st-century-america-present-and-.](http://kiecocenterorg.ipage.com/.../the-character-of-urban-education-reforms-from-1890-1940-past-as-compared-to-21st-century-america-present-and-.) 3549 Boulevard Place. Indianapolis, IN 46208

### **PUBLICATIONS IN PROGRESS**

- Adams, B., Berghoff, B., & Medina, M. (in progress). Developing pre-service teachers' commitment to social justice in an urban education program. *Journal of School Connections* (in progress).
- Adams, B. (in progress). *Toward relevant immigrant Pedagogy: Teacher and student interactions in an urban classroom. Doctoral Dissertation.*

### **CONFERENCE ATTENDANCES**

- Adams, B. (2013). The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) 16 annual research conference, Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Adams, B. (2014). The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) 66<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Adams, B. (2016). Attended Hoosier Association of Science Teachers (HASTI), Annual Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana.

### **OTHER WORKING EXPERIENCES**

**Supervisor of Student Teachers, IU School of Education at IUPUI**  
Aug. 2013- May, 2015

- Supervised student teachers doing Service and Learning Field experiences in both Urban K- 12 Schools and Suburban Schools.
- Responsible for coordinating placement of students' field experience during the course.
- Observed and consulted students on their classroom engagement, participation with students, and instruction.

**Testing Evaluator**, Kelly Services-Dploit, Indianapolis, Indiana  
Nov, 2005- Present

- Assessed and scored k-12 National Student tests in writing, reading, social studies and mathematics.
- Evaluated and assigned k-12 scores to Indiana Standard Assessment Testing Project (ISTEP).

**Literacy Coach**, Park Tudor School  
Aug, 06-June, 07

- Prepared lessons and taught second graders in language arts, mathematics and mathematics skills
- Regularly assisted with homework and conducted assessment for a group of elementary students according to the state standards.

**High School Science Teacher and Principal**, Forest Hill, Botswana, Africa  
Aug, 02-Aug, 04

- Prepared and taught Human and Social Biology lessons according to the state curricular standards.
- Solely managed a class of 80 students including recording grades, lesson planning, conducting individual progress meetings and overall classroom management.
- Conducted school level administrative duties working as director and executive director to include curriculum and instruction, special education, technology, and school and state program areas.
- Conducted regular monthly workshops on professional development and action planning to teachers and members of staff.
- Directed, guided, advised and lead the school toward the goal of increasing student performance for all student groups and the elimination of student achievement inequities.

**High School Social Studies Teacher**, Kanye, Botswana, Africa  
Jan, 01-Aug, 02

- Recorded and evaluated students' progress by developing individualized lessons for students and meeting with their parents to help them reach their potential.

- Taught European history including the rise of Benito Mussolini of Italy up to the unrest in the Balkans area which led to the killing of the Serbian prince Archduke Ferdinand which triggered the World War 1.
- Taught Global History including World War 1 and each stage of the war including international involvement, the beginning of the League of Nations which eventually transitioned to the United Nations.
- Solely taught social studies and managed a diverse class of 50 students.

## **AWARDS**

- Indiana Association of College Teachers' Association, 2014: Outstanding Future Educator Award.
- Nominated by Indiana University School of Education in the Doctors Scholars Program in the Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, through Southern Region Education Board (SREB) Oct, 14
- Inducted to Golden Key International Honor Society for Exceptional Outstanding Academic Achievement through Indiana University-Purdue University Oct, 11- Present
- Nominated by Golden Key International Scholars Program to attend the 2012 International Scholar Laureate Program (ISLP) for exemplary academic performance.
- Nominated again by Golden Key International Society Scholarship Program to attend an International Laurette Program in China for Exceptional Academic Excellence, Jan, 13
- Nominated by the IU Associate Dean of Education at IUPUI as the top recruited student for the Urban Education PhD. Program in the Graduate School-Education May, 13
- Nominated by Student Athletes and Honored as an Outstanding Educator Nov, 14
- The Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, SREB Doctoral Scholars Program, 2015- Present

## **ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS**

- National Association of Multicultural Education ( NAME), 2012- Present

- Golden Key International Society, 2011-Present
- Indiana Coalition for Public Education, 2014-Present
- American Association of Colleges For Teacher Education ( AACTE), 2014-Present
- Hoosier Association of Science Teachers, 2015-Present