

Activating components of an inclusive learning framework for refugees: Confronting the
challenges and proposing some strategies

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ABSTRACT

Activating components of an inclusive learning framework for refugees: Confronting the challenges and proposing some strategies

The world is witnessing the largest trans-border migration waves in history. Immigrants and refugees from around the world are trying to build their lives in host countries. Most are survivors of major traumas and they are trying to adjust to a new culture and learning a new language. This is a literature-based thesis in view of activating some components for an inclusive learning framework for refugees. After a review of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory and Dewey's Theory of Experience and Education, the focus is placed on the educational experiences and voices of adult refugees and their children with examples drawn from a variety of geographic and institutional contexts. These stories provide insight into some of the strengths and limits of existing educational programs to which adult and school aged refugees are exposed to in the host country. The understanding of refugee expectations could be beneficial for educators as a way to facilitate the integration of the new learners in the new learning environment. The crucial role of the community in helping the newcomers to integrate in the adoptive society is also examined. Finally, positive programs and strategies that have been introduced both at the individual and institutional levels are reviewed. It emerges from this literature review that significant changes at all levels of the educational system are needed to better meet the needs of refugees. Some strategies towards a more inclusive learning framework for refugees as well as education for all are illustrated in summary tables throughout the thesis.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Literature Review

While every refugee's story is different and their anguish personal, they all share a common thread of uncommon courage-the courage not to only survive, but to preserve and rebuild their shattered lives.

Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The world is witnessing the largest trans-border migration waves in history. War is one of the major causes for this massive shift of humanity. Thus, immigrants and refugees from around the world are trying to build their lives in a new country. These people's lives have been shattered due to corruption, economic strife followed by war or civil war and almost complete devastation of their lives in their country of origin. These events have left a significant impact on their life and outlook for their own future and the future of those members of their families and loved ones who have not succumbed to war. During such periods in their lives, people experience general trauma, many traumatic incidents, extremely strained socioeconomic circumstances and culture shock in their life.

People in posttraumatic contexts, will experience profound psychological, social and environmental changes. These experiences can completely devastate them but also can teach them to rebuild and revive again through the efforts of the schools, educational endeavours and the receiving community. Moreover, there is an increasing demand at all levels of education, including adult education, to create programs and policies that will enable immigrants, and refugees in particular, to integrate and to participate fully in the host society (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2011).

Most new immigrants face a series of problems in the host country. One of the major issues that they encounter is related to adjusting to this new culture and then to learning a new language. However, this learning process can be distracted by a number of issues created by the disorienting dilemma associated with the risk of cultural disillusionment being felt by most newcomers. Therefore, education plays an essential role in facilitating the way new immigrants learn a new language and adjust to the new culture and society. Effective programs need to be organized in order to facilitate the integration of newcomers into the host society. Considering this necessity, there are some pertinent educational approaches that could guide educators and educational organizations to effectively facilitate the learning process of the newcomers and their integration. For example, by using authentic texts, educators can help the newcomers to develop their critical thinking skills that will help them to appreciate their new living environment and its cultural differences (Fisher, 2007; Kinloch, 2010). As a starting point, educators should understand the obstacles that adult refugees and their children face, in order to be able to assist them.

The challenges facing adult learners who are simultaneously acquiring literacy for the first time and learning to speak a new language are daunting. Upon arrival to new host countries, these individuals have limited time to learn the language of their host country and adapt to their new lives through participation in schools and workplaces. Therefore, it is crucial to understand those challenges in order to support them. Drawing from Mezirow's (1997) theory, transformative learning can be used as a theoretical tool to understand the challenges of the newcomers and to find specific teaching approaches to help them integrate in their new country. Mezirow (1997) believes that past

experiences have a great influence on the way people perceive meaning. Thus, in transformative learning the newcomer's past experiences and emotions can be the cornerstone for future nourishment of the individual. Moreover, the social structures influence the way people view their experience. Every person has their point of views about life and these viewpoints cannot be changed unless something tremendous occurs in the life of that person such as, disorientating dilemma, self-examination and sense of isolation. However, there is always the challenge to create a safe environment for the newcomers to feel free to express their beliefs about new issues and misconceptions confronting them in the new country. In addition to Mezirow's theory of transformative learning, Dewey's theory of experience and education (1963/1968) can help the educators to support the newcomers since they provide the adult learners and their educators with additional lenses to understand their situation better and to move forward to build a better life for refugees in the new host society.

In this thesis, I first present some theories from the literature and then focus on the educational experiences and voices of adult refugees and their children. These stories will provide insight into some of the strengths and limits of existing educational programs they are exposed to in the host country. Thirdly, I present an in-depth analysis of the role of the school. The understanding of refugee expectations could be beneficial for educators as a way to facilitate the integration of the new learners in the new learning environment. Fourth, I examine the role of the community in helping the newcomers to integrate in their adoptive society. Finally I review, both at the individual and institutional levels, positive programs that have been introduced.

Problem Statement

Educational approaches could be adopted to assist immigrants, refugees in particular, in a host society and to instruct and guide them effectively throughout their new journey. While research focused on the education of refugee students, for both adults and young ones, has been growing (Rutter, 2006), there is a gap in the literature regarding this issue and there is little discussion in the literature about ways in which the educational approaches and practices support adult refugee students throughout their integration in the society and the school environment. Living as a refugee in a host country can create a lot of challenges, including accommodation changes in home and school, financial hardships and learning the new language and adapting to the new culture of the host country. Learning a new language is not an easy task and especially after years of being away from school.

Therefore, educators need to consider these issues while teaching refugees and try to facilitate this process and to find ways that make the learning atmosphere engaging and realistic. Realistic means the subjects should be taken from real-life experiences and should be about their everyday life problems and concerns. I therefore highlight the challenges that the refugees face which is generated by the dilemma and the cultural dissatisfaction felt by the newcomer to better understand the effects of trauma and the means used to overcome these effects. Also, I propose implications for a successful resettlement by identifying the person's strengths and their issues and by the support of the community as the education of the refugee students is shaped not only by the school, but also by the broader contexts of the school and society. In this regard, host communities play an essential role in paving the way of the refugees and supporting them

to overcome the obstacles that they face. Thus, the role of the community is fundamental and should be highlighted in the literature.

Research Question

The aim of my thesis is to examine the methods and programs that schools can implement in order to facilitate the learning journey of the refugee and to shed light on the role that communities can play to support the newcomers. Therefore, I examine the following questions in order to make some positive, practical suggestions:

- What are the challenges that refugees face?
- How can they overcome these obstacles?
- What are promising theories to analyse their situation?
- According to these theories, what can be the role and the contributions of the schools, related educational institutions and programs and receiving communities in reorienting and reshaping the newcomers' life?
- Can this examination of the situation suggest an integrated theoretical framework drawn from Mezirow, Dewey and other theorists with similar orientations, for answering these questions more effectively and with a positive impact?
- What are the recommendations for the schools and the community in particular?

Purpose of the Thesis

Posttraumatic experiences are inseparable aspects from the lives of the refugees. The purpose of this thesis is to discover those experiences and to propose solutions that can facilitate the adaptation of adult refugees and their children in the new country. There are different ways of facilitating this process taking into consideration characteristics of the individual, educators, communities and schools. There are theories that support adult refugees' learning and the facilitation of this procedure. One of the theories that I chose to discuss is the Transformative Learning theory advanced by Mezirow (1997).

Transformative learning has been applied to assist the process of change where fear and traumatic events restricted the people's freedom and social development. Moreover, the purpose of this literature-based thesis is to shed light on the challenges that refugees face in their adaptation in the host country and to recognize the way these experiences can reshape their understanding about the values of their new life context. This outcome can be guided by transformative learning theory which includes self-examination, critical reflection on the past incidents and hope for a better future with the assistance of the educational institutions, related programs and the host community.

Every learner has the potential to improve and develop herself/himself. Hence, educational systems should consider the challenges that face the newcomers with refugee status and try to find better solutions for their education in view of successful integration. The main challenge is to understand how to foster this development. I hope that my thesis will provide a nuanced understanding of the refugee challenges and how to address such challenges. I therefore expect that my thesis will make a contribution that will allow

schools, educational programs and communities to identify the best theoretical frameworks and research results from the relevant literature to achieve this goal.

Literature Review

This thesis examines the way the newcomers confront the challenges of being-in-transition and how they transform those challenges to a better life balance. By relying on theoretical perspectives, this thesis reviews Mezirow's Transformative Learning theory and Dewey's theory on Experience and Education, as well as related literature, in identifying the ways schools and communities can help the refugees to integrate in the host society.

- Transformative Learning theory by Mezirow, Dewey's Experience and Education theory as applied inside schools and other related frameworks (Freire and Kolb). (Chapter 1)
- Confronting the challenges: critical issues and dynamic contexts from around the world (Chapter 2)
- The Role of Schools and that of the Community (Chapter 3)
- Proposal for elements towards an integrative framework of learning and education for refugees.

Transformative Learning Theory

In this paper, I use Mezirow's (1991, 1997, 2000) theory of Transformative Learning to describe the newcomers' situation in which as adult learners, they reshape or redefine their beliefs, which results in changing their opinions on their previous experiences and assumptions (Cranton & King, 2003). Transformative Learning theory

was first introduced by Mezirow in 1978, and it had significant impact on adult education. Scholars continued to study, test, debate and improve the theory and reconstruct under theorized aspects. As adult learners, we reassess and review all the experiences, assumptions and the prior knowledge that we had to form new meanings. These prior assumptions or meanings that we had are called the frame of reference.

The transformative learning theory is the process where the adult learner thinks critically about the prior knowledge or the emotions and reshapes them in order to construct new meanings. The new meanings will be better adapted as they emerged after critically reflecting on those meanings and therefore these will be more authentic and comprehensive (Mezirow, 1991, 2000). Hence, the frame of reference facilitates and influences perception, comprehension, and the evaluation of past experiences. As a consequence, the frame of reference influences how the adult learners behave and feel in different circumstances. Moreover, there are some external factors that may influence the way those new perceptions form. Mezirow (1991, 1997) suggests that those factors may be the social factors, cultural values, religious beliefs and psychological factors; without those social interactions there will be no transformation. Hence, transformative learning means reasoning and assessing those beliefs and then reforming them to make them more valid in the new environment. These new perceptions will pave the way to bigger opportunities for the adult learner and especially the refugee newcomer.

Dirkx, Mezirow, and Cranton (2006) have observed that during the transformative learning process, the learner is involved in deep and meaningful learning experiences. These meaningful experiences differ from other learning experiences as they cause major transformation in the learner's life. In the case of the newcomers, the transformative

learning is considered to be a social interactional activity where with the help of the community and the reflection of the individual there will be a change in the perception of the individual. Therefore, in this case it is not only the individual but also the society that the newcomer interacts with that also has an essential role in the changing process.

Mezirow (1997) argues that the frame of reference consists of various experiences that individuals have acquired from various situations. Hence, an individual can easily reject an opinion and accept another one based on their preconceptions. Syrian refugees, for example, who arrived to Canada some three years ago and those among them who are considered as adults had their own conception and experiences before their arrival and they were living their life based on those beliefs which are designated by Mezirow to be the frame of reference of the individual. When they arrived to Canada, they encountered new perspectives that rendered some of their previous perspectives invalid and in need of reassessment.

The two essential elements in transformative learning are thinking and reflecting critically and participating freely in the discourse to reach to the new judgment and to form new opinions about the new situations. Sometimes these preconceptions can be biased and they may affect the way the newcomer thinks. Thus, it forms a barrier, which the newcomer should overcome to form new ideas or solutions, especially if the new idea does not fit the newcomer's current frame of reference.

Mezirow (1997), states that the frame of reference has two dimensions: habits of mind and points of view. Habits of mind refer to political, cultural, educational, or social sets of codes, all of which change very slowly. The point of view made up by the beliefs, judgements, attitudes, and feelings of the individual can be changed easily. In the case of

the refugees, for example, people who come from the same place may have different opinions and their own habits of the mind based on different educational, cultural, and social backgrounds. Thus, transformative learning does not occur in a void, but takes place in the context of interactions (Cranton, 1996). Hence, the role of the community is essential to reshape the newcomer's perceptions.

The individual may reframe their thinking through various ways, when they start to focus and examine their own thinking. Mezirow (2000) explains transformation with ten key phases, which are fully identified in Figure 1. The first phase starts from the external factor, which is a disorienting dilemma. Then there will be the self-examination of the feelings such as fear, anger, or shame and critically reassessing and reflecting on the previous assumptions and opinions. After critically reflecting on those conceptions the learner shares them with the society where they belong, through social interactions. The learner plans a course of action and implements those new perceptions in real life. The integration of the new opinions in the real life is evidence that the individual's perceptions have been changed. All of the above keys are essential elements in the process of transformation learning. For example, in the case of the Syrian refugees the first element is considered to be the most important element in the process of their transformation. The disorienting dilemma is caused by their experiences of the loss of a family member during the war, or learning a new language in a new country, related financial hardships and work issues among others. These new events and experiences will influence the way the newcomer will respond to subsequent events.

Table 1

Ten key phases of transformative learning processes (adapted from Mezirow 2000).

Ten Key Phases of Transformative Learning	
1-A disorienting dilemma	6-Planning a course of actions
2-Self-examination with feelings	7-Acquiring new knowledge and skills
3-Critical reflection of prior assumptions	8-Integration into the existing practices
4- Re-constructing perspective through social interaction	9-Trying new perspectives
5-Exploration of options	10-Adopting new perspectives

Mezirow's transformative theory forms an essential part of this thesis as it helps professionals to understand the refugee newcomer's past and present experiences. Since every newcomer has their own experience, it is vital to discover the meaning of those experiences. Mezirow argues that there should be some learning theory that describes how the adult learner interprets their experiences (Mezirow, 1991). He believes that reflection is an essential component in transformative learning theory. This means, asking questions and making assumptions are considered to be reflections, thus, they are critical elements in the transformative learning process.

Kitchenham (2008) states that transformation and reflection are closely related, as the former does not occur when there is no reflection. Similarly, Dewey (1910), states that reflection is "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends" (p.19). Indeed, Mezirow (1991) argues that the ability to see a situation

from different perspectives requires reflection; it also involves the ability to find alternative explanations by critically considering various evaluations, decisions, and viewpoints. Therefore, he encourages learners to take an interdisciplinary approach to learning. This means the learner should critically reflect on those experiences, emotions, reactions and the beliefs that they have in order to fully understand them and to form new meanings from them. The learner in this process should reflect on the way they view the world and decides what is adequate or inadequate. The role of the educator is to facilitate this process.

The ability to adapt to a new environment depends on several factors such as: personality, family traditions, age, inherited characteristics, gender, culture and the assistance of the community and so on. Therefore, each person has its own conceptions and values and based on them they understand their life experiences (Mezirow, 1997). Therefore, it is essential to construct a comprehensive, integrated theoretical framework, which will assist the displaced human being to reshape knowledge, foster critical thinking skills and raise consciousness to arrive to a new balance in life in the welcoming community. Hence, transformative learning means the expansion of the consciousness through the efforts of the person and is facilitated via critical analysis.

Adult learning can be considered to be transformative in nature, meaning that it can change the learner's perspective towards a more inclusive one. This transformation can save the person from previously and narrowly held beliefs and perspectives, which may be constrictive in the new situations and circumstances of the newcomer.

Mezirow (1991) argues that learning happens when an individual or a group acquires the cultural characteristics of another via direct or indirect contact and

interaction. There are two concepts for the transformative theory: meaning schemes and meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1991). First of all, it is the individual's ideas, beliefs and emotions by which the individual interprets a new subject – this is the meaning scheme. Then comes the individual's perspective on the subjects, which act, as codes to form the way the individual will respond to the new subject matter. These are called meaning perspectives. Hence, the critical reflection phase is essential in this process as it shapes the way the individual understands their own experiences.

West (1998) believes that in moments of transition it is essential to spend quality time with the community and the people around the newcomer. These relationships are critical, as they would lead to learning and adaptation in the new country and culture. This idea is illustrated in an autobiography by Jongeward (1999), where the author states that in moments of transition she searched for people to speak with them and to share her stories with them so she could find relief from the unfamiliar world she had entered. During her journey, she discovered how much she relied on people to seek relief and help from the unknown world. Therefore, the role of the community and the people around the person is very important to help them overcome obstacles in time of transition. The people's kindness and their acts of benevolence can be a major counterforce to overcome the difficulties.

According to Gilpin-Jackson (2014), the process of transformative learning in post war contexts is not covered in the theory and practice of transformative learning. Therefore, this raises the question, “how do people in post-traumatic contexts that require social change, experience the process of transformative learning (p. 96)”

John (2016) explained the process of transformative learning by stating that before transformative learning takes place, there might be discomfort and some tension with the self. Then, it comes a stage where the individual's interests and experiences take part in this process, during which, with careful practices, the person forms new interpretations about the new world. This is the point where the individual finds meaning in their post trauma experiences.

More specifically, Gilpin-Jackson (2014) stated that transformative learning happens through the contexts of holistic knowing. This procedure brings a personal reconciliation with the real-life situations. This involves acknowledging aspects of life that are not as the person would like them to be. Hence, seeing things as they really are provides the only basis for a transformative learning. As the psychologist Carl Rogers said, "It is a curious paradox that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change" (Rogers, 2007, p. 17). By the same token Jongeward (1999) states that unknowns and surprise are integral to what takes place. In a letter to her daughter after 3 months in India, she wrote, "When you don't know what is going to happen (and you can't know) don't worry, don't panic, keep calm enough to take things as they come. Because what comes is always a surprise and a gift of great value" (p.9).

All the authors, mentioned above, seemed to refer to the current crisis in the world as being the result of political, economic or environmental changes. Amend and Benne (2012), state that these crises can lead to a huge transformation in the individual's life through critical reflection of their own experiences. Refugees have the ability of this transformation. Each one of them has a past experience, which in a way affects their learning. Thus, by reflecting critically on those experiences, they can learn new concepts.

Educators have a major role regarding this issue; many learning theories attempt to explain how learners learn and the impact of the external factors on learning.

According to Amend and Benne (2012), applying the principles of transformative learning theory, learners' experiences change the way of their thinking. Hence, it is the educators' job to bring awareness of this process of transformational learning to the learners so they can process knowledge and develop confidence. In addition, educators should encourage them to engage in learning, collaborating and sharing experiences. In times of crisis, the immigrants face harsh experiences. These experiences may lead to a great transformation in their lives. Hence, educators and community members should assist the learners in their efforts to learn new skills and new ways "to be." According to Bassett (2012), lacking knowledge and wisdom is a major problem in the world. Therefore, changing the way people think and behave can lead to a more prosperous world. Thinking wisely can help people to move towards transformation and change.

Dewey's Experience and Education Approach and Pedagogy inside the Schools

The theoretical framework of this thesis is based on the works and perspectives of Jack Mezirow, John Dewey, and their contributions to the field of education and adult education and experiential learning in nineteenth century progressive pedagogical movements and postmodernist approaches. For the most part, these authors adhere to the experiential learning theory where knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. "Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p.41). Thus, critical reflection is an important aspect of both teaching and learning. Educational philosopher and theorist John Dewey (1933) recognized that "it is the reflection on our experiences that leads to learning not

merely the experience itself. We learn from those experiences that we ponder, explore, review, and question” (Dewey, 1963, p. 61).

Let us examine the different stages of Dewey’s theory and how it may help the newcomers to better learn the new language. The first stage that Dewey described is that the learning experience should contain a physical interaction with the environment of the learner and the social surrounding. In the case of the newcomers, this would be for example going to the museum and form direct relationship with the new environment (Monk, 2013). The second stage of experiential learning is that experiential learning takes into account the real-life experience of the person during their learning process.

According to Dewey (1963), everything occurs within a social environment, and knowledge is based on experiences that need to be organized in authentic experiences that frame the information. Dewey believes that these experiences will assist the learner to use this knowledge to solve everyday life situations. However, adult learners should be open to this knowledge and try to use the socially learned knowledge and values and build on their previous knowledge. Hence, Dewey argues that not all experiences are educative unless they are connected to the real world where adult learners can transfer knowledge to real and new situations, “Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience” (Dewey, 1963, p.25).

Learning is generally considered to be a common process for adult refugees, which will lead to confidence and self-development. Hence, there should be a social process in this learning experience where the educator should impart knowledge in order

to facilitate this process. Therefore, schools should make the learning process experiential in nature in order to engage the learner in the learning process, which according to Dewey (1963), should be given priority and importance. This means, learners should bring their past experiences to life and connect them with the new experience. This process will facilitate their critical reflection and understanding of the new experience through reflection and then action. In the case of the newcomers, there should be continuity and integration at the same time. The newcomers should relate their past experiences with the new ones and make connections between them. The learners should not erase what is in their memory in order to fill it with the new knowledge. Hence, the role of the educator is essential as they should have the background knowledge of the newcomers in order to facilitate the learning process (Dewey, 1966).

The third stage of Dewey's experiential learning is reflection. Dewey explained that learning cannot happen when the mental process is lacking. This means, the newcomer should know why he is there and for what purpose and consequences. Hence, the newcomer should connect his past experiences with the new ones and form new meanings from them. Dewey called this process continuity, which is vital for the final stage. There should be continuity and integration in order to form effective learning and integration.

Moreover, Dewey (1966) reinforced the role of the educator since students with refugee background may suffer from poor concentration and confusing thoughts due to the harsh circumstances that they have been through. Therefore, educators should be well-trained to help the students who need additional support. There are several methods that educators can use in order to help students reach their full potential. Educators'

greatest challenge has always been and continues to be making learning easy and enjoyable for the students. This means educational institutions should encourage creative thinking and problem-solving skills. That also means learning the skills needed to succeed in an increasingly global and constantly developing economy. Therefore, the fundamental goal of educators is not just providing education to pass exams; rather it should teach them open-mindedness. This means that teachers should take the refugee students' interests and attitudes into account throughout the teaching process and should instil the values of empathy and tolerance among their students. The concept of openness and respect for the diversity is essential as people become willing to work with different people and to cooperate with others in solving problems and share experiences. This can be done by providing a learning atmosphere where the students have the freedom and the space to critically analyse and solve a problem with respect to others' perspectives rather than just their own (Freire, 2001). Hence, it is vital that educators help the refugee students to develop their "unique capacities for creative thought and action" (Robinson & Aronica, 2016, p. 136).

Table 2

Experiential learning and transformation: Summary of refugee student perceptions and the role of the educators.

Theories	Refugee Students' perspective	Educators' Role
<p>Experiential Learning (Dewey, 1963)</p>	<p>The classroom is an open space where the student has the freedom and the space to talk about their past experiences and reflect upon them. There is active participation and the physical environment facilitates the learning process.</p>	<p>The Educator is a facilitator of the learning experiences . experiences. The educator should make the learner to reflect on his past experiences in order to form new ones. These new experiences will be the skills and the knowledge for the future.</p>
<p>Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2000)</p>	<p>In this theory, the adult learner reflects on his beliefs, attitudes, emotions and reactions in order to form new meanings from them. By reflecting on the way they view the world, they can reshape their assumptions and can change those that find them inadequate.</p>	<p>A progressive educator must not experience the task of teaching in a mechanical fashion. In doing so, the educator must not merely transfer concepts to learners Transformative Learning is rather a social process and “discourse becomes central to making meaning” (Mezirow, 1997, p.10).</p>

Chapter 2
Confronting the Challenges:
Critical Issues and Dynamic Contexts from around the World

This part of the thesis is grounded on two themes: Language and Literacy, and Education and Policies. An examination of these two themes is important for a clear understanding of the experiences of refugees.

Language and Literacy

For many adult newcomers, survival in an unfamiliar culture takes precedence over educational and career goals. Some of the obstacles that influence and intensify their problems are related to a number of factors such as: difficulties receiving accreditation for their prior education and work experience, financial hardship, a lack of affordable and safe housing, changing relations within their families, racism, and a lack of social and community networks that would help them gain access to information about various services available to them (Lange, 2015).

This section includes challenges refugee students face while learning a new language as well as the pedagogical instructions in the curriculum. One essential factor in this chapter is that literacy cannot be separated from the social background of the students and therefore requires questioning how migration has shaped their values and practices and what resources are often used in educational institutions. Considering the background of the students is essential to assess their progress. Some students may have an education background and preparation before their arrival and some students may not have any. These differences may influence the way a learner learns the new language. In one of the

studies, the researcher argues that previous schooling and other educational experiences in students' first language influence the way they learn the new language.

Browder (2018) writes about Chin refugees. Chin refugees from Myanmar who immigrated recently to the United States of America (USA) fleeing from religious and ethnic war in their country, spent many years living in refugee camps and detention centers where they didn't have access to schooling and education. After their arrival to the USA these newcomers were all processed together without any differentiation in educational background. The findings of this study indicate that not all the refugee students were at the same level of education. Some of them attended school in their country but some of them did not do so. However, they were all put together in one study group, which resulted in a delayed learning environment. Thus, schools need to know which of these new students need more help learning the new language. Another finding is that educational institutions should have other measures to determine the educational level of the students (Browder, 2018) and select, accordingly, materials that are used to teach the new language to the students.

Crandall (2011) indicates that authentic writings about the experiences of the newcomers are more helpful for the students. Most of the educational institutions focus on preparing students for standardized tests and forget about the authentic writing process, which may be more effective. Crandall (2011) illustrates the cases of four-Somali young men who arrived in the USA with limited and interrupted education and reported their experience and the challenges that they faced while learning to write in the foreign language. Ali, who was born in Somalia, and lived in a camp until his arrival to the USA, discovered his expectation towards learning the new language to be completely

different from what he had learnt from his friends' experiences as to the kind of education he was going to receive upon his arrival. He indicated that the teachers' concern was to prepare them to pass the state exam and they rarely were given an opportunity to write in the class. Ali started an after-school project to publish a magazine about the lives of the students, and with the help of his friends, they published a magazine that included biographies, articles, photographs and experiences of the students. Ali's experience in learning the new language at the high school was an example of how writing and speaking about our experiences can lead to creativity.

Shafac, another man whose father was killed during the war and who was forced to flee the country, lived with his mother and siblings in a refugee camp and he didn't go to school as he didn't like grammar and the school taught only grammar. After immigrating to the USA, Shafac described that he had to learn how to hold a pencil and the first thing that he wrote was about his life to have a clear vision of what had happened in the past. Shafac started to write about his life in the refugee camp and how he was bullied in the camp. This creative exercise motivated him to learn new tools and skills in writing. Shafac's writing out of the box imposed in class helped him to succeed.

Ade, who was also relocated to the USA, stated that he wrote better when he was going to write about something that he had known before or when the teacher provided a model about what was expected from them.

Najm, also was relocated to the USA with his family and was enrolled in a tenth-grade English class. Najm wanted to talk about the African history in the English class because he didn't have the opportunity to speak about it and he stated that his teacher did

not care about the African history. All the four participants argued that they wrote more when they were on their own time and when they expressed themselves freely. These experiences show that personal narratives and providing authentic materials are essential to enhance writing in the new language. Adult learners do not need exam-focused curriculum to learn to write; rather, they need to write about real-life topics. These findings suggest that a theme-based curriculum is more helpful to encourage writing. Teachers should therefore encourage authentic writing tasks in the classroom in order to help students with refugee background to be motivated to develop their writing skills in the new language.

During refugee resettlement, learning a new language was essential in order to access the available economic or educational opportunities (Warriner, 2007). Thus, much research was done on providing effective learning environments for the newcomers but less was done in practical terms. The learning environment for the refugee students should provide student-centered classroom where they can share ideas and express themselves freely. Preventing students from using their first language will create a passive relationship between the teacher and the students and will hinder the students from learning the new language (Krashen, 1982). This is particularly true with adult learners who may have undergone various hardships in their recent lives and will view this restriction as an impediment to successful engagement in language learning.

In another study, Nepali-Bhutanese adult students, who resettled in the USA as refugees, were given the opportunity to learn English in one of the language centers. The adult learners claim that translanguaging activities helped them to better learn the English language. The teachers often forbade using the first language, but in this case the teacher

allowed the students to use their first language in order to facilitate the learning. The strength of using the first language is that it offers to the teachers the opportunity to scaffold language learning whereby the use of the first language will also make the adult learners feel valued (Park & Valdez, 2018).

Moreover, developing literacy is more than teaching reading and writing. Culture and lived experiences are vital to literacy development, which can change over time. It is an interactional act. Taking into account the social and cultural background of the students is essential in order to develop meaning-making practices in the classroom. One of the challenges of the adult newcomers is learning in an environment where formal education is a requirement. Learning for adult refugees should be informal and meaning-making. This means it should be related to their everyday life experiences.

In one of the studies by Nakutnyy (2013), Sahal a single mother with her five children came to Canada from Sudan. They escaped from the civil war in Sudan and they fled to Egypt and then to Canada. When they arrived, she experienced a cultural shock as she explained that in her country people talk with each other, they have time to communicate and speak together. She explained that in Canada she found out that people talk less with each other and there is little oral interaction among people. Their everyday life practices have changed dramatically due to these cultural differences. For Aheu, one of the children, the role of the social worker is vital as she helped her when she first arrived in Canada. Thus, the social worker became a cultural and literacy advisor for Aheu. Therefore, for Sahal and Aheu literacy and community are connected as one supports the other in the integration process. Hence, students with refugee background benefit from community-based programs and therefore schools and educators should

integrate community-based programs in the schools. Aheu learned better when the English class was about real-life situations like going to the grocery and Sahal also stated that she learned better when they used group work activities in the classroom.

Digital learning can be one way in facilitating the path for the newcomers to learn the new language. Tait and Elizabeth, two teenage girls who were resettled as refugees from Thailand to the Western United States used technology in order to create informal learning settings for themselves after school (Omerbasic, 2015). Many refugee people are unable to return back to their country due to unsafe environment. Thus, Elizabeth and Tait couldn't return to Burma. This realization made them feel depressed and sad. The two girls went to an after-school program where they had to learn English. Informal learning was effective in the case of the two girls as they had the opportunity to express their feelings freely and they had the chance to use technology in the classroom. The use of technology helped them to overcome major issues in the new environment. Although, Elizabeth's family didn't allow her to use social media, she found other ways to use social networks, which helped her develop 21st century skills. In addition to using technology, Elizabeth was involved in community work and volunteering after school hours, which helped her gain confidence. Tait, on the other hand withdrew from the after-school program and volunteering, as there were so many restrictive rules and schedules. She used online space to do her homework and to interact with other people. She was able to make friends from different cities in the United States and started to communicate in English. She shared her thoughts, opinions and her drawings with other people on the Internet. The feedback that she received from her friends made her continue her passion as an artist and developed her literacy in English. Thus, to promote learning, educators

should encourage using technology as evidenced by the case of the two girls.

Technology use helped them adapt to the new environment and learn the new language through sharing their lived experiences and talking about their passion. Educational policies should adopt new methods in order to integrate social digital platforms in formal settings.

It is interesting to include studies from different countries, which highlight the need for cross-border collaboration among educators. Therefore, I will include tables that indicate how refugees from around the world with different backgrounds confront the challenges and how they are unique despite the diversity between them. The examples are taken from the literature review and will be summarized in the following table.

Table 3

Challenges related to language learning.

Source	Consequences	Type of Response	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chin Refugees from Myanmar with limited or interrupted formal education (Browder, 2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withdrawal from school Missing years of schooling Difficulty in learning the new language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students claim that educational services need to have other measures to determine the level of each student and to place them in the correct place. We cannot rely on transcripts to determine the newly arrived refugees' educational needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools need to provide more help for these students. Students should not necessarily be lumped together in one program since there may be variability among the students and the way they learn a new language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four Somali young refugees in the United States with limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withdrawal from school Difficulties in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students claim that the main purpose of learning to write is to pass the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers should provide authentic writing opportunities

<p>formal education (Crandall, 2011)</p>	<p>learning the new language especially writing</p>	<p>examination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students reported that writing is important in their lives • Teachers spend the majority of time controlling the behaviour of the students. • Students left the school due to discrimination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should follow the interests and desires of the student. • Teachers should listen to the stories of refugee students beyond the mainstream classroom, which will help them to achieve in the school and respect personal stories. • Using authentic stories will help the learners to learn easily. Such as speaking about everyday life problems. • Sharing lived experiences with peers • Writing about childhood experiences can be useful as they have pictures in their minds. • Using models will help the students to write for what they expected.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nepali-Bhutanese adults from a refugee backgrounds learning the new language (Park & Valdez, 2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discomfort • Hinder language learning • Disengagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students expressed discomfort when the teacher forced them to not use their mother language while learning the new one • Strong emotional responses from the students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators should value the existing linguistic abilities of the refugee students which will increase the gain of the new language • The use of translanguaging practices led to the emergence of meaning-making awareness among refugee students • By using translanguaging approach teachers create ways to scaffold language learning and

			<p>disrupts a deficit view of the students' home language allowing them to be valued as assets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of language and literacy resources among adult refugees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Sudanese refugee mother and son arriving in Canada (Nakutnyy, 2013) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with others through the medium of written language • Refugees encounter formal education which devalues their knowledge, previous life experiences, their resilience and oral practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both mother and son appreciated social interactions in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee students can learn better when their curriculum is linked to their out-of-school life experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two girls, Tait and Elizabeth, from the Umpiem Camp in Thailand resettled in United States as a refugee (Omerbasic, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to return to their home country due to violence and persecution • Social and economic challenges in their new home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal education can be disengaging without informal learning • The two refugee girls indicated that their mother language and culture were marginalized due to focus on formal education. • The girls bridge a gap between their former and new life to make learning a meaningful process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging home and community relations through out-of-school activities • Use digital spaces to develop skills and knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging after school community programs • Educators teach their students meaningful practices in formal settings.

Challenges Related to Educational Policies and Political Issues

Transition of the newcomers into the new educational system can be a time of mixed emotions and multiple challenges. It typically involves leaving old friends, home, traditions, and celebrations and to learn in a new environment (Hiorth, 2017). Thus, creating meaningful and positive learning experiences are crucial to the successful integration of students with refugee backgrounds. Therefore, the mental health and well-being of the students is vital to have healthy citizenry in the country. Magro (2009) claims that the ability to establish a career and professional connection is a challenge for the newcomers. A teacher from China who had immigrated to Canada expressed the difficulties that she faced in order to teach in Canada. She had the passion to teach in Canada but couldn't in spite of her degrees and diplomas. Hence, in spite of being educated and having all the credentials to work in Canada, immigrants still face barriers.

The literature indicates the challenges of the educators while immigrating to another country regarding the recognition of their prior knowledge and experience (Andersson & Guo, 2009) and the return to training and education as a perceived means to improve their knowledge (Shan, 2009). For example, the immigrant teachers struggle to establish an environment where they can be respected by the students because of their foreign accent and their skin colour, differences that can be a great issue in the classroom as a foreign educator (Amobi, 2004). By the same token, the students stated their preferences of taking classes from native speakers who may have richer vocabularies and a native accent. Moreover, refugee students stated the difficulty to adjust to the native accent while learning the new language (Alberts, 2008; Liang, 2006; Marvasti, 2005). Marvasti states that, "Language, even accent, may be used as a proxy for an individual's

level of skills and lead to prejudice and discriminatory behaviour in the work environment” (p. 154).

Marginalization is described in several studies such as the experiences of immigrant teacher candidates in the Faculty of Education of an American university. Schmidt (2010) found evidence of discrimination, contradictory hiring and salary standards, intolerance of dress, hostility toward certain pronunciation patterns of ESL teachers, and anti-immigrant discourses in classes. Therefore, institutions are not adjusted to meet the needs of the immigrants, which can lead to great disappointments by the immigrants. In another study, Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) describes the case of the Russian teachers immigrating to Israel and the challenges that they have faced while adjusting to the new norms and culture. The immigrant educators encountered considerable levels of difficulties while dealing with the students because of their status and different accent. However, despite the difficulties, the newcomers are always ready to re-establish their life in the new country, there is hope and resilience among the people. For example, in one autoethnography, Li (2006) states, that the new environment may open new horizons to her to develop a new sense and a new identity. The new environment is an opportunity not an obstacle because she can learn new things. Nevertheless, she affirms the need of future collaboration to strengthen the feelings of social responsibility among people and how to accept the others with respect.

These experiences occur, in part, as a result of marginalization discourses in work situations. Equity discourses in the workplace create very little change if they do not consider the various socio-cultural realities that shape transnational lives. Significantly, the literature suggests that an analysis of human experience through intersecting

perspectives may reveal new gaps, trends, pedagogies, and differences that may be useful considerations in the expanding field of adult Education. In this case, the institutions and people should work together to establish these values among the new generation. This can be done by creating opportunities to engage in a dialogue at work that involves considering how difference in identity, culture, and context may be appreciated and supported.

A sense of belonging is fundamental to the shaping of the identity. Thomas (1991) believes in the importance of “place” where we live, in the process of constructing our habits and shaping our thinking. Thus, “place” is connected to the self and when we are away from our familiar ground, this is considered an enormous challenge and opportunity at the same time. However, with the help of the self and the people around us we can continue to search, learn and to participate in the unknown world and at this stage the unfamiliar becomes familiar to us. Similarly, Magro (2009) claims that courage, optimism, patience, openness to new experiences, and a willingness to help others are all considered being important elements in the life of the new comers. In spite of their difficult life, the overwhelming majority of newcomers want to improve the conditions for family and friends left behind.

In one of the studies conducted in Winnipeg (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2011), it was reported that a large number of participants have taken positive steps to improve their lives and that of others through their community work. They have redirected their energy in positive ways and have become what Freire (2001) refers to as an “agent of change”. For instance, one of the refugees stated that the war made her determined to finish her university degree and she expected to be able to work as a counsellor with newcomers.

She was also active in the African community in Winnipeg and had organized events to encourage her community's engagement in Winnipeg. Hence, the experience gained from the war and the education may empower the refugees to make a difference in their lives.

Similarly, another refugee stated that despite his own personal and financial hardships, he overcame the barriers by the motivation he had to help others in his community (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2011). By the same token, Webb (2015) believes that self-reliance is a strong theme in the stories of the migrants. They learned how they would seek information for themselves, ask others for guidance and regard failure as a learning opportunity. Resilience in the context of human conditions means the ability to recover quickly from misfortune or to adapt to a new environment quickly (Morris, 1976). Therefore, this survival skill emerges during these transitions times, which are essential to adult learning. As adult learners, resilience makes us recover from the unfamiliar and become stronger than before and re-establish new connection in the new world. Likewise, disorienting dilemma can lead the refugees to think of the world in a different way. The experience of war, moving to another country, loneliness and the assistance of the community opens occasions for new insights into life and learning. This idea is reflected in Mezirow's (1981) transformative learning theory. Self-examination, exploring new roles, planning a course of action, and acquiring the skills and knowledge for realizing one's plan requires time, resources, and support. However, it is important to note that transformative learning is not a linear process, but complex and unique to each person (Grabove, 1997).

Many of the adult newcomers take decisions to improve themselves by starting a new path, getting involved in community works and communicating with other refugees

to learn from each other's experiences (Magro, 2009). A refugee stated that he had a Master's degree from Kenya but his first job in Canada was sorting garbage and also, he stated that one should believe in oneself and there should always be hope and determination. Now he works as a counsellor for young people and helps them to face their challenges. In this regard, he stated that educators and leaders should educate the communities in general and not only individuals to solve problems peacefully (Magro, 2009). Therefore, self-healing plays an essential part in the healing process of the refugees.

In one of their studies Montero et al. (2014) argued that schools should incorporate self-healing expressions inside the schools with students who suffered from trauma. These expressions include personal narratives of the students. In one of the studies in Canada (Montero, 2018) Rohingya young men from Burma who were living in Ontario, Canada told their personal stories in an English literacy development program in school. The narratives revealed how they ascribed meaning from their life experiences and trauma. By listening to their stories, educators can gather information about their prosocial behaviour that signal self-healing. In this case, the educator can play an essential role in the healing process. These young men noted the role that the teachers played in their healing process and how they were helpful in many ways.

Table 4

Challenges related to cultural, emotional and social adjustments.

Source	Consequences	Type of Response	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers immigrated to Canada (Amobi, 2004) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being able to teach despite of their teaching diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The struggle in finding a respectful environment Foreign accent issues Low salary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise social awareness for discrimination Creating opportunities to engage in a dialogue at work that involves considering how difference in identity, culture, and context may be appreciated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five Rohingya adult refugees from Burma (Myanmar) resettled in Ontario, Canada (Montero, 2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Anxiety Post-traumatic stress disorder Risk of dying at sea rather than to live under oppressive regime Arbitrary violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students regret that they were prohibited from getting a formal education in Burma. The teachers in Canada were very helpful Sharing their stories together brought comfort to their shattered soul Trauma stories contributed to informal learning and self-healing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educators need to be more attuned to the difficulties and psychological distress of the newcomers Understand the impact of trauma Offer support in a humane manner Educators should welcome the trauma stories of refugee students Create safe environment to allow refugees feel free to share their stories Self-healing should be supported from the community

Islamophobia and Xenophobia

"'Islamophobia' is the unfounded and close-minded fear and or hatred of the Islamic/Muslim culture." (Council of American and Islamic Relations, 2014)

“Xenophobia refers to the irrational fear of the unknown, or specifically, as the fear or hatred of those with a different nationality. It relies heavily on the circulation of myths and stereotypes about foreigners” (Steenkamp, 2009, p. 1).

Nowadays, discrimination is a big issue inside the schools as there are a huge number of refugees fleeing their homes. In a study by Pucino (2018), Muslim Iraqi refugees speak about the challenges that they faced in the US schools. Responses to discrimination were not equal among the group. Some of them ignored the discrimination that they experienced, some of them reacted to it positively as they decided to take action and educate the person who was discriminating refugees. Hence, there were passive and active reactions to discrimination.

Pucino (2018) stated that Islamophobia may influence the integration of the newcomer in the host country. Middle Eastern youths face discrimination in US schools that will negatively affect their success inside the school and their general mental well-being. Iraqi refugee-background students faced these challenges while they fled their country and came to the United States of America. The September 11, 2001 attacks created some further barriers and the number of refugees from the Middle Eastern countries decreased (Gibney, 2010).

A study Pucino (2018) revealed discriminations felt by the Iraqi refugee students due to their Islamic religion and explained how these youths responded to the discrimination against them. For example, teachers may insult and exclude students or their family members because of their religion and race. Also, this research shows that many hijab wearing girls were discriminated because of their religion, which led some girls to avoid attending school.

Discrimination could have crucial educational effects for refugees. Benner and Graham (2011) believe that discrimination may lead to anxiety, depression and even failure in educational settings and low levels of motivation among the students. A study reported by Council of American and Islamic Relations (2014) that American Muslim refugees avoid reporting discrimination issues to the school staff or the community as they believe that no one will believe them and will make their situation even worse than before. This implies that schools and community members should be more open and disposed to listening and caring for the refugee students' problems and make them feel secure to speak and report their fears and stories. Hence, human and community interactions are essential to build healthy relationships among the newcomers.

Another study by Shapiro, Farrelly and Curry (2018) told the story of five high school students who reported their experiences with other non-refugee peers inside the school, they stated that they felt some kind of discrimination from the other non-refugee peers and school staff. Two of them said that the discrimination was related to the inability to speak the English language well and they often got bullied when they spoke Arabic with each other. Another student stated that the religion was a great issue as he held different religious beliefs than his peers. She was maltreated when she started wearing the headscarf and one school staff asked her to remove the headscarf. Another student said that their Iraqi nationality was a big problem and that people looked down on her because of her nationality and her friends started to avoid her when they realized that she was from Iraq (Shapiro, Farrelly, & Curry 2018).

These experiences imply that Middle Eastern Refugees are more exposed to discrimination due to their Islamic religion (Tabbah et al., 2012). However, the reactions

to these discriminations were not the same among the five students as each one of them reacted differently based on individual and contextual factors. Lacking confidence about the English language was an individual factor and feeling insecure in the school was a contextual factor, which made every student react differently to the challenges that they faced. Some of the students had passive responses to discrimination because of their nationality and religion, while other students ignored them due to their nationality and religion and they did not know what to do. They felt insecure and limited in their abilities, especially, speaking the foreign language. Some of the students had active responses such as educating the perpetrator about the country of origin and about the political reasons of the immigration, while others said that those interactions with their peers were funny and used their sense of humour to respond to their discrimination. Others tried to educate their peers and inform them about what is happening in the world. Hence there are some factors, which made these Iraqi-background students react differently. The active responses by the students add to the literature of the resilience and agency of the refugees from other regions (Montgomery, 2010).

Additional active responses are said to reduce the level of stress and empower refugee students. However, the students did not feel safe all the time and they felt shy and embarrassed sometimes because of their language deficiency. It is clear that Islamophobia and xenophobia were factors of discrimination. Three implications emerge from this study (Montgomery, 2010), which aim to make the school environment more appealing for refugee students. The first one is that schools should make sure that teachers and school staff are well trained and aware about the challenges that refugee students may face and create safe spaces for the students. Also, since community support

and strong family relations can reduce the impact of discrimination, efforts should be made to include the families of the refugee-background students and community leaders in school programs. This will reveal the value that they can bring to the school and also, they can bring their contribution to educate the school staff about refugee issues and help in making the necessary changes. For example, families and community members can teach about the Middle East, Islam and implications of the U.S policies and this information can be used inside the classroom to avoid prejudices. Finally, participants in this study revealed that their peers had false information from the media, which suggest that designing a media-based curriculum would be a great way to reduce discrimination.

Table 5

Islamophobia and xenophobia.

Source	Consequences	Type of Response	Recommendation
Teachers and school staff used discriminatory language, regarding religion and nationality, in misguided relation to 9/11 (Gibney, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety, depression • Failure and low level of motivation • Fear to speak English due to mocking and bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Active</u>: Informing teachers about the negative effects of their behavior • <u>Passive</u>: discomfort and confusion and shy to speak English 	Educate the teachers and he school staff by providing them correct information and the necessary tools and support to adjust to the influx of refugee students
Non refugee peers (Montgomery,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mocking language • Bullying • Meanness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active: humor • Passive: withdrawal from 	Create safe spaces for all students. Both refugee and non-refugee

2010).		interaction	students may be fearful and not comfortable in the context where they find themselves
Girls wearing Hijab (Shapiro, Farrelly, & Curry, 2018).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pressured to remove hijab • dropping out and not attending school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not reporting discrimination 	Invite community and family members to visit the school and discuss religious and cultural traditions familiar with the refugee and non-refugee students
Iraq factor (Pucino, 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belittle identity • exclusion 	<u>Passive:</u> feeling totally insecure <u>Active:</u> (a) educating the perpetrators about the people and cultures of Iraq; (b) sense of humour	<p>Create tools and occasions for better understanding and appreciation of the rich cultural background.</p> <p>Support the families in school programs.</p>
Media effects (Montgomery, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False news • Negative reporting 		Critical media literacy in the curriculum

The Experience of Life inside Schools

As we live in this globalized world, the world seems to have little interest in the way teachers teach at the schools. They are more interested in trivial matters such as grades, curriculum and having to finish the scheduled program for a given year. Schools manipulate young people by keeping them within an enclosed system where the only

thing that matters is getting certificates, which will place them in the job market. Schools ignore the freedom of the students for the sake of the big market profits, which will make them gain more money (Illich, 1973). According to Robinson and Aronica (2016), schools kill the freedom of the student to speak as they consider mistakes the worst thing that a student can do. This is the reason why refugee students feel afraid to speak and to express their opinions freely which is an asset in education.

Therefore, the result is that we are educating people out of their creative capacities. This makes students little interested in learning the new language and often they leave the school because they are not interested in the subjects that have been taught. Hence, teachers need to spend more time by igniting their students' creativity and imagination. As Einstein puts it, "Imagination is more important than knowledge" (Einstein, 1931/2009). This principle can be enacted by creating active learning environments in the classroom. Specifically, imagination will lead refugee students to engage more and perform better on every single sphere. Research shows that writing activities inside schools are disengaging and that schools pay no attention to the creative writing which can take place outside the school zone where immigrants can be more productive in their learning process (Hull & Schultz, 2002).

Also, research suggests that students who write out of their experiences, desires and authentic stories are more prone to succeed in the school. This is due to the fact that refugee students prefer to communicate their stories after relocation (Black, 2009). In a study by Crandall (2012) on four Somali-born young men enrolled in an English class in the United States to prepare for an exam, it was shown that they did very well while writing about their culture and personal experiences as refugees. They stated that these

experiences created opportunities to enhance their thinking through different writing processes. These types of writing activities were rare in school, as teachers prefer more instructional writing activities, which are not as effective as authentic writing activities. These four participants who arrived in United States with limited background is a good example of how authenticity can lead to creativity.

Crandall (2012) stated that language classrooms are mostly focused on passing examinations where students have to answer questions designed by their school or teacher. Nevertheless, the four participants reported that writing is very important for them where they can express themselves freely through writing about their experiences and this approach led to self-empowerment. Also, they can discuss about the civil war and 20th century globalization. Hence, providing authentic writing activities is crucial to teach writing to refugee students. Similar studies (Campano, 2007; Fisher, 2007; Kinloch, 2010) imply that exam-focussed curriculum does not help refugee students to develop their writing abilities as most of the time teachers give worksheets to fill out and they don't give opportunities to write about lived experiences.

A study by Shapiro et al. (2018) revealed the challenges of six Indigenous Karen-background adolescents from Thailand and Myanmar who resettled in Melbourne, Australia. The main challenge that they faced was related to the inadequacy of refugee programs inside the school, which supposedly were aimed at facilitating their transition process. The conclusion was that schools and institutions need to know the immense social and academic adjustments that refugee students need to make as well as the strong powers and determinations that they possess. These six Karen refugee students, ages 12 to 15, explained the transition stages that they faced during their relocation. These

students were born in refugee camps and experienced interruptions in their studies. The main issue that they stated was the lack of support in the social domain, which is the social contact between these students and others from the same age. This lack of social contact made them feel isolated and lonely with no friends. Therefore, schools lack the ability to bring together students from different backgrounds and nationalities. The transition process in this study was a complex one as all the students faced some challenges in all stages of their transition be these of a social, academic or institutional nature. Their expectations were not fulfilled, as the school did not engage actively with the individual's needs and appropriate socializing practices. In addition, the students stated that the school overlooked some of their talents and skills that they brought with them because the main interest at school was teaching the new language. Also, the study revealed that public places such as libraries and music rooms, parks and gymnasiums are related to the social development of the students and should not be neglected.

The Importance of Creativity

Creativity is at the centre of our being and it never dies. However, it may be muted by certain circumstances, but it never fades away. Therefore, it is essential to accept those difficult moments and try to reduce the anxiety in order to return to the normal position where creativity forms a vital part.

In this digital era educators are more interested in finding the appropriate tools for testing the levels of creativity of students and they forget to take into consideration the enhancement of creativity that leads to intellectual development (Robinson, 2016). As human beings, we all have our own conceptions and views about life and based on them

we generate new ideas and apply them to make our decisions. Fostering creative abilities is fundamental to meet the purpose of education. Richard-Amato (1988) states “when students are involved in creating; their anxiety is lowered thus increasing the rate of motivation” (p.173). The reasoning behind this fact is that refugee students, who are fully immersed in the creating process, may have a lesser stress level, and will endure to learn more. Creativity has an essential role in bringing up healthy refugees. According to Duffy (2006), when students learn with pleasure, the probability of integrating the newly learned topics in their everyday life increases.

Moreover, successful learning requires creativity because through this process the students can enhance their learning abilities to a wider context and they can make connections of what they have learned with the real world. Hence, these elements in human beings can give them the opportunity to solve problems, face the challenges of life in a more reasonable way and have a better imagination (Duffy, 2006). Duffy (2006) states,

We do not know the challenges that will face the students we work with in their adult lives but we do know that in order to meet these challenges they will need to be creative and imaginative and grow into adults who can:

- Deal with the unexpected
- Bring together previously unconnected information
- Use information in a new way
- Modify and monitor their work
- Think flexibly and play with ideas and materials

- Empathize with others
- Make mistakes and learn from them. (p. 6)

These strategies inform the importance of creativity not only in education, but also in all aspects of students' life.

Promoting Creativity and Imagination in the Classroom

According to Sak (2004), teachers lack the ability to promote creativity and imagination in the classroom. In order to understand how teachers can promote creativity in the classroom, he gave an example about Martha's classroom. Martha was an elementary teacher in the Southwest region of the United States. She used different methods in her classroom including drawings, stories and relating new information to prior experience. She incorporated reading fantasy stories in her lessons to enhance the student's imagination. In this way she was able to seek much information from her students related to the story and their everyday life. Moreover, they discussed the different characters in the story by examining their situation and role-playing them. Given these facts, the atmosphere of the classroom was very motivating and full of adventure to the extent that all the students were contributing in a creative way. To stimulate the students' creative minds, Martha, the teacher, used a text by Martin Luther King in her lesson plan to connect the topic to actual world problems. Overall, the activities that she implemented were very beneficial for the students.

With this in mind, tasks that include problem solving, making connections to real life, sequencing, connecting characters and inferring ideas from the story can enhance creativity among young students. This idea is illustrated in Tanggaard's (2011) article,

which examines the role of schools in promoting creativity among students. He believes that if teachers understand the process of teaching through creativity and try to implement approaches and activities, students learn with enthusiasm. To show this, he conducted a study of four teachers in Denmark from different schools in order to reveal how teachers integrate creativity. He mentioned that teachers should come up with creative approaches in order to prepare their students for the level of creativity. This can be done through pre-selected materials to fulfil the students' needs and problem-solving activities to involve the students in the process of creating. The significance behind this is that stories enable learners to foster their creativity and imagination.

According to Honig (2000) there are different techniques that promote creativity. Working cooperatively to form new sentences or stories can sharpen the students' imagination and creativity. He states that using metaphors, similes, and aphorism encourage students to create their own stories. Moreover, he believes that questions, which discuss character comparison, setting, conflict and resolution of a story, can motivate them to be creative. In addition, wondering helps students build comprehension by questioning and thinking about what they read.

Critical Thinking Inside the Classroom

We cannot disregard the effectiveness of thinking critically and the benefits it harbours for the individual refugee student. In essence, thinking critically means the ability to analyse ideas and to arrive at a precise conclusion in the most appropriate form. However, fostering critical thinking skills can be the hardest to practice.

Leicester and Taylor (2010) examine different types of activities that can be implemented inside the classroom which make refugee students think critically. For

example, before reading the story to the students the teacher uses a lot of scaffolding techniques. By asking different questions, the teacher opens opportunities for the students to respond critically and collaborate in a variety of different ways. Teachers should be knowledgeable about fostering critical thinking skills and try to implement the appropriate activities in their classroom. Meanwhile, research shows that young students need challenging tasks to think critically. As a matter of fact, sometimes it is necessary to challenge the students and give them problem solving tasks in order to make them think and imagine. Equally important, visualizing the new information in the classroom provides the students with the necessary tools to think critically. Stories contain a lot of metaphors and hidden messages, they can promote critical thinking among young learners (Cameron, 2001). Activities such as guessing, asking questions and role-playing during a story time have a positive influence on students' readiness to think critically (Farrell & Jacobs, 2010).

Wagner (2008) speaks about the 21st century skills and he argues that critical thinking skill is an asset for learners in order to be successful people in their future lives. The skills that he finds crucial for our digital era are good communication skills and asking good questions. He speaks about the seven essential skills to thrive in this digitalized world. He labelled critical thinking and problem solving as essential skills in addition to collaboration and leadership, agility and adaptability, initiative and entrepreneurialism, effective written and oral communicative skills, accessing and analysing information and curiosity and imagination.

Stimulating learners' interest and imagination through different activities, is vital in schools. Teachers should create an atmosphere where the students spend time imitating

and practicing the target language in a guided way. Specifically, real stories can be a great tool to teach refugee students 21st century skills and teachers have a crucial role to play in this process (Ellis, Brewster, & Girard, 2002). Given the opportunity to respond to a variety of questions, young learners compare, contrast, solve problems and consequently express themselves in a meaningful way about their learning experiences. Besides, as students learn to think about what they read, their responses become more sophisticated and insightful. Thus, the classroom should be a place where the teacher listens to the students, asks questions and encourages them to come up with new ideas and interpretations. This kind of learning space opens new insights and opportunities for the refugee students to become critical thinkers and active participants in the society (Palmer, 1993).

By the same token, hooks (1999), argues that education is a practice of freedom and should not be a prison for the students. Therefore, her ideas can be linked to what Freire strongly promoted: a student body with critical thinking abilities. Freire opposed the “banking concept of education”, in which the student is considered an empty box to be filled by the teacher. He states: “it transforms students into receiving objects. It attempts to control thinking and action, and inhibits their creative power” (Freire, 2001, p.72). In addition, thinkers like John Dewey are strongly critical of the transmission of mere facts as the goal of education. Dewey describes school methods as one-sided and narrow. The students adhere to certain symbols and rules, which will restrict their desire to learn, to accumulate information and to be creative in all aspects of their lives (Dewey, 2000). Therefore, creativity and critical thinking need to be accommodated in schools to provide

adequate help for the students to enhance their knowledge and human values and to learn how to care and respect for every individual in society.

Fostering creativity and critical thinking in the classroom as well as within a complex and changing social world, is not an easy task. It is a process that requires social change and a great deal of reevaluation of what teachers assume and a great knowledge about education. In order for this to happen, often the best approach is to open a space for learning rather than taking students as prisoners inside an enclosed box. Therefore, the fundamental goal is to raise the awareness of the teachers all over the world to change the idea of education and make it an open space where students practice with freedom and creativity. This will make a great difference in students' lives especially in the lives of refugee students.

Montero (2014) suggests that schools and classroom environment should create safe and brave atmosphere for refugee students in order to reveal their hidden stories that in fact, can be the core to their self-healing process. These hidden emotions shouldn't be kept hidden. Educators can directly or indirectly delve with the students into conversations, which will support their mental well-being. Hence, the role of the schools is not only giving education, but the role of the school is to listen to the traumatic details of the students which can be part of the refugee students' process of self-healing and recovery from trauma. Shapiro et al. (2018) stated schools should take into consideration refugee students' previous knowledge and abilities and try to reshape those abilities in a new environment by planning proper activities in the classroom. In addition, teachers should teach the culture of their country to the newcomers in order to successfully finish mainstream schooling.

The Engagement of the Community and Social Support

The role of the community. Community engagement plays a central role in the well-being of the immigrants and refugees. I feel strongly that communities have a big influence in assisting the new immigrants' integration in the host society. Abid (2016) states that immigrants are marginalized due to several factors including language barriers, cultural diversity and educational differences among cultures. These factors lead to the emergence of different obstacles, such as unemployment, deskilling of the previous experience and knowledge, disintegration in the society and the overall loss of a sense of community safety, which prevent the immigrants to fully participate in their host communities (Guo, 2016).

Social support, engagement and cooperation play an essential role for the well-being of the refugees, such as, anti-violence pedagogies, community-based health education and women's rights. In the case of refugees and for most newcomers, learning a new language is a major challenge and they are unable to attend language courses due to work and childcare responsibilities. In addition, there are the emotions of the immigrants towards the receiving society and their confusion about the ways they feel marginalized and discouraged. Therefore, community members need to be aware of these difficulties and try to organize social events for the new comers who may face challenges due to lack of resources and knowledge.

Moreover, the lack of knowledge and communication between communities is leading to the emergence of war and the acceleration of the rate of immigration all over the world. Thus, the role of the receiving society is to be aware that the immigrants are facing huge transformations in their lives. Human beings have the potential to learn from

their own crisis in different ways. Therefore, there should be a starting point where all the societies engage in clear discussions and understanding their changing and evolving situations in order to become more supportive of the refugee newcomers.

We live in a diverse community and in order to bring peace to that community, educators need to listen to the others' voices, engage with others to collaborate and cooperate in order to bring social justice to the community. They should inform the policymakers to take the necessary steps to provide adequate training and support for the immigrants. This will make them more open to the new horizons that the host country offers to them and will ease their integration (Guo, 2016).

Opportunities for communication. There are different possibilities to make people engage in community activities. In one of the articles, the authors described the collaborative experience occurring at the city park level and introduced various ways for the practitioners and academic professionals to nurture the learners' sense of citizenship. Hibbler et al. (2016) claimed that cooperation and communication between people could bring about promising outcomes, especially by implementing adult learning practices and by establishing academic professionals to work together for the purpose of improving leisure activities. The act of making connections has the potential to enhance learning, facilitate the integration of the people in the community and promote social change. For example, leisure can be considered a powerful tool for social change as it has the ability to bring people together and teach them unconsciously the good values of a community. By centering education on the learners and their communities, leisure activities have the potential to bring a huge change in the field of education (Hibbler & Scott, 2015).

There are various types of activities that can be implemented to strengthen the sense of civic engagement of the people. For example, public libraries and cooperative activities can promote lifelong learning opportunities to societies. In addition, the collaboration between organizations fosters lifelong learning by providing unbiased, high-quality education to communities. Thus, public libraries and cooperative activities provide access to education to those who do not have access to schools or community projects. These can be considered as powerful tools to strengthen their connections throughout the city and to enhance their lifelong learning abilities (Peich & Fletcher, 2015).

Positive school experiences are crucial to bring healthy communication opportunities among the students with refugee backgrounds. In one study (Montero et al., 2014), the trauma narratives of the refugee students led to the self-healing from the trauma itself. The students were engaged with the school or work, social activism, altruism and spirituality. These narratives are a means of communication, which is essential for the resettlement of refugee students. Montero et al. (2014) insist that educators have to be more attuned to the challenges of the newcomers and try to create opportunities for communication in the classroom or outside the classroom to support the mental health of refugee students.

Listening to the various stories that refugee students tell to the educators, may help educators to better understand the healing process of the students which will fasten the recovery from trauma and will facilitate the integration of the newcomer in the new society (Cole et al., 2013; Phifer & Hull, 2016). To take this trauma narration approach, educators do not need to be specialists or therapists, but simply need to have the desire to

help the other person and give them the needed support to face their fears and difficulties (World Health Organization, 2011).

By engaging in the process of storytelling the person feels comfortable and relaxed when their story is being listened to by a sympathetic listener and in turn the listener learns more about the traumatic events of the person (Mollica, 2006, 2004). An example of this approach can be seen in one study (Pucino, 2014) that took place at a secondary school in Ontario, Canada where five Rohingya men aged 18-20 participated in this study to narrate their stories in January 2015. They relocated to Ontario from Burma as refugees due to the war in their country. They faced a considerable amount of difficulties while fleeing their country as they fled their country on a fishing boat. They were rejected in their country and they experienced violence, hatred and physical abuse. Montero (2014) documented these refugees' stories, which emerged naturally during their conversation together. These young men opened their hearts to the educator and disclosed details about their journey to Canada. Here the educator is researcher-teacher who supported these young boys from Rohingya to express themselves freely and helped them to find the correct words to tell their stories. These narratives revealed the way the pro- social behaviours helped these young men to heal from the trauma.

Social behaviour can occur in different ways such as, when a refugee student finds meaning in school or work and contributes to political, civic and community life. Schooling has the potential to bring quick recovery from trauma as education provides refugee students with the hope of upward mobility in their resettlement. In addition, successful school experiences can heal the students from psychological issues that they

may have, due to the relocation (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007), and can be supportive in the creation of a stable social life.

Altruism can be practiced by sharing, helping and cooperating with other people that serve as a role model. These prosocial activities promote recovery from post-traumatic experiences and support mental health and well-being of refugee students (Mollica et al., 2015). Altruism can help refugees to return to their normal life through communicating and helping others. They build healthy relationships together and create foundation to recover a new life far away from violence and hatred (Mollica, 2006).

Transformation is profoundly related to the various processes that the refugees encounter in their new life. First, there is the stage where they have left their identity behind but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It is the process where they are away from their comfort zone and any possible new meaning of life. At this stage refugees examine their self and the ability to overcome difficulties, where people enter a place apart to learn, to face the dark side of emotions, to find guidance. Facing the culture shock and identifying the ability to overcome those challenges will lead the refugee to the last stage of transformation which is helping others and involving oneself in community works. Through these processes, they found a new meaning and purpose of life. Nowadays people are undergoing huge changes in their lives especially the new immigrants who fled their country seeking a better life in the new country. These crises can be both opportunity and obstacle at the same time. The role of the community and the educator is to change the crises that are happening in one's life to an opportunity to become a more knowledgeable person and be able to bring potentially positive changes in one's life.

Communities and educators can play a fundamental role to support the newcomers. People need to reconcile with each other in order to become a powerful tool for enhancing personal growth and civic engagement in the community. In addition, they will become more open to accept the diversity that we are living today. This of course will decrease the amount of the crimes that are happening nowadays. Finally, I want to highlight what the Prime Minister of Canada stated in the aftermath of the attack on the Mosque in Quebec City, which is that we should learn to become open to accept each other through love and compassion. Community support can be one way to achieve this goal (Minsky, 2017).

To put this all together, nowadays people are undergoing huge changes in their lives especially the new immigrants who fled their country seeking a better life in the new country. These crises can be both opportunity and obstacle at the same time. The role of the receiving communities is to facilitate the change from crisis in one's life to an opportunity to become a more knowledgeable person and be able to bring positive and empowering transformative changes in one's life and that of the community.

Chapter 3

An Integrative Framework for Educational Institutions, Curricula and Community Regarding Successful Integration of Newcomer Refugees

Classrooms are comprised of students from different nationalities, educational experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds. Students change classes on a regular basis if they show some level of progress or they stop attending classes due to family obligations or work-related constraints. Thus, teaching refugee students can be a challenge for adult education teachers. I included this chapter to help teachers who teach refugee students to find strategies for dealing with multilevel classrooms. The examples

are derived from the literature and the research done for this purpose. The chapter will propose some techniques to make the teaching process easier for adult education teachers.

Setting up the Classes for Refugee Students

Adult education teachers face a set of challenges in providing suitable learning opportunities for students who are having difficulty and for students who are independent readers and writers. There are some factors that teachers need to consider while setting up the groups. One of them is a literacy related issue: is the student literate in his or her mother language. This is relevant because a student with literacy skills has certain strategies, which make learning a new language easier (Cummins, 1979).

Culture is another essential factor that interferes in the students' learning process. For example, students from certain countries prefer the teacher-centred classroom while students from some other countries prefer student-centred classroom. Hence teachers should be aware of the differences and not allow the student-centred group to dominate the classroom. Taking these two different preferences into consideration, teachers should form the class groupings accordingly (Oral, 2013).

A student's background is another factor that needs to be taken into consideration. For example, students from two different countries who are at war or 'enemies' can be a big issue inside the classroom. Some students may stereotype others and may harbour prejudices about other ethnic groups that should not go unchallenged. Thus, teachers can use different techniques to avoid these situations. For example, teachers can open a dialogue between various groups, which may facilitate discussions between two different groups. Teachers can create ground rules that say that politics are to be left outside the

classroom door. Some teachers design activities with certain themes that address certain issues related to discrimination and open up dialogues with the groups. In an effort to avoid conflict, some teachers encourage students to put their own ground rules inside the class to avoid difficult situations.

Individual factors play a crucial role in successful learning experiences (e.g., the ability to speak the foreign language, age, gender, motivation, etc.). For example, young students prefer problem-solving activities and they can be very creative when using the new language for specific purposes such as getting a job or getting a date. Older learners on the other hand, prefer to be in groups that value their opinions and experiences, as their language ability is not at par with others in the same group or due to family responsibilities and job-related restrictions.

Designing the Curriculum Based on the Learners' Needs and Expectations

Before planning a course, teachers should spend time with the community, talk with the community members and get some input from them in order to discover their interests and needs. This will give the teacher a general idea of how to plan his or her class. In addition to this, the teacher should do personal evaluation and observation in order to know the real level of the group. Hence, it is recommended to assess the students during the first few weeks of classes. An example of these activities may include, interviews, group discussions, reading and writing activities that allow individual learners to select the materials they want to read and write, such as postcards, notes, or pictures. Such ongoing assessment should also evaluate the success of each literacy activity. Refugee students' backgrounds, needs, abilities, interests, and goals must be taken into consideration when planning a literacy course. Teachers should be sensitive to students'

various cultural backgrounds and personal characteristics. Also, teachers should create opportunities that allow the learners to express themselves freely which will give insight into their strengths and weaknesses.

Innovative Programs that Build a Community of Learners

These programs are derived from the literature and are meant to inspire teachers to create their own classes and to help the newcomers in learning the new language successfully.

Informal Assessment at the Beginning of Each Class

More than anything else, teachers learn from observing and listening to learners as they read and write. Innovative teachers often open each class with an activity that brings the class together and allows the teacher to see who is making progress and who needs special help. Bell (1988) gives an example of an opening activity, which is called “social chat”. In this activity a dialogue between teacher and students takes place where the students have to listen and speak. For beginner students it is more listening but for intermediate and advanced learners it is both listening and speaking. The teacher takes notes while doing this activity and encourages the students who need more motivation and then designs suitable activities for each group of students. The topic may defer from group to group. For example, the teacher may ask about the previous day and may initiate discussions based on the learners’ stories. During this activity the teacher discovers their problems and concerns of the group.

Visual Activities

These types of activities work very well with beginner students who are struggling with a new language. Wallace (1988), states that strip stories, for example, in

which a series of pictures tell a story, give learners the idea of what is going to be read. Students can use their mother language in order to speak about the pictures before speaking in the new language. Once texts are introduced, the beginning readers can predict what the story is about, while advanced students can focus on the printed text. Then a real discussion between the students takes place and beginner students can give short answers while fluent students can give detailed answers.

Enhancing Language Skills through Storytelling

Using stories in a classroom enriches the curriculum, enhances the students' four language skills and provides a rich learning environment for the students in terms of expanding their vocabularies, building early reading and comprehension skills and developing essential writing skills. It has been found that post-reading activities, including vocabulary tasks lead to vocabulary development. Atay and Kurt (2006) examined the effects of post-reading activities on elementary students' vocabulary development. Six-week study was done on 62 elementary students in two classes in Istanbul, Turkey. There were two groups, the control group and the experimental group. The experimental group was given a story written in English. The teacher taught the new words to the children by writing the definitions on the board. The control group was given the same story, but after reading the story they were given post-reading activities, including vocabulary tasks. After six weeks of teaching, the results showed that the group who were exposed to different post-reading activities learned much more vocabulary than the control group.

Storytelling includes telling folk stories, personal experiences, or thoughts of what might be happening in a picture. It can also include role plays. Storytelling has the potential to close the culture gap between the students as the learners listen about other

cultures and discover common things between their own and different cultures (Lapp & Fisher, 2009).

Peer Teaching and Sharing of Skills

Working with peers can be a great opportunity especially for shy learners to showcase their strengths and hidden abilities. They can share their skills and they can learn from other's skills and experiences. In this case there is benefit for both learners. In this sharing activity, one student may act as a listener, while another as the speaker. The roles can be reversed as well, so that the non-literate students act as interviewers and they can use illustrations for remembering information in order to report information back to the class.

Working with peers encourages learners to share skills, knowledge, and information, which are considered to be an effective method to use with refugee students. In one activity, one learner acts as the interviewer and scribe for an important event, such as the first day of school. The other learner acts as the "cultural informant," describing the event.

Bilingual Communication Helps Understanding

In programs where the teacher speaks the language of the students, learners sometimes switch between using English (or the language of instruction) and the mother tongue. Not being constrained by their limited English, students can freely express their ideas and opinions while learning English.

Computers Facilitate Writing

Computers can help learners who have difficulties with the mechanics of writing. For example, stories that they have dictated can be word processed and printed out, resulting in a "professional look" that can compete with papers written by more proficient

students. Stories can be printed in large type for students who have difficulty with small print. In addition, learners can suggest changes to their stories that can be easily made on the computer, saving hours of time rewriting. Templates of different kinds of notes or letters can be stored on the computer, serving as examples for students who would like to see what "professionals" have written under similar circumstances.

It is generally accepted that there is no single method that serves as a cornerstone to teach and assess refugee students. Using standardized tests in these programs might be of little or no particular value, as they do not serve to assess refugee students accurately, instead they put a lot of stress on the learner to pass the exam. Designing learner-centred assessment methods can bring more promising results. Finally, the educators should work with people from outside the school environment such as with members of the community in order to design more comprehensible and acceptable programs for the newcomers.

Table 6

Elements towards an integrative framework for learning and teaching for refugees and education for all.

Category	Components
Classroom set up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy-focused • Preference for student-centered or teacher-centered approach • Awareness of potential conflicts due to country of origin and background • Problem-solving activities for young people; special grouping for older adults who have experience to share
Curriculum Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community input to discover interests and needs • Activities to encourage cultural, critical and identity literacy • Telling authentic stories and building on these personal stories
Visual Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplementing strip stories – a series of pictures

	<p>tell the story in the text assigned for low literacy students as well as use of mother tongue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students fluent in the language of the text, the new language, can give detailed answers to questions.
Storytelling for Enhancing Language Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expand vocabularies, building early reading and comprehension skills and developing essential writing skills • Supplementing with post reading activities • Storytelling can include folktales, personal experiences, interpretation of pictures, role plays, proverbs and their origins etc.
Peer-teaching and Sharing of Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One student plays a speaker and the other acts as a listener • One student acts as an interviewer for an event and the other student plays the role of “cultural informant” describing the event.
Bilingual Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students feel free to participate in discussions knowing that they can use their own language as needed on their way to becoming proficient in the new language
Use of Computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates mechanics of writing • Word processing stories • Giving a professional look to writing assignments • Use different size fonts for different learners • Templates and examples of similar writing easily accessible
Assessment and Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid standardized testing • Use student centered evaluation methods

Conclusion

This thesis includes literature review and research reports from different countries Australia, Canada, Germany, Scotland, Middle Eastern countries, Burma, Somali and the United States of America discussing the challenges that refugees face from different perspectives and explaining carefully the many facets of adjustment they experience in the resettlement process. It is clear that refugee cohorts have enormous differences and diversity within and across national and ethnic groups, not only in language learning, but

also in their adaptation in the host country and culture. This thesis indicates the need for cross-border collaboration among educators and holds high hopes for continued worldwide endeavour. Also, it shows that educators need to have various skills in order to be able to teach refugee students and to recognize their strengths. This conscientization is an essential step that educators should take. Finally, this thesis shows that not all educational institutions are designed well to meet the needs of refugees whether adults or of school age. Educators should understand post-traumatic stress disorder and should design their classrooms accordingly. They should know that not all refugees are the same and they have diverse needs and ways of learning and interpreting new knowledge. This is an issue that should be taken into consideration in the teacher education programs.

In this thesis, the needs, interests and voices of refugees are at the heart of the matter. In this respect, this thesis calls for future collaboration among organizations and the communities in order to implement effective teaching methods and to create safe learning environments for the refugees. The focus of this thesis has been on the needs of refugee populations in terms of learning and education for successful adaptation to their new environment in host societies. Some of the findings summarized and highlighted in the thesis have direct implications for rethinking and redesigning school and adult education curricula for multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies around the world. Even in countries with very homogeneous populations or groups, it is important to make sure that citizens understand the challenges faced by refugee receiving societies to be able to successfully navigate in a world that is in continuous communication and interaction due to globalization and virtual, electronic networks. Therefore, some of the examples for

improving the learning opportunities for adults and school age refugee populations should be valid options for the education of all learners around the world.

Recently there are moves to consider a new approach to literacy: *identity literacy* in addition to, *critical literacy* and *cultural literacy* (Schacter & Galili-Schacter, 2012). Two books published recently have similar recommendations to the ones outlined in this thesis. The first book is *Centering African proverbs, Indigenous folktales, and cultural stories in curriculum: Units and lesson plans for inclusive education*, (Dei & McDermott, 2019) and the second book is *Transcultural literacies: Re-visioning relationships in teaching and learning* (Magro & Honeyford, 2019). These books both have models for incorporating some of these approaches into curriculum modules for adult and school-age learners. Sinclair and Cariou (2011) argued that education should engage students in answering four key questions: Where do I come from? Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? All learning and teaching curricula should be developed to facilitate answers to these questions and allow the learners to tell and develop their own stories towards achieving their own human potential while contributing to more peaceful communities and a just world for all.

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