

**Designing Learning Environments for Cultural Inclusivity:
Case Studies with three Instructional Designers and a Teacher Exploring Their Practises**

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ABSTRACT

Designing Learning Environments for Cultural Inclusivity:

Case Studies with three Instructional Designers and a Teacher Exploring Their Practises

Ludmila Messitidis

There has been a limited amount of research concerning designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. Even though students enter educational systems with cultural designations, the teaching workforce in this system does not reflect their cultural composition. There is a need for bridging the cross-cultural teaching gap. The purpose of this study was to explore whether three instructional designers (i.e. current graduate students enrolled in a Master's program of Educational Technology in the Department of Education) from Concordia University are in the process of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. In order to successfully accomplish data enrichment one more participant/teacher with experience in Nunavik was added to this case study. This study addresses how participants are proceeding in order to design learning environments for cultural inclusivity. The three participants were chosen through a purposeful sampling method and one participant was chosen through a snowball sampling method, and case studies were constructed mainly through in-depth interviews. Results show that all of the participants are prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners. Results reveal how these instructional designers, Linda, Eduard and Francine, as well as a teacher Sydney are developing appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training materials. The key strategies for instructional design that demonstrate respect for multicultural diversity include: (1) researching the target audience in-depth, (2) integrating a diverse perspective across cultures, (3) incorporating the characteristics and learning styles of diverse cultures, (4) including both

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individual and cooperative learning, (5) tailoring the design to students' different strengths and needs, (6) implementing ongoing effective communications throughout the lesson in order to monitor students' understanding, (7) being flexible and adaptable to make adjustments if necessary, (8) using educational technology tools, (9) providing flexibility by offering students multiple options, and (10) making learning more effective by asking a lot of questions, which will allow students to actively participate during their learning, rather than passively consuming the information. These prescriptions are discussed in the context of creating a more effective school experience for students and teachers.

Keywords: culture, sociocultural consciousness, culturally sensitive instructional designer, collectivism versus individualism, instructional design, multicultural competence, cultural inclusivity.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my son, Marian. Marian, your love, encouragement, support, constructive feedback, wisdom and presence gave me the strength to follow my lifelong dream. I could not have gotten through without you.

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Chapter 1 – Background

Due to the increasing cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity in Canada, there is a need for instructional designers to skilfully and respectfully employ multicultural competence in their design practice (Statistics Canada, 2011; Figueroa, 2014). Multicultural competence is defined as an instructional designer's awareness, knowledge, and skills with regard to effectively working with culturally diverse clients (Crockett & Hays, 2015). The need for application of multiculturalism in their work challenges instructional designers to choose instructional strategies that recognize cultural differences in order to produce the most effective outcomes (Atwater, Lance, Woodard & Johnson, 2013; Figueroa, 2014; Figueroa & Kinuthia, 2014; Rogers, Graham & Mayes, 2007).

The purpose of this study was to explore whether three instructional designers (i.e. current graduate students enrolled in a Master's program of Educational Technology in the Department of Education) and one teacher from Concordia University are in the process of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. This study addressed how they are successfully proceeding, as well identifying constraints/barriers they are facing. Specifically, the goals of this study are to: (1) analyse how instructional designers integrate multiculturalism and diversity as part of their practice; (2) explore instructional design practices and decisions related to the practice of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity; (3) explore instructional designers' experiences when designing educational instructions; and (4) analyze opportunities, challenges and limitations when designing instructions for cultural inclusivity.

A lack of multicultural competence in instructional design practice can have a negative impact on the learners' performance. It is important to address issues associated with being a culturally naïve instructional designer who lacks the understanding of the culturally diverse learners' unique characteristics.

There are three issues connected with this situation:

- 1) firstly, instructional designers need to reflect on the multicultural realities of learning communities;
- 2) secondly, they need to include multiple ways of learning and teaching in their design;
- 3) and thirdly, they need to promote equity within learning outcomes (McLoughlin & Oliver, 2000; Figueroa, 2014; Rogers, Graham, & Mayes, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

MacIver (2012) argues that “the Canadian education system is failing its Aboriginal students” (p. 156). This is an example of research that looks at a specific cultural group. While this thesis does not target this population, the principles that emerge from this and similar research are of great value. Even though students enter educational systems with cultural designations, the teaching workforce in this system does not reflect their cultural composition. There is a need for bridging the cross-cultural teaching gap (Atwater, Lance, Woodard & Johnson, 2013; Hofstede, 1986). According to Atwater et al. (2013) “little is known about effective instructional practices for the various groups” (p.11). McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) suggest that “instructional designers need to move beyond the narrowly prescriptive boundaries of current instructional design models. It is proposed that a multiple cultural model of design that caters for diversity, flexibility and cultural inclusivity in the design process affirms the social and cultural dimensions of constructed meaning” (p. 70).

Research Questions

In order to provide a deeper understanding of social phenomena, data were collected via qualitative methods such as interviews. This qualitative study consequently answered important questions regarding educational practices pertaining to cultural competence. I compare four different cases (i.e. four participants) and explore facts, relations, and processes in order to find differences or similarities among the cases under study (Starman, 2013). This study was guided by the following three research questions:

- (1) Are contemporary instructional designers designing for multicultural audiences using dimensions of collectivism or individualism?
- (2) Are the instructional designers prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners?
- (3) Are the instructional designers developing appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training?

Significance of the Study

There is a need for this study, since Canada is experiencing a shift in demographic trends, including an increase in cultural diversity. Between 2006 and 2011, around 1,162,900 foreign-born people immigrated to Canada. These recent immigrants made up 17.2% of the foreign-born population and 3.5% of the total population in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011).

In order to effectively meet the needs of constantly changing multicultural learning environments, the instructional designer needs to be aware of the cultural diversity of the learners (Atwater, et al., 2013; MacIver, 2012; Hofstede, 1986). This will enable them to develop effective instructional designs to maximize the full potential for students' learning.

Terms and Definitions

Table 1 represents the key words and terms referenced in this study.

(Adapted from Figueroa, 2014, p.16-18).

Table 1

Key Words and Terms

Culture	“Culture is inherited patterns of belief, feeling, and behavior learned and transformed as they pass from one generation to another” (Figueroa, 2014, p. 17).
Sociocultural Consciousness	“An understanding that people’s ways of thinking, behaving, and being are deeply influenced by such factors as race/ ethnicity, social class, and language” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 22). “Being conscious of cultural differences” (Figueroa, 2014, p.17).
Culturally Sensitive Instructional Designer (ID)	“A culturally sensitive designer is understanding and accepting of other cultures” (Figueroa, 2014, p.17).
Culturally Insensitive (ID)	“Culturally insensitive designers are ethnocentric in that they neither understand nor accept cultures different from their own” (Figueroa, 2014, p.17).
Instructional Design	“A systematic approach to designing instruction for effective learning” (Figueroa, 2014, p.17).
Instructional Designer	“Someone who uses a systematic approach to design effective instruction” (Figueroa, 2014, p.17).
Educational Technology	“Educational technology is the study and

Interview	<p>ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using, and managing appropriate technological processes and resources” (Definition and Terminology Committee of the AECT, 2008, p. 1; Figueroa, 2014,p.17).</p> <p>“Interview is the qualitative data collection method of asking one or more participants general, open-ended questions and recording their answers. Interview protocol is a form designed by the researcher in a qualitative research study that contains instructions for the process of the interview, the major questions to be asked, and space to take notes about the responses from the interviewee” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015, p. 488).</p>
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Chapter 2 – Literature Review

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the literature by looking at the process of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. My focus is on the role of the instructional designers, including the challenges they face in their current practice. This literature review describes and discusses the relationship between culture and instructional design; specifically, it focuses on how culture impacts teaching and learning.

The following topics are explored in this chapter: definitions of culture, multicultural competence, bridging the cross-cultural teaching gap or polycultural learning situations, individualism versus collectivism, principles for culturally inclusive instructional design, as well as learning and performance with respect to cultural diversity. The purpose of this review is to demonstrate the importance of cultural issues in developing effective instructional design for multicultural learners. The literature plays a dynamic and informative role in this study.

Definitions of Culture

Scanning the literature on culture, one notices that many scholars agree that culture is a ‘fuzzy’ construct (Hofstede, Neuijen & Ohayv, 1990; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai & Lucca, 1988; Spronk, 2004; Salomon & Perkins, 1998). Spronk (2004) argues that “[c]ulture, especially as it operates in learning contexts, is far more profound and dynamic than these surface features alone. It involves beliefs and values, ways of seeing the world, and ways of knowing, thinking, doing and relating to the cosmos and to society” (p.171). He suggests that culture is important to human identity because human behavior is guided by values and beliefs. Therefore, it is essential that cultural aspects with regard to teaching and learning be more critically examined. This literature review demonstrates what difficulties exist in understanding culture and developing a multicultural competence. It explains why culture matters in education,

and gives an overview of the existing questions and concerns regarding culture in the arena of inclusive pedagogy.

According to Atwater et al., (2013), “[m]embers of the dominant cultural group in a society traditionally believe that its cultural values and ways of behaving are normal; anything else is abnormal or even deficient” (p.7). This can result in interpreting academic success or failure on the basis of individual characteristics of the learner, rather than institutionalized discrimination (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This occurs when learning environments are designed without assessing the target audience and practicing biased methods by stereotyping and generalizing attributes of individuals, such as cultural backgrounds. Institutionalized discrimination often exists within current education systems. This has a negative impact on the learner’s academic achievement. It is important to understand that there are different cultural dimensions with respect to teaching and learning.

Hofstede, Neuijen and Ohayv’s (1986) four-dimensional model of national culture differences serves “as a useful framework for teaching both practitioners (such as future expatriates) and students and for guiding research design in the previously fuzzy field of national cultures” (p. 288). “The labels chosen for the four dimensions, and their interpretation, are as follows:

1. Individualism as a characteristic of a culture opposes Collectivism. Individualist culture [is self-oriented; it presumes that an individual is concerned mostly after his/her own interest. Collectivist culture is group-oriented (e.g. look after the interest of its members)].
2. Power Distance as a characteristic of a culture defines the extent to which the less powerful persons in a society accept inequality in power and consider it as normal.

Inequality exists within any culture, but the degree of it that is tolerated varies between one culture and another-[a]ll societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others.

3. Uncertainty Avoidance as a characteristic of a culture defines the extent to which people within a culture are made nervous by situations which they perceive as unstructured, unclear, or unpredictable situations which they therefore try to avoid by maintaining strict codes of behavior and a belief in absolute truths. Cultures with a strong uncertainty avoidance are active, aggressive, emotional, compulsive, security-seeking, and intolerant; cultures with a weak uncertainty avoidance are contemplative, less aggressive, unemotional, relaxed, accepting personal risks, and relatively tolerant.

4. Masculinity as a characteristic of a culture opposes Femininity. The two differ in the social roles associated with the biological fact of the existence of two sexes, and in particular in the social roles attributed to men” (Hofstede, 1986, p.308).

Human systems operate under different systems of norms, standards and cultural beliefs. Hofstede’s (1986) four-dimensional model of national culture differences is a useful tool for educational practitioners to effectively guide them throughout the process of designing cross-cultural learning interventions that fit the specific needs of their potential target audience. In order to skilfully and respectfully produce effective training and programs with the current increasing cultural diversity in Canada, instructional designers need to develop a multicultural competence. Of those four different cultural dimensions, this study focused on the issues pertaining to pedagogy; thus, the focus is only on the individualism versus collectivism dimension.

Multicultural Competence

Multicultural competence is defined as an instructional designer's awareness, knowledge, and skills with regard to working with culturally diverse clients (Crockett & Hays, 2015). Being a culturally competent instructional designer means being aware of the relationship between learners' culture and learning, as well as being able to effectively design learning instructions that fit students' needs. This will result in enriched access and a heightened potential for success for all culturally diverse learners (Wang, 2007). Therefore, multicultural competence represents an important building block of the instructional design field, as well as a skill set that is central to professionalism and quality. Multicultural competence is a necessary skill of quality improvement in educational interventions. In order to foster culturally inclusive pedagogy, it is an instructional designer's responsibility to gain intercultural understanding so as to ensure effective teaching and learning outcomes.

Instructional designers and educators need to develop awareness and skills to fulfil the existing cultural teaching gap. As a result, cross-culturally competent educational practitioners will respect the students' culture of learning including their needs, capacities, potentials and learning style preferences to meet learners' expectations. This will also help to narrow the cross-cultural teaching gap, which is far from easy given the diversity in students' backgrounds.

Bridging the Cross-Cultural Teaching Gap

The cultural context, or that context within which a person is raised, inevitably affects a person's perceptions of the world (Salomon & Perkins, 1998). Clashes between different cultures can arise as each strives to impose and establish their values, norms and beliefs during the process of development or learning, in order to shape other cultures in their own image (Harrison & Huntington, 2000).

With respect to bridging the cross-cultural teaching gap, Hofstede (1986) argues that “[p]olycultural learning situations [...] are extremely difficult to handle, and [...] the focus of the [instructional designer]’s training should be on learning about *his/her* own culture: getting intellectually and emotionally accustomed to the fact that in other societies, people learn in different ways. This means taking one step back from one’s values and cherished beliefs, which is far from easy” (p.316). In other words, instructional designers need to continuously adjust their strategies to meet learners’ needs while being simultaneously conscious of their own biased.

In order to gain learners’ attention, the instructional design needs to be culturally relevant, while the type of culturally relevant instructional strategies might vary (Atwater et al., 2013). Wang (2007) proposes that “instructional designers should evaluate their audiences on the basis of an additional cultural dimension and should be better equipped to structure their [...] learning to present to each learner the activities that the learner can best utilize and benefit from” (p. 309). This means that instructional designers need to redesign current courses in order to create cultural inclusivity (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). As a result, teaching and learning in a culturally affirming environment provides learners with a sense of belonging, as well as motivates and engages learners’ behavior (MacIver, 2012). The following concepts of individualism and collectivism explain certain differences across cultures. Educational practitioners need to understand how these differences impact the students’ learning. As a result, this will help to build bridges between students’ preexisting knowledge and experiences and new learning materials.

Individualism versus Collectivism

Cultures vary in the level to which cooperation, competition, or individualism are stressed (Triandis, Leung, Villareal & Clack, 1985; Trindis et al., 1988). At the psychological

level, these variances are reflected in a personality dimension labeled *ailocentrism versus idiocentrism*. Reliable ways to measure allocentrism in the United States were developed by Triandis et al., (1985). At the psychological level, Allocentrism-idiocentrism reflects the dimension that has been labeled *collectivism versus individualism* (Trindis et al., 1988), *cooperation versus individualism* (Hui,1988), or at the cultural level *collateraterality versus individualism* (Triandis, Leung, Villareal & Clack,1985; Trindis et al., 1988).

In order to understand the way culture pertains to learning, I will analyze it by largely focusing on one of the dimensions of cultural variation (Hofstede, 1986; Triandis *et al.*, 1988). One of the most reliable such dimensions is individualism versus collectivism (Hofstede, 1986). The following Table 2 represents differences in teacher/student and student/student interaction related to the individualism versus collectivism dimension (Adapted from Hofstede, 1986, p. 312).

Table 2

Individualism versus Collectivism Dimension

Collectivistic Culture	Individualistic Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive association in society with whatever is rooted in tradition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive association in society with whatever is “new”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the young should learn; adults cannot accept student role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one is never too old to learn; “permanent education”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students expect to learn how to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students expect to learn how to learn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual students will only speak up in class when called upon personally by the teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual students will speak up in class in response to a general invitation by the teacher

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- | | |
|--|--|
| • individuals will only speak up in small group | • individuals will speak up in large groups |
| • large classes split socially into smaller, cohesive subgroups based on particularistic criteria (e.g. ethnic affiliation) | • subgroupings in class vary from one situation to the next based on universalistic criteria (e.g. the task “at hand”) |
| • formal harmony in learning situations should be maintained at all times (T-groups are taboo) | • confrontation in learning situations can be salutary: conflicts can be brought into the open |
| • neither the teacher nor any student should ever be made to lose face | • face-consciousness is weak |
| • education is a way of gaining prestige in one’s social environment and of joining a higher status group (“a ticket to a ride”) | • education is a way of improving one’s economic worth and self-respect based on ability and competence |
| • diploma certificates are important and displayed on walls | • diploma certificates have little symbolic value |
| • acquiring certificates, even though illegal means (cheating, corruption) is more important than acquiring competence | • acquiring competence is more important than acquiring certificates |
| • teachers are expected to give preferential treatment to some students | • teachers are expected to be strictly impartial |
-

(e.g. based on ethnic affiliation or on recommendation by an influential person)

Understanding the impact of cross-cultural diversity on teaching and learning is a critical factor for students' success and instructional design effectiveness. Table 2 above illustrates the specific cultural differences across the continuum of individualistic and collectivistic cultures. These interactional patterns are particular to each cultural group. Instructional design practices must understand these cultural differences, and thus build on students' personal and cultural strengths. Instructional design practices must also examine the curriculum from multiple cultural perspectives, using varied assessment practices that promote learning, and designing multicultural learning environments. The following concept suggests that there are ten principles for culturally inclusive instructional design.

Principles for Culturally Inclusive Instructional Design

McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) argue that “[i]nstructional design cannot and does not, exist outside of a consideration of culture’, and that it impinges on notions of cultural identity and cannot be culturally neutral” (p.62). McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) describe ten design principles for culturally inclusive instructional design. The following represents ten design principles for culturally inclusive instructional design:

“1. Adopt an epistemology that is consistent with, and supportive of constructivist learning and multiple perspectives. This form of emancipatory pedagogy ensures recognition of students’ capacity to construct their own knowledge, bring prior

experience and culturally preferred ways of knowing to learning tasks and develop a sense of ownership and pride in their own knowledge.

2. Design authentic learning activities.[..] instructional design of educational programs must incorporate the skills and values of the community, its cultural traditions and its values and issues in order to create a unified and authentic learning environment.

3. Create flexible tasks and tools for knowledge sharing.[..] Collaborative task design that enables groups to combine expertise and distribute control for parts of the task affirms learner control. Knowledge sharing can be fostered by designing bulletin boards for students to discuss assignments, offer peer support and feedback.

4. Ensure different forms of support, within and outside the community. [..] Engage with students in dialogue through discussion forums, and can provide examples of communication protocols and learning processes that are required in tasks.

5. Establish flexible and responsive student roles and responsibilities. [..] Awareness of student needs must inform the design process.

6. Provide communication tools and social interaction for learners to construct knowledge. Learners should be able to access multiple channels of communication [..]

7. Create tasks for self-direction, ownership and collaboration. [..] Students can create their own sense of progress and decide on a learning path that will lead them to successful completion of the unit.

8. Ensure flexible tutoring and mentoring roles that are responsive to learner needs. [..]discussion forums providing learners with rapid feedback and scaffolding.

9. Create access to varied resources to ensure multiple perspectives. [..For example,] for indigenous learners the creation and inclusion of the indigenous perspectives is an important dimension and a means of recognising and integrating cultural knowledge.

10. Provide flexibility in learning goals, outcomes and modes of assessment. [..]By offering choice and structure learners can develop self-knowledge of their own learning needs and levels of performance” (Adapted from McLoughlin and Oliver, 2000, pp.65-68).

One of these principles is designing authentic learning activities since “purely cognitive based approaches have had limited success, while interactive, dialogic approaches have been found to equip indigenous students with the analytic and verbal skills they need to succeed in the contemporary world” (p.65). Such practices embrace: (a) empowering all students in building on their personal and cultural strengths, (b) helping all students being active participant of the curriculum , and using diverse assessment practices that promote cultural diversity of learners, and (c) making the culture of the learning environment inclusive of all students. McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) argue that “[c]onsidering the micro and macro cultural levels of instructional design is therefore essential if appropriate learning environments are to be created” (p.58). With regard to micro cultural level, it is important to understand how past learning experiences have shaped learners’ current views of education. An essential feature of the macro cultural level is concern with educational government agencies in supporting and sustaining development of a multicultural society (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 1977).

The following literature represents different cultural groups (African American, Asian American, and Latino students), where the data were collected with focus on informing educational practitioners about contextually relevant learning methods. The following concept

includes the examples of how to further improve students learning with respect to their cultural backgrounds.

Learning and Performance with Respect to Cultural Diversity of Learners

Atwater, Lance, Woodard and Johnson (2013) address important issues of how learning and teaching of African American, Asian American, and Latino students can be enhanced so that high performance of students can be achieved. Despite the fact that “[b]y the year 2050, the nation’s population of children is expected to be 62 percent ‘minority,’ up from 44 percent today”; Atwater et al. (2013) argue that current learning environments and instructional design do not reflect the cultural composition of learners (p.7). With the increasing global changes, there is no time more fitting to argue that there is a great need to design and deliver learning that can be engaging to a culturally diverse audience. This means assessing the cultural composition of the individual learner and then adapting instruction -in real time- to changes in the current learning environments.

According to Martin and Siehl (1983), a socio-cultural system is a “complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (p.53). Lewis (2004) argues that a socio-cultural system “is not limited to ethnic groups, but is applied more broadly to include collective systems of meaning and expression, such as gender, class and religion, all or any of which may be significant in shaping empowerment relations in any [learning] community” (p.346). Learning context influences the academic performance of the learners. If the learning context is not culturally relevant to the learner and the complexity of the task is overwhelming to the learner, learning will suffer as a result. Simply stated, effective instructional materials must be tailored to the learner’s cultural background.

Furthermore, it is important to note that what is considered ethical or moral may vary across different cultures (Lewis, 2004; Schech & Haggis, 2000). The role of culture needs to be addressed as a potential challenge during learning. The family cultural context also plays an important role in the student's learning process and performance, as well as influencing the student's academic results (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 1977). Cultural differences are related to the role of parents at home and student performance at school (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 1977).

Research shows how learning repeatedly incorporates a larger context in African-American, Latino and Chinese cultures, where morals and values impact human behavior (Atwater et al., 2013; Artino, 2008; Wentzel, 1998; Taylor, 2003). For example, studies show that African-American parents scored higher in support of achievement values and educational goals for their children than Caucasian parents (Wentzel, 1998).

Research demonstrates that many African-American students tend to see the big picture (systems thinking approach) and appreciate academic material that provides them with human interaction in a collaborative manner (Atwater et al., 2013; Taylor, 2003). Artino (2008) proposes that African-American students may be more feeling-oriented and people-oriented than other ethnic groups; thus, these students tend toward "reciprocal teaching" (p. 434). Cognitive load theory explains the load of information processing on learning and refers to the ease with which information can be processed in working memory, which is associated with pure discovery of learning (Atwater et al., 2013; Artino, 2008). In order for African-American students to benefit from learning, they need more than to just focus on cognitive aspects of thinking and learning (Atwater et al., 2013; Artino, 2008). They need reciprocal teaching, the opportunities that employ engaging discourse and work collaboratively (Atwater et al., 2013; Artino, 2008). This method of learning can (1) empower African-American students to ask

questions about educational concepts, and (2) help African-American students understand and think profoundly about the subject matter (Artino, 2008; Hmelo-Silver, Duncan & Chinn, 2007; Chinn, 2006). Providing students with scaffolding and collaborative learning offers students the opportunity to build relationships among educational concepts and to develop their learning skills (Artino, 2008; Hmelo-Silver, Duncan & Chinn, 2007; Chinn, 2006).

Another example of culture that influences learning includes Latino students, where academic success is often rooted within the idea of family, as they value collectivistic culture (Atwater et al., 2013; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). Nieto (2000) suggests that Latino students consider the school setting as an extension of their family and they tend toward support for their achievement. This means that Latino students also tend to work collaboratively; thus, the learning environment should provide Latino students with opportunities to engage in the reflective process of questioning and the exploration of ideas with respect to potential benefits (Atwater et al., 2013; Nieto, 2000; Artino, 2008, Hmelo-Silver, Duncan & Chinn, 2007). In other words, the influence of culture and context on student learning and motivation has long been recognized by empirical evidence. Drawing on the premise that all the students are related to diverse social systems (community, school, family) that affect a student's learning process; this should be currently considered as essential knowledge to instructional design practices. With respect to this complex systems perspective on learning, it is important to emphasize the importance of individuals within surrounding and interconnecting contexts. With an understanding of this phenomenon and its instructional implications, educational practitioners will be in a better position to design and develop instructional materials that align with their learners' cultural composition.

There is a need to take into consideration that learning is impacted by multiple interacting systems; thus, this ongoing dynamic interplay between learners and their social systems should be taken into account when designing learning interventions. A lack of respect and empowerment toward cultural diversity can lead in some cases to serious academic issues, such as performing below average or even academically failing (MacIver, 2012).

It is important to note that Chinese students are from a very different cultural background and education system. For example, the Chinese culture values teachers' input and expertise, because they are regarded as authorities in their field of study, as well as students' moral mentors (Atwater et al., 2013; Huang & Cowden, 2009; Wang, 2013, 2011, 2009). Chinese students value an individualistic approach during their learning; thus, too much group work can make them feel anxious (Atwater et al., 2013; Huang & Cowden, 2009; Wang, 2013, 2011, 2009). In Chinese culture, students study individually due to the traditional role of a student (Atwater et al., 2013; Huang & Cowden, 2009; Wang, 2013, 2011, 2009). Collaborative learning strategies can thus increase feelings of discomfort associated with participating, as well as the psychological impact of being afraid of making mistakes and losing face (Huang & Cowden, 2009; Wang, 2013, 2011, 2009). In Chinese culture, performing well or even excelling in school frequently plays an important role within the family, in that familial responsibility and admiration are carried through standard performance in school (Atwater et al., 2013; Huang & Cowden, 2009; Wang, 2013, 2011, 2009). These are important data because, although instructional designers might be aware of cultural differences among their learners, they may not be aware of how to implement effective teaching strategies that reflect cultural diversity in order to create learning environments for cultural inclusivity.

With respect to helping students reach their academic goals, instructional designers need to understand different cultural dimensions, concepts and situations. This literature review provides educational practitioners with a valid evidence of how to effectively incorporate these dimensions and concepts into their practices. Culturally inclusive pedagogy is a new reality in Canada; it is a new way of thinking about various cultural groups in the specific learning context. The goal of culturally inclusive pedagogy is to support and provide necessary resources to students with different cultural backgrounds so as to respect their cultures and in so doing, increase their academic success. Culturally inclusive pedagogy helps in establishing equal opportunities in education for those originating from different cultures. It allows the acquisition of knowledge, skills and behaviors that will support students to actively participate in their learning.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

In this chapter, I provide an explanation of how this study was conducted, and describe the choice of research methodology, the selection of participants, the collection of data, and the analysis of data. Chapter three closes with a description of actions taken to enhance credibility and trustworthiness.

Choice of Research Methodology – A Qualitative Case Study

Merriam (1988) defines a qualitative case study as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit” (p. 16). I compared four different cases (i.e. four participants) and explored facts, relations, and processes in order to find differences or similarities among the cases included in the study (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). I used this qualitative interview-based approach to assist me in answering the three research questions.

Tellis (1997) suggests that interviews “are one of the most important sources of case study information. The interview could take one of several forms: open-ended, focused, or structured. In an open-ended interview, the researcher could ask for the informant’s opinion on events or facts” (p.11). I used open-ended interviews with all four participants. Schein (1990) argues that “open-ended interviews can be very useful to better understand how people feel and think, but questionnaires and survey instruments are generally less useful because they prejudge the dimensions to be studied” (p.112).

Context

This study took place in an academic setting at Concordia University. Three participants were current graduate students enrolled in a Master’s program of Educational Technology in the Department of Education, and one participant was undergraduate student enrolled in a Bachelor’s program in Early Childhood and Elementary Education at Concordia University. I

selected four participants for this study. The goal was to include instructional designers who have different cultural backgrounds and one teacher from Québec. Eligibility criteria for recruiting participants included that they all had to be over 21 years of age, and had a minimum of six months experience working in an educational setting. Participants for this case study were recruited via an initial email.

Participants

The demographic characteristics of the participants are as follows: (see Table 3)

Table 3

Demographics of the Participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Cultural Background	Experience as an instructional designer
Eduard	27	Male	Romanian	3 years
Linda	45	Female	Chinese	5 years
Francine	50	Female	Canadian	10 years
Sydney	22	Female	Canadian	2 years

Purposeful and Snowball Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used for the selection of the three participants, in order to ensure the maximum insight and understanding whether the three instructional designers are designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). In order to successfully accomplish the data enrichment, one more participant/teacher was added to this case study through the help of initial contacts. This referral approach, a snowball sampling method was used in case study four. The reason for its adoption was the advantage of data expansion from the expert in the field. Thus, the teacher (i.e. case study four) was an example of

such phenomenon. A snowball sampling was used as an effective tool to gather more valid and resourceful information from a respondent who actually advocates and practices a culturally inclusive pedagogy. This teacher has done some work in Nunavik and was exposed to a new culture which underlined the importance of culturally relevant and inclusive educational settings.

Tellis (1997) argues that “the issue of generalization has appeared in the literature with regularity. It is a frequent criticism of case study research that the results are not widely applicable in real life” (p.2). Yin (1984) disputed that criticism. According to Tellis (1997), Yin offered “a well-constructed explanation of the difference between analytic generalization and statistical generalization: In analytic generalization, previously developed theory is used as a template against which to compare the empirical results of the case study. The inappropriate manner of generalizing assumes that some sample of cases has been drawn from a larger universe of cases. Thus the incorrect terminology such as "small sample" arises, as though a single-case study were a single respondent” (p.2). The sample size included four participants. In order to protect privacy, pseudonyms were used to identify the study participants.

Profile Summary

Meet Eduard: Eduard is a 27-year old Caucasian man of Romanian descent. He grew up in Romania (Europe) and currently works for La Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec as a resource teacher. Eduard’s prior work experience includes teaching special needs students, and educational technology practices. He considers himself an expert in the field and has three years of instructional design experience. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Education and Psychology, and he is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Educational Technology.

Meet Linda: Linda is a 45-year old Asian woman of Chinese descent. She grew up in China and currently works for a training organization. Linda’s prior work experience includes

English language training, and educational technology practices. She considers herself an expert in the field and has five years of instructional design experience. She holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature, and a master's degree in Educational Technology.

Meet Francine: Francine is a 50-year old Caucasian woman of Canadian descent. She grew up in Montréal (Québec, Canada) and currently works for a Canadian university as a Process and Policies Analyst. Francine's prior work experience includes university training, and educational technology practices. She considers herself an expert in the field and has ten years of instructional design experience. She holds a bachelor's degree in Economics, and she is currently pursuing a master's degree in Educational Technology.

Meet Sydney: Sydney is a 22-year old Caucasian woman of Canadian descent. She grew up in Montréal (Québec, Canada). She is a student in Early Childhood and Elementary Education at Concordia University. Sydney is a representative for Frontier College. Frontier College is a national literacy organization. Sydney believes literacy is a right. She works with volunteers and community partners whose purpose is to teach people how to develop effective skills and confidence in order to reach their full potential and thus contribute to society. She created a workshop for their volunteers and community partners on the subject "Cultural Diversity in Learning and Pedagogy". According to Sydney, Frontier College offers many programs and volunteer opportunities with many different communities and cultures; this workshop was offered to assist volunteers with perspectives and skills to appropriately reach these communities and learners.

These four participants were an appropriate sample size for this qualitative research method (i.e. exploratory study). For example, the chosen participants: (1) have different types of cultural backgrounds as they come from three different continents (i.e. Asia, North America and

Europe), (2) are familiar with the field of instructional design and (3) have enough experience in the educational system. In order to address the research questions, the study required four qualitative cases (i.e. four participants) that were different enough to provide insight into different facts, relations, and processes when designing educational instructions, and yet comparable enough to allow for reasonable comparison across cases.

Data Collection Procedures

To address the research questions, I conducted four case studies with four adults (three women and one man), with ages ranging from 22 to 50 years and ethnicities of Chinese ($n = 1$), Canadian ($n = 2$), and Rumanian ($n = 1$). The study was qualitative in nature, and I used semi-structured interviews as the primary source for data collection. The first interview took approximately sixty minutes, and participants were asked ten open-ended questions (see Appendix B). The second follow-up interview took thirty minutes with primary focus on the questions nine and ten as these two questions represent the core of this study with their focus on pedagogy (see Table 4). Table 4 juxtaposes the alignment of the three research questions, and questions nine and ten from the interview protocol. The follow-up interviews were undertaken to let the respondents elaborate in more depth by focusing specifically on the challenges and effective practices with respect to a culturally inclusive instructional design. The follow-up interviews helped with the expansion on the interviewees' answers to the first interview. During the second interview, I could monitor and gather more data on the participants' development pertaining to various practices based on inclusive education. This improved design also contributed to the data enrichment. I compared the responses from the three participants and highlighted the differences in the responses from the first and second interview by track changes.

It should be noted that the snowball methodology was employed for case study four. The snowball sampling method is suggested in the literature as a useful method. This technique was used to find an additional participant where one individual provided the researcher the name of the fourth participant. Thus, Sydney joined this study during the follow-up interviews. This is the reason that Sydney answered only questions nine and ten just once (see Appendix B or Table 4).

Table 4

Alignment of Research Questions with the Key Interview Questions

Three Research Questions	Interview Guide: Follow-up Questions
(1) Are contemporary instructional designers designing for multicultural audiences using dimensions of collectivism or individualism?	9. What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21 st century regarding what instructional designers know
(2) Are the instructional designers prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners?	about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?
(3) Are the instructional designers developing appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training?	10. Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or Are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Process of Interviewing

In the role of the interviewer, I listened without judgment in order to build an effective rapport and to make participants feel comfortable (Kvale, 1996; Patton, 1990; Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Building a rapport is an important component to conducting effective interviews (Kvale, 1996; Patton, 1990; Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). I asked participants to share their learning and experiences with me. I tried to make them feel as comfortable as possible, since I was entering into their world (Kaiser, 2009; Kvale, 1996; Patton, 1990). Therefore, it was important for me to choose carefully where the interviews would be conducted.

I requested the participants to meet with me in a space that assured privacy and confidentiality so that they could feel free to share their experiences (Kaiser, 2009; Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014). This space was situated in Concordia University, in the Education department building, in a small cozy and very quiet office with big glass windows. This office is a familiar setting to participants, they use it for a group assignment projects or even for an individual studying purposes. I taped recorded these interviews. Tape-recording interviews was an important part of the interview process, since I could later go back and analyze the data from the interviews (Kvale, 1996; Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014). I also used field notes to document emerging concepts. The field notes included my perceptions about the quality, content, and process of the interviews (Kvale, 1996; Patton, 1990; Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003).

The essential part of each interview was to establish rapport, which involved conveying a trust and a respect for the respondent and the information they shared. It also meant creating a safe and comfortable environment for sharing the respondent's personal experiences. I created a

comfortable environment by being authentic, adaptable, flexible and transparent. I employed non-verbal techniques; for instance, I was smiling and making eye contact. This allowed me to have the opportunity to develop a positive rapport with the interviewee. Consequently, I was able to ask follow-up or probing questions based on their responses to pre-constructed questions. I found this quite useful in my interview, since I could ask questions based on interviewee responses to previous questions. The questions were structured; nonetheless, adapting them permitted me to explore their experience with a more personal approach.

Interviewing the participants allowed me to pursue and explore the issues and topic under examination with greater depth. This qualitative research design gave participants more freedom to direct the flow of conversation (Kvale, 1996). I applied seven stages of Kvale's (1996) interviewing process:

1. *Thematizing*: clarifying the purpose of the interviews
2. *Designing*: the actual process of interviewing, including a consideration of the ethical dimension. The following are three core principles with regard to human dignity in research involving living human participants (Adapted from Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014, pp. 65-67):
 - (a) *Respect for Persons* includes the autonomy and respect for vulnerable persons. For example, during the study, I asked participants to express their preferences, and I ensured that they had the capacity to make their own decisions.
 - (b) *Concern for Welfare* includes the attempt to minimize the risks associated with answering any given research questions. For example, I authorized the participants to make the final judgements - participants could withdraw from the study at any time, as it is clearly their right.
 - (c) *Justice* includes the obligation to treat people fairly and equitably. For example, I ensured that the

relationship between the participants and the interviewer was well balanced and all participants were given the same power. In order to protect confidentiality and safety of participants' personal information, data were stored under numerical codes. Access to participants' personal information was restricted to the researcher only (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences, & Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2010).

In order to ensure compliance and ethical integrity, I took several precautions to address any ethical issues that might arise during the research. I followed these precautionary steps to protect the privacy and safety of participants in this study. All participation in the study was voluntary, and I provided each participant with an explanation of the study.

Once the participant understood the purpose of the study and their role in the study, I asked them to sign the study information and consent form. Participants needed to sign a consent form giving me their permission to complete the interviews. The consent form clearly states that respondents are not obliged to answer questions or participate in activities if they do not want to. I provided the participants with a hard copy information sheet concerning Voluntary Informed Consent. This information sheet included the following (See Table 5). The complete consent form is found in Appendix C.

Table 5

Voluntary Informed Consent

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Study Title

Researcher's name

Researcher's Contact Information

Faculty Supervisor's name

Faculty Supervisor's Contact Information

Source of funding for the study

PURPOSE

PROCEDURES
RISKS AND BENEFITS
CONFIDENTIALITY
CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION
PARTICIPANT'S DECLARATION
Participant's signature

I reassured the participants that their identities are protected. I collected the hard copies of the consent forms and stored them in a safe deposit box (Kaiser, 2009). I gave all participants a copy of the signed consent form for their records. I also stated that at any point in the study, should participants wish to withdraw, I would remove and destroy all collected data for that participant from the study, requiring no explanation (Kaiser, 2009).

I assigned pseudonyms by asking participants to pick a fictitious name to represent them in the study. I concealed some identities and institutions associated with the participants and used pseudonyms. At the beginning of the data collection, I created a cross-referenced document with participant names and assigned pseudonym codes. Once I completed the data collection, I began analysis, and I permanently deleted the document from my computer. I stored all collected data from the research in a safe deposit box. I made no hard copies of the transcribed data, as I performed all reading online, eliminating the need to create printed copies. I deleted all stored audio files from the audio device once transcription and verification of transcript were completed. I saved electronic data such as downloaded audio files and interview transcripts and placed them in a password-protected folder on my home computer.

3. *Interviewing*: doing the actual interview
4. *Transcribing*: creating a written text of the interview
5. *Analyzing*: determining the meaning of gathered materials in relation to the purpose of this study

6. *Verifying*: checking the variability and validity of the materials
7. *Reporting*: telling others what I have learned

In this study, during each semi-structured interview, I was taking notes, and simultaneously, I was recording the interview using a digital recorder. After each interview, I created a written text of the interview, and then I showed the transcript to the participant for verification and additional comment. I have chosen this method for the reason that “there are no standard methods, no *via regia* to arrive at essential meanings and deeper implications of what is said in an interview” (Kvale, 1996, p. 180). In other words, this study cannot claim representativeness, since it is based on a small purposeful sample; however, I acknowledge that this process trades generalizability for depth (Goldblatt & Eisikovits, 2005).

Data Analysis

For the transformation of qualitative data obtained in the interviews, I used a process known as coding, which means shifting through data in order to find recurring themes, patterns, or concepts, and then labeling the pieces of data so as to indicate what theme, pattern, or concept they reflect (Creswell, 2013; Abell & Myers, 2008; Myers & Newman, 2007). I individually performed the First Cycle coding which ranged in magnitude from a single word to a full sentence and I incorporated some In Vivo excerpts (Saldana, 2015; Saldana, 2009). The latter “can provide some crucial check on whether [I] have grasped what is significant to the participant and may help crystallize and condense meaning” (Saldana, 2009, p. 75). This First Cycle coding generated what is referred to as Preliminary Codes (Saldana, 2009, 2015).

The Second Cycle coding process was also performed individually. During second cycle coding, I collapsed the “original number of First Cycle codes into a smaller number as [I] realize[d] the data and [found] that larger segments of text [were] better suited to just one key

code rather than several smaller ones” (Saldana 2009, p. 20). The next step was to go back to the data and analyze it as objectively as possible. I used the technique called iterative categorization (IC), which is suitable for inductive and deductive codes (Creswell, 2013; Myers & Newman, 2007; Kvale, 1996; Patton, 1990; Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). I cycled back and forth between the data collection and analysis in order to ensure that I developed the best understanding possible (Abell & Myers, 2008; Myers & Newman, 2007; Jick, 1979; Brewer & Hunter, 1989; Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Morse, 1991). The major task during this stage was to analyze the data by organizing it into the categories on the basis of themes, patterns, and concepts (Abell & Myers, 2008; Myers & Newman, 2007).

For qualitative research, during the coding process, it is recommended that there are several coders who analyze the data collected individually and transcribe the coding based on their own understanding. After that, these coders compare their analysis and agree on the group coding through discussion. With respect to accuracy in this study, I invited the second coder who is my colleague. I needed to explain my coding process and reviewed the coded data for evidence of the interpretation. The second coder examined the coding for gaps, missing codes, and inconsistencies in the coding. We compared the coding to ensure consistency and interpretation of the data units. The Third Cycle coding, the Group Codes, were gathered in close accordance with the research questions (Saldana, 2009, 2015). The codes generated were either identical or modified versions of the First Cycle codes. We used an open discussion and in-depth analysis, we reflected on the three research questions and the goals of this study and each other’s assumptions and beliefs about our own interpretations. The main purpose of this stage was to examine closely the data in order to observe and categorize the findings (Abell & Myers, 2008; Myers & Newman, 2007; Jick, 1979; Brewer & Hunter, 1989; Greene, Caracelli & Graham,

1989; Morse, 199; Saldana, 2009, 2015). A category-set consists of a number of classes into which the units of qualitative data are placed (Abell & Myers, 2008; Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014). Once we identified all themes and patterns, the final step was to sort the data into categories (Abell & Myers, 2008; Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014).

In order to reach a consensus for the group coding (Third Cycle coding), each coder explained the rationales, and then we discussed which way to code was more appropriate in the specific context. Throughout the iterative process, we applied and reapplied the codes to the interviews raw data, segregated the individual codes, grouped them based on agreement; sometimes regrouped them in order to consolidate the meaning and implications in case there was disagreement. The coding process was transparent to both coders and discussion was constructive, open and flexible (Saldana, 2009, 2015). The following Table 6 represents a small-scale illustration of Third Cycle coding.

As shown in Table 6, the Third Cycle coding produced a series of Group Codes obtained through consensus by the two coders (Saldana, 2009, 2015).

Table 6

Third Cycle Coding

CATEGORY	Sub-Category	Group Codes
Cultural Diversity	Culture influences learning	I would say Romanian culture is quite different to Canadian culture In my culture, people value more collectivism, not often discuss this topic, not a pleasant topic in public, western countries are more individual. At universities, every student works on their own, shares responsibilities and jointly contributes to the

		project for group assignments.
	Being open to discuss cultural identity	I do discuss my cultural differences with friends, classmates and coworkers. Most often, I get asked what the origin of my name is, as it is an uncommon one (in Montreal, at least).
	Being aware of cultural differences of learners	I think this difference will play an important part in the success of a learning intervention or a training program. For example, a successful training program in North America is not guaranteed to have the same results in Asia, or in Europe. The clientele or target audience needs to be carefully examined when designing a learning program. The more knowledge we gather as instructional designers about the target audience, the higher chances we have of designing a successful learning program. Just off the top of my head, the assignments and evaluations: how many individual vs group assignments and evaluations should be included? What should count more: autonomy or ability to work with others? Well, looking at individualism versus collectivism in a given culture can give us a good idea about that.
Designing Learning Environment with Multi-Cultural Competence	Professional development	Knowledge sharing at work with colleagues Attend to conferences and workshops

		<p>Read peer-reviewed articles</p> <p>Search on line for up-dates</p> <p>Develop multicultural skills</p> <p>Practice skills needed for diverse cultures</p>
	Personal development	<p>Understand multiculturalism in Canada</p> <p>Become a role model for others</p> <p>Be a change agent</p> <p>Ask a lot of questions</p> <p>Introspection</p> <p>Invest time to learn about diverse groups</p> <p>Develop critical thinking skills</p>
Effective Multicultural Practices	Be aware of your own bias	<p>I think it is from the sum of life experiences I've had so far, the way I was raised by my parents, the people I've met and particularly from having lived in 2 different countries and absorbing elements of two rather different cultures. I believe all of our experiences and the choices we have to make daily shape who we are. It also depends on age: when you are little, you generally accept the values and views of your parents and family without really questioning them, but as you get older you start asking more questions, exploring alternatives and even challenge views and ideas you've had all your life. The prevalence of culture in a society is also important: for example, in Romania the shared culture is very prevalent, as the majority of people share it; in Canada,</p>

	<p>multiculturalism is more prevalent and you get a big chance to explore other cultures and compare them with your own. So then it also depends on where you live and how willing you are to explore other possibilities and views.</p>
<p>A lot of years of experiences</p>	<p>Experience, for example, one needs to have lots of experience, practice these skills when you are involve in multicultural events. I also think that one needs to have own ideas derived from updated knowledge and previous experience, to design multicultural training.</p>
<p>Practice knowledge sharing with colleague</p>	<p>Discuss issues associated with cultural diversity with your peers and cohorts, be the change agent, share practices with work environment such implementation of clear objectives within the design</p>
<p>Practice multicultural models and strategies</p>	<p>Be aware what are the realistic expectations and implement a self-managed learning approach Provide course material motivating for students Being aware and researching the target audience of your learning intervention. It's an important skill to have and develop over designing multiple learning interventions. Enrich curriculum activities and make them accessible to all students</p>

Support different learning styles
Conduct assessment of student's learning style
Design lesson that includes students interest
Design provides variety of choices for students
Design addresses the needs of students at various readiness level
Instruction and production are flexible to permit for students pacing step-by-step if necessary
Ongoing effective communication throughout the lesson in order to monitor students understanding
Be flexible and adaptable make adjustments if necessary
Design demonstrates respect for multicultural diversity
Provide flexibility by offering students multiple options
Stimulate learning through risk-taking
Employ scaffolding, direct instruction, demonstration, individual learning, and cooperative learning in small groups
Embrace a self-managed learning approach
Encourage critical thinking
Include provide problem solving strategies in instructional design
Provide information in more rich context
Enhance student understanding by asking for feedback
Make learning more effective by asking a lot of questions this way students are active

participants during their learning, rather than passively consuming the information
 Use educational technology tools
 Be the change that you want to see in the world
 Promote student engagement by creating culturally relevant material
 Make learning fun through collaboration
 Further develop multicultural skills
 Go beyond the rigid traditional instructional models of the established curriculum
 Incorporate extracurricular activities that will expand learning through engaging projects
 Use a cross-cultural curricular approach

When conflicts (i.e. differences of opinion) arose between the two coders, a Win-win approach was used. Both parties reached a mutual agreement based on empirical evidence using empathetic listening, and effective communication techniques.

The specific words, phrases, statements, and observations were the data that we have drawn from in order to support the findings (Abell & Myers, 2008; Jick, 1979; Brewer & Hunter, 1989; Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Morse, 1991). The findings are based on the identification of seven themes (see Table 7). The themes and patterns were the answers to three research questions (Abell & Myers, 2008; Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014). These themes and patterns were the findings (Abell & Myers, 2008; Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014). Findings were supported by direct quotations from answers provided by the participants.

Assuring Rigor, Credibility and Trustworthiness

To ensure the rigor, credibility and trustworthiness of this study, some precautions were taken beforehand. “Technical rigor in analysis is a major factor in the credibility of qualitative findings. The constant comparative method of inspecting and comparing all the data of a case study design was used in the data analysis to address the concern of credibility. This was followed by the constant comparative method across cases” (Angers & Machtmes, 2005, p.778).

I used several strategies in my research study to ensure rigor, credibility, and trustworthiness. My own subjectivity impacts study design, data collection, and interpretation, which should be explored and articulated (Peshkin, 1988). In order to address rigor and credibility, I kept and used a reflective journal (i.e. bracketing) to log my assumptions, beliefs, thoughts and interpretations during the research process (Chapman & Francis, 2008). I am aware that my cultural background and experiences are subject to my personal biases; thus, I reviewed these journal entries a few times a week. This strategy helped me to effectively monitor my assumptions and interpretations of the data. The practice of reflexivity was helpful in order to reveal one’s biases and underlying assumptions about the research experience and results (Chapman & Francis, 2008). According to Plano Clark and Creswell (2015), “bracketing helps to ensure that the researcher’s perspectives do not overwhelm the perspectives of the participants and therefore enhances the credibility of the study’s findings” (p.364). Furthermore, in order to overcome challenges associated with my personal biases, I kept ongoing effective conversation with my supervisor, and I kept asking him to give me ongoing constructive feedback.

In order to compensate for possible validity threats, two methods such as triangulation of the data and member checks were used periodically by having participants review interview

transcripts for misunderstandings and clarification prior to the coding. Participants had the opportunity to review their transcripts and to add, alter, or delete information from them.

Furthermore, during the interviews, I performed the strategy of member checking in order to confirm the accuracy of the interpretation and credibility of my understanding of participants' insights by actively listening and probing throughout each interview, and by asking follow-up questions for clarification (Creswell, 2013). In addition, Creswell (2014) suggests that the raw transcript not be delivered back to the respondents. Thus, I performed another qualitative validity tactic of member checking. More specifically, I carefully documented emerging themes, and subsequently I presented them to the participants of the study in an essay format. As a result, the participants had an opportunity to comment on these findings.

I used a variation of triangulation; a fundamental assumption of this approach is that each of the multiple sources of data could give a slightly different picture of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2013). Triangulation of data sources can be achieved through collection of data from different individuals (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013). For example, I used data triangulation in my qualitative research study during which I collected data via semi-structured interviews from four different sources (i.e. four participants). This helps to ensure that "the themes found in a study are credible representations of people's experiences and perspectives because the information draws on multiple sources of information or individuals" (Plano Clark and Creswell, 2015, p. 384). According to Thurmond (2001), multiple data sources improve the study because of the possibility of revealing atypical data or the potential of identifying similar patterns. Although my sample was small, the data moved toward theoretical saturation as the participants independently presented topics and examples that formed similar categories. This inter-participant agreement established a type of reliability in the thematic formation.

Chapter 4 – Results

In this chapter, I present the results from four case studies of participants who have experience in the instructional design field and culturally inclusive pedagogy. I compare four different cases (i.e. four participants) and explore designers' belief systems, artifacts specific to their own cultures, the relation between designer culture and learner culture, and design processes. The findings of these case studies reveal the similarities and differences between perspectives of the three instructional designers and one teacher as represented by statements in their interviews.

I coded specific words, phrases, statements, and observations and I drew on these in order to support the findings (Creswell, 2013; Saldana, 2009). Seven themes (Culture, Cultural Identity, Cultural Differences, Multicultural Competencies, Design for Cultural Inclusiveness, Practice and Develop Skills) emerged after we analyzed the interviews, and these themes helped me develop the answers to the research questions I had originally posed (Creswell, 2013; Saldana, 2009). These seven themes (see Table 7) and patterns represented the core of the findings (Angrosino, 2007; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009; Saldana 2009, 2015; Wolcott, 1999; Fetterman, 1998). These themes represent answers to three research questions:

- (1) Are contemporary instructional designers designing for multicultural audiences using dimensions of collectivism or individualism?
- (2) Are the instructional designers prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners?
- (3) Are the instructional designers developing appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training?

In order to achieve a valid emic description, we needed a thorough understanding and knowledge provided by respondents. Thus, we used the participants' words/participants' voice in order to enhance the results as well. Emic descriptions of each participant's experiences and some of this information will be link with previous literature (imposed etic data).

The following Table 7 summarizes each theme and provides a sample of emic data provided by the participants. Each theme is then discussed, including etic reflections.

Table 7

Creation of Themes

Theme	Theme Evidence
Culture	<p>Francine: "ethnic background and religion"</p> <p>Linda: "diversity, long history, cultural differences due to geographical location, specific cultural characteristics. My culture is more collectivistic"</p> <p>Eduard: "when describing a culture, I would try to include as much information as possible, meaning I would do extensive research on the culture to make sure I have an in-depth knowledge of it. I would research the origins and history of said culture, their customs, religious beliefs, traditions. I think it would also be interesting to note how said culture is represented throughout the world, i.e. by members who live abroad. In my opinion, extensive research is very important because I would not want to misrepresent the culture in any way. I would describe my own culture as collectivistic, family-oriented, welcoming and hard-working. Networks of friends and family are very important in Romania. Hard work is valued and religion still holds an important place in society. The other side of the coin is that there is still some closed-mindedness and resistance to change. Of course, I have also integrated other values to form my culture, from having lived in Canada for the past 13 years. Canada is more individual oriented, with less emphasis on networks. Having lived in both places, I can compare between the two, so I also got a chance to form my own "hybrid" culture"</p>

Cultural Identity

Francine: “most Canadians define themselves by their ethnic heritage, even if they are second and third generation Canadians. I instead prefer to consider myself very Canadian”

Eduard: “I would say Romanian culture is quite different to Canadian culture, something I notice when I go back to visit family in Romania. There are some subtle differences, for example the proper etiquette in a supermarket (your bag your own grocery items), tips in a restaurant, how social gatherings work, respect for elder family members. There are also some big differences, like Canada’s multiculturalism and Romania’s relatively closed mindedness towards immigrants or people who do not speak Romanian (ex. Romania’s minorities, like Hungarian and gypsies for example)”

Cultural Differences

Linda: “being Chinese, I believe in diversity, collectivism, and traditions, Chinese Confucian teacher is the most respected profession, in my culture, people value more collectivism, not often discuss this topic, not a pleasant topic in public, western countries are more individual. At universities, every student works on their own, shares responsibilities and jointly contributes to the project for group assignments. Cultural differences influence school learning, in turn, school learning reflect cultural differences, and should be applicable and appealing to the culture”

Eduard: “I do discuss my cultural differences with friends, classmates and coworkers. Most often, I get asked what the origin of my name is, as it is an uncommon one (in Montreal, at least). This often brings follow-up questions like how long I’ve lived in Canada, are my parents living here too, when was the last time I visited my home country, do I speak Romanian and maybe even questions about how to say something like “how are you” in Romanian. Also, I often get asked to compare life in both countries and if I would return to Romania for good someday. Generally, people who I discuss the topic with seem curious about which country I prefer. I would say it’s not a frequent topic of discussion with long-term friends and acquaintances; it mostly comes up when I meet someone for the first time. Culture certainly influences way of learning. I’ve attended primary school in Romania and secondary and above schooling in Canada. Now of course this can be due to the

passage of time as well, but I think the education system in Romania is a lot more rigorous than Canada's. Success in school is very important in Romania and a source of prestige both for the student and the family. While it's certainly important in Canada as well, I never sensed that all my classmates got a similar pressure to succeed from their parents (though very predominantly yes for classmates from other European countries and Asian countries)"

Multicultural Competencies

Francine: "mutual empathy towards others and individual personalities"

Linda: "experience, for example, one needs to have lots of experience, practice these skills when you are involved in multicultural events. I also think that one needs to have their own ideas derived from updated knowledge and previous experience, to design multicultural training, also after working for 5 years in Canada; I am more experienced in my work. In my working environment, we are from 15 different countries, so we learn from one another. This helps me to be culturally competent. This further results in producing a friendly multicultural network, it is important to have effective communication skills, must communicate effectively with a subject-matter expert (SME), because SME may not take into consideration the dimension of Individualism versus Collectivism, so the collaboration between subject matter experts and instructional designers may be challenging"

Eduard: "I think this difference will play an important part in the success of a learning intervention or a training program. For example, a successful training program in North America is not guaranteed to have the same results in Asia, or in Europe. The clientele or target audience needs to be carefully examined when designing a learning program. The more knowledge we gather as instructional designers about the target audience, the higher chances we have of designing a successful learning program. Just off the top of my head, the assignments and evaluations: how many individual vs group assignments and evaluations should be included? What should count more: autonomy or ability to work with others? Well, looking at individualism versus collectivism in a given culture can give us a good idea about that, also go beyond the rigid traditional instructional models of the established curriculum, incorporate extracurricular activities that will expand learning through

Design for Cultural Inclusiveness	engaging projects and use a cross-cultural curricular approach ”
	Francine: “Enhance student understanding by asking for feedback, make learning more effective by asking a lot of questions this way students are active participants during their learning, rather than passively consuming the information”
	Linda: “I am sending surveys to the potential learners, with respect to what they know, what kind of training they need, what is their level of expertise, and what their demographics are. This is the way to get a better understanding in order to develop an effective training program”
	Eduard: “Being aware and researching the target audience of your learning intervention. It’s an important skill to have and develop over designing multiple learning interventions”
Practice	Francine: “I try to simplify it, encourage feedback; also, I adjust each design to the learner’s needs. Being intuitive and empathetic toward others. I use a direct instruction, demonstration, individual learning, and cooperative learning in small groups. I use a self-managed learning approach and encourage critical thinking. I also provide them with problem solving strategies”
	Eduard: “When designing a learning intervention, like I have said previously, it is very important to research the target audience in-depth in order to maximize your chances of designing a successful learning intervention. A useful technique can be do gather not only quantitative data, but also qualitative, in order to find major themes that apply to subsets of the target audience. The more data you collect, the better your understanding will be. I think an openness to devoting more time to this step is needed from researchers”
	Linda: “I think that supporting knowledge sharing in the collaborative manner at work, it is very important, this helps me reflect on all the learning opportunities and develop some strategies to overcome challenges and cope effectively with issues that are associated with dramatically changing social environment”
Develop Skills	Francine: “Of course, I am prepared to take extra steps to

maximize my knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners, I love going to conference, I took the workshop from social sciences, somebody from the ETEC told me about it, called Discourse Analysis and I highly recommend this course”

Eduard: “I think understanding multiculturalism is still a challenge. Many immigrants, for example develop a hybrid culture, with elements from their home country and their new country. It’s an interesting phenomenon, because basically they get to choose aspects of their culture that they wish to keep and pass down to future generations while making changes as they see fit to others. I think the distinction between collectivism and individualism isn’t so clear anymore, so it’s more of a spectrum, cultures having aspects of both to some extent. As is it continually evolving, research on multiculturalism must continue to be done and researchers should be more aware of the biases they bring, even if they don’t realize it”

Linda: “I am developing my awareness via feedback from others, what are the realistic expectations and I am developing skills to implement a self-managed learning approach, I am learning how to include course material that is motivating for learners”.

Culture

Participants agree that culture is a ‘fuzzy’ construct. It involves beliefs and values, ways of seeing the world, and ways of knowing, thinking, doing and relating to the rest of the world. Eduard suggested that culture is important to human identity because human behavior is guided by values and beliefs. Participants included all the following examples in the definition of culture: an ethnic background, religion, diversity, long history, cultural differences due to geographical location, and specific cultural characteristics. Participants recognized the differences between collectivistic and individualistic societies.

Eduard explained: “When describing a culture, I would try to include as much information as possible, meaning I would do extensive research on the culture to make sure I

have an in-depth knowledge of it. I would research the origins and history of their culture, their customs, religious beliefs, traditions. I think it would also be interesting to note how their culture is represented throughout the world, i.e. by members who live abroad. In my opinion, extensive research is very important because I would not want to misrepresent the culture in any way.

Culture certainly influences way of learning. I've attended primary school in Romania and secondary and above schooling in Canada. Now of course this can be due to the passage of time as well, but I think the education system in Romania is a lot more "rigorous" than Canada's.

Success in school is very important in Romania and a source of prestige both for the student and the family. While it's certainly important in Canada as well, I never sensed that all my classmates got a similar pressure to succeed from their parents (though very predominantly yes for classmates from other European countries and Asian countries)".

Culture and learner's diversity is a complex phenomenon. There is a connection between the values of the culture in which a learner is currently living, or from which she was raised, and thus, these experiences are directly related to the learner's academic success. Participants felt that one of the important foundations of student learning environments is cultural inclusivity with an emphasis on empowering learners to access learning resources in a manner that is congruent with their cultural composition (values, beliefs, religion, and styles of learning). In other words, understanding my culture means understanding myself.

Cultural Identity

Participants understood that their cultural identity refers to one's beliefs regarding their membership in a social group. Participants responded that their cultural identity involves an explicit connection to a group of people outside of the self. In this study, the participants were

Canadian, Romanian and Chinese, as they answered the following questions differently: “who am I as a member of my group and what does it mean?”

Each of the participants was proud of their cultural background. One example is when I asked Francine about her cultural identity. I could observe a sparkle in her eye, smile in her face and the sound of pride in her voice, as she responded: “I am Canadian, very Canadian”. It almost brought tears into my eyes as I knew deep down that I understand exactly what she meant. Nevertheless, I had to ask her a follow-up question, just to verify with Francine’s perspective on what it means to her being Canadian. Francine responded that Canadian is someone who is respectful, helpful, and multicultural.

Another example is Eduard: “I would describe my own culture as collectivistic, family-oriented, welcoming and hard-working. Networks of friends and family are very important in Romania. Hard work is valued and religion still holds an important place in society. The other side of the coin is that there is still some closed-mindedness and resistance to change. Of course, I have also integrated other values to form my culture, from having lived in Canada for the past 13 years. Canada is more individual oriented, with less emphasis on networks. Having lived in both places, I can compare between the two, so I also got a chance to form my own “hybrid” culture”. Concrete examples of a clear cultural identity are illustrated in Table 7. According to Eduard, his cultural identity evolved throughout a challenging and reforming process of socializing with another culture. As a result, Eduard identifies his own culture as a hybrid culture. Crucial to forming this new culture was coming to understand the differences of each cultural perspective. Simply put, Eduard is open-minded and flexible to change. Canada is experiencing demographic changes in populations and increase of cultural diversity, so being aware of different cultures, as well as being adaptable in a current turbulent social environment means that

Eduard is a culturally conscious instructional designer. This is one of the qualities needed for creating a culturally inclusive learning environment.

Cultural Differences

Cultural differences play an important role in viewing the world around us. In other words, based on our own cultural beliefs and values, we can unconsciously function by using our personal biases toward another culture. Thus, exploring cultural variations in perception is important for our understanding of basic cognitive processes underlying judgments, as well as for the improvement of learning in multicultural environments. Linda suggests that in her culture: “people value more collectivism, not often discuss this topic, not a pleasant topic in public, western countries are more individual. At universities, every student works on their own, shares responsibilities and jointly contributes to the project for group assignments. Cultural differences influence school learning, in turn, school learning reflect cultural differences, and should be applicable and appealing to the culture”.

According to Prioste, Narciso, Gonçalves & Pereira (2015) “collectivism and individualism have been investigated extensively in recent cross-cultural research[...], which has considered different cultures’ general values orientation, or the priority or position of the self in relation to others[...]. Schwartz’ theory of basic individual values proposes the order of the values around the circular motivation continuum [...] collectivist values (CV) to refer to group-oriented or values focused on social outcomes; and individualist values (IV) to mean self-oriented values or values focused on personal outcomes” (p. 3259).

When I interviewed the participants, I observed a pattern in their expressions. For example, “I” was used with a respondent who scored higher in individual initiative. Other participants inclined more towards using “we”, which is a sign of collectivistic values.

Participants in this study acknowledged the individualism–collectivism distinction, they have suggested that individuals in collectivistic cultures are more collaborative, actively seek feedback from others, pay greater attention to, and are more seriously influenced by others' opinions, expectations, and behaviors than those in individualistic cultures.

Eduard also addressed this issue: “I think, I am aware of cultural differences and the role they play. I've studied psychology for my undergraduate degree and one thing I've learned is to stop and analyze my own biases in a situation. As humans, we have a tendency to seek out information that agrees with our point of view and sometimes neglect information that can contradict what we believe. For example, living in a multicultural society means you encounter people with a variety of cultural beliefs, customs and traditions. That means that it is important to learn about these aspects for the people in your social circle, in order to better understand them and be sensitive and aware of their particularities. If you have friends from a different religion, it would be good to know if they have any dietary restrictions before inviting them over for dinner. Even if you are of a different religion, it's good to know of other religious holidays of the people in your social circle. It shows you care about them as individuals and an open mindedness as well”.

Eduard further explained: “I do discuss my cultural differences with friends, classmates and coworkers. Most often, I get asked what the origin of my name is, as it is an uncommon one (in Montreal, at least). This often brings follow-up questions like how long I've lived in Canada, are my parents living here too, when was the last time I visited my home country, do I speak Romanian and maybe even questions about how to say something like “how are you” in Romanian”. Eduard is proud of being different and living in a multicultural society such as Canada. Eduard further explains his ideas about living in two different cultural societies. As he

puts it: “Also, I often get asked to compare life in both countries and if I would return to Romania for good someday. Generally, people who I discuss the topic with seem curious about which country I prefer. I would say it’s not a frequent topic of discussion with long-term friends and acquaintances, it mostly comes up when I meet someone for the first time I would say Romanian culture is quite different to Canadian culture, something I notice when I go back to visit family in Romania. There are some subtle differences for example, the proper etiquette in a supermarket (your bag, your own grocery items), tips in a restaurant, how social gatherings work, respect for elder family members. There are also some big differences, like Canada’s multiculturalism and Romania’s relatively closed mindedness towards immigrants or people who do not speak Romanian (ex. Romania’s minorities, like Hungarian and gypsies for example)”.

Culture is an important contributing factor of how one views oneself and one’s social world (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Miller, 1984; Moghaddam, Taylor, & Wright, 1993; Triandis, 1994). Literature explains that the cultural context of most of the Eastern societies, such as China, India and Japan, encourage a collectivist or an interdependent self (“*We*”), whereas most of the Western societies, such as the US and Canada, encourage an individualistic or an independent self (“*I*”) (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Eduard: “in Romania, when *we* would accomplish academic goals *we* felt *we* made our family proud and *we* were intrinsically motivated to continue our studies by the sheer amount of knowledge of the world *we* gathered [.....]. Also, *we* prefer to learn in a group setting, from each other. In Canadian culture people are more individualistic in learning”. Adler (1999) argues that in Mexican–American and African–American cultures, learning is characterized by cooperation and interdependence, while the Anglo–Saxon culture values independence and self-

reliance in learning. The above, plus the quotes from Table 7, provide concrete examples of clear cultural differences.

Multicultural Competencies

In order to acquire effective skills to support a culturally inclusive pedagogy, one must be exposed to multi-culturally appropriate resources and experiences. More specifically, it is a personal and professional development that involves ongoing learning opportunities and continuing education related to working with learners from diverse cultural backgrounds. Eduard explained that “being aware and researching the target audience of your learning intervention. It’s an important skill to have and develop over designing multiple learning interventions, activities that require critical thinking and inquiry. Students in a blended learning environment get the change to negotiate the meaning of what is being taught. Together with peers they introduce multiple cultural perspectives and styles in the way they construct meaning. The facilitator plays specific attention to cultural differences of the students in the way they organize their learning and prefer their information to be delivered (some may prefer it in the form of highly referenced, controlled and directed learning, other may enjoy to discover information, engage in a quest). Asking a lot of questions, contractual dialog”. In order to best meet the needs of his learners, Eduard suggests that constructive feedback from his learners is an important part of self-awareness and awareness of others. According to Zaldivar (2016), “the more aware we are; the more choices we have. The more aware we help our client systems to be, the more choices they have” (p.8). Linda also agreed that feedback and effective communications are important factors when designing learning for culturally inclusive environments.

Linda: “I use suggestions and feedback from students to make the multicultural learning reality; I develop compatible design with various learning strategies, cultural backgrounds,

interests and needs of my potential target audience”. Research suggests that multicultural competence is being culturally aware, that is, “recognizes that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality and that these ways are influenced by one’s location in the social order” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.21).

Eduard: “I do my best to be aware of the importance of culture in designing a learning intervention. I read articles and enjoy viewing online seminars or Ted Talks on the topic. I think it is important to be aware of one’s own culture and the role and influence it has on design. It is important to remember that we have our own biases and that we may be unaware of them when designing a learning intervention. That’s why I believe it is very important to research the target audience as much as possible in order to make sure the learning intervention is properly designed and has the highest chances of being successful”.

Research proposes that a multicultural competence includes someone who “has affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing differences as problems to be overcome” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.21).

Sydney suggested that we “must realize the role culture plays in interactions and classroom culture and it is our responsibility”. Literature proposes that a multicultural competent instructional designer sees herself as both “responsible for and capable of bringing about educational change that will make schools more responsive to all students” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.21).

Eduard suggested that “it is very important to research the target audience in-depth in order to maximize your chances of designing a successful learning intervention. A useful technique can be to do gather not only quantitative data, but also qualitative, in order to find major themes that apply to subsets of the target audience. The more data you collect, the better your

understanding will be. I think openness to devoting more time to this step is needed from researchers”.

Wang (2007) proposes that “instructional designers should evaluate their audiences on the basis of an additional cultural dimension and should be better equipped to structure their [...] learning to present to each learner the activities that the learner can best utilize and benefit from” (p. 309). This means that instructional designers need to redesign current courses in order to create cultural inclusivity (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). As a result, teaching and learning in a culturally affirming environment provides learners with a sense of belonging, as well as motivates and engages learners’ behavior (MacIver, 2012).

Sydney: “I believe this is our duty to design for culturally diverse students. Based on my experiences, looking at my cohorts and colleagues, this is considered as an extra work”. This means understanding in depth learners composition and being capable of supporting learners’ cultural diversity in order to design instruction that “builds on what they already know while stretching them beyond the familiar” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.21).

Eduard explained: “I think it is from the sum of life experiences I’ve had so far, the way I was raised by my parents, the people I’ve met and particularly from having lived in 2 different countries and absorbing elements of two rather different cultures. I believe all of our experiences and the choices we have to make daily shape who we are. It also depends on age: when you are little, you generally accept the values and views of your parents and family without really questioning them, but as you get older you start asking more questions, exploring alternatives and even challenge views and ideas you’ve had all your life. The prevalence of culture in a society is also important: for example, in Romania the shared culture is very prevalent, as the majority of people share it; in Canada, multiculturalism is more prevalent and you get a big

chance to explore other cultures and compare them with your own. So then it also depends on where you live and how willing you are to explore other possibilities and views”. According to participants, a multicultural competent instructional designer is flexible, adaptable and open to developing special strategies and techniques to cope with a Canadian society that is diversifying daily. Multicultural competence includes understanding the characteristics of these minority learners and being a culturally aware instructional designer is a key to developing effective instructional design, and thus maximizing the potential for students’ learning.

Participants pointed out that a stepping stone for multicultural competence is being able to acknowledge your own biases, understand what it means to your own cultural background, and how your culture plays a role in designing learning for cultural inclusivity. This involves; for example, asking questions such as “what is my cultural identity”, and “how does my cultural identity impact my way of thinking?”

Design for Cultural Inclusiveness

A culturally inclusive learning environment represents the incorporation of values from different cultural dimensions. However, in reality, instructional designers are often faced with resistance to do so. Linda explained that in order to create a cultural inclusiveness for learners “it is important to have effective communication skills, must communicate effectively with a subject-matter expert (SME), because SME may not take into consideration the dimension of Individualism versus Collectivism, so the collaboration between subject matter experts and instructional designers may be challenging.”

Eduard enlightened that “designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions, I think this difference will play an important part in the success of a learning intervention or a training program. For example, a successful training program in North America is not guaranteed

to have the same results in Asia, or in Europe. The clientele or target audience needs to be carefully examined when designing a learning program. The more knowledge we gather as instructional designers about the target audience, the higher chances we have of designing a successful learning program. Just off the top of my head, the assignments and evaluations: how many individual vs group assignments and evaluations should be included? What should count more: autonomy or ability to work with others? Well, looking at individualism versus collectivism in a given culture can give us a good idea about that". Knowing the probable characteristics of a potential target population of learners is essential when designing for cultural inclusiveness. Learning activities should be built on inclusivity and openness to create motivating tasks that respond to learners' needs. The instructional designers and teacher suggested that educational practitioners must avoid assumptions about cultural stereotypes. In order to create and support differences in learning, participants suggested that educational practitioners must conduct needs assessment and surveys to better understand the demographic of their learners.

Practice

The instructional designers and teacher agreed that their practices include providing learners with access to diverse cultural resources to ensure multiple perspectives. Sydney, as a teacher, has experienced working closely with indigenous students, and she agreed how important is to include the indigenous values in the curriculum. Sydney argues that recognising and integrating a cultural knowledge into her practice is a pivotal component of teaching. All four participants agreed that educational practitioners need to offer flexibility in learning goals by proposing different choices and levels of performance. To do so, the first step is the needs assessment phase. Linda offered her ideas of procedures: "I am sending surveys to the potential

learners, with respect to what they know, what kind of training they need, what is their level of expertise, and what their demographics are. This is the way to get a better understanding in order to develop an effective training program”.

Research suggests that “the goal is not to be bias free, but bias aware” (Zaldivar, 2016, p. 9). The integration of culture in a course or training curriculum requires specific steps. The following crucial procedure were identified: (1) proficiency in designing meaningful (relevant to learner’s specific culture) and stimulating instructional material, (2) using new instructional models that place the importance on multiple perspectives, (3) many years of experience in practicing designing culturally inclusive activities, (4) using culture in alignment with the course curriculum , (5) encouraging students to apply a self-managed learning approach, (6) using critical thinking, and (7) employing a student–centered approach.

Participants felt that it is important to be aware of multicultural diversity of students they design for; however, this is just the first step towards effective practice. In other words, practice of culturally inclusive design goes deeper, it can happen “by appreciating our own unique cultural lens that we can be in a position to appreciate a cultural lens different than our own” (Zaldivar, 2016, p. 10). Furthermore, it is a skill to understand the world through different perspective and make intentional changes in our own thinking, behavior and values; thus, we are the change we want to see in the world (Zaldivar, 2016).

Francine explained: “I try to simplify it, encourage feedback; also, I adjust each design to the learner’s needs. Being intuitive and empathetic toward others”. Participants also felt that it is important to: (1) ensure flexibility and inclusivity while designing for diverse groups, (2) create resources that are culturally relevant, (3) communicate effectively with the target audience and SME, (4) and encourage feedback.

Develop Skills

Arguably the most “practical” question examined by this study was number three: “Are the instructional designers developing appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training?” In order to be effective, an instructional designer has to understand how her own culture, gender, ethnicity, values, experience, class and sexuality influence how she designs instruction. All participants strongly acknowledged how pivotal it is to be aware and understand their own limitations and how designing for diverse groups could be inhibited or restricted by their own biases. To effectively integrate cultural inclusivity into the curriculum, participants suggested that instructional designers must keep developing their knowledge and skills.

Again, as explained above, the methodology of this study evolved in order to best respond to the core question of skills. In this qualitative research, the purposeful sampling was used to pursue information-rich participants, and thus, we would be able to discover a complete range of perceptions. However, after careful examination of collected data, we decided to improve the initial method and sampling design, as we understood that the results can suffer from a lack of richness, i.e., the first interviews were found lacking in response to these issues.

As a result, we decided to conduct follow-up interviews with the main focus on the questions nine and ten, since these two questions are the core of this study. Also, we included a snowball sampling design in case study four. The reason for its adoption in this study was the advantage of data expansion from the expert in the field. Thus, the teacher (i.e. case study four) was an example of such phenomenon.

The following section represents the follow-up interviews with primary focus on letting respondents elaborate in more depth by concentrating specifically on the challenges and effective

practices with respect to a culturally inclusive instructional design. The follow-up interviews helped with the expansion on the interviewees' answers to the first interview. During the second interview, we could monitor the participants' development and gather more data pertaining to various practices based on the inclusive education. This improved design also contributed to the data enrichment. Additionally, we compared the responses from the three participants and highlighted the differences in the responses from the first and second interview by track changes.

Interview 1 & 2 Question 9

The following data include both interviews (i.e. the first interview and follow-up interview). The following *Figure 1* represents a summary of the codes, category, and theme that emerged with regard to question number nine: What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21st century regarding what instructional designers know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?

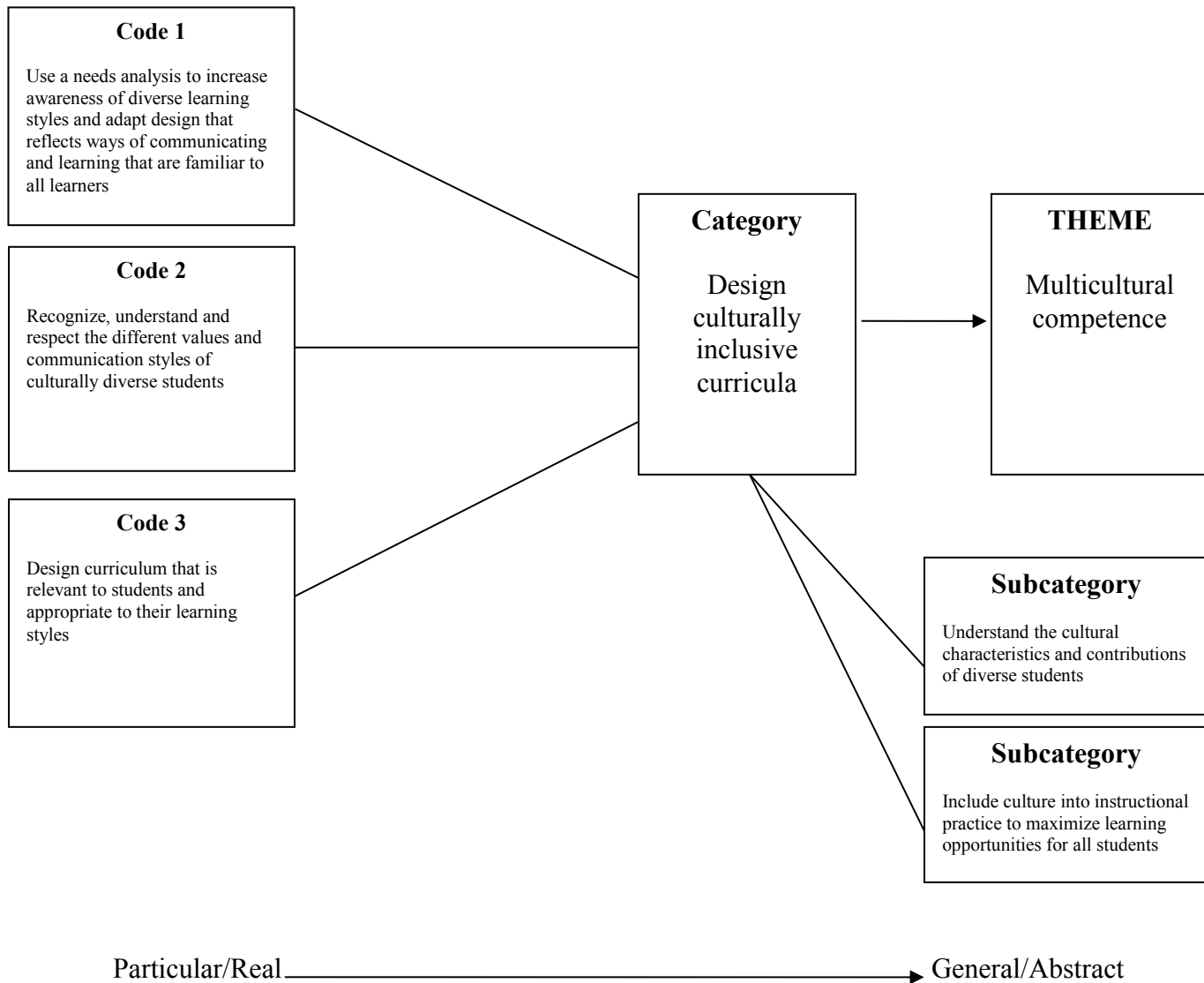


Figure 1 The coding for qualitative research (Adapted from Saldana, 2009, p.12)

With respect to a valid emic description and the results enhancement, we used the participants' voice. Emic descriptions of each participant's experiences and some of this information will be link with previous literature (imposed etic data).

According to Yin (2014) a question-and-answer format is the evidence in case studies without the traditional narrative. Case study does not need to be presented in the traditional narrative form. An alternative format for presenting the same evidence is to write the narrative in question-and answer form. These answers contain all the relevant evidence. The following is a

question-and answer format that represents such phenomenon. The coding and results are the product of organizing the data and conclusions based on the thematic relevance rather than at what point (or technically to what question) the comments emerged.

First, I present the comments provided by each of the three participants (i.e. instructional designers). I then compare and contrast their ideas amongst them, and address how new information emerged in the second interview.

First Interview-Case Study 1

Interviewer: What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21st century regarding what instructional designers know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?

Since I have already reported some quotes from the respondent Eduard, I will summarize the main points of Eduard's answers; and then, I will use the quotes as evidence. I will also link this information with previous literature (imposed etic data).

Respondent Eduard: "Being aware and researching the target audience of your learning intervention". Our society is becoming rapidly more culturally diverse; thus, we need to learn an important lesson, how to cope with this challenge. It is a challenge, as well as a strength. In order to overcome this challenge and turn it into the strength, Eduard suggests that we need to be aware of this challenge and use innovative methods. For example, we need to keep open dialogue with our learners. We need to give them a voice and power; this will help students perform better.

Literature: McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) argue that "[i]nstructional design cannot and does not, exist outside of a consideration of culture', and that it impinges on notions of cultural identity and cannot be culturally neutral" (p.62). McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) describe ten

design principles for culturally inclusive instructional design. One of these principles is designing authentic learning activities since “purely cognitive based approaches have had limited success, while interactive, dialogic approaches have been found to equip indigenous students with the analytic and verbal skills they need to succeed in the contemporary world” (p.65). Such practices embrace: (a) empowering all students in building on their personal and cultural strengths, (b) helping all students being active participant of the curriculum , and using diverse assessment practices that promote cultural diversity of learners, and (c) making the culture of the learning environment inclusive of all students.

Eduard continues with his statements about the differences between two cultural dimensions (collectivism versus individualism). He believes that we need to understand and recognize different values that each of these cultures embrace. Simply put, it is an ongoing learning process and sometimes can be challenging.

Respondent Eduard: “I think the distinction between collectivism and individualism isn’t so clear anymore, so it’s more of a spectrum, cultures having aspects of both to some extent. As is it continually evolving, research on multiculturalism must continue to be done and researchers should be more aware of the biases they bring, even if they don’t realize it”.

Literature: Research suggests that “the goal is not to be bias free, but bias aware” (Zaldivar, 2016, p. 9)

Follow-up Interview-Case Study 1

In the second interview, Eduard expanded on this theme, stating more challenges pertaining to a culturally inclusive pedagogy.

Respondent Eduard: “Of course there are challenges to design for cultural inclusivity, the essential challenge is not being able to recognize, understand and respect the different values

and communication styles of culturally diverse students. Based on my experiences there are challenges that include issues associated with: (1) a lack of sufficient funds, (2) time constraints, or even (3) an absence of mandate to perform a need analysis, this is in order to make the design as standard as possible”. Eduard argues that based on his experiences, in order to create culturally inclusive learning environments, one must be aware and prepared to manage these challenges. Given the working conditions mentioned above by Eduard, he explains how to efficiently deal with issues connected to design for a cultural inclusivity: “To overcome these challenges, it is important to examine the implications of individualism vs collectivism when designing instructional materials. Once the needs assessment phase is completed, the instructional designer should have a good idea about the intended learners. The idea is not to create roadblocks for learners who are from either background. This means that pilot tests of the materials should be conducted with subsets of learners coming from individual and collectivistic backgrounds and compare the results between the two subsets. In the end, this will allow the designer to include the material that has proven effective for everyone and remove or change the material that does not.” According to Eduard, the core values of multicultural competence are a mutual respect, a valuing of difference, and a high level of transparency. As a result, these three values can assist designers in incorporating culture into instructional design, maximizing learning opportunities for all students.

Additionally, Eduard suggests that he has more ideas how to overcome challenges: “discuss issues associated with cultural diversity at your work, be the change agent, share practices with work environment such implementation of clear objectives within the design, be aware what are the realistic expectations and implement a self-managed learning approach, practice-multiple perspective on instructional design models and support different learning styles

in your design. This is how I do it”. Eduard understands that there are multiple challenges associated with his practice that pertains to a culturally inclusive pedagogy. Nevertheless, he truly values multiculturalism in the educational system. This is the reason that he continues developing his multicultural competence, so these challenges that he is facing every day can become his strengths to hold down in the near future.

Literature: Research suggests that a multicultural competence includes someone who “has affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing differences as problems to be overcome” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002. p.21). Multicultural competence is defined as an instructional designer’s awareness, knowledge, and skills with regard to working with culturally diverse clients (Crockett & Hays, 2015).

First Interview-Case Study 2

Interviewer: What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21st century regarding what instructional designers know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?

With regard to the first interview, Linda pointed out that she is faced with different challenges in her practice than Eduard. More specifically, she works in the international organization and thus, the target audience is enormously diverse compared to Eduard’s student population.

Respondent Linda: “Training needs analysis, what did learners know, and what competencies should learners have? With what kind of skillsets they should be equipped. The target audience is widely distributed, and training may not be applicable to each one in the target population, this is a challenge”. Linda continues to explain some other challenges that are associated with her work experience.

“Sometimes geographical location makes training inaccessible to learners, and subject matter experts may not understand the instructional design. More specifically, the subject matter experts (i.e. SMEs) may not take into consideration the dimensions of individualism versus collectivism, so the collaboration between subject matter experts and instructional designers is challenging. It is important to have effective communication skills and critical thinking skills, must communicate effectively with a subject-matter expert (SME), because SME may not take into consideration the dimension of individualism versus collectivism, so the collaboration between subject matter experts and instructional designers may be challenging”. Linda is aware of the challenges she faces at work. This helps her stay focused on her goal, which is designing learning environments for cultural inclusiveness.

Literature: Being a culturally competent instructional designer means being aware of the relationship between learner culture and learning, as well as being able to effectively design learning instructions that fit students’ needs. This will result in enriched access and a heightened potential for success for all culturally diverse learners (Wang, 2007). There is a need to move beyond the narrowly prescriptive boundaries of current instructional design models and methods which assume that the content of a lesson defines a one-size fits all method of delivering that lesson (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Zheng & Davison, 2008).

Follow-up Interview-Case Study 2

During the second interview, Linda elaborated on more challenges that are linked to her practice. She explained that the unlimited access to internet makes learning more universal. Since each country presents different cultural customs, it is very challenging for Linda to compensate different cultural values with respect to a policy of performance standards. This

policy includes the communication of competence-based output standards and the delivery of support material (e.g. competence-based assignments).

Respondent Linda: “With the advent of internet, learning is ubiquitous, which can be formally in a classroom or as informal as our daily lives. Learning interventions are created for some purpose and may be applied to different place, so how to make it applicable to every each of the target population in spite of their geographical locations. Sometimes a performance standard is different from one country to another”. Linda further explains: “for example, instructional designers collaborate with subject matter experts to design learning interventions, that they may not share a same understanding of individualism versus collectivism; consequently, design what kind of learning intervention is more relevant to the learners in the learning environment. It is important to use a needs analysis to increase awareness of diverse learning styles and adapt design that reflects ways of communicating and learning that are familiar to all learners”. Students differ a lot in their motivation, prior knowledge and skills, learning styles, interests and cultural backgrounds. Linda’s goal is helping every student reach his or her full potential. Embracing learner diversity is therefore a challenge. Linda provided specific strategy how to deal with the challenges during the design. She develops such sensitivity through analyzing different sources of information (i.e. assessments). The quality of Linda’s design is reflected by her ability to respond appropriately and flexibly to students’ different needs. She highlighted that the learning material in her design is culturally relevant to learners. What also makes her design successful is her ability to effectively communicate with SMEs, which is one of the key factors with regard to multicultural abilities. Linda is aware of the micro and macro cultural levels of instructional design. In other words, the microsystem deals with direct contact of learners, the face-to-face relationships and classroom activities which construct the immediate

experience of learners. On the other hand, the most distant influence of culture on learners is recognized as the macrosystem that deals with a less direct contact with learners such as political and economic systems. This is important knowledge because learning is a complex phenomenon. The literature expands on this notion.

Literature: McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) argue that “[c]onsidering the micro and macro cultural levels of instructional design is therefore essential if appropriate learning environments are to be created” (p.58). With regard to micro cultural level it is important to understand how past learning experiences have shaped learners’ current views of education. An essential feature of the macro cultural level is concern with educational government agencies in supporting and sustaining development of a multicultural society (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 1977).

First Interview-Case Study 3

Interviewer: What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21st century regarding what instructional designers know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?

Despite the fact that Francine is knowledgeable and skilful in the field of instructional design, during the first interview, she was humble and shy. Francine believes that culture is a process of cultivation or improvement, especially through the education system and social interaction. Cultural background influences people’s values and personal belief system, as well as preconceptions of ‘otherness’. Preconceptions of differences are learned throughout the culture where people grown up. It is a mentally programmed, or at least primed to respond to differences in certain ways. She also faces common challenges as Linda and Eduard on a daily basis.

Respondent Francine: “Being not supported at work, it makes my job difficult. Being a woman and bringing a different perspective and approach to design appropriate training helps me because—and especially being caring—I can empathize with others better, and I can put myself in their shoes. My education and a lot of years of experiences have allowed me to develop effective critical thinking skills and alternative ways of looking at things. This helps me overcome these challenges. I also believe that we are all different. Some people prefer more to work in group and others prefer to work mostly alone”.

Literature: According to Wood and Lenze (1991), “females, connections among individuals, rather than external rules and laws, provide necessary safeguards against self-interests and ensure some commitment to collective welfare and common good. Caring, rather than fairness, is the penultimate moral goal within this developmental pattern, and it is enacted by meeting responsibilities, that is needs, of others with whom one is connected” (p. 5).

Francine has worked in a higher education sector for ten years, and her goal is congruent with Linda’s and Eduard’s goal - they are all trying to design learning environments for a cultural inclusivity. Conversely, Francine’s work environment is less accommodating compared to Linda’s cooperative and supportive work culture. As a result, she is experiencing a lot of stress at her workplace. Francine’s caring and empathetic behavior toward her students helps her overcome these challenges, thus accomplishing her goal.

Follow-up Interview-Case Study 3

Respondent Francine: “Some challenges include not being supported at work by supervisors to attend workshop or conferences in order to develop more skills and knowledge that are relevant to work assignments”. Francine further explains: “Another challenge at work is that there are many groups at work that want to take over training, and thus, I have to be passive,

and there is this old expression that my father use to say: *give them enough robe to hang themselves*. I still think that I will become the trainer, in the meantime if my boss does not put his foot down, these groups will take over my face to face training responsibilities, and I know I will be responsible for training guides and training material”. A supportive, knowledge sharing and flexible working arrangement allows a better choice and the necessary time to effectively focus on the task at hand, rather than wasting energy on competing with each other. A healthy working setting is respecting the value and importance of a cooperative culture at the workplace. Francine believes that a cooperative culture at work has a positive impact on the final product, in this case, a training design. This is the reason that Francine presents her work environment as a challenge.

Francine continues: “The culture and the office dynamics are all about power and I guess in some cases exposure to the University community. In order for the design to be effective, it is important to put myself in the shoes of the user/learner. I need to understand what their struggles are, and why they need to learn this, and what their situation is. I really try to simplify every concept as much as possible so people can embrace it, and use it properly when they do their job and not to intimate them with too much detail or sophisticated language, keep it simple. I use a lot of pictures or screen shots, I use a lot of steps, and it is almost full prove when I use something, and obviously I open the door when they need to know something in the higher level. I am there to help them or I will steer them in the right direction”. Francine’s devotion and determination help her to overcome these challenges associated with the work dynamics. A mutual respect toward her learners and trust to work out an arrangement that suits the needs of the learners produces benefits for all learners.

Francine is passionate about her work, and she has many years of experience, as she puts it: “I have 10 years of experience working at university designing trainings and programs; I did

design even before I started this program. I do testing 3-4 time in order to find out what they need, ask colleagues for help, and solicit feedback. I do not intimidate the learners, my strategy is step by step, and I use a lot picture. I get a positive feedback, my learners are happy as they comment on my design that they love it, and it is exactly what they need. They also say they are confident doing it on their own and that they do not need the manual (training guide) anymore". In order for instructional designers to have a complete picture of their learners' expectations and perceptions, it is important to gather several different sources of data. Francine explicitly stated her techniques. As a result, she understands the results and she acts on them.

Francine continues: "face to face is culture, I have to say in some culture people/learners, they need a classroom, they need to see somebody, they need to explain to them, they do not like reading, I do not know what it is, and I do believe that everyone is different, some people are very autonomous, and some people need more guidance and some people need to be surrounded by people that will support them, yes there are cultural difference". Francine stated that learners are from different dimensions, the individualism and collectivism. She believes that her responsibility is to provide learners with necessary resources that are relevant to their cultural background. Francine: "my job is to accommodate them; I need to make sure, I make sure they know how to use the system, so I make sure that they learn it. I am very...what is the word... I am almost motherly. I often say do not worry if you make mistake, do not worry you cannot brake it; and I tell them that I understand that they do not like doing this. I had people with PhDs telling me I hate this, and I told them do not worry, I will show you exactly how to do it. I explain them and show them, tell them do not worry, I told them just follow the steps, you won't be confused. Some people do not like change, but obviously there is always upgrade, there is always changes, we have to accept change". Francine's comments reflect those of the other two

instructional designers. They all stressed the importance on how pivotal it is to design learning environments that fit students' needs.

Literature: Ferguson (2008) suggests that in order to design curriculum that emphasis what students will ultimately understand, it is important to support “individual students’ learning” [this means that we need to] “personalised” to their current abilities as well as their interests. Planning for differentiation involves thinking about different ways that any lesson or learning project might be changed to better meet students’ needs” (p.114).

Comparison between the First Interviews and the Follow-up Interviews

Case study four, the teacher Sydney was the product of a snowball sampling strategy; thus, respondent Sydney joined this study later; more specifically, during the follow-up interviews. This is the reason that Sydney’s responses were pertaining only to the questions nine and ten. Also, case study four is not included in this section, where we compare the similarities and differences between the first and second interviews of the three instructional designers.

The first interview served as an ‘Aha moment’ to all participants. They all elaborated on their ideas during the follow-up interview. The results show that Eduard, Linda and Francine provided more ideas for a multicultural dimension in the design process. The results also show that: Eduard, Linda and Francine are trying to design culturally inclusive learning environments. Eduard, Linda and Francine build on the past research which suggests that, a cultural competence is the skill to critically think, understand, be aware and act in ways that recognize, respect, and build upon multiculturalism (Lynch & Hanson 1993). Linda, Eduard and Francine understand the differences between collectivism and individualism. All participants acknowledged that a cultural competence is an ongoing learning process and professional practice that requires intentional effort and development.

The results illustrate the excessive responsibilities and challenges faced by 21st century instructional designers while designing for multicultural audiences using dimensions of collectivism or individualism. Eduard, Linda and Francine during the follow-up interview listed these challenges: (1) a lack of sufficient funds, (2) time constraints, or even (3) an absence of mandate to perform a need analysis, this is in order to make the design as standard as possible, (4) a lack of effective communication with SME, and (5) a lack of willingness to become a part of social change.

In order to overcome these obstacles participants suggested that it is important to explicitly address the issues of cultural inclusion. In other words, it is important to take action, as stated by Linda “I effectively communicate with the SME, I make changes where it is possible, and because I understand that a culturally inclusive environment is supporting each learner’s development”. Eduard explained: “I spend extra time because it is a time-consuming process, I have tendency to look at the big picture, I know how complex it is; I simply believe that it is worth it”. Unfortunately, based on their experiences, they know that people in their work environment often demonstrate resistance toward change. Therefore, integrating a cultural inclusiveness in the instructional design can represent a major challenge.

Namely, it is a long-term process that requires stepping out of one’s comfort zone and changing one’s own way of thinking. Some instructional designers’ resistance to change is also incumbent on the following challenges: fear of failure and increased workload for designing and preparing course curriculums. Instructional designers’ personal engagements in developing skills in cultural competence are one of the pivotal factors that lead to effective practices. This is accomplished through a self-driven motivation to explore and learn new cultures, and applying them in daily practices in a reflective manner.

Interview-Case Study 4

During the follow-up interviews, with respect to successful accomplishment of the data enrichment, one more participant/teacher who actually advocates for a culturally inclusive pedagogy, as well as who has experience in this multicultural design joined this study.

Interviewer: What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21st century regarding what instructional designers know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?

Sydney as a teacher understands that in the current education system, there are many challenges. She also believes that it is our (educational practitioners) responsibility to act and make some changes in order to overcome these challenges. Thus, she shares the same view as the three instructional designers.

Respondent Sydney: “There is not one fit for all students. There is a need to design culturally inclusive learning environments. This is one of many challenges that teachers need to put extra work into analysing their learners, this will increase their awareness of diverse learning styles and this way teachers can adapt design that reflects ways of communicating and learning that are familiar to all students. I believe this is our duty to design for culturally diverse students. Based on my experiences, looking at my cohorts and colleagues, this is considered as an extra work”. With respect to question number nine, there is a pattern of agreement among the teacher and the three instructional designers. For example, all four participants agree that they need to spend extra time. According to Eduard, “it is a time-consuming process”, and Sydney suggests that it “is an extra work”. All four participants in their professional practice identify resistance toward change. As a result, integrating cultural inclusiveness in the instructional design can signify a main challenge.

Sydney: “I think that another challenge is the structure, how education is made. Right now the older generation has not necessarily grown up in diversity or has not been taught about diversity. One example is coloring Indians for Thanks giving but all the thinking behind is actually not inclusive, it is racist. Also, all these textbooks are very western, European, euro-centric really, so it is difficult. Everything you have learned to put in different perspective. But again, it is necessary, and it is important to know that history is not written in stone, there are many different perspectives”. Another pattern of agreement among the teacher and the three instructional designers is that learners have many different points of views. All four participants agreed that in order to overcome this challenge it is important to be aware of these differences and use multi-cultural learning models.

Sydney: “another challenge is Quebec curriculum (QC), QC is based on basic competencies so it is open and does not tell you what culture you need to have in your classroom. But at the same time there is not really a guide on to make it more inclusive, how to make it work, so I guess because there is not a guide and because there is not much information it makes it difficult to apply it in inclusive ways. This is the reason teachers may do the bare bone curricula, and move on. For example, if you look at Quebec curricula as far the diversity, they mention women twice; they mention First Nations twice in the whole history in Quebec. If teacher wants to be inclusive, you can add more history, but what is going to be in the ministry exam will be what is within the curricula. So often times the first thing to be cut is what is not mandatory, which is too bad”. More patterns of agreement among teacher and the three designers include a lack of support and an absence of mandate to design culturally inclusive pedagogy, this is in order to make the design as standard as possible. They all agree that there is a lack of

willingness to become a part of social change, a role model or change agent, a self as a most powerful instrument of change in the social environment.

Sydney: “I would like to add another challenge for teachers, another challenge teachers might have in creating inclusive settings is a lack of exposure to diversity. Many teachers, and pre-service teachers in my cohort, may live in their own homogeneous bubbles and not realize the role culture plays in interactions and classroom culture. Therefore, through a lack of exposure and ignorance they may fall short of creating inclusive settings. For me personally, I have done some work in Nunavik and was exposed to a new culture which underlined the importance of culturally relevant and inclusive educational settings”. All four participants understand how important is to respect the cultural background of students, and be open and flexible to narrow the cross-cultural education gap.

Literature: MacIver (2012) argues that “the Canadian education system is failing its Aboriginal students” (p. 156). Even though students enter educational systems with cultural designations, the teaching workforce in this system does not reflect the students’ cultural composition.

McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) suggest that “instructional designers need to move beyond the narrowly prescriptive boundaries of current instructional design models. It is proposed that a multiple cultural model of design that caters for diversity, flexibility and cultural inclusivity in the design process affirms the social and cultural dimensions of constructed meaning” (p. 70).

In the following section: first, I present a summary of the codes, category, and theme that emerged from both interviews (i.e. the first interview and follow-up interview) that pertain to question number ten. I then provide the comments provided by each of the three participants (i.e.

instructional designers) based on question number ten. Additionally, I compare and contrast their ideas amongst them, and address how new information emerged in the second interview.

With respect to the data enrichment, one more participant/teacher (i.e. Sydney-case study four) took part in this study. This method allowed us to gather beneficial data from the expert (i.e. Sydney). Sydney joined this study during the follow-up interviews, this is the reason she is not included in the comparison between the first interviews and the follow-up interviews. Lastly, I present case study four where Sydney answers question number ten.

Interview 1 & 2 Question 10

The following *Figure 2* represents a summary of the codes, category, and theme that emerged from both interviews (i.e. the first interview and follow-up interview) that pertain to question number ten: Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

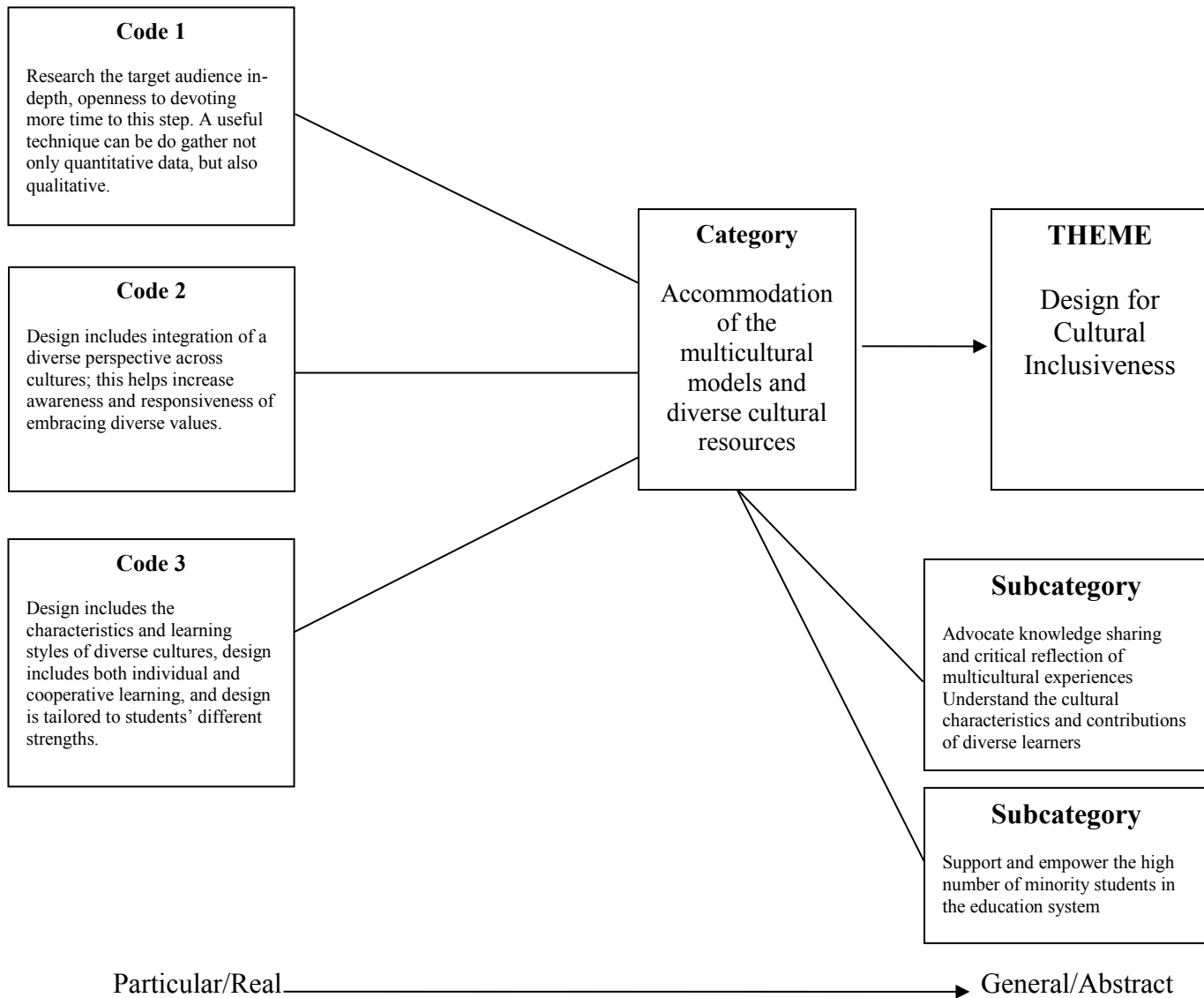


Figure 2 The coding for qualitative research (Adapted from Saldana, 2009, p.12).

First Interview-Case Study 1

Since I have already reported some quotes from the respondents, I will summarize the main points of their answers, and then, I will use the quotes as evidence. I will also link this information with previous literature (imposed etic data).

Interviewer: Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Eduard is prepared to take extra step; he knows that there is always a room for an improvement and many learning opportunities ahead of him. He suggests some useful techniques when designing a learning intervention.

Respondent Eduard: “it is very important to research the target audience in-depth in order to maximize your chances of designing a successful learning intervention. A useful technique can be to gather not only quantitative data, but also qualitative, in order to find major themes that apply to subsets of the target audience. The more data you collect, the better your understanding will be. I think openness to devoting more time to this step is needed from researchers”. When Eduard discussed challenges, he mentioned time constraints as a challenge. We are often exposed to a fast-paced work environment; this arrangement can make us feel overwhelmed or stressed. Being open and devoted to spend more time can lead to a better preparation of an effective leaning design.

Another strategy that Eduard uses is “asking students if they are willing to demonstrate their culture. Students and I develop personal relationships. I learn from my students about their cultural values and it always is a rewarding and humbling experience. I enjoy when people are empathetic to my culture. This is the reason, I believe in constructive and collaborative conversations, where we are exposed to diverse critical points of view and cultures. I use both individual and cooperative learning, which is tailored to learners’ different strengths”. Eduard believes that learning is a social phenomenon and it involves a mutual learning. He also

recognizes that there are some similarities and differences between cultures in what motivates students and how they approach learning.

Eduard: “I think this difference will play an important part in the success of a learning intervention or a training program. For example, a successful training program in North America is not guaranteed to have the same results in Asia, or in Europe. The clientele or target audience needs to be carefully examined when designing a learning program. The more knowledge we gather as instructional designers about the target audience, the higher chances we have of designing a successful learning program. Just off the top of my head, the assignments and evaluations: how many individual vs group assignments and evaluations should be included? What should count more: autonomy or ability to work with others? Well, looking at individualism versus collectivism in a given culture can give us a good idea about that”. Due to this critical difference, it is possible that collectivism is linked to group assignments, while individualism is linked to self-oriented motivation. Eduard understands these differences and provides some techniques for effective managing when designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. In addition, this variation of cultural differences between students should be evaluated in order to meet the needs of the learners.

According to Eduard, “addressing the individual needs of the learner is a must. However, most documented individual needs are of a cognitive nature. Instructional designers need to mitigate the dialectic of individual students’ needs and collective SME and organization view on learning. We need to address these issues in our instructional designs”. Eduard suggests that the step one in instructional design is a needs analysis approach. Evaluation of the target audience must be conducted, as a result, it will help instructional designer to (1) explore current characteristics and expectations of learners, (2) create culturally relevant learning curriculum and

associated priority areas for importance, and (3) determine implementation strategies to empower cultural diversity, rather than ignore it.

Literature: Understanding in depth learners composition and being capable of supporting learners' cultural diversity in order to design instruction that "builds on what they already know while stretching them beyond the familiar" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.21). In order to support culturally diverse students during their learning, educational practitioners need to acquire the necessary motivation, knowledge, skills, and commitment to work effectively with a diverse student population.

During the follow-up interviews, participants took advantage and elaborated on their ideas. The following are the examples of such phenomenon.

Follow-up Interview-Case Study 1

Interviewer: Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or Are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Respondent Eduard: "Yes, I am and it is important to be open to this aspect of designing instructional materials. It is important to participate in conferences, communicate with fellow instructional designers, both national and international, and be up to date with relevant research articles. It is also very important to apply these skills into one's own research and design process, as well as being open to the possibility of having to devote extra time to ensure the learning intervention reaches as many of the learners as possible". Eduard suggested that it is essential to stay connected with others as he advocates for knowledge sharing among professionals, and he also believes in personal and professional development. During the second interview, Eduard again stresses the importance on the need assessment phase in his instructional

design: Eduard explains: “it gives the educational designer a chance to get to know the learners in depth. However, it is also important to ask the right questions and only inquire about aspects of learners cultural backgrounds that can have an impact on the success of the learning intervention or instructional material. This is, in my opinion, a skill that is developed through working on a large number of projects and that is very useful in Canada’s multicultural society”. The needs assessment phase is a stepping stone in the instructional design field because it provides necessary data with respect to learners’ goals. If we are professional instructional designers, we cannot assume what these goals are. We need to spend extra time to figure out who our learners are and how we will proceed, so the learners will experience inclusion and respect during their learning.

Furthermore, Eduard suggests that there are more necessary steps toward a successful instructional design: “another important step is to inquire into barriers certain learners may encounter that could potentially reduce the effectiveness of the learning intervention. Who are the subsets of learners that may have trouble benefiting from the learning intervention? How can they be included? If the needs assessment stage receives all this extra attention and effort, the material that is developed will be of much higher quality”. Eduard explained that critical reflection is an important step in his design. The increasing importance of ongoing learning has an impact on instructional designers and in that context, it is important to understand that critical reflection leads to personal and professional development.

Literature: A large body of literature suggests that an effective educational system is characterized by high awareness of culture, since culture impacts how individuals think and act (MacIver, 2012; McLoughlin & Oliver, 2000; Bell, 2007; Atwater, Lance, Woodard & Johnson, 2013; Hofstede, 1986;). In a constantly changing and complex social environment, we need to

understand different cultural perspectives and use our ability to be adaptable and flexible with our instructional design. Critical reflection is based on problem solving, and thus, in the context of education and training it takes into account all the different cultural perspectives. As a result, we can effectively cope with complex situations.

First Interview-Case Study 2

Interviewer: Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or Are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Respondent Linda: “I think that supporting knowledge sharing in the collaborative manner at work, it is very important, this helps me reflect on all the learning opportunities and develop some strategies to overcome challenges and cope effectively with issues that are associated with dramatically changing social environment”. Linda encourages critical reflection and collaboration with others in her workplace because she believes in mutual learning. Linda works in an extremely multicultural environment and has five years of practice in designing a multicultural training. She thinks that one of the most important learning opportunities is being exposed to diversity by her colleagues’ cultural background. As a result, her multicultural colleagues are helping her, and vice versa, to effectively navigate via constantly emerging multicultural situations.

Linda explains: “in my working environment, we are from 15 different countries, so we learn from one another. This helps me to be culturally competent. This further results in producing a friendly multicultural network”. Linda’s effective practice involves analyzing her potential learners, in order to explore what are their goals and objectives. According to Linda, she is trying to create multiculturalism in her design: “Yes, I am sending surveys to the potential

learners, with respect to what they know, what kind of training they need, what is their level of expertise, and what their demographics are. This is the way to get a better understanding in order to develop an effective training program”.

Literature: Learning is a complex phenomenon, which includes many different factors along with various dimensions of difference that includes culture (Bell, 2007; Chinn, 2006; Ramage & Shipp, 2009). An effective educational system should be dynamic and change over time as members of the learning community adapt to new events and their surrounding environment (Lewis, 2004).

Follow-up Interview-Case Study 2

During the second interview, Linda firmly restated same ideas. She believes in change and she is a change agent who is trying to help influence learners to make decisions in a desirable direction.

Respondent Linda: “I personally advocate for knowledge sharing activities and critical reflection of multicultural experiences with my colleagues. I am open to learn every day. I try day after day to accommodate the multicultural models and cultural resources; I work in a team for any project of designing learning interventions. I think it is very important to listen to others. The team may not share a same opinion but the learning intervention will be enhanced if we can compromise our ideas and come up with a solution that embraces multiculturalism and diversity. For example, when we design case study, we need to think about and ensure that there is no bias for any learner if the case is presented to them. To the contrary, their cultural diversity will make their solution to the case complementary to each other”.

Linda further explains how she is trying to develop an effective design: “the needs assessment cannot be skipped. Through the needs assessment, we will get to know why a

training solution is needed and the expected results, what are the required competencies to be achieved by the target population, who are the target population and their preferred learning style. Also this information forms a solid foundation of the instructional design. The more solid the foundation is, the more effective the training program will be”. Based on her five years’ experience, Linda strongly argues that the needs assessment phase is a pivotal step in her design. On the other hand, she understands that the reality brings some challenges and constrains.

Linda explains: “we select a sample to conduct the population analysis in order to identify their characteristics and preferred learning style, with the assumption that the sample represents the entire population. In practice, a sample may not accurately represent the population as a whole and it is also extremely hard to define the differences between the sample and the population and subsequently apply the differences to the design of learning interventions”. During her graduate studies, Linda obtained enough skills and knowledge to guide her toward an effective way of designing learning intervention. However, there is a gap between theory and practice; as she argues that in her practice, the needs assessment phase has been faced with a great deal of limitations. She believes in diverse values; and thus, she attempts to fill this gap by using helpful techniques such critical thinking and innovation.

In the field of instructional design, there are numerous situations in which an instructional designer decides without thinking and only on the basis of her own intuitions and internal requirements based on the organizational core values. However, sometimes these values do not match our personal values. With regard to challenges, Linda added: “resource allocation. Needs assessment is the foundation of instructional design, but it is also the part most easily overlooked in the process of instructional design, because it requires time, resources with no concrete deliverables. In a lot of projects, clients state their requests and instructional designers go for the

design directly without needs assessment analysing why a learning intervention is needed, who to be taught and what to design”.

Linda provides us with more ideas and techniques from her practice: “as an instructional designer, we should always bear in mind the three critical elements when designing learning interventions. They are context, content and learners. A learning intervention won’t be successful if it is not appealing to the learners for the achievement of the learning objectives. In this respect, how to create a motivating learning environment is significantly important. In my work experience, we conduct population analysis before developing course material. To be specific, we send a survey questionnaire to a sample of the target population and collect data from them for population analysis”. Linda explains in details how she proceeds. This is beneficial information for educational practitioners who are interested in attempting to design learning for cultural inclusivity. Linda continues: “the questionnaire consists of questions about demographic information, such as their age, gender, education, job title, organization, years of work experience, etc. and specific questions about their previous training. That is to say, we ask questions in order to identify if the target population is a homogenous group and their preferred learning style. Sometimes, the target population might be a heterogeneous group with diverse cultural background. In this case, the instructional designers should discuss and reach consensus among the team on the mode of delivery and instructional techniques in order to design an appropriate learning environment”. Linda’s practice offers an education with a high quality that enables all students to succeed since her instructional design practice is about improvement, solving problems, innovation and confronting challenging issues. Linda argues that “the integration of culture in a course or training curriculum requires specific strategies: (1) proficiency in designing meaningful (relevant to learner’s specific culture) and stimulating

instructional material, I use the characteristics and learning styles of diverse culture; (2) using new instructional models that place the importance on multiple perspectives, I use integration of a diverse perspective across cultures; this helps increase awareness and responsiveness of embracing diverse values, (3) many years of experience in practicing designing culturally inclusive activities; I share knowledge with more experienced colleagues-mentors; (4) using culture in alignment with the course curriculum; (5) encouraging learners to apply a self-managed learning approach; (6) using critical thinking, and (7) employing a student-centered approach. Most of all, I adapt the design to accommodate the cultural resources”. Linda’s valuable input is linked with this study literature.

Literature: McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) suggest that “instructional designers need to move beyond the narrowly prescriptive boundaries of current instructional design models. It is proposed that a multiple cultural model of design that caters for diversity, flexibility and cultural inclusivity in the design process affirms the social and cultural dimensions of constructed meaning” (p. 70). Zaldivar (2016) suggests that “if we need to hold our theories and models lightly, then what are we left with? Ourselves. And the opportunity before us is to practice our profession with even greater awareness and skill than ever” (p. 10).

First Interview-Case Study 3

During the first interview, Francine was overwhelmed with the amount of ten questions; and thus, due to a long interviewing process (60 minutes, during her lunch time), the last two questions (i.e. nine and ten) were a bit neglected.

For the second interview, I decided to change the time of the interview. I conducted the interview after her work hours on Friday with focus on the last two questions. As a result, Francine felt relaxed, and she could elaborate on her ideas.

Interviewer: Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or Are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Respondent Francine: “Yes, I am. I research on line, and I go to workshops. I try to simplify it, encourage feedback; also, I adjust each design to the learner’s needs. Being intuitive and empathetic toward others”. According to Francine, she employs scaffolding, direct instruction, demonstration, individual learning, and cooperative learning in small groups, as well as she embraces a self-managed learning approach and encourage critical thinking. She also provides her students with problem solving strategies. With respect to improving students’ academic achievement, all three instructional designers agreed that it is important to use a critical thinking strategy. Francine also attempts to improve the students’ performance by using several other techniques mentioned above. Direct instruction is reported in this study literature.

Literature: “Brown and Palincsar (1982) have shown that direct instruction involving three strategies is particularly effective: instruction in comprehension-fostering strategies, instruction on the importance and usefulness of the strategies, and metacognitive monitoring strategies to check the appropriateness of strategy use” (Stevens, Slavin, & Farnish, 1991, p.8).

Follow-up Interview-Case Study 3

During the second interview, Francine elaborates on the question number ten.

Respondent Francine: “I love going to conference, I used to go to conferences, not anymore, since there is not support in my work. I took the workshop from social sciences, somebody from the ETEC told me about it, called Discourse Analysis and I highly recommend this course”. Francine, Eduard and Linda felt that it is important to further develop their

professional skills, since they need to effectively manage through turbulent times, in order to effectively respond to a constantly changing student population.

Francine explains: “we customize, so prior to meet face to face training, I try to find out about the users as much as I can. I try to find out what are they struggling with, what they are interested in, and even if I do not know. I use Power-points and I simplify it, then I do the demonstration and I ask them: what do you need to know; let’s look at it; let’s look at your accounts; let’s look what we can find; and sometimes people do not want to talk but I show them the thing what I think they need to know, and sometimes it sparks a conversation. I do that when I am writing documents too”. Francine provides specific strategies that she uses in her practice. She continues: “I have been working on a project over a year, and it is very controversial, it is not really training, but it is procedure, and it is two groups and they are kind of against each other, and what I did it was very complicated, how I did it was the way I started the dialogue. I brought examples, that really help, very randomly I said let’s look at this one, let’s look at this one...and that one, and then I brought the other way 12 examples, I built the understanding that what we all needed, and this was fantastic stepping stone for building a team. And as a result this team is now together for a year”. Francine has over ten years practice in the instructional design field, and results from her work suggest that she is successful in her practice. She is passionate about designing learning environments and she understands that different types of cultures play a role in problem solving activities. The effective selection of problems-solving strategies is based on her ten years of experience in instructional design field, as well as on all the research she had conducted in the educational technology master’s program. Consequently, she is able to facilitate her students through challenging situations.

Francine provides more insight about her successful strategies: “so I truly think of the ideas to go to the bottom of things, we need to all understand and we need to be all in the same page. This is my strategy, when I am given a task, I try to do it as best I can, and I listen. That is the whole thing; it is about listening and not thinking about you but thinking about them. And you know I know that I am dealing with intelligent people but I think if it is something they do not want to do, I simplify it as much I can to make it clear and concise”. Francine uses Vygotsky’s scaffolding approach. In other words, this strategy represents the potential learning that a student can achieve only after receiving assistance from others. In this context, collaboration with support from Francine is an essential element of extending a student’s performance. Another strategy that Francine uses is using learning material that is relevant to learners. This is also consistent with this study literature.

Francine: “make the material relevant to them, do not overwhelm them with a lot of material, take your time and focus what it is important to them. Specially, if you are learning systems with numbers and you are not really interested, you really need to build your knowledge step by step in order to go higher to reach more sophisticated level”. After all, Francine thinks that her practice is effective. The following is the specific example of her comments.

Francine: “So based on my experience, I believe that I am designing appropriate training session. I usually schedule 1,5 to 2 hours, in order to make it work, they are happy and I am doing the best I can and I believe that I always try to meet their needs, they learn what they need to learn. I am not confusing them that are really important. You do not confuse them and you do not bombard them”. Francine, Eduard and Linda felt that it is important to effectively communicate with their learners; thus, creating an authentic learning. As a result, students feel included and respected; and thus, they take an active part in their learning.

Francine further continues: “I am very respectful, I always teach them foundation and I know they are not interested. These are the codes but I need to show you because when you go to the system it is all there. And because you understand all these codes when you look these columns you will know what they are. Even if you do not need them you will know what they are”. Linda stated that one of the challenges is communication with a subject matter expert. In sharp contrast to Linda’s experience, Francine is teaching a topic where she has substantial domain knowledge and expertise; thus, due to her an extensive experience in integrating these different forms of knowledge, Francine is a subject matter expert.

This is the reason Francine argues that: “when you design or write any training you need to know what you are doing. I think it is good to be a subject matter expert (SME) in these guides that I am writing, because the people who are doing this job they are on automatic pilot, they are clerks, so clerks think they do not need to understand. I know if I will do a thorough job I need to understand what I am doing. It is also important to synthesize the information and make it flow, I know how it goes together, and probably this skill I learn from my masters because I became good at it. The more you write better writer you are”. Francine felt that she is successful in her practice. The following represents this study literature.

Literature: In order to be successful we need to be dedicated to “a student-oriented, critical, and environmentally responsible approach to science and it contextualizes Western science in the social and technological settings relevant to students” (Aikenhead, 1997, p.229).

Comparison between the First Interviews and the Follow-up Interviews

The first interview triggered in Eduard, Francine and Linda a passion and desire to go deeper and research more on the topic of cultural diversity with respect to education. Eduard, Linda and Francine are trying to achieve the same goal, which is to design a learning

environment for cultural inclusiveness, as they all believe in how pivotal it is to design a learning environment where people can thrive. Eduard, Linda and Francine have acknowledged that designing instruction in our dramatically changing environment can feel chaotic and challenging. However, they all agreed that self-awareness, awareness of others, self-reflection and critical thinking are basic skills for effective instructional designs in order to achieve their goal. In other words, these basic skills can help us to question our values and choices. During the follow-up interview Eduard, Linda and Francine explained that it is important to put high priority on developing their professional skills in order to increase their multicultural competence, and thus, acquiring this skill can help them become better prepared with regard to designing effective learning multicultural interventions.

The follow-up interview highlighted the changes in the respondents' ideas concerning how pivotal it is to understand that the field of instructional design is not at all a static phenomenon, rather it involves an ongoing process of reflecting on learners needs and developing strategies to systematically design instruction for effective learning. As stated by Eduard: "I like to share knowledge with more experienced colleagues-mentors". Based on the premise that our social and economic environments are constantly changing, it is expected from instructional designers to effectively respond to diverse learners in order to meet their needs. To do so, instructional designers need to know the specific needs of their potential learners. Eduard and Linda use needs analysis to meet their learners' needs. Francine uses ongoing effective communication throughout the lesson that allows her to monitor students understanding and based on students' feedback she can make some adjustments. All participants demonstrate respect for their learners by encouraging different learning styles. They are open, flexible and adaptable change agents.

Literature: Anderson, Bond, Davis-Street, Gentlewarrior, Savas, and Sheehy (2014) argue that designing culturally inclusive learning environment is “a process that strengthens intellectual communities and advances teaching in a scholarly way” (p.4). Anderson et al. (2014) suggest that implementing culturally inclusive learning environment is a “learn-as-you-go proposition” (p.9). In other words, it is an individual’s decision or choice that it does not happen overnight, it is an ongoing learning process that includes social responsibility (Anderson et al., 2014).

In order to successfully accomplish the data enrichment, one more participant/teacher (i.e. Sydney-Case study 4). The following case study four represents such phenomenon.

Interview-Case Study 4

Interviewer: Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or Are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Respondent Sydney: “Yeah, I am definitely prepared to learn more, I am learning in class and I know that pre-service teachers have a tendency to be idealistic. I believe that things do change and that eventually the hard work and beliefs of young teachers will pay off”. Sydney’s positive attitude toward change and her enthusiasm to work is exactly what our current education system needs. Sydney is ready to take extra step to enhance her knowledge and skills. As she puts it: “I am prepared and a lot of my preparation comes from my own terms, so in my classes, I will often say let’s make the classroom as diverse as possible. I even took course on classroom diversity, we talk about different pedagogy, we talk about critical pedagogy, I personally prefer to use in my classroom critical pedagogy. I want to look at everything, embracing different cultures but also with critical eyes. The most techniques I learn on my own

by attending different conferences. I specifically targeted to learn about Aboriginal culture and people; thus, I learned about First Nations pedagogy and their perspectives about education, how to be educated which is completely different from the idea that I am the teacher and I stand in front of the class and everyone listens to me. I think that it is important to go and develop your skills and knowledge about different ideas of teaching and learning". Sydney believes in a cultural diversity and different ways of learning; thus, Sydney felt that the traditional method of teaching does not provide students with an opportunity to interact. As a result, the students' critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills cannot be developed. Sydney explains how to proceed: "in order to practice and create culturally appropriate learning environment, it is important to gather background knowledge, do the research about the background, about what is this lesson about. This must be done before you write your lesson plan. What are the hidden curriculums, what are the hidden messages in my classroom? Be critical of your own biases. For example, for all the books I read which books are appropriate and which ones are not. So it is a lot of introspection, this is the first step". Sydney and the other participants mentioned that critical thinking is important skill to have when creating a culturally inclusive learning.

Sydney continues: "after that when I have a new student coming into my class what I can change that is relevant to her culture. For example, if she is from more collectivistic culture, maybe for this student we should not force her to do the oral to put her in front of the class alone, and make her really uncomfortable. Also, we should lower the competition in the class; it is not about the best behaviour because this approach is pretty individualistic-euro-centric. The key is to leave a lot of things open, give students a voice to address their needs and teacher should be their role model. For me, it is very important to use critical pedagogy, the student centred-

approach, where you try to empower everyone in the classroom to have their voice, for me this is very important”. To ensure that all students feel respected and included, Sydney and all the other participants agreed that learning material must be responsive to their culture. Furthermore, Sydney explained another idea that involves her practice. Sydney: “I also think that a lot of it comes from the knowledge and understanding of our own bias like teaching methods, where you are looking at the tasks where is need to use multiple choice. Some cultures do not see knowledge to be so objective maybe in these cases you need to use more subjective model, where students can show you what they know where is not so much yes or no, the right or wrong”. Sydney pointed out that she is aware of difference between some cultures. She also provided ideas how to effectively manage them. Sydney continues to give more ideas and techniques. She states: “it is also important to be critical of everything that you are doing, and everything you are putting forward. I do not think that it is always easy, but it is important to have effective critical thinking skills, strong beliefs and using literature”. To support culturally responsive pedagogy, all four participants agreed that they are faced with complex issues. In order to overcome these challenges, Sydney and all other participants felt that being passionate about their work and trusting the idea that all students should thrive are necessary ingredients in this process.

Sydney explains: “for me personally, I had an opportunity to work in the environment that it was different from my culture, an Inuit community. It was more like day camp setting, I was in charge of students that were not from the same culture, one of the strategies is being able to accept the losses, get help from colleagues who are from the same culture as the students and have experience with that culture”. Sydney is committed to being an agent of social change. Simultaneously, she is working to remove barriers and creating conditions for learning that are

beneficial for all students. Furthermore, Sydney, Linda, Eduard and Francine advocate for creation of a knowledge sharing culture in their workplace as they well understand how beneficial it is for their professional development and success.

Sydney explains: “it is important to accept that there are things I will not understand, so for example, a lot of the times when there was a dispute between our students, this event was happening in their language, which I did not understand. For me, it was more important to have the presence of their language then to solve every conflict all the time or even to be so nosy not to allow speaking their language. It was more important to give student freedom of choice, which language they choose English, French or Inuktitut. I believe that it is not me who will tell them which language they should speak. Sometimes is important to accept being powerless, it is a good lesson for teachers; I think you do not need to be authoritative at all times. It important to take time to learn, I was there for one and a half months and I had to adjust as a teacher, it was my responsibility. Even if we were to create multicultural classrooms, it is our responsibility to adjust, teachers need to adjust, not the students”. Sydney understands how important is to acknowledge the students’ multiple cultural identities. Sydney holds positive and affirming views of all students, she desires to make a difference and she builds upon the diverse lived experiences of all students in order to bring the curriculum to reality. Sydney’s ideas correspond to this study literature.

Literature: Culturally inclusive learning environment needs to (1) reflect on the multicultural realities of learning communities; (2) include multiple ways of learning and teaching in their design; and (3) promote equity within learning outcomes (McLoughlin & Oliver, 2000; Figueroa, 2014; Rogers, Graham, & Mayes, 2007). There is a need in our society to encourage, embrace, support and empower diversity among students in order for students to

reach their full potential (self-actualization). In other words, the inclusive learning environment helps students to (1) continue in their educational development and (2) experience creative, fulfilling and joyous learning (Benson & Dundis, 2003).

Overall, in this study, we found that the instructional designers and the teacher are prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners. Also, these instructional designers, Linda, Eduard Francine and the teacher Sydney are trying to develop appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training. All four participants are reaching to realize the individuals' potential for all students.

Moreover, participants in this study agreed that there are some courses or trainings that do not include diversity, so culturally inclusive practices are not required at all. Their other experiences include understanding that some learners come from cultures, where they follow the educators' instructions closely, while others are creative, coming from oral cultures where learning is performed through storytelling.

Linda, Eduard, Francine and Sydney suggested that education, work experience and being open to learn about different cultures helps create effective teaching, training and programs. With regard to the education factor, Sydney explained: "I even took course on classroom diversity, we talk about different pedagogy, we talk about critical pedagogy, I personally prefer to use in my classroom critical pedagogy". Sydney feels that education is important because it opens her mind and provides her with theories that she can use in the real life. Eduard builds on Sydney's premise explaining that the purpose of Canadian schooling is to create a multicultural pot: "because the students here have such a variety of backgrounds. It's interesting, I remember that during my secondary schooling, for the school year beginning speech, the school's principal

mentioned that the students currently attending come from over 60 countries”. Eduard points out that based on his experience, he felt respected as a student in the Canadian education system, and he believes that the Canadian schooling system is aware of and values its students’ diversity. As he puts it: “I’ve never really felt pressure to hide my culture or my origins and felt comfortable sharing it with my peers, as well as inquiring and learning more about theirs. I have noticed tendencies from the students to group or find friends of a similar cultural background, but not necessarily exclusively. Canada offers a certain freedom to keep your customs and traditions when moving here. As its population is so diverse, there is a good chance to find a small community here that share your traditions and customs (ex. A Romanian community). So, you have a chance to keep your culture and pass it down to further generations, while learning and maybe adopting new values and traditions from others in the process”. Eduard provides a quiet different picture than Sydney about primary and secondary Canadian schooling. According to Sydney, current Canadian education is based on a Euro-centric curriculum, despite attempts to incorporate multicultural education. In contrast to primary and secondary schooling, Sydney suggested that in her undergraduate program at the university level, she is educated about students’ cultural difference. The instructional designers acknowledged that in their master’s program, they are taught to use a needs analysis that includes information concerning the students’ cultural backgrounds in order to adapt the instructional design and development of material to the specific student knowledge and style of learning. However, they suggested that this needs analysis is disproportionately focused on the cognitive differences aspect. In effect, designers are taught many different features to address aspects such as cognitive load diversity in learners, but they do not recall that they have ever had to specifically address the issue of cultural

identity in their instructional design. This apparent gap in instructional content is addressed in the Discussion section.

All the participants felt that Concordia University does a fantastic job at promoting multiculturalism and educating not just Educational Technology (ETEC) students, but all Concordia's learning community on the benefits of cultural inclusivity. Linda explained: "one of many examples is when I participated in Concordia's Cultural Diversity Week hosted by the International and Ethnic Associations Council (I/EAC). Throughout the week, we had an opportunity to participate in a series of events; these events were designed to promote multiculturalism and celebrating diversity on campus. People discussed cultural differences and similarities. There were many activities supported by cultural on-campus clubs; for example, a lot of different food accompanied by music, all this cultural interactions helped me understand that cultural diversity is embraced in this learning environment, so I felt welcomed". In encouraging students to learn about and respect one another's culture and share their own experience is an act of appreciating cultural diversity. Multiculturalism is a key factor of what makes Canada such a kind and welcoming place to be.

Lastly, participants suggested that it is important to be aware of their own biases, this way an instructional designer takes great pains to determine precisely what training and what strategies will work best with each student from different cultural background and under which particular circumstances. They use feedback from their learners to determine which one work best. Therefore, an instructional designer (ID) who uses various methods during the process of designing instruction may, as a result, develop a training or program that is tailored to meet learners' needs. This will result in enriched access and a heightened potential for success for all culturally diverse learners. Participants acknowledged that there is evidence that instructional

designers lack an understanding or full self-awareness of methods for designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. However, there is a solution, which is developing various effective techniques one of which is recognizing that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality.

Given the extensive comments presented above that were made by the participants, the following Figures summarize the research questions, and each case's key points made related to them. These are revisited in the Discussion section below.

Case Study-Questions and Answers

The following *Figures* 3, 4, 5 and 6 represent three research questions and summarized participants' answers to each of three research questions from the interviews.

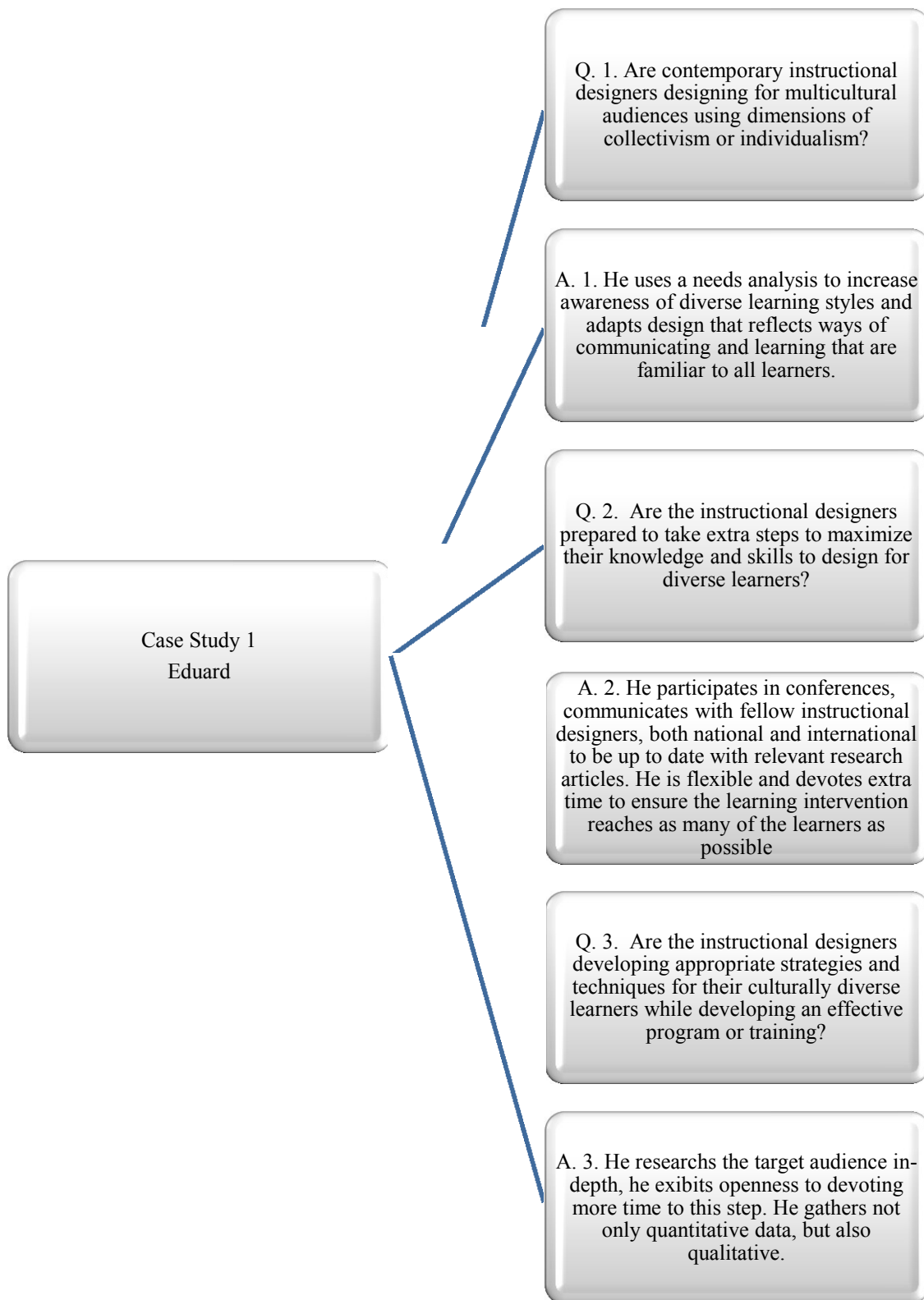


Figure 3. Case Study 1: Eduard—Questions and Answers.

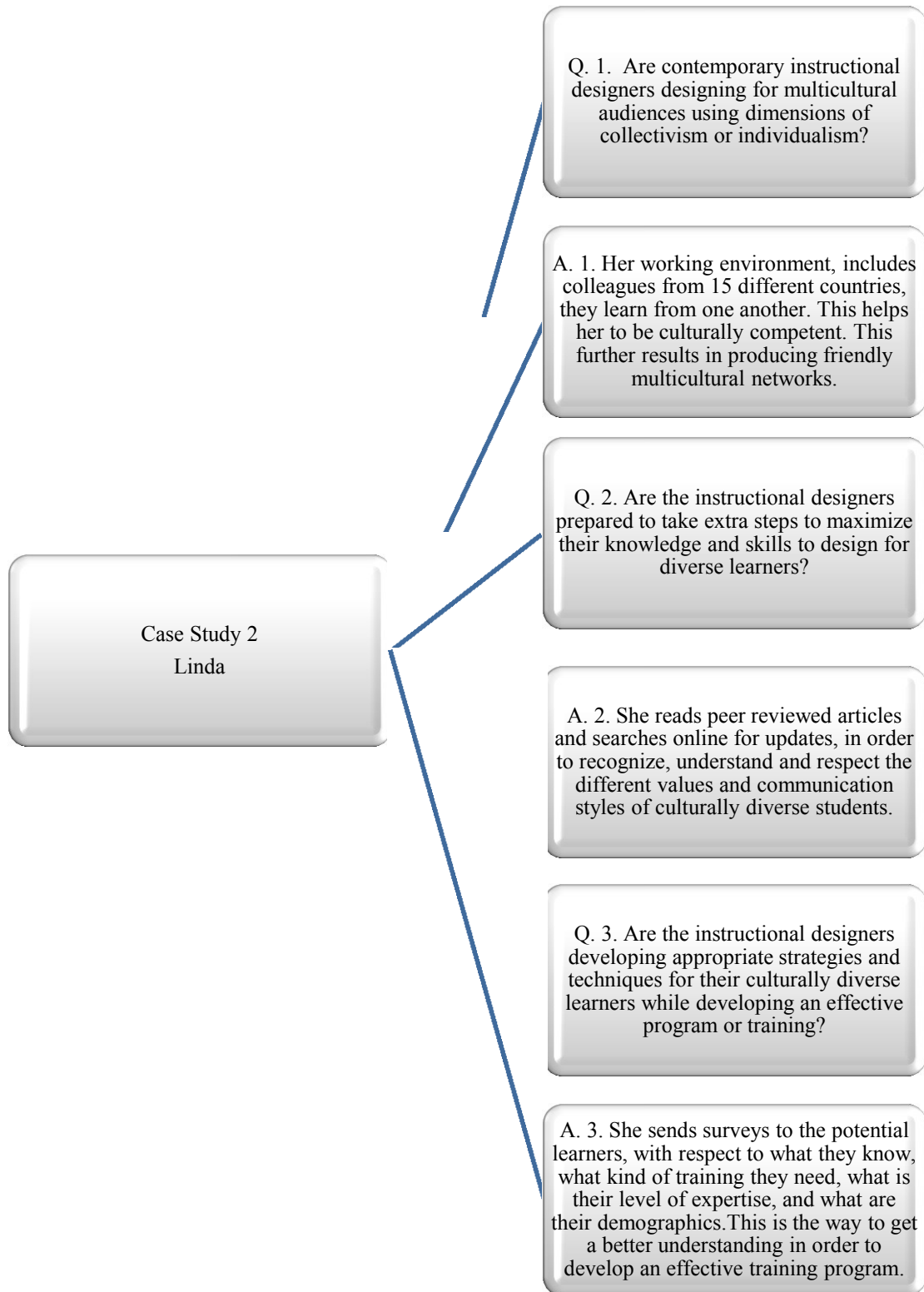


Figure 4. Case Study 2: Linda—Questions and Answers.

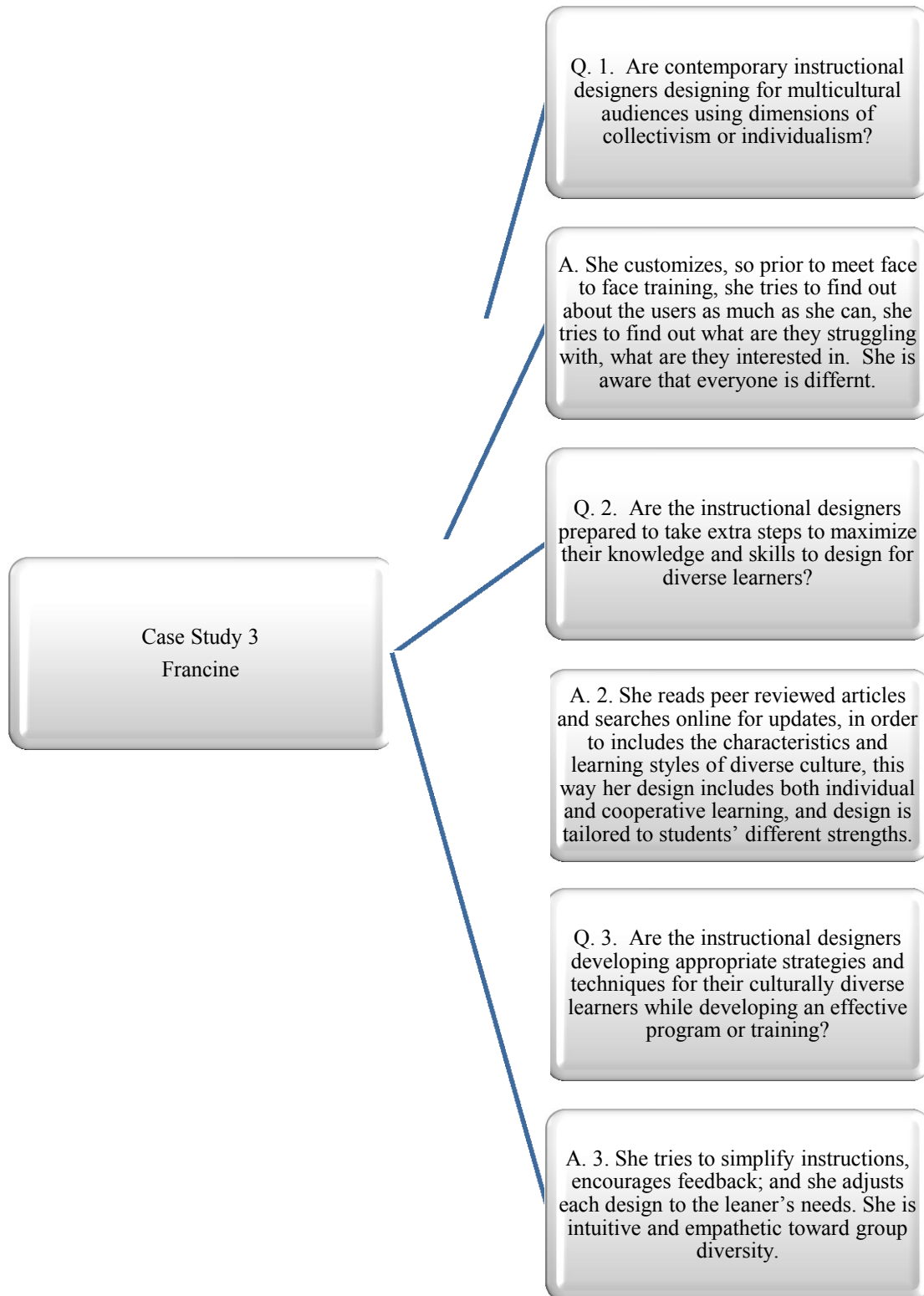


Figure 5. Case Study 3: Francine—Questions and Answers.

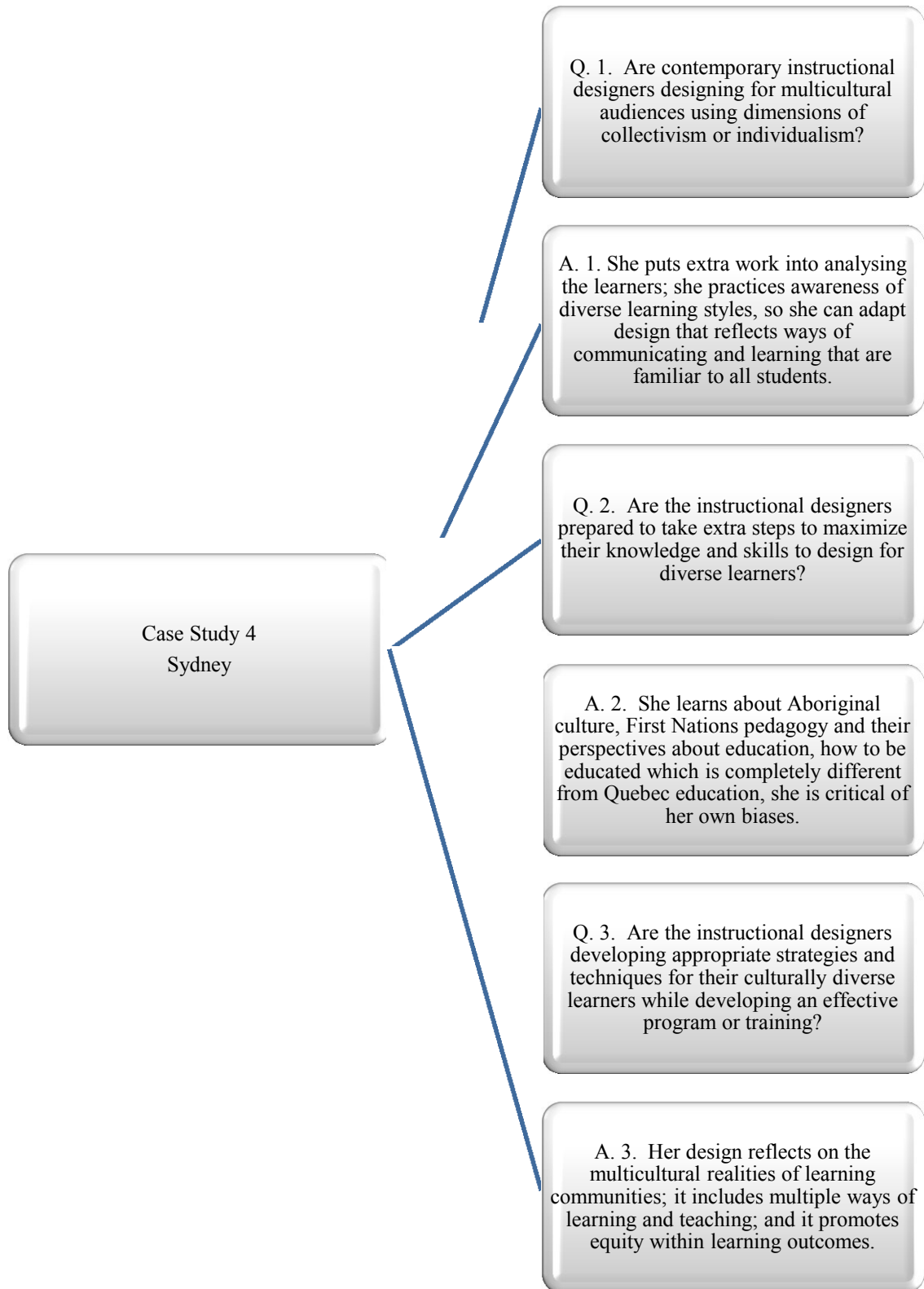


Figure 6. Case Study 4: Sydney—Questions and Answers.

Chapter 5 – Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter is composed of two parts: discussion and conclusion. The discussion deliberates the results of this study. The conclusion answers the research questions and summarizes the findings.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore whether three instructional designer students from Concordia University are in the process of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. If so, how are they proceeding; and if not, where are they lacking? In order to provide a ‘deeper’ understanding of social phenomena, data were collected via qualitative methods, i.e., interviews. This study took place in an academic setting at Concordia University. The participants were current graduate students enrolled in a Master’s program of Educational Technology in the Department of Education. A fourth participant was recruited after the first round of data collection, she being a current undergraduate student from the Department of Education. The resultant goal was to include instructional designers and a teacher who have different cultural backgrounds and feel that they consider themselves experienced in this field.

In order to reach the goals of this study; firstly, I explored instructional designers’ experiences. Based on their experience, participants suggested that creating a culturally inclusive curriculum is tremendously challenging. They suggested that it is important to understand that individuals learn in different ways. This means taking one step back from one’s values and cherished beliefs, which is far from easy. In other words, instructional designers need to continuously adjust their strategies to meet learners’ needs while being simultaneously conscious of their own biases. Another key to success is that the instructional design needs to be culturally relevant, while the type of culturally relevant instructional strategies might vary. The participants

suggested that needs analysis helps evaluate their target audiences on the basis of an additional cultural dimension. This means that instructional designers need to redesign current courses in order to create cultural inclusivity. As a result, teaching and learning in a culturally affirming environment provides learners with a sense of belonging, as well as motivates and engages learners' behavior. The literature and participants' opinion were in congruence with the idea that designing a culturally inclusive learning environment is "a process that strengthens intellectual communities and advances teaching in a scholarly way" (Anderson, Bond, Davis-Street, Gentlewarrior, Savas, and Sheehy (2014, p.4). Anderson et al. (2014) suggest that implementing a culturally inclusive learning environment is a "learn-as-you-go' proposition" (p.9). In other words, it is an individual's decision or choice that it does not happen over-night, it is an ongoing mutual learning process that includes social responsibility (Anderson et al., 2014). Participants also agreed that it is their responsibility to continue in this ongoing learning process.

Secondly, I explored instructional design practices and decisions related to the practice of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. For example, all participants advocate for a knowledge sharing and critical reflection of multicultural experiences. They believe in understanding and including the cultural characteristics and contributions of diverse learners in their instructional design. Some of their practice includes application of ongoing effective communication throughout the lesson in order to monitor students understanding. They are flexible and adaptable to make adjustments if necessary, and their design demonstrates respect for multicultural diversity by offering students multiple options to learn. Their instructional design stimulates learning through risk-taking. Their design also employs Vygotsky's scaffolding approach. The participants design for direct instruction, plus they use demonstration methods. They use both individual learning and cooperative learning in small groups. They also

embrace a self-managed learning approach, and focus on learners' needs by asking for constructive feedback.

Thirdly, I analyzed how instructional designers integrate multiculturalism and diversity as part of their practice. This included attention to the skills they have developed and utilize. All participants conduct a needs assessment in order to research the target audience in-depth. Linda, Francine, Sydney and Eduard integrate a diverse perspective across cultures in their design. Their design includes the characteristics and learning styles of diverse cultures, as well as it contains both individual and cooperative learning. As a result, their design is tailored to students' different strengths and needs.

Lastly, I examined learning opportunities, challenges and limitations when designing instructions for cultural inclusivity. Eduard, Linda, Francine and Sydney agreed that there are a number of challenges: (1) a lack of sufficient funds, (2) time constraints, (3) an absence of mandate to perform a needs analysis in order to make the design as effective as possible, (4) a lack of effective communication with SMEs, (5) a lack of willingness to become a part of social change, (6) a lack of understanding how past learning experiences have shaped learners' current views of the world, (7) a lack of multicultural competence, and (8) a lack of a cooperative and collaborative work culture. In today's challenging and turbulent times, an effective learning intervention becomes applicable and instantly needed for desired outcomes. In order to implement an effective instructional design, participants suggested that it is necessary to continuously keep engaging in reality.

Answers to Research Questions

The first research question was: "Are contemporary instructional designers designing for multicultural audiences using dimensions of collectivism or individualism?" The results show

that the instructional designers stated the need for multicultural awareness. In addition, Chinese participant (Linda) describes herself as moderate collectivist; this specific example is consistent with this study literature. The significant results also endorse the inclusion of cultural competence into all participants' practice. Cultural competence includes knowledge, skills and behavior to work effectively with a cross-cultural population.

The second research question was: "Are the instructional designers prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? The results show that the instructional designers are prepared to take extra steps to maximize their knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners. For example, all participants use a needs assessment in order to estimate learners' needs and preferences. Linda, Francine, Sydney and Eduard plan for clarity, in order to avoid assumptions about cultural stereotypes. They research and keep up-to-date methodologies and strategies in order to be informed and to achieve culturally inclusive learning environments in their design.

The third research question was: "Are the instructional designers developing appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training?" All participants acknowledged that Canada is experiencing a shift in demographic trends, including an increase in cultural diversity. Participants felt that to be able to develop appropriate strategies and techniques for their culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training, the instructional designers need to be aware of their learners' cultural diversity. This helps them develop an effective instructional design to maximize the full potential for students' learning. A lack of multicultural competence in instructional design practice can have a negative impact on the learners' performance.

Limitations of Data

This research project is not without limitations. The results are not generalizable because this study included only four participants. This study used a purposive sampling approach which is a nonprobability sampling method (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). The results cannot claim representativeness; however, this study can trade generalizability for depth (Clark & Creswell, 2015). Nevertheless, the consistency of responses across the broad range of issues, in conjunction with agreement with the literature, suggests a reasonable level of validity.

The subjectivity pertaining to studying individuals' ideas of the 'truth' is a characteristic of qualitative practices (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). The qualitative data can provide in-depth understanding of the phenomena being studied (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). In other words, this study provides instructional designers with different practices to better understand how cultural diversity of student experiences and beliefs can improve instructional experience. This can have a positive impact on the practitioners' problem-solving skills; they will be better prepared for cultural diversity. The following are three examples of this limitation: the first limitation is "the problem of interviewer bias", i.e., researcher may behave outside of awareness by using a verbal (i.e. yes) and non-verbal (i.e. smile) reinforcement. The second limitation is "the leading questions"; one of the most discussed issues in the use of interviews in qualitative research. The third limitation is "the analysis of interviews"; selecting and interpreting interview statements according to one's own preconceptions or prejudices (Kvale, 1983, pp.189-193). Efforts were made throughout the data collection phases, and analyses, but any interpretations must be tempered by these issues. The analysis component was particularly served by the extensive use of the participants' words, allowing the reader to draw their own conclusions.

In order to overcome the limitations discussed above, future research should primarily focus on repeating a similar study with the goal of addressing the stated limitations. More specifically, future research should expand qualitative results with quantitative data, the so-called “convergent parallel design” (QUAN + QUAL). The quantitative data (large sample size, trends, generalization) and results in future study can provide “a general picture of the research problem, and the qualitative data [qualitative interviewing] and its analysis [will refine and explain] those statistical results by exploring the participants’ views regarding their persistence in more depth” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015, p. 386).

Implications & Additional Recommendations for Future Research

The findings gained in this study and literature reviews of this study led me to make these recommendations. There is a need for bridging the cross-cultural teaching gap (Atwater, Lance, Woodard & Johnson, 2013; Hofstede, 1986). Future researchers should also explore how instructional designers, educators, and education researchers can work together to find constructive ways for all students to experience a cultural inclusivity.

Research suggests that the Canadian education system does not provide Aboriginal students with the necessary resources and tools that are relevant to their cultural background (MacIver, 2012). The question remains, are there other cultural groups that the Canadian education system does not reflect on with respect to their cultural background? Even though students enter educational systems with cultural designations, the teaching workforce in this system does not reflect their cultural composition (Atwater, Lance, Woodard & Johnson, 2013; Hofstede, 1986). The research question for future study should be: What are specific multicultural models of design that supports diversity and cultural inclusivity in learning and pedagogy? The objectives for future study should be: (1) to develop complete and valid

conclusions about effective instructional practices for the various groups, (2) to describe what research evidence is needed to fill missing information on multicultural instructional models, and (3) to provide a clearer picture of identifying impactful instructional strategies for various cultural groups.

This qualitative study offered a way of illuminating the complex and multilayered nature of the expressions of human experiences and the interplay between self, relationships, and culture. Nevertheless, there were some variations pertaining to the instructional designers' perceptions and practices, so further study regarding the implementation of different strategies and the resulting impact on students' achievement would help resolve these variations (e.g. the participants' representations of the issues vary based on their cultural backgrounds and experiences); however, the core principles are the same and participants did not contradict each other. Future research should focus on both the effectiveness and a broader view of different instructional strategies, as well as the complex ideas and experiences of the participants. This would help in identifying impactful instructional strategies for culturally diverse learners. This would also help to promote human development, enhance professional practice, and narrow the gap between theory and practice in ways that promote a positive change in learning and pedagogy with respect to cultural diversity.

In conclusion, we need to be comfortable in questioning the status quo. The key element in an effective instructional design is change; however, based on the literature and participants' experiences, people are resistant to change. It is significant to raise awareness about the benefits of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. It is essential to be able to step outside one's comfort zone. Being comfortable with uncertainty and taking risks requires one to

interpret and practice a variety of thoughts and actions according to the unique needs of a specific situation.

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Appendix A – Recruitment Message

SUBJECT: Invitation to participate in a short study

Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in this research project. You have been identified as an individual with expertise in educational technology, and this research would benefit from your participation and insight. As a research project for my Master of Arts graduate requirement at the Concordia University; I am carrying out a study that focuses on designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity as it relates to instructional designers. The title of my study is Designing Learning Environments for Cultural Inclusivity: Case Studies with three Instructional Designers and a Teacher Exploring Their Practises

The purpose of this study is to explore whether three instructional designer students from Concordia University are in the process of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. If so how are they proceeding, and if not where are they failing. In order to provide a ‘deeper’ understanding of social phenomena; data will be collected via qualitative methods, such as interviews. This study will take place in an academic setting at Concordia University. The participants will be current graduate students enrolled in a Master’s program of Educational Technology in the Department of Education. I will select three participants for this study. The goal is to include instructional designers who have different cultural backgrounds. Eligibility criteria for recruiting participants include that you must be over 21 years of age, and have a minimum of six months experience working in an educational setting.

Your involvement is likely to include: One face-to-face interview lasting approximately sixty minutes. In the interest of privacy, all precautions will be taken to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of all data collected. Each participant will be given a pseudonym and any data that may act to identify him or her specifically will be removed. Specific data will be accessible only to Dr. Schmid (supervisor) and Ludmila Messitidis (principal investigator). Participants will have total access to the findings of this study and any related published materials. Information received will not be used in any way that is detrimental or demeaning to the participant. Participants will have the opportunity to review their transcripts and to add, alter, and delete information from them. Also, if you prefer at any time (up until the publication of the thesis) to have your real name, a form will be provided to opt-out of the anonymity condition I have presented. By default, however, anonymity and confidentiality will be protected unless otherwise requested by the participant.

I hope that you will agree to participate in this study. However, be aware of your right to refusal and the expressed understanding that if you choose not to participate in the study, this will not reflect negatively on you in anyway, and there will be no resulting issues that would arise from your refusal. Also, be aware of your right to discontinue your participation in the study at any time. This is clearly your right. By signing and dating this consent form, you are acknowledging that the subject of this research and the contents of this consent form have been adequately explained to you, and that you agree to participate in the study. A copy of this consent form will be provided for your records.

Thank you for your time,

Ludmila Messitidis
Principal Investigator
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Appendix B – Interview Guide

Interview Questions:

1. When you describe a culture, what exactly would you include? What words would you use to describe characteristics of your own culture?
2. Do you discuss your cultural differences with others? If so how often do you discuss this topic? How typical is your culture compare to Canadian culture and how unique is it in other ways? Does culture influence a way of learning? If so in what way?
3. Is the purpose of Canadian schooling to create “a melting pot” or “a multicultural pot”?
4. What do you know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as Individualism versus Collectivism?
5. From where do you get your ideas, knowledge and views?
6. Do you read about design and cultural differences, or do you attend conference presentations, or you encounter models and practices in your professional lives?
7. What practice do you think constitute the multicultural competencies?
8. To what extent do you perceive yourself to be competent with regard to cultural diversity? Can you give me some examples?
9. What are the challenges that instructional designers are facing in the 21st century regarding what instructional designers know about designing for different audiences based on cultural dimensions such as collectivism versus individualism?
10. Are you prepared to take extra steps to maximize your knowledge and skills to design for diverse learners? Or Are you developing appropriate strategies and techniques for your culturally diverse learners while developing an effective program or training? If so, how?

Appendix C – Information and Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Designing Learning Environments for Cultural Inclusivity:

Case Studies with three Instructional Designers and a Teacher Exploring Their Practises

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Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Schmid, Richard

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tel: 514-848-2424 ext. 2001. Department of Education, Concordia University.

Source of funding for the study: As a research project for my Master of Arts graduate requirement at the Concordia University; I am carrying out a study that focuses on designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity as it relates to instructional designers. Thus, there are no sources of funds for this study.

You are being invited to participate in the research study mentioned above. This form provides information about what participating would mean. Please read it carefully before deciding if you want to participate or not. If there is anything you do not understand, or if you want more information, please ask the researcher.

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to explore whether three instructional designers (i.e. current graduate students enrolled in a Master's program of Educational Technology in the Department of Education) from Concordia University are in the process of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity. If they are, this study will address how are they proceeding, and if they are not it will address where are they failing. Specifically, the goals of this study are to: (1) analyze how instructional designers integrate multiculturalism and diversity as part of their practice; (2) explore instructional design practices and decisions related to the practice of designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity; (3) explore instructional designers' experiences when designing educational instructions; and (4) analyze opportunities, challenges and limitations when designing instructions for cultural inclusivity.

B. PROCEDURES

If you participate, you will be asked to answer ten questions during the one face-to-face interview lasting approximately sixty minutes. In the interest of privacy, all precautions will be taken to protect your anonymity and confidentiality of all data collected. You will be given a pseudonym and any data that may act to identify you specifically will be removed. Specific data will be accessible only to Dr. Schmid (my supervisor) and Ludmila Messitidis (Principal Investigator). You will have total access to the findings of this study and any related published materials. Information received will not be used in any way that is detrimental or demeaning to you. You will have the opportunity to review your transcripts and to add, alter, and delete information from them. Also, if you prefer at any time (up until the publication of the thesis) to have your real name, a form will be provided to opt-out of the anonymity condition I have presented. By default, however, anonymity and confidentiality will be protected unless otherwise requested by you.

In total, participating in this study will take 60 minutes. This study is qualitative in nature, and I will be using interviews as the primary source for data collection. I will collect data via semi-structured interviews. Each interview will take approximately sixty minutes, and you will be asked ten questions.

C. RISKS AND BENEFITS

As the scope of this research, there is no physical or psychological discomfort, no risks to their relationship with others, or to their financial well-being.

Potential benefits include the chance to discuss and reflect on your own educational technology practices and will help the researcher to understand instructional design practices when designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY

We will gather the following information as part of this research: Age, Gender, Cultural Background, and number of years as an instructional designer.

We will not allow anyone to access the information, except people directly involved in conducting the research. We will only use the information for the purposes of the research described in this form.

The information gathered will be coded. That means that the information will be identified by a code. The researcher will have a list that links the code to your name.

We will protect the information by giving a pseudonym to you and any data that may act to identify you will be removed.

We intend to publish the results of the research. However, it will not be possible to identify you in the published results.

We will destroy the information five years after the end of the study.

F. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

You do not have to participate in this research. It is purely your decision. If you do participate, you can stop at any time. You can also ask that the information you provided not be used, and your choice will be respected. If you decide that you don't want us to use your information, you must tell the researcher before the August 30, 2017.

Please note that participants are not being offered compensation in this study.

There are no negative consequences for not participating, stopping in the middle, or asking us not to use your information.

G. PARTICIPANT'S DECLARATION

I have read and understood this form. I have had the chance to ask questions and any questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this research under the conditions described.

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

If you have questions about the scientific or scholarly aspects of this research, please contact the researcher. Their contact information is on page 1. You may also contact their faculty supervisor. If you have concerns about ethical issues in this research, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Concordia University, 514.848.2424 ex. 7481 or oor.ethics@concordia.ca.