**FROM EXPERIENCED TEACHERS TO NEWCOMERS TO THE
PROFESSION: THE CAPITAL CONVERSION OF INTERNATIONALLY
EDUCATED TEACHERS IN CANADA**

by

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Abstract

My doctoral thesis, titled, “From Experienced Teachers to Newcomers to the Profession: The Capital Conversion of Internationally Educated Teachers in Canada,” examines the recertification process of internationally educated teachers (IETs). My main research question is: What conceptions of the “good teacher” are evident in the recertification trajectory of IET participants in this study, and how do these open up or close down spaces for IETs to bring their experiences and voices to bear on reconstructing their professional identity in Canada? I argue that assumptions about good teaching intersect with factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, language, and immigration status. Building on Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital and its sub-category of professional capital, I explore the conception of the “good teacher” in a recertification program for IETs at the University of British Columbia, and I do so as a way of illustrating the dominant professional capital circulating in teacher education in British Columbia. I argue that, in the field of teacher education, the “good teacher” is a manifestation of a specific form of professional capital, which serves as “local currency” for the field. However, whereas IETs are required to convert their professional capital to the local “currency,” successful conversion does not guarantee successful integration into the teaching profession in Canada. One of the concerns that emerged from my dissertation is that teacher education in Canada, in spite of its claim to foster diversity, often becomes a site for social reproduction. Holding unexamined conceptions of the “good teacher” can lead teacher educators to favour and create teachers who are “like us,” and to discourage different forms and models of teaching.

Preface

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List of Abbreviations

AIT – Agreement on International Trade

BC – British Columbia

B.Ed. – Bachelor of Education

BCTF – BC Teachers’ Federation

CDA – Critical discourse analysis

CMR – Complete member researcher

CMEC – Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

CREATE – Community to RE-imagine Alternatives for Teacher Education

FA – Faculty advisor

GTA – Graduate teaching assistant

ESL – English as a Second Language

IET – Internationally educated teacher

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OISE/UT – The Ontario Institute of Education of the University of Toronto

PQP – Professional Qualification Program

PR – Permanent residency

SFU – Simon Fraser University

TC – Teacher candidate

TEO – Teacher Education Office

TOC – Teacher on call

TRB – Teacher Regulation Branch

UBC – University of British Columbia

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For my parents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Central Argument

This study examines the recertification process of internationally educated teachers (IETs) in the contradictory space of Canadian multiculturalism (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988). IETs need to be recertified in order to be able to teach in Canada. The recertification process may vary between provinces and is a full-time training process, which takes between eight months and a year, following a procedure of assessment of their foreign credentials. In Canada the recertification process is under the mandate of teacher education programs (Walsh & Brigham, 2007a; Walsh, Brigham, & Wang, 2011); however, critics point out that teacher education programs have not been sufficiently flexible to face the challenge of IET integration (Cho, 2011; Phillion, 2003). In British Columbia (BC), only two teacher education programs out of nine offer a designated track for IETs (BC Ministry of Education, 2014).

Building on Pierre Bourdieu's (1997) concept of cultural capital and its sub-category of professional capital (Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011), I explore the conception of the "good teacher" in one of these programs, the University of British Columbia (UBC) Updating program, as a way of illustrating the dominant professional capital circulating in teacher education involving IETs. I argue that in the field of teacher education, the "good teacher"¹ is a manifestation of a specific form of professional capital, which serves as "local currency" for the field (Gemme, 2009).

Since most people in Western societies have substantial interactions with teachers while growing up, most also have explicit and implicit ideas about who is a "good teacher" (Britzman,

¹ I go back and forth between "good teacher" and "good teaching." My focus is on the dominant discourses that circulate in teacher education and not on the "good teacher" as a reified set of personal characteristics.

2003). I argue that the concept of professional capital in the field of teacher education captures these ideas and their changing value in different contexts. The main focus of the study is the intersection between pedagogical assumptions about teaching and factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, language, and immigration as playing out within a teacher education program in a metropolitan city in a multicultural society like Canada.

One of the concerns driving this study is that teacher education, in spite of its claim to foster diversity, is a site for social reproduction. Unexamined conceptions of the “good teacher” can serve to make people more “like us” and discourage different forms and models of teaching. Whereas Bourdieu (1984) claims that in France the main site of social reproduction has shifted from education to other social fields (such as the arts), it seems that in Canada and elsewhere, education has remained an important site of social reproduction. For immigrant professionals, the importance of credentials and certificates has only increased (Bauder, 2003; Man, 2004; Mojab, 1999; Ng & Shan, 2010; Reitz, 2001; Shan, 2009).

This study focuses on the institutional space of the recertification trajectory for a group of five IETs and the processes and interactions that are enacted therein. The word trajectory fits well in the Bourdieuan conceptual framework, since it refers to a movement that is affected by inter-field power dynamics. It is also grounded in the understanding that the Updating program is not an isolated social site; rather, it is located within a web of policies and institutions that are intertwined in the recertification process.

Schmidt (2010b) claims that there is a “dearth of scholarship that brings immigrant teacher issues beyond the realm of the personal and into the political” (p. 241). This study builds upon findings of previous research on IETs, while aiming to extend from IETs’ experiences to institutional and political factors that affect these experiences. As such, this study is rooted in the

assumption that the marginalization of IETs is the outcome of deep inequalities; thus, “it is no accident that racialized students do not make it through the education system or that racialized teachers from other countries do not get hired” (Ryan, Pollock, & Antonelli, 2009, p. 258). If the mismatch between the diversity of the Canadian population and the homogeneity of the teaching force is no accident, then the case of IETs may be a way of unveiling some inequalities that lie beneath the diversity discourse in this society. As such, this study is subsumed under the questions of diversity and multiculturalism in teacher education in BC (BC Ministry of Education, 2004).

It is important to state upfront that although the terminology of IETs may suggest they are an essentialized category, identity is always complex, constructed and located within a specific time and space. In this case study, I unfold the layers of marginality in the recertification trajectory of some IETs in the Updating program, and analyze what factors have the most negative and positive effects on their experiences in their journeys towards becoming Canadian teachers.

1.2 Research Questions

My main research question is: What conceptions of the “good teacher” are evident in the recertification trajectory of IET participants in this study, and how do these open up or close down spaces for IETs to bring their experiences and voices to bear on reconstructing their professional identity in Canada?

This question can be broken down into a set of sub-questions:

1. What different players do IETs encounter in the recertification process in BC? What conceptions of the teaching profession do these players convey?
2. How are conceptions of the “good teacher” manifested in the IETs’ recertification

trajectory and particularly in the Updating program?

3. What kind of professional capital is embedded in conceptions of the “good teacher” in the recertification trajectory? What kind of assumptions underlie this capital?
4. How do these assumptions intersect with race, ethnicity, gender, language, and immigration processes?

1.2.1 Modification of the Research Questions

My original intention was to focus solely on the Updating program at UBC and on the conceptions of the “good teacher” that are conveyed throughout its eight-month duration. I chose this perspective since the main focus of the literature on IETs in Canada is on the experiences of IETs during the recertification process. Hence, I wanted to incorporate into my research the institutional and structural aspects of the recertification process and their effects on IETs’ experiences. For that reason, I also chose to use a “case study” method. I thought that the prism of the “good teacher” would allow me to capture the essence of the Updating program as a teacher education platform. However, while conducting the study, I realized that the recertification trajectory could not be broken neatly into discrete units. Recertification is a long process that arises as soon as thoughts on immigration begin and typically ends (not necessarily on a happy note) only a few years later when IETs attempt to enter the job market in the receiving society. I realized that the Updating program needs to be connected with the other players in the recertification trajectory in order to capture the complexity of this process and the conceptions of the “good teacher” that are conveyed during the program. The design of this study as an extended case study and the conceptual framework of Bourdieu allowed me to view the

Updating program in the wider frame that is crucial to understanding the complex journey of IETs in BC.

1.3 Summary of the Theoretical Frame

In the journey to become Canadian teachers, IETs are located at the intersection of immigration and education. I employ the lens of critical multiculturalism (May, 1999) and the conceptual tools of Bourdieu (1984) to frame this complex journey. IETs need to reestablish themselves in their lives as immigrants while obtaining the required credentials to practice their profession; hence, as my study will outline, their experiences highlight tensions between the declared multicultural image of Canada and the actual policies and structures that govern the teaching profession in BC.

Since Canadian society is “a kaleidoscope of overlapping and intersecting identities” (Fleras & Elliott, 2002, p. 17), no one would claim openly that the education system in Canada should be monocultural; yet some argue that “in practice, schools have done little to reform their approaches to diversity” (Fleras & Elliott, 2002, pp. 196-197). Similarly, from the perspective of critical multiculturalism, North-American universities, while grounded in the ideal of knowledge seeking, are located in a white, Anglo-Saxon worldview (Henry & Tator, 2009a). Bourdieu (1988) claims that universities are not meritocratic institutions, but rather places that advance students who already possess certain forms of capital. The university is a highly reproductive space that employs practices of knowledge and pedagogy as means of social reproduction. Although most universities in Canada have a declared commitment to equity, they do little to further this beyond tokenized gestures (Henry & Tator, 2009b). Universities:

are perceived as long on the principle of diversity, but short on the practice... Campus racism is neither sporadic nor randomly restricted to the deranged actions of a few social

misfits. Nor is it about what happens; rather, it's about what *doesn't* happen because of the system that is in place. (Fleras & Elliott, 2002, p. 194, italics in original)

From a critical multiculturalist perspective, exclusion is built into the academic system and operates in subtle and invisible ways through such elements as mission statements, cultural values, organizational structures, and power relations. This is not to say that racists occupy the university, but rather that oppression is ingrained within its structures. As argued by Watson Nind, Humphris and Borthwick (2009): "It is increasingly evident that many of the challenges faced by students from non-traditional backgrounds stem from [the university's] long-established culture, which generally remains oriented toward the traditional white middle-class student population and effectively resists inclusivity" (p. 666).

In the field of teacher education, it is argued that the situation is much the same (Chapman, 2011). Even in teacher education programs that are supposedly social justice-oriented, there is a form of "new racism" in which, "those prepared to teach through these programs are taught to blindly, silently, and paradoxically reproduce the same inequities and injustices under the rhetoric of diversity and multiculturalism" (Cross, 2005, p. 265).

Although IETs by definition arrive in Canada as graduates of higher education and teacher education programs, many of them need to repeat at least portions of their higher education and teacher education in order to be eligible to teach in Canada. In order to better comprehend the challenges that IETs face in this process, I believe that Bourdieu's (1985; 1990b) work on habitus, field, and social and cultural capital is especially helpful. According to Bourdieu, disjunctions between habitus and field occur "when individuals with a well-developed habitus find themselves in different fields or different parts of the same social field" (Reay, 2004b, p. 438). The IET participants in this study arrived in Canada as immigrants, mostly

belonging to ethnic minority groups, with their prospective habitus and capital; however, in order to continue to be employed in their profession, they needed to participate in a recertification process, even if it seemed “not for the likes of us” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 202). This is important since, for Bourdieu, the match or clash of field and habitus is a major fact that operates unconsciously in the choice-making of agents. Hence, this is a situation of inherent tension between habitus and cultural capital attained by IETs in their home countries, and the demands of the field of the recertification they enter.

Since diverse fields hold different currencies, certain kinds of capital may be worth little in another field, or may need to go through a “currency exchange” (Gemme, 2009). In this study, I use the concept of professional capital to better capture the currency conversion process that is required from IETs. I follow Schinkel and Noordegraaf’s (2011) suggestion that Bourdieu’s conceptual apparatus can be expanded with the concept of professional capital, and argue that this concept of professional capital contributes to an analysis of the challenges faced by IETs. The concept of professional capital is especially useful since, in a global society with high rates of professional immigration, many distinctions are based on professional definitions. The concept of professional capital is concerned with how professional fields are positioned in relation to each other, and with distinctions that are made within professional fields. In the field of teacher education, the distinction seems to be built around who is considered to be a “good teacher.”

Furthermore, when describing the recertification trajectory of IETs, the concept of professional capital is useful in demonstrating how distinctions are internalized as professional dispositions and inclinations toward teaching, which is why it is difficult to change them. Especially in the case of teachers, these dispositions are acquired from an early age when most

people are introduced to educational systems; this is an early socialization that resembles the one that happens within the family. However, not only do IETs have embedded dispositions toward teaching, but, as my study will illustrate, certain dispositions are also embedded within the dominant conceptions of the “good teacher” in BC. I use the concept of professional capital to critically examine how different dispositions are ranked in the field of BC teacher education.

1.4 Summary of Methodology

This study was designed as an extended case study (Burawoy, 1998). I examined the UBC Updating program within the context of the field of teacher education in BC. The design of the study was also influenced by the extended place method (Duneier, 1999), since the Updating program, which intersects with other places/institutions, is a central site for IETs during the time of recertification. The main site of my study was the Updating program in which I conducted interviews with five current IETs and 11 faculty members, and observed seven classes from five different courses.

In order to fully understand the recertification trajectory, I examined how the case extended over time and space. I extended the time backward to the mandatory preliminary stage of credential evaluations that was done by the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB). I also extended the time forward to the period of post-graduation and the job search stage by interviewing five graduate IETs. In addition, I looked at the extension of the case over space, or, in Bourdieu’s (1985) terminology, as located in the field of teacher education in BC. I conducted interviews with three employees of the TRB, attended two information sessions at the TRB, and interviewed a faculty member of the only other recertification program offered in BC. I also examined policies and documents related to teacher certification and IETs in BC. By using this

methodological design, I gained a deeper understanding of the recertification as a complex process that involves several institutions and periods extending over time and space.

As an immigrant and certified teacher from Israel, I have had many experiences similar to those of the participant IETs; hence, this case study contains some elements of analytic autoethnography (Anderson, 2006). My personal voice is integrated into the dissertation as another source of data. However, it is clearly distinguished (using a special font) from my researcher position in order to create a space between my personal experiences and the “bigger picture.”

1.5 Chapter Structure

Chapter 2 presents the literature base this study builds upon. The case of IETs is located in the wider discourse on diversity in teacher education. Hence, I begin by exploring the concept of diversity in the teaching profession, and specifically in teacher education in Canada. Then I move to examine the literature base related to IETs and summarize its main findings. This chapter also defines terminology and offers an international perspective on IET research. I end by presenting the unique contributions of the current study to the existing literature base.

Chapter 3 explores the two levels of theory that frame this study: the first concerned with the larger social sphere through the lens of critical multiculturalism, and the second focused on the institutional level and rooted in the Bourdieuan conceptual framework. In the second part, I establish the concept of professional capital and justify its applicability to the field of teaching and the study of IETs. Lastly, I analyze the professional capital of teachers as connected to prevalent conceptions of the “good teacher.”

Chapter 4 presents the methodological design of this study and defines its site. I explain the methodological design of an extended case study and describe the case – the “Teacher

Updating Program” at UBC. I also describe the main sources of data gathered in this study and provide ethical considerations.

Chapter 5 is the first chapter pertaining to research findings. It presents the main barriers IETs face in the recertification trajectory. This chapter does not directly answer my research questions, but rather it lays the groundwork for more complete answers found within the next three chapters. I provide additional evidence for some of the findings previous research has established. However, while most studies base their findings on data collected from IETs, in this study the data was collected from both IETs and other professionals involved in the recertification trajectory. Hence, the data I report in this chapter is well beyond the actual experiences of the current or graduate IETs and comes also from other players in the field.

Chapter 6 locates the barriers IETs face in the heteronomous field of teacher education in BC by identifying the major institutional players and where and how they intersect. It analyzes the recertification process as a subfield in the Bourdieuan sense and maps the players in the recertification trajectory in BC and the role different institutions play in creating the barriers IETs face. This chapter examines the interrelations between the different players in the field as they emerged from the fieldwork, as well as through the frame of policy analysis. The last section is focused on the Updating program, which is the main site of this study.

Chapter 7 analyzes the recertification trajectory through the concept of professional capital and the process of capital conversion. The concept of professional capital draws on Bourdieu’s (1984) conceptual frame and captures the conceptions of the “good teacher” in BC. Based on the data, I identified four main components that construct the concept of professional capital in teacher education in BC: cultural/linguistic/content knowledge; school culture; assessment; and pedagogy. After presenting these four components I analyze the recertification

trajectory with emphasis on the Updating program through the lens of professional capital conversion.

Chapter 8 highlights the problematic nature of the recertification trajectory when set against Canada's declared nature as a multicultural society that promotes and embraces diversity. It critically examines the concept of multiculturalism during the recertification process and demonstrates some contradictions found under its "celebration of diversity."

Chapter 9 is the concluding chapter. It repeats the main findings of this study and suggests recommendations and possible directions for further research. I end with some applications of this study to diverse fields.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Context: Diversity in the Teaching Profession

The discourse on diversity in the teaching force in North America has a long history, and is evoked repeatedly in the face of changing social forces (e.g., globalization and immigration). In the Canadian context, the concept of diversity is closely tied with the discourse on multiculturalism (Joshee, 2004). Especially when many Western countries are becoming increasingly diverse, teachers “who are ready to handle this demographic reality are no longer luxury but a necessity” (Garcia, Arias, Harries Murri, & Serna, 2010, p. 135)

Many studies have shown the importance of diversifying the teaching force. Many argue that in order to answer to the needs of the highly diverse student population, the teaching force should “better reflect the backgrounds, worldviews, cultures, and languages of the students” (Schmidt, 2010a, p. 2). For instance, some claim that teachers of (racial or ethnic) minority groups appreciate the cultural knowledge of students from minority groups and incorporate it into their teaching (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). They also serve as cultural translators and mentors, have high expectations for minority students, create emotional connections, and increase their achievements by using culturally based pedagogies (Bascia, Thiessen, & Goodson, 1996; Irvine, 2002; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The importance of minority teachers goes beyond that of minority students since “all students can benefit from what [these] teachers bring into the learning environment” (Sleeter & Milner, 2011, p. 83). Moreover, since teaching is a public profession, it is important for teachers from marginalized groups to hold positions of power (Ryan et al., 2009).

In contrast, many claim that the experiences and knowledge of “mainstream” teachers (who are mostly white, middle-class women) do not facilitate equal learning opportunities for

minority students (Milner, 2010; Nieto, 2000). Sleeter and Milner (2011) explain that: “The more homogenous the teachers, the more homogenous the worldviews that are likely to be used to analyze teaching and students’ needs[;] [this] is particularly problematic when those worldviews and the experiences underlying them diverge from those of students” (p. 83). Hence, in diverse school systems, the “one size fit for all” approach actually serves one group of students better than others (Apple, 2004; Kincheloe, 2010). This is problematic if we accept Ladson-Billings’ (2011) argument that diversity in education needs to be understood under the mission of schools to “minimize social differences in academic performance” (p. 395).

2.1.1 The Diversity Gap in the Canadian School System

Many studies have demonstrated the gaps found between the diversity of the student body in North America and the limited diversity of the teaching force (Ryan et al., 2009; Ball & Tyson, 2011a; Milner, 2010; Nieto & McDonough, 2011; Sleeter & Milner, 2011). It is widely accepted that “while changes in the student demographics have been dramatic, changes in the demographics of the teaching force have been slow.... Most teachers continue to be white female, monolingual, and middle class” (Ball & Tyson, 2011a, p. 2).

As an outcome of the dramatic growth of minority groups in Canada, the diversity of the student body is constantly increasing (Statistics Canada, 2008). However, no organized data has been collected and analyzed specifically to measure the diversity of the teaching force in Canada. In a study that has extracted data from several sources, Ryan, Pollock and Antonelli (2009) claim that “despite the increase in the number of teachers of color over the years, the ratio of racialized teachers to the racialized Canadian population is falling, and in some instances, dramatically” (p.

596). Vancouver has the widest gap between the proportion of “visible minority”² teachers in the teaching force and the “visible minority” citizens in the general population (28% in 2006), as well as the greatest rate of decline between its growth of “visible minorities” in the student population and “visible minority” teachers in the teaching force (7.2% in the years 2001-2006) (Ryan et al., 2009, p. 594). This overall picture forms a challenge to educational policy and has been raised as a concern by the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (Schmidt & Block, 2010, p. 4).

It is important to clarify that minorities are not a single unified group; broadly speaking, some ethnic groups have a high success rate in school and university (e.g., the Chinese) (Worswic, 2001), while other groups (the African-Canadian and Aboriginal groups in particular) are relatively less successful academically (Ryan et al., 2009). In addition, the discourse on diversity has varied underlying assumptions in different locations (e.g., African-Canadian and Caribbean-Canadian youth in Ontario and South Asian youth in BC are both stigmatized as being involved in “gangs”). In both examples, however, essentialized definitions are attached to these minority groups.

There seems to be tension between the discourse on the importance of diversity (BC Ministry of Education, 2004) and the current neoliberal context that is characterized by increasing regulation and standardization tendencies intended to promote marketability and competition (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Walsh et al., 2011). This is evident in the inclusion of the teaching profession under the “Agreement on Internal Trade” (AIT), which imposes governmental standards on teaching and makes it easier for teachers educated in Canada to move between the provinces (BC Ministry of Education, 2010). Furthermore, Grimmer and Young (2012) argue that the AIT is a “Trojan Horse” in which, “under the guise of increasing labour

² I use quotations marks here since “visible minority” is a contested term. I will discuss this terminology further in Chapter 3.

mobility” officials in charge of teacher certification overlook the standardization and de-regulation of the teaching profession that “alter[s] the standing of teaching as a profession in itself” (p. 95)

2.1.2 Diversity in Teacher Education in Canada

The case of IETs is located in the wider discourse on diversity in teacher education. This discourse raises critical questions regarding the implications of factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and language in the accessibility of and success in teacher education programs. Sleeter and Milner (2011) claim that, currently, most teacher education programs “are designed mainly with traditional-age white students in mind, a reality that may be invisible to those in such programs but is visible to those who sense not belonging” (p. 88). Similarly, Nieto and McDonough (2011) wonder “whether preservice teachers are adequately prepared to teach students of diverse background” (p. 363) and argue that,

given the rapidly growing number of students of color and immigrants in US [and Canadian] public schools, as well as the lagging number of teachers and administrators of color, this is a question worth addressing for considerations of both policy and practice. (p. 363)

There is an increasing understanding that “teaching marginalized student populations requires different dispositions, beliefs, training, and practices than traditionally conveyed in teacher education” (Grant & Gibson, 2011, p. 24). Therefore, teacher education should be able to prepare teachers to teach in highly diverse urban areas that are characterized by a discriminatory job market and poverty (Weiner, 2002). In this “changing demographic landscape” (Ladson-Billings, 2011, p. 386), teacher education faces two major challenges: providing relevant training for teacher candidates who are mostly white middle-class women, and incorporating more

diverse teacher candidates into teacher education programs (Sleeter & Milner, 2011). This study mainly focuses on the second challenge, although these two components complement one another since, as Ladson-Billings (2011) claims, “until we improve teacher education we have no hope of improving diversity in teacher education” (p. 385).

It is argued that in order to increase the diversity of teacher candidates, a drastic transformation of teacher education is required, since, as claimed by Ladson-Billings (2011), “a profession that is trying to diversify and ‘multiculturalize’ its students finds itself in the embarrassing and awkward position of remaining overwhelmingly white, monolingual, and middle class” (p. 391). Furthermore, in order to facilitate deep transformation, the change needs to be apparent in all layers of teacher education programs: at the structural level (e.g., cost of tuition, time frames), in teaching and curriculum, and in policy and the hiring of faculty members.

2.2 Diversity and Immigration in Canada

There seems to be a political and practical contradiction between Canada’s need for immigrants and its practice of rejecting and deskilling them; this is marked by many immigrants ending up unemployed or in jobs far below their level of education (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Bauder, 2003; Deters, 2011; Mojab, 1999; Walsh et al., 2011). In the current neoliberal context, which is characterized by the erosion of social concerns under the predominant discourse of “freedom of the market,” this process escalates (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Shan, 2009). As Walsh, Brigham and Wang (2011) argue, “difference is flattened in the neoliberal context. Social concern about, and responsibility for, systemic inequities related to gender, race, ethnicity, language, and so on disappear within the emphasis on the individual’s responsibility” (p. 659). Hence, individuals are constituted as free actors in a competitive space, without the recognition

of differences and inequities that limit their ability to “win” the competition (Fenwick, 2003; Schmidt, 2010b).

In regulated professions, immigrants need to meet certain criteria in order to be able to practice their professions in Canada. The certification process often lacks transparency, demands local knowledge, and costs money (Bauder, 2003; Guo & Shan, 2013). Critics point out that the underlying assumption of the process is the devaluation of foreign credentials under the supposed neutrality of what Shan (2009) calls the “credential and certificate regime.” This is “a colonial legacy that downgrades education, training and credentials from non-Western societies, thereby re-inscribing and exacerbating existing inequalities based on age, gender, and race” (Ng & Shan, 2010, p. 181). Similarly, Guo (2007) claims that “the devaluation and denigration of immigrants’ knowledge and experience become the new head tax to keep ‘undesirables’ out...the new strategy to maintain the subordination of immigrants and to reinforce the extant power relations in Canada” (p. 37).

It seems that the devaluation and deskilling of immigrants serve to maintain the domination and reproduction of the social order. This social order is underlined by factors such as race, gender, language, and ethnicity, which add layers of marginality to the immigration status. Hence, “education is not a determining factor in access to the job market. The play of skill, high or low, is constrained by other factors such as gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, and knowledge of the official languages” (Mojab, 1999, p. 4).

This is the wider frame for analyzing the integration of IETs into the teaching profession in Canada, as argued by Walsh and Brigham (2007b), who state, “the current Canadian labor market in the global context and the ways that immigrant professionals are ‘deskilled’ ... is

crucial to understanding the ways that IETs are situated as they seek credential recognition and access to teacher education programs” (p. 9).

Teaching is a common profession among Canadian immigrants (Ryan et al., 2009; Government of Canada, 2011);³ however, IETs have higher underemployment and unemployment rates than immigrants in any other regulated profession. Several researchers claim that only 20% of IETs find permanent teaching jobs, and if they are hired, it is mostly as “teachers on call” (TOC) (Zietsma, 2010). This is partially due to the saturated teaching market, particularly in Canada’s urban areas;⁴ however, critics claim that deeper underlying factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, and immigration status contribute to this state of affairs. IETs differ according to gender, place of origin, race and ethnicity; hence, they cannot be unified under an essential “immigrant” category. However, in the current situation of BC, most IETs are “visible minority” women who speak English as a second language or with a non-Canadian accent (Ryan et al., 2009). Walsh and colleagues (2011) claim that IETs are constructed under the category of “immigrant women” as an intersection of gender, race, and language that reinforces their subordination (see also Man, 2004; Ng & Shan, 2010).

2.3 IETs in Canada

IETs may have the important role of promoting diversity in the Canadian K-12 school system since they are immigrants, many of whom are members of ethnic minorities and/or “visible minorities.” Their presence is especially important in urban school systems in which “the cultural characteristics and lived experiences of the majority of new teachers coming into the system continue to be dissimilar to those of many students” (Chapman, 2011, p. 63).

³ Although it is not as common as engineering, for example (6.2% vs. 27.6%, Deters, 2011, p. 9).

⁴ Although teaching is the most common profession in Canada, there is a shortage of teaching positions in the main urban centres (Schmidt, 2010b); however, these are the areas where immigrants tend to settle.

Although diversity in teacher education in North America has been the subject of some research (Ball & Tyson, 2011a; Banks, 2001; Foster, 1993; Nieto, 2000; Santoro, 2007; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), research on IETs in Canada is still a relatively unexplored field (Bascia et al., 1996; Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2004; Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Faez, 2010; Frank, 2013; He, 1998; Mawhinney & Xu, 1997; Medic, 2007; Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2006; Phillion, 2003; Rosehart, 2013; Schmidt, 2010b; Walsh et al., 2011; Wang, 2002). Most research on IETs to date has been conducted in Ontario (Chassels, 2010; Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Faez, 2010; Phillion, 2003). Less research has been conducted in Manitoba (Schmidt, 2010b; Schmidt et al., 2010), Nova-Scotia (Walsh & Brigham, 2007b; Walsh et al., 2011), Alberta (Janusch, 2015; People and Research Division, Professional Standards Branch, 2012) or British Colombia (Beynon et al., 2004; Frank, 2013; Magambo, 2009; Rosehart, 2013).

2.3.1 Terminology

Within the Canadian scholarly base, studies employ different terminology for IETs, utilizing such phrases as “foreign trained teachers” (Frank, 2013), “foreign trained immigrant teachers” (Myles et al., 2006), “foreign accredited teachers”(Phillion, 2003), “immigrant teachers” (Beynon et al., 2004), “immigrant teacher candidates” (Cho, 2011), “immigrant student teachers” (Duchesne & Stitou, 2010) and “re-certifying teachers” (Rosehart, 2013).

I use the term “internationally educated teachers” (IETs) for two reasons. One is that some of the main scholars in the field employ it (Deters, 2011; Schmidt, 2010a; Walsh & Brigham, 2007a); also, this is the term commonly used in the TRB and at UBC (UBC Teacher Updating Program, 2012). The second reason is that the terminology of “immigrant” seems to be imbricated with deficiency, whereas “international” and “education” are more highly regarded concepts.

2.4 Barriers within the Recertification Process in Canada

Studies focus on diverse stages of the recertification process (e.g., credential assessments, course work, practicums, and job searches). Most studies focus on the experiences and voices of IETs and unveil barriers within the process of recertification and employment; relatively few studies are examined within a policy frame (Schmidt, 2010b; Schmidt & Block, 2010; Sorano, 2009).

Some barriers in the recertification process of IETs are consistently reflected in the literature. Scholars organize them according to various categories, such as systemic, social, and general barriers (Phillion, 2003); recertification entry, discrimination and marginalization, and professional acculturation (Deters, 2011); the institutional fields of “regulatory agencies, teacher education programmes and employers” (Beynon et al., 2004, p. 433); language, recertification process, personal and economic problems (Walsh & Brigham, 2007a); and intake into recertification programs, recertification process, and job finding (Cho, 2011). These different categories imply the focus of the studies and their theoretical perspectives; however, there is no clear-cut boundary between the categories since most factors intersect. I have organized the findings of the studies I reviewed according to the following categories:

- language barriers
- systemic barriers
 - recertification process
- cultural barriers
 - professional barriers
- personal barriers

These categories are not chronological; rather, they capture the main types of barriers IETs

face, in my understanding, while highlighting the former's structural and systemic nature within the recertification process. I have added the sub-category of professional barriers under the category of cultural barriers, since the concept of professional capital is a main contribution of the current study. The category of personal barriers is helpful as an umbrella for diverse individual issues; however, some of these individual barriers are inseparable from social factors.

2.4.1 Language Barriers

Language barriers refer to language proficiency and accent (including pronunciation and punctuation) (Chassels, 2010; Deters, 2011; Myles et al., 2006; Walsh et al., 2011; Wang, 2002; Xu, 1999), as well as to language as a part of communication skills and the specific usage of a language (e.g., reflective writing, linguistic knowledge) (Deters, 2011; Faez, 2010). Language barriers are strongly related to psychological insecurity and feelings of deficiency (Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013). Studies vary in their conclusions regarding the importance of English proficiency in teaching ability of IETs (Braine, 1999; Moussu & Llurda, 2008). In her study of IETs in practicums, Faez (2010) argues that a lack of language proficiency frustrates both students and IETs alike. Some studies also argue that a negative reaction toward accent and language proficiency is sometimes stronger among minority students and parents who seek a “proper” Canadian teacher (Deters, 2011).

Language also has many cultural implications that may be challenging for IETs in teaching and in interactions with parents and students (e.g., political correctness, subtle talk vs. directness) (Deters, 2011). For instance, the IET participants in Faez's study (2010) were confused about cultural norms in Canada and the “nature of small talk among Canadians” (p. 9). However, language proficiency is not only a source of insecurity for IETs; rather, it is connected to systemic discrimination. The participants in Frank's study (2013) felt that “their language

ability and accents positioned them as ‘others’ in their teaching experiences” (p. 205), while Block (2012) argues that “employers often mistake an accent as a lack of literacy and oracy. A different accent also becomes the identifier for a range of differences, including race and religion” (p. 90).

A structural barrier that is related to language is the inconsistency of language requirements between the provinces. Hence, IETs are able to teach in some provinces without going through the language evaluation process, but if they move to a different province they may not be eligible to teach. “The Registrars for Teacher Certification in Canada” (hereafter Registrars) that was created in 1999 under the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) “to deal with questions of common interest, with particular emphasis on teacher-mobility issues” (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2013, p. 6) is currently working on the “development of Pan-Canadian language proficiency assessment tools” (p. 35) to deal with this inconsistency. The Registrars’ approach is consistent with what Bales (2006) refers to as “bureaucratic accountability,” which assumes that “[if] all participants are judged by the same criteria...their outcomes will also be the same” (p. 402, cited in Higgins, 2010, p. 117). However, as Guo and Shan (2013) assert, Pan-Canadian policies that aim to promote equality can actually become a “technical exercise that serves to exclude immigrants from, rather than include them in” (p. 466). Hence, whereas Pan-Canadian policies use the term “fair” extensively, fairness is understood as a neoliberal tool employed to reinforce market-driven values such as individualism and competition. As such, mechanisms to create fairness ignore and reproduce the “systemic devaluation of difference” (p. 474). Furthermore, this approach does not recognize “any other linguistic capabilities [IETs] may have. This is an English-centric deficit approach to teacher’s language competence” (Reid, Collins, & Singh, 2014, p. 92).

2.4.2 *Structural Barriers*

Structural barriers begin in the credentials evaluation process, continue during the recertification program, and persist after its completion during the job-hunting process. Initial barriers consist of a lack of information on the recertification demands prior to IETs' arrival in Canada and a lack of knowledge of provincial policies and regulations (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2014). Barriers in the credentials evaluation process consist of a lack of recognition of foreign credentials, a lack of previous teaching experience in Canada, a mismatch of teaching areas, procedures such as the need to obtain and translate foreign documents, and the cost of evaluation (Cho, 2011; Myles et al., 2006; Phillion, 2003; Pollock, 2010). Many IETs find it difficult to understand and follow the various time-constraining and demanding requirements in the evaluation process (Mawhinney & Xu, 1997).

The credentials evaluation process is categorized under provincial authority; hence, similar to the language proficiency assessment, it lacks consistency across the provinces. Also, in this case, the Registrars' forum has recently issued a feasibility study referred to as "establishing a Pan-Canadian framework for the assessment and recognition of foreign qualification," by following the principles of "fairness, transparency, timeliness, and consistency" (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2014, p. 1). The study calls for the adoption of a "Comprehensive Centre Model," in which a national centre would be the "single entry point for IET applicants in Canada" (p. 6). However, the certification decision would remain at the provincial level.

More barriers arise past graduation, when IETs attempt to find jobs in a competitive job market with discriminating hiring policies (Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013; Phillion, 2003; Schmidt, 2010b; Walsh et al., 2011). These difficulties create an emotional toll, since in

many cases, IETs are unaware of “job shortness and believe they would find jobs soon” (Registrars, 2014, p. 12). Several scholars claim that in comparison to newly trained teachers and teachers from other provinces or nearby US cities, it is more difficult for IETs to find jobs, and many remain TOC (Chassels, 2010; Faez, 2010; Magambo, 2009). In Ontario, while 41% of domestic teachers were working in regular positions one year after graduation, only 8% of IETs were hired (Schmidt & Block, 2010). Although in its most recent report, *Transition to Teaching*, the Ontario College of Teachers (2015) identified that the teacher surplus is over and that more teaching opportunities have become available, jobs opportunities continue to be more limited for IETs:

The strengthening Ontario teacher employment market also resulted in employment gains for newly licensed teachers educated outside the province. Ontario university education graduates, however, continue to enjoy higher rates of full employment in the first year as Ontario licensed teachers than newly licensed teachers from other sources. (p. 6)

Similarly, Pollock (2010) claims that one-fifth of the teaching force in Canada works as occasional teachers with a high correlation to IETs (e.g., 48% in Ontario). As is the case with other professions, white IETs originating from Western English-speaking countries or have a similar cultural background face fewer barriers (Guo, 2007; Reitz, 2001).

The Registrars’ forum initiated a study (2014), which included six focus groups of stakeholders, to examine the recertification and workplace integration of IETs. In the study, most stakeholders insisted that “the onus is on IETs to make the effort” to look for jobs (Registrars,

2014, p. 19).⁵ In contrast, many IETs feel that they lack knowledge about district hiring procedures, job postings, as well as local connections in the school system (Cho, 2011; Frank, 2013; Registrars, 2014).

Another barrier arises in defining a salary base for IETs. Schmidt (2010b) suggests that IETs' previous experience, if recognized, leads to a higher salary classification, and thus is seen as a disadvantage, whereas for a domestic teacher it is advantageous. Conversely, Frank (2013) argues that in BC, IETs' salaries are set at the basic level without recognition of their previous teaching experience (p. 200).

At the policy level, Schmidt and Block (2010) find that in contradiction to the call for "diversifying the teaching force" (p. 5), out of six school divisions in Winnipeg, only three had policies related to diversity and equity, and only one had a clear policy about IETs. Similarly, Walsh and Brigham (2007a) find that "none of the equity policies at Canadian teacher education institutions specifically name internationally educated teachers" (p. 24). In the period 2005-2010 there was a designated policy for IETs at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) that increased the equity in IETs' admission and provided additional support during the program; however, this policy was since dropped and most of the services were cut (Schmidt & Gagné, 2015). These findings support Sorano's claim (2008) that "current policy processes are under the strong influence of the market discourse" in ways that "limit the inclusion of immigrant teachers" (p. ii).

2.4.2.1 The Recertification Process

Recertification in BC is an eight-month to one-year full-time training process, following

⁵ This is from an unpublished focus group study called, "Certification and workforce integration: Experiences of internationally educated teachers," which is the basis for the *Establishing a Pan-Canadian framework for the assessment and recognition of foreign qualification* (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2014).

a procedure of assessment of foreign credentials. This is a demanding and costly process, during which it is difficult for IETs to work and provide for their families (Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013). In a survey of Canadian institutions conducted in 2007, Walsh and Brigham (2007a) found that only seven teacher education programs across Canada identify themselves as having designated tracks or mechanisms for IETs (this number has dropped further since then). Two of these designated programs are located in the Greater Vancouver Area.

Guo (2007) argues that misperceptions of difference and knowledge, which position immigrants as deficient, lie at the heart of the long journey by which IETs can become Canadian teachers. These misperceptions are rooted in “the epistemological conflation between difference and deficiency and the ontological endorsement of objectivist and universal measurement by credentialing bodies” (Guo & Shan, 2013, p. 468). From this perspective, recertification is a political process that “restricts the competition and sustains the interests of dominant groups” (Guo, 2007, p. 37). Under the “regime of credentials” (Shan, 2009), institutions and regulatory bodies are serving as gatekeepers.

to insure that teaching positions in mainstream schools are filled by individuals who will transmit the cultural capital of the dominant society. The regulations constructed to accomplish this work render valueless the social and cultural capital of teachers from other jurisdictions. In addition, these regulations close off opportunities for bringing diverse cultural resources to students in British Columbia public schools; they thus impose the very opposite of Canada’s claimed status as an inclusive, multicultural nation. (Beynon et al., 2004, p. 442)

It is my contention that the prevalent conception of teachers’ professional knowledge overlooks the enrichment potential that immigrant teachers’ professional capital, which will be

discussed further, can add to the Canadian school system (Beynon et al., 2004; Schmidt, 2010b).

The recertification process requires that IETs, most of whom are experienced teachers, repeat at least part of their teacher training. As Frank (2013) points out, they are considered “skilled workers” during immigration but become students or “teacher candidates” upon entering a recertification program.

2.4.3 Cultural Barriers

Cultural barriers refer to the lack of cultural knowledge and local pedagogies (Deters, 2011; Faez, 2010) as well as to the lack of networks and familiarity with local education systems (Chassels, 2010; Faez, 2010). IETs are often perceived as lacking the cultural capital and social understanding required to become teachers. Cultural barriers also refer to IETs’ professional beliefs and their expectations of students, for instance, in the use of teacher-centered *versus* child-centred pedagogy (Deters, 2011; Myles et al., 2006; Frank, 2013).

2.4.3.1 Professional Barriers

Although mentioned under the umbrellas of other, mainly cultural, barriers (Cho, 2011, Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013), there has been little distinctive focus on the barriers IETs face from a professional (Duchesne & Stitou, 2010) or professional acquisition perspective (Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013). For instance, Frank (2013) argues that “moving from a teacher-directed system into the student-focused system in BC classrooms was a catalyst for change in how foreign-trained teachers adjusted their professional identities” (p. 197).

However, in this study I use the concept of professional capital to highlight the structural and institutional barriers that are intertwined with the process of professional acquisition. I have identified two main themes in the literature that serve as professional barriers: the IETs’ adjustment to the Canadian school system, and their adjustment to Canadian pedagogical

approaches.⁶ The adjustment to the Canadian school system refers to an adjustment to the structural and institutional features of that school system, such as teachers being required to teach (at least at the elementary level) a greater number of subjects, the larger involvement of parents in school, the employment of technology in the classrooms, and the focus on inclusivity in the classrooms (Registrars, 2014). The adjustment to Canadian pedagogy refers to common teaching and learning styles in Canadian classrooms. Duchesne and Stitou (2010) suggest a possible link between the difficulties that many IETs encounter in their practicums and their prior ideas about teaching and learning. They argue that many IETs come from teacher-centred school systems characterized by the practice of memorizing and testing as prime methods of learning, and by prescribed modes of teaching. However, in Canada, IETs need to adjust to a more child-centred model, alternative assessment tools, and the greater role teachers play in creating the curriculum.

Another difference is in class management. While some IETs are used to “authoritarian and standardized classroom discipline” (Duchesne & Stitou, 2010, p. 50), in Canada they need to adjust to a less constructed and more open classroom atmosphere. The main question that Duchesne and Stitou (2010) asked the IET participants in their study regarded the qualities constituting the “good pupil.” They argue that for many IETs the “good pupil” is “one who listens; does his homework; is calm, attentive, industrious, polite, disciplined, applied, respectful, hardworking, and properly attired; asks questions; and cooperates with others” (p. 50). Similarly, the participant stakeholders in the Registrars’ study (2014) argue that IETs see the gaining of immediate respect as inherent in their teacher role, and not as an attribute of their work.

Stakeholders also claimed that “although an IET may have a remarkable academic resume, this

⁶ In Chapter 7 I establish the concept of professional capital and include in it four main components: cultural/linguistic/content knowledge; school culture; assessment; and pedagogy. Some of these components are classified in previous studies as cultural, linguistic, or structural barriers.

often does not translate well into practice,” and that “the teaching methods of some IETs could be very rigid, lacking flexibility and showing limited ability to accommodate and modify as needed” (p. 19).

But the picture is not one-sided: Duchesne and Stitou (2010) argue that some IETs express alternative ideas about teaching and portray a more active picture of learners that is consistent with the Canadian child-centred pedagogies. Similarly, Deters (2011) claims that some IETs adapt easily to child-centred pedagogies, and find ways to bridge their previous and present experience. Janusch (2015) asserts the centrality of “flexibility” for professional adaptation of IETs:

Flexibility is a self-identified trait the teachers use to define changes to the way they interact in their new personal and professional contexts in Canada. The process of becoming more flexible is developed through time and experience, both of which are described as the essential building blocks of personal and professional transformation. (p. 16)

In a study focused on the professional identity development of IETs, Frank (2013) argues that “the most significant systemic aspect that appeared to influence the development of professional identity was the change in positioning from a teacher-directed system to a student-focused system” (pp. 201-202). The IET participants in Frank’s study saw this change in positioning as a growth process and felt that they had gained the ability to combine the best of both worlds.

2.4.4 Personal Barriers

Personal barriers relate to a large number of issues, such as family adjustment, psychological pressures, financial difficulties, childcare needs, and health concerns (Block, 2012; Chassels, 2010; Cho, 2011; Faez, 2010; Phillion, 2003; Schmidt et al., 2010; Walsh & Brigham,

2007a). Walsh and colleagues (2011) claim that research tends to overlook the centrality of gender affecting these “personal” issues. For instance, childcare needs, although involving individual IETs, may imply structural barriers that affect the latter based on their social location.

2.4.5 Summary of Existing Knowledge

There is a growing knowledge base on the barriers in the recertification and employment process of IETs in Canada. Most studies in that area conclude with practical recommendations to policy makers and faculties of education, such as increasing the transparency of the assessment of credentials and recertification procedures through, for example, “bridging programs” and information sessions (Deters, 2011; People and Research Division, Professional Standards Branch, 2012; Phillion, 2003). Consistent recommendations made for the recertification process include the importance of a support system (e.g., constructive mentoring and support groups), professional and cultural support (e.g., content relevant courses and networking for IETs) (Beynon et al., 2004; Chassels, 2010; Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Faez, 2010; Myles et al., 2006; Schmidt et al., 2010), and school observations and practicums (Deters, 2011; Magambo, 2009; Wang, 2002). In general, there is a call for a more relevant recertification process that is attentive to IETs’ needs (e.g., shorter, practicum-based, and focused on the Canadian context) (Beynon et al., 2004; Walsh et al., 2011).

It seems that there has been a critical shift in research on IETs in the last few years. This is apparent in the call to challenge the role of the recertification process in order to “disrupt those practices that have served the prototypical teachers but have thwarted the progress of immigrant teacher candidates” (Cho, 2011, p. 43). Studies call for a systematic change in policy, employment, and teacher education programs (Schmidt, 2010b; Schmidt, 2016; Walsh et al., 2011) “to both affirm the multiple perspectives on education that IETs have to offer and

challenge discriminatory practices evident at the systemic level” (Schmidt et al., 2010, p. 441). Finally, many studies highlight the agency and determination that IETs show in the recertification process and deplore the loss of their ability and expertise from the Canadian school system (Beynon et al., 2004; Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Phillion, 2003; Schmidt, 2010b; Walsh & Brigham, 2007b).

2.4.6 The Uniqueness of IETs in the Diversity Discourse

Many barriers IETs face are also reported in research on the integration of minority teachers⁷ in North American school systems, as Ryan and colleagues (2009) argue:

Racialized students and teachers are systemically marginalized in the local and global communities in which they reside, and in the institutions and school systems of which they are a part. Inequitable communities, institutions, and school systems routinely push out certain groups of racialized students from schools and discriminate against racialized teachers from abroad. (p. 258)

The systemic marginalization is an outcome of the construction of the teaching profession to largely attract middle-class white women (Dei, 1996; Sleeter, La Vonne, & Kumashiro, 2014). For instance, the design of most teacher education programs makes it more difficult (e.g., via cost, time frame, and the need to have a relevant teaching field) for students of minority groups and IETs to gain entrance (Chapman, 2011). As claimed by Chassels (2010):

Race, class, gender and language are often considered in higher education research and practice as personal deficits of non-traditional students but little emphasis is placed on the ways in which these factors are produced, reproduced, critiqued or mitigated systemically or institutionally. (p. 27)

⁷ I refer to both racial and ethnic minorities.

Research also highlights similar factors as supporting success in both cases; these include the creation of selection criteria, partnerships with school districts, academic and social support systems, relevant modifications to teacher programs, and financial assistance (Chapman, 2011).

However, there are also differences between domestic and immigrant minorities (and obviously neither group is a fixed category in itself). The main source of difference in the case of IETs is related to the experience of immigration, which adds another layer of marginality. For instance, whereas domestic minority students do not see teaching as their only entry port to middle-class professions, for IETs any other option would mean starting all over again. Sleeter and Milner (2011) argue that some minority students criticize teaching as a white, irrelevant profession (“not for the likes of us,” in Bourdieuan terminology). However, even if IETs hold critical views, teaching is the path for professional integration into the new country. Deters (2011) argues that even when the “Canadian way” of teaching and learning is at odds with some IETs’ professional beliefs they “strongly believed that IETs must adapt to Canadian norms in order to achieve professional success” (p. 118). It may be related to what Ogbu (1993) describes as “voluntary minorities”: that is, immigrants who accept assimilation and see it as a way to improve their lives. Cho (2011) argues that this is part of the reason why IETs prefer to support superficial multicultural terminology in teacher education without challenging the deeper currents of racism and oppression.

Language proficiency and accent are two main barriers that set (most) IETs apart from domestic teacher candidates who come from minority groups. These two factors contribute to societal perceptions of IETs as deficient and are related to (misconceived) assumptions about knowledge and their level of education (Deters, 2011; Lippi-Green, 2012; Schmidt, 2010b;

Zietsma, 2010).⁸ Since “teaching is a linguistically and culturally dependent profession” (Deters, 2011, p. 121), for many IETs, learning new ways of teaching in a language that is not their mother tongue means “learning a new way of being” (Deters, 2011, p. 120).

2.4.7 International Perspective

Although this study is located within the Canadian context, there is a growing literature on the IET experience in various countries that discusses similar barriers (Howard, 2010; McNamara & Basit, 2004; Michael, 2006; Miller, 2008; Reid et al., 2014). In Australia, the percentage of immigrants in the teaching profession lags behind their percentage in the overall population, and many foreign-trained teachers come from New Zealand and the UK (Collins & Reid, 2012), while many immigrants come from China, India, and other Asian countries (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2013; see also Cruickshank, 2004). Similarly, in New Zealand, Howard (2010) reports that:

While the New Zealand student population has become increasingly diverse, the ethnic composition of the teaching workforce has remained relatively static. At least 79% of primary and secondary school teachers in the most recent [2005] New Zealand teacher census were of Anglo-European ancestry. (p. 2)

Michael (2006) concludes that “immigrant teachers are a wasted resource of human potential in Israel, as well as in other immigrant-absorbing countries such as Australia” (p. 166). Thus, the ability of immigrant teachers to become recertified and find employment is an important concern for the successful diversification of the teaching profession in Canada, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. As Cruickshank (2004) argues, “with the growing

⁸ Accent intersects with other factors such as the country of origin and race; for instance, the Western European accent is regarded as on a “higher” level than the Asian accent (Lippi-Green, 2012).

teacher shortages in many countries...it is inevitable that greater efforts will be made to provide pathways for immigrant teachers back into the profession” (p. 126).

In research on IETs, the concept of professional capital has not yet become a common analytic lens. In a recent book that examines the experiences of immigrant teachers in Australia and of Australian teachers who immigrate to other countries, Reid, Collins, and Singh (2014), building on Bourdieu, use the concept of capital reconversion. They focus on the many tests that immigrant teachers need to pass to become certified as teachers in Australia, which, the authors argue, serves to determine whether these immigrant teachers will fit into the Australian teaching profession. The only work that uses the concept of professional capital in relation to immigrant teachers is Stewart’s (2010) article on the transferability of immigrant teachers’ professional capital to New Zealand schools. Stewart writes that New Zealand teachers can ease the difficulties immigrant teachers tend to experience in the transition to a new professional environment “by valuing the immigrant teachers’ professional capital” (p. 50). However, Stewart (2010) only uses the term professional capital in a short essay without further elaboration. Fee (2011) describes how Latino/a immigrant teachers in the US “make sense of their experiences” (p. 392), while emphasizing their limited social capital (such as networks and contacts in the new setting). Some other studies use the concept of cultural capital as part of their theoretical framework (Beynon et al., 2004; Cho, 2011).

In the current study, I build on these previous findings. Whereas Stewart (2010) considers professional capital to be “very personal” (p. 48), in my research I focus on how professional capital matters at a different level, and argue that the concept of professional capital is useful in unveiling further the systemic barriers that are embedded within the recertification trajectory.

2.5 Scholarly Significance of the Study

The discrepancy between the diversity of the teaching profession and the student body in Canada is well documented. In a review of the “Employment Equity Act” by the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (Canadian Teachers’ Federation, 2006), it is argued that:

National 2001 Census data highlight that English was the ethnic origin most over-represented by teachers relative to the under 15 school-aged population among 28 ethnic origins examined, while teachers were most under-represented relative to the under 15 school-aged population for the North American Indian, Chinese and East Indian ethnic origin groups with percentage point gaps of 3.8%, 3.7% and 2.9%, respectively. (pp. 3-4)

In the urban centres of BC, such underrepresentation is even higher. One reason is that the “teaching market” in the Greater Vancouver Area is extremely saturated. The other reason is that historically, the “two most populous visible minority groups in British Columbia [Chinese and South Asian] are not pursuing teacher training programs as teaching is seen as neither lucrative nor prestigious” (Toohey, Kishor, & Beynon, 1998, p. 57). Hence, incorporating IETs into the system is an important means of promoting diversity within the teaching profession in the Greater Vancouver Area. As Deters (2010) argues, there is

a classic mismatch: on the one hand, there is a shortage of teachers from diverse backgrounds; on the other hand, there is an abundance of internationally educated teachers from diverse backgrounds who are experienced and clearly have much to contribute to a multicultural school system, but face barriers in becoming successful practitioners in the education system. (p. 10)

This dissertation research adds two relatively unexplored aspects to research on IETs in Canada: a shift of focus from IETs' experiences to the *recertification trajectory*, and a focus on the *professional capital* of teachers.

While the individual experiences of IETs have been studied, Guo (2007) claims that there is a need for a shift of focus from IETs' experiences to unveiling the deeper roots of those experiences. Reay (2004b) argues that the limited focus on social structures is part of a wider problem in contemporary educational research, "which tends to view any focus on structures and mechanisms as part of a discredited Marxist research agenda" (p. 431). Moreover, as argued by Schmidt (2010a), "academics working in the area of IET advocacy and scholarship face challenges in establishing IET research as a significant agenda amongst government and education stakeholders" (p. 1). Hence, by using the concept of professional capital, this study aims to add to the emerging body of knowledge on IETs that focuses on structural inequities at the institutional level (Schmidt, 2010a; 2010b; Sorano, 2009).

In addition, research on IETs has so far paid limited attention to professional assumptions that are embedded in the conceptions of the "good teacher" (Reid et al., 2014). Hence, there is a gap in the literature at the crossroads of immigration, race, ethnicity, language, gender, and pedagogy in the recertification process. The focus of the current study on the conceptions of the "good teacher" as a specific form of professional capital in the field of teacher education aims to fill this gap. I argue that teachers' professional capital weaves such social constructs as race, gender, immigration, and ethnicity together with the pedagogical assumptions.

If conceptions of the "good teacher" in teacher education are to be understood as a form of professional capital, then IETs contradict this mainstream conception in almost every aspect

(Myles et al., 2006). Their presence raises questions about the gaps between the discourse on diversity and the reality of marginalization in teacher education.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Two levels of theory frame this study: the first is concerned with the larger social sphere through the lens of critical multiculturalism; the second one is focused at the institutional level and rooted in the Bourdieuan conceptual framework. While both theories can stand alone as fertile groundwork for investigation, I find that the combination of the two enlarges my ability to provide a detailed account of the recertification trajectory of IETs in BC.

While determining the theoretical frame for this study, I was aware that the theoretical framework needs to be contextualized in space and time and can have different relevance in different places; hence, I grounded this theoretical discussion within the Canadian context. In a way, choosing a theoretical perspective is like selecting a lens through which one views the world; this is a cognitive process as much as it is an emotional one, and it is linked to one's location, emotions, and beliefs (Jaggar, 1989).

I grappled with two theoretical perspectives that share many similarities, each holding its own advantages and disadvantages. Burawoy (1998) argues that theory enables us to comprehend the world, but does not capture the ultimate truth, as the world is ever changing. Hence, when working with a theoretical frame, “we need first the courage of our convictions, then the courage to challenge our convictions, and finally the imagination to sustain our courage with theoretical reconstruction” (Burawoy, 1998, p. 20). Since research is, *inter alia*, a reconstruction of theory, I selected the theory that I believe has the best capacity to better frame my research questions, as well as the theory in which I feel the most “at home.”

3.1 The Societal Level: Critical Multiculturalism

3.1.1 *Multiculturalism: Introduction*

Since this study deals with immigrant teachers, many of whom are members of minority groups, and since Canada defines itself as a multicultural country (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988), multicultural frameworks are a good starting point. However, multiculturalism is hard to define, as the concept of culture is itself complicated, and the addition of “multi” makes it even more so. Not surprisingly, multiculturalism has been a contested and negotiated term from the beginning (Fleras & Elliott, 2002). There is also a need to differentiate between multiculturalism as a *de facto* description of diversity, and multiculturalism as policy, discourse, and ideology (Wright, 2012). For clarity, I employ in this study the concept of diversity to describe the composition of the population in BC, and the concept of multiculturalism when discussing policies, discourses, and ideologies.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as an outcome of the civil right movements, multiculturalism was seen as holding great promise and many hoped it would foster cultural relationships and promote the capacity of students of minority groups that were systemically at a disadvantage in the school system. As opposed to the liberal framework of individual citizens with equal rights, according to multiculturalism, “ethnicity has never been absent from the civic realm. Rather, the civic realm represents the particular (although not necessarily exclusive) *communal* interests and values of the dominant ethnic group *as if* these values were held by all” (May, 1999, p. 18, italics in the original). Over the years, multiculturalism has been a source of countless academic debates (Banks, 2001; 2009; Banks & Banks, 2004), has come under considerable criticism, and has been accused simultaneously as threatening the nation state and concealing profound inequalities (May, 1999).

Multicultural education transports the concept of multiculturalism to the educational field. An initial claim of multicultural education is that although the population is becoming increasingly more diverse, its school curriculum is still organized by a paradigm that reflects the experiences of white, protestant males; multicultural education is perceived as the solution to this historical injustice (Jay, 2003). However, as with multiculturalism in other public domains, the critical component of multicultural education is often thwarted and is being incorporated into the system without being radically challenged or changed (Jay, 2003).

Scholars differentiate between several approaches to multicultural education (e.g., Grant & Sleeter, 2003; Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001; McLaren & Ryoo, 2012); most typologies recognize an initial division between conservative multiculturalism, liberal multiculturalism, and critical multiculturalism (May, 1999). Conservative multiculturalism aims at an assimilation that is understood as the key to equality; in the educational field, it is translated into a focus on the knowledge and skills that all young people need in order to succeed. The state and its institutions are seen as neutral spaces, and structural inequities are overlooked. Liberal multiculturalism supports diversity, acknowledges the worth of dissimilar cultures, and “celebrates” differences, but again without taking into account the power relations and social forces that create inequities for different cultural groups. The educational system gladly embraces some basic ideas of cultural representation within a liberal framework, while simultaneously ignoring the bigger picture of injustice (Lea, 2010). Critical multiculturalism, which I elaborate on in the next section, aims at exposing and transforming the power relations that construct a society and its school system.

In teacher education, which is the concrete location of this study, multicultural education is a tool to encourage teacher candidates to collaborate and create communities, and to develop a

commitment towards the acquisition of diverse knowledge and equity. However, within this context, multicultural education may become stripped of its transformative potential by an institutional reality that “supports and maintains the *status quo*” (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004, p. 954). Similarly, Gorski (2009) argues that multiculturalism has moved away from its original intention toward a milder version of celebrating cultural diversity. At numerous times, teacher education programs contain a multicultural component, but this is mostly as an add-on; hence, it is viewed by students as minor, unimportant, and contradicting the dominant discourse on standardization (Ladson-Billings, 2011). This is a “moment of danger” for multiculturalism (Wright, Singh, & Race, 2012, p. 3). It seems almost passé, both theoretically (e.g., due to theories such as cosmopolitanism and transnationalism) and politically (e.g., as illustrated by the political backlash in Europe). However, I would argue that critical multiculturalism may suggest a current mode for the interpretation and implementation of multiculturalism.

3.1.2 Critical Multiculturalism

Critical multiculturalism is a radical version of multiculturalism; it shares many of the assumptions of critical race theory and also draws from critical pedagogy. It was developed in the 1990s as a way to challenge the decline of multiculturalism on both the theoretical and practical levels (May, 1999). Critical multiculturalism scholars argue that multicultural education actually conceals deep inequalities by its “overemphasis on the significance of curricular change and underemphasis, and at times disavowal, of the impact of structural racism on students’ lives” (May, 1999, p. 2). As an alternative, critical multiculturalism focuses

on the *multiple* ways in which we inhabit hegemonic narratives of culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender, language, sexual orientation, and ability, and how these

narratives inhabit us. It asks us to look for ways of contesting power and oppression as they play out in current society. (Lea, 2010, p. 37, italics in the original)

In critical multiculturalism educational institutions are understood, in the main, as social reproduction mechanisms that are erroneously viewed by both oppressed and dominant groups as neutral spaces; hence, critical multiculturalism focuses on the structural aspects of discrimination, while still allowing for agency and action. As Stack and Kelly (2006) argue, although “education systems are key institutions that perpetuate various social inequalities, spaces exist—both within and beyond these institutions— where adults and youth resist dominant, damaging representations and improvise new images” (p. 12). The term *agency*, unlike the term choice, “spotlights human actors and social forces simultaneously; it encourages us to situate individuals in their historical context” (Kelly, 2007, p. 9). Hence, agency is an intersection of external circumstances and internal motivations. As such, agency in social institutions can be either encouraged or silenced. For example, Kelly and Brandes (2010) argue that inquiry is a tool to critically reflect on the educational system, as “the structures of schooling are often taken for granted and ‘naturalized’; inquiry can thus make the familiar strange” (p. 397).

There are some similarities between critical multiculturalism and critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970/1997; Giroux, 1981). Critical pedagogy aims at transforming the educational system and constructing teaching as a liberating dialogue. Similar to the decline of multiculturalism, McLaren and Ryoo (2012) argue for the need to revive “revolutionary critical pedagogy” as a reaction to the amputation of critical pedagogy by capitalistic liberal discourse. However, whereas critical pedagogy focuses on class as the dominant form of oppression, critical multiculturalism sees oppression as the outcome of various intersecting social constructs.

As Sleeter and May (2010) explain, “individuals and groups are inevitably located, and often *differentially* constrained, by wider structural forces such as capitalism, racism, colonialism, and sexism” (p. 6, italics in the original).

This is a point of dispute, since, as claimed by McLaren and Ryoo (2012), “in most progressive offerings of school reform, materialist critique is glaringly absent. Especially in the case of multiculturalist analysis, a culturalist viewpoint prevails at the expense of class analysis” (pp. 75-76). Similarly, Žižek (2008) argues:

Since the horizon of social imagination no longer allows us to entertain the idea of an eventual demise of capitalism – since, as we might put it, everybody tacitly accepts that capitalism is here to stay – critical energy has found a substitute outlet in fighting for cultural differences which leave the basic homogeneity of the capitalist world-system intact. So we are fighting our PC battles for the rights of ethnic minorities, of gays and lesbians, of different lifestyles, and so forth, while capitalism pursues its triumphant march. (p. 261)

I agree that class analysis should not be ignored; however, I would suggest that the framework for critical multiculturalism allows for class analysis as one of several intersecting factors. The theoretical framework for critical multiculturalism, rather than of critical pedagogy, became more relevant to this study when I realized that the participant IETs all originate from the middle-class sectors in their home countries. Furthermore, they entered Canada as skilled workers, which means that they were required to prove to the Canadian immigration authorities that they had the means to support themselves in the immigration process. Most IETs in this study still experienced severe financial struggles in Canada, but these struggles were more an outcome of immigration than of class location.

According to critical multiculturalism, cultures are not reified objects in a neutral social space; hence, the concept aims to expose and challenge institutional structures that attribute different value to cultures. In critical multiculturalism, cultures are perceived as dynamic and multilayered, consisting of both historical experiences and modern influences; its focus is the concrete experiences and struggles of oppressed groups. Critical multiculturalism wishes to challenge power relations and inequalities that are embedded in Western societies. However, according to critical multiculturalism, educational disparities are many times ethnically based; hence, the concept highlights the “wider manifestations of racism that extend beyond color, at least in the ways they are expressed” (May & Sleeter, 2010, p. 8).

Every social space is a complex web of privileges and oppressions (Crenshaw, 1991). As Martinez (1993) argues, rather than competing in the “Oppression Olympics,” we need to teach and learn to locate oppressions within their historical and social contexts. The theoretical frame of critical multiculturalism captures different forms of oppression without scaling them, which is very compatible with the multiethnic structure of Canada in general and in the Greater Vancouver Area specifically.

3.1.3 The Road Not Taken: Critical Race Theory

Another relevant theory for framing the current study is “critical race theory.” Although I did not use it as my main framework, I still view it as an important reference. Critical race theory has been inspired by a branch of critical legal studies in which legal scholars, most of them scholars of colour, challenge the racial powers in the context of the US legal culture, including civil rights legislations. Ladson-Billings and Tate adjusted this perspective to the educational field (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1998; 1999; 2005; Tate & Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Critical race theory has been built on the assumption that race is still a main element in Western social outlook, especially in the US. Hence, it challenges the notions of neutrality, colour blindness, and meritocracy that are embedded within the educational system and in other public institutions, and aims to expose the racial factors that circulate and operate within liberal discourses.

Critical race theory is a theoretical perspective that is committed to social justice, and that attempts to expose the racist assumptions underpinning the core structures of society. Racism is understood not just by its manifestation in visible acts (like hate crimes), but also via its subtle, hidden, structural operations that have led to the disadvantages experienced by minority groups. Therefore, racism should not be analyzed through the lens of intention only, but by its outcomes, especially because in “respected” institutions like universities, racism operates in much subtler ways (Henry & Tator, 2009a). For instance, in many universities, there is a certain kind of knowledge that counts, and thus results in advantages for white students over others (Yosso, 2005). Henry and Tator (2009b) argue that racialization in universities and other institutions is not separated from other forms of oppression (toward gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.). However, they perceive whiteness as a main property of institutional privilege, a colourless colour that defines the standards through “organizational policies and practices that, regardless of intent, are directly or indirectly disadvantageous to racial minorities, such as the lack of recognition of foreign credentials” (p. 29). This is a form of institutional racism that can be defined as “those established laws, customs, and practices, which systematically reflect and produce racial inequalities in Canadian society” (pp. 29-30).

In the field of teacher education, critical race theory calls for radical changes in claiming that teacher education programs have remained “rooted in traditional ways of preparing teachers

peppered with some discussion of race or culture ... [T]he language of the programs includes social justice and multiculturalism and diversity while the ideology, values and practices are assuredly re-inscribing white privilege, power, and racism” (Cross, 2005, p. 266).

Cross (2005) claims that this is a form of new racism that operates through an invisible system of powers and privileges at the institutional level, and serves the same cultural agents and power relations even when a program is redesigned to promote social justice. Viewed through the prism of Bourdieuan terminology, it is a form of symbolic domination (Bourdieu, 1997) that operates through policies, structures, and everyday practices (e.g., tenure track, curriculum design, department meetings, and teaching methods).

A main difference between critical race theory and critical multiculturalism is that critical race theory focuses on race as a dominant form of inequality, while critical multiculturalism scholars worry that this may lead to a dichotomy of black and white, and thus to a reductionist understanding of race. As claimed by May (1999), “such an approach subsumes other factors such as class, religion and gender, and fails to address adequately postmodern accounts of identity as multiple, contingent, and subject to rapid change” (p. 3). Some critical race theory scholars such as Yosso (2005) share the fear that “by offering a two-dimensional discourse, the Black/White binary limits understandings of the multiple ways in which African Americans, Native Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders...continue to experience, respond to, and resist racism and other forms of oppression” (p. 72) (see also Ladson-Billings, 2011; Nieto & McDonough, 2011). Reflecting on ten years of critical race theory, Ladson-Billings (2005) also calls to “move past the black/white binaries” and focus on “the way everyone regardless of his/her declared racial identity is positioned in relation to Whiteness” (p. 116).

I find the explanatory power of critical race theory very forceful, even at a time when transnational and global forces are characterized by a more fluid view of identity. The reason I chose not to build solely on this approach is that it is still very much contextualized within the American black/white paradigm, which is I believe less suitable in the diverse context of BC. This decision is supported by the findings of recent studies on IETs in Canada (Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011), in which few specific references to race can be ascertained. However, this does not rule out the possibility that the race factor is so covert that it is being left out of the conversation by members of both privileged and minoritized groups (Henry, 2014). In the current study, even when I asked directly, race was not mentioned as playing a role in the integration of IETs.

3.2 Multiculturalism and Canada: Background

Canada became a nation state in 1867. From the beginning, this country contained diverse groups, notably the French and First Nations, as well as other minorities. However, the ideas of racial and cultural diversity did not exist in Canada, which was dominated until the 20th century by white men (Yan, 2012). Up until the late 1960s, Canada's immigrant population was relatively homogeneous, and came mainly from Europe:

Factors such as race, ethnicity, nationality, and social class were used to control the quality and character of immigration and ensure the “assimilability” of those who immigrated. In other words, structural racism, operationalized through immigration policies and practices, not only determined those who were permitted into the country, but also controlled the economic, political, social, and cultural lives of those who managed to gain entry into Canada. (Thobani, 2007, p. 298)

It is only since 1967, when immigration policy changed to a point system by which potential immigrants need to reach at least 67 points based on such factors as education, profession, age, and English proficiency, that Canada has opened the doors to immigrants from non-European countries (Government of Canada, 2013). Since then, Canada has had a constant demand for immigrants, which makes it one of the countries with the highest immigration rates, with two-thirds of its population growth resulting from immigration (Deters, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2011).

Immigration leads to a wider degree of diversity, with its main direction being from non-Western to Western nations (Deters, 2011; Schmidt et al., 2010). As Joshee (2014) argues, “while not all immigrants are people of color and not all people of color are immigrants, a significant overlap exists between the two categories” (Joshee, 2004, p. 129). Seventy-five percent of Canada’s immigrants move to the urban centres of the big cities, with different ethnic profiles taking shape in each of its provinces (Walsh & Brigham, 2007a). In BC, most immigrants (70%) are of Asian origin, and 80% are “visible minorities” (BC Stats, 2013). In April 2013, the *Vancouver Sun* featured on its front page a study predicting that by the year 2031 whites would become a minority in Metro Vancouver (Todd, 2013).

Immigration policies, intended to sustain the Canadian economy, are also supported by discourse about the social and cultural benefits of a diverse society. The complexity of diversity is captured in the terminology. While the “Canadian Employment Act” uses the term “visible minorities” to describe “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (Justice Laws, 2006), this is considered racist by many (e.g., Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2015). Alternatively, the term “racialized minorities” points to a critical perspective that understands race as the outcome of power relations. A related term is

“marginalized minorities,” which was coined in order to describe the effects of migration on individuals who become caught between two cultures, leading to psychological difficulties and marginalized personalities; the original use of this term was gradually expanded to describe the social processes that lead to the marginalization of some groups and to the domination of others (Pollock, 2010).⁹

3.2.1 Canadian Multiculturalism

Canada is considered to be the first country to embrace multiculturalism as an official policy (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Johnson & Joshee, 2007; Wright et al., 2012); however, critics claim that immigrants still face many obstacles after entering Canada, despite the legislation of various multicultural policies (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Joshee, 2004; Thobani, 2007).

Multiculturalism as a policy within a bilingual framework was officially announced at the beginning of the 1970s, and was famously legislated in the Multicultural Act of 1988. Canadian multiculturalism is first and foremost a demographic imperative, as well as a tool to create social cohesion, and an answer to internal pressures from minority groups (e.g., Québécois and Ukrainians) and external powers (e.g., the American influence) (Fleras & Elliott, 2002).

Canadian multiculturalism has also emerged as a result of economic motivation by attracting immigrants as a way to increase profits and competitiveness on the global market (Deters, 2011).

Canadian multiculturalism is conceptualized according to the three founding populations of Canada, namely, the French, English, and First Nations, but it is open to recognizing other cultures as an integral part of Canadian society (Wright, 2012). Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, the architect of the policy, claimed that no official culture or ethnic group comes before another (cited in James, 2011). However, critics claim that Canadian multiculturalism is rooted in a

⁹ I will henceforth use the latter terms, unless referring to formal data.

liberal framework, is “colour-blind,” and focuses more on the “celebration of cultures” than on past struggles and power inequities (Orlowski, 2008; Yan, 2012). This is a weak definition of multiculturalism that fits the liberal market ideology, whereas social justice is seen as a component of civil society and not as part of government responsibility.

A related claim is that Canadian multiculturalism has not really dealt with racism or colonialism from the outset (St. Denis, 2011). Simpson, James and Mack (2011) argue that “Canada is a white settler colony built on the expropriation of Indigenous land, erasure of Indigenous histories, and ongoing colonization” (p. 285). From this perspective, Canadian history should be framed by its colonial context in which racism and colonialism interplay in a complicated manner (for instance, people of colour do not have identical claims as Indigenous people) (Thobani, 2007). Simpson and colleagues (2011) claim that within the Canadian context, discourses on racism and colonialism are localized under the multicultural umbrella in order to skirt them and reduce their importance; hence, Canada, as the country that symbolizes multiculturalism in both policy and practice, seems to be utilizing its claim to multiculturalism as a mechanism to ignore the operation of racism and colonialism at the structural and institutional level.

3.2.2 The Relevance of Critical Multiculturalism in the Canadian Context

Over the years, Canadian multiculturalism has expanded from a political stance to a public ideology (Ng, 1995), and is still a dominant discourse in the Canadian context. However, as argued by Wright (2012), there is “an ongoing erosion of Canadian multicultural education that is leading, gradually but perhaps inexorably, to the end of multiculturalism and multicultural education” (p. 108).

I would argue that critical multiculturalism might build upon the familiarity of multicultural terminology within Canadian society, while offering important revisions instead of a complete dismissal. Critical multiculturalism aims to look at the concrete experiences of minority groups and their hardships without melting or diffusing them into a category of sameness (such as one of “immigrants” or “people of colour”). Hence, critical multiculturalism can better respond to the claims of Aboriginal people who comprehend Canadian multiculturalism as a form of colonialism and a violation of Indigenous rights. As stated by St. Denis (2011), “multiculturalism erases the specific and unique location of Aboriginal peoples as Indigenous to this land by equating them with multicultural and immigrant groups” (p. 311).

In addition, James (2011) claims that multiculturalism in Canada is captured by the slogan “cultural neutrality,” which overlooks the dominance and privileges of some cultures based on such elements as visibility, language, and accent. Another dominant metaphor is that of a mosaic, which is similarly transforming multiculturalism into a cliché while overlooking the complicated relations that hold the mosaic together (Fleras & Elliott, 2002). Both critical race theory and critical multiculturalism call for a deeper investigation into the apparently neutral Canadian cultural mosaic, since “happy face” multiculturalism cannot deal with the harsh questions of inequities in society. Thus, multiculturalism should be viewed under the framework for power relations in Canada (Dei, 2000).

Critical multiculturalism provides me with the theoretical lens needed to explore the intersections of race, ethnicity, language, gender, and immigration in the recertification process of IETs while focusing on the power relations and institutional structures that shape this process. It also allows for a nuanced non-essentialist account of IETs’ journey to become Canadian teachers.

3.3 The Bourdieuan Conceptual Frame

From the perspective of critical multiculturalism, inequities are embedded and reproduced at the institutional level; therefore, institutions are social reproduction mechanisms and not neutral spaces. Educational institutions such as schools and universities are criticized for continuing “to follow monocultural practices and promote hidden agendas, the end result of which is to foster assimilation” (Fleras & Elliott, 2002, pp. 196-197).

Since this study is concerned with the institutional aspects of the recertification trajectory of IETs and their translation to daily practices, I also use the concepts of “habitus,” “cultural capital,” and “field” (Bourdieu, 1990b). I especially build on the concept of “professional capital” (Noordegraaf & Schinkel, 2011; Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011) as an extension to Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital. I use the concept of professional capital as a way to demonstrate the capital conversion process (Bourdieu, 1984) that IETs need to go through during the recertification trajectory.

Bourdieu attempts to understand the social world by uncovering the deep and hidden reproduction mechanisms of social structures (Reay, 2004b). He tries to overcome the traditional structure/agency dichotomy by forming a new set of concepts (Maton, 2008). According to Bourdieu, the practice of individuals is manifested by the correlation of the three concepts of field, habitus, and capital (Bourdieu, 1990b). The connection between these concepts is summarized in the following equation: $[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$ (Bourdieu, 1986, cited in Maton, 2008, p. 51).

There is an ongoing academic debate about the ability of the Bourdieuan framework to truly bridge the dichotomy of structure and agency, specifically about the place of agency in Bourdieu’s work. Some scholars argue that the Bourdieuan conceptual frame assumes that

“regular people” do not use critical thinking and act upon their habitus and dispositions (Lane, 2000; Singh & Huang, 2013). By contrast, Reay (2004b) argues that

despite this implicit tendency to behave in ways that are expected of ‘people like us,’ for Bourdieu there are no explicit rules or principles that dictate behaviour, rather ‘the habitus goes hand in hand with vagueness and indeterminacy’ (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 77). (p. 433)

Similarly, as Kelly (2007) argues, “Bourdieu also stresses that human knowledge is reflexive and that practice can be turned against what constrains it. More space opens up for agency-as-invention when individuals encounter unfamiliar circumstances or are confronted by events that prompt self-questioning” (p. 9). Hence, I would argue that the concept of professional capital allows space for agency, especially since IETs experience a “break” of habitus as the outcome of the immigration process and are required to reenter a similar professional field in a different context.

Educational researchers have made extensive use of Bourdieu’s (1990b; 1997) conceptual framework, and especially his concepts of field, habitus, and capital (Archer, Hutchings, & Ross, 2003; Burke, 2005; Cornbleth, 2010). For example, Thomas (2002) uses the concept of habitus to discuss student retention in higher education, while Reay, Ball, and David (2002) use it to examine higher education choices of university applicants, and Watson and colleagues (2009) use a Bourdieuan lens to explore the educational experiences of first-year post-secondary students. Significant for the purposes of this study, these concepts are also widely used to critically examine the integration process of immigrants in their receiving societies (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Bauder, 2003).

According to Bourdieu, different fields (social worlds) are positioned in relation to other fields within a surrounding field of power. This social universe resembles a magnetic field, with economic capital and, to a lesser degree, cultural capital, at its poles; different fields are positioned according to their relative capital. Hence, fields are defined by their degree of autonomy and their location within the field of power (Bourdieu, 1985; Gemme, 2009). In any given field, “the kinds of capital, like the aces in a game of cards, are powers which define the chances of profit” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 196). Hence, capital has two important functions: to advance members of one group over another, and to serve as the quality distinction of a certain group. The concept of distinction is generated from Bourdieu’s critique of the concept of “good taste” (1984). He argues that taste is associated with one’s habitus and capital and not an extraction of individual independent choice. Distinction is not only constructed at the individual level, but is embedded within the social fields. Hence, the fields promote different forms of capital as a way to distinguish themselves from other fields.

Bourdieu (1997) differentiates between three main forms of capital: economic capital, which refers to financial and material assets; cultural capital, which refers to abstract assets such as knowledge, beliefs, values, and taste; and social capital, which refers to social resources such as one’s network of connections and political power:

There are, principally, economic capital (in its different kinds), cultural capital and social capital, as well as symbolic capital, commonly called prestige, reputation, renown, etc., which is the form in which the different forms of capital are perceived and recognized as legitimate. (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 197)

Hence, symbolic capital has a double function: It is a form of capital, but is also embedded within the other forms of capital. As Gemme (2009) explains, “the symbolic capital plays a

special role: one's reputation and the respect received from the community will influence the value of the other forms of capital held by a given agent" (p. 21).

Bourdieu makes a distinction between the clear, instrumental nature of economic capital and the hidden, instrumental nature of symbolic capital (e.g., social, cultural, linguistic) (Bourdieu, 1985). Economic capital lies at the basis of the infrastructure of inequity, but symbolic forms of capital reflect and reproduce it. Symbolic capital is an arbitrary tool for creating a distinction; it has no intrinsic value other than that of being a power mechanism. When an arbitrary type of capital pretends to hold intrinsic value, which is especially the case for cultural capital, this inflicts "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu, 1997; Reay, 2004a). The effectiveness of symbolic violence is built upon the neutral and elitist appearance of an arbitrary cultural capital (Moore, 2008). For example, accents in speech are associated with and are used as a mark of distinction between social classes and geographical locations. Violence can be exerted through judgments against those who do not speak "properly," even though accent has no intrinsic value.

3.3.1 Recertification Programs of IETs as a Subfield

According to Bourdieu, "the exact nature and definition of [the] specific form of capital, within each field, is an object of struggle and must be submitted to empirical inquiry" (Gemme, 2009, p. 21). Hence, before elaborating on the concept of professional capital, which I will argue is the "specific form of capital" in professional fields, I need to define the field in which this study is located.

According to Bourdieu, for a field to exist empirically, it must have several characteristics, such as agents who recognize each other, clear rules of membership, defined symbolic capital, regularities, and timeframes. The key characteristic of a field is its relative

autonomy; however, no field is completely autonomous, as it exists within the social world (the field of power) (Bourdieu, 1990a). A field is more autonomous when it is better positioned within the field of power, is higher ranked in the social universe, and is not accessible through other fields (for instance, achieving a PhD is only possible through higher education).

Although under constant neoliberal attacks (Wagner & Yee, 2011), the field of higher education is still relatively autonomous and has distinct manifestations of capital, namely, objectified (publications, awards), institutionalized (titles such as Professor, Head, Dean), symbolic (scientific knowledge, recognition), and social (public influence). It is a field with a strong set of regulations (academic appeals, tenure and promotion) that is in a constant state of struggle between established and aspiring academics (Bourdieu, 1988; Gemme, 2009).

In comparison to the field of higher education, teacher education is a less autonomous field. It is a regulated field in which the gain (being certified as a teacher) is subjected to changing educational policies. As such, the field of teacher education is affected dramatically by two overlapping fields. The first one is the field of higher education, because teacher education programs (at least in BC) are usually located in academic institutes; the second one is the K-12 school system that takes in the graduates of teacher education programs. Hence, teacher education is affected by the pedagogical, administrative, and financial decisions of higher education institutes, as well as by educational policies and regulations. A current example of this social location is the dispute between the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and the Liberal government in BC that resulted in a full job action that started in the last two weeks of the school year of 2013 and dragged into the first month of the school year of 2014. The job action had obvious effects on the motivation of teacher candidates who entered teacher education programs at a time of constant disputes and instability in the teaching profession in BC. It also interrupted

the mandate of teacher education programs, such as setting practicum placements and assigning school advisors (SA).

Although a heteronomous field, teacher education has clear characteristics that differentiate it from the field of higher education, such as specific credentials (teacher certification), a distinctive timeframe, recognized agents (teacher candidates), and specific features (practicum). However, recertification programs for IETs are not sufficiently defined to be considered a separate field; hence, they are better defined as a subfield of teacher education.

3.4 Professional Capital

Bourdieu was skeptical of the concept of “profession” because it veils the “space of competition and struggle” in occupational fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, cited in Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011, p. 72), and therefore he did not use the term “professional capital.”¹⁰ However, in spite of his protestations, Schinkel and Noordegraaf (2011) argue that professional capital is a useful extension of Bourdieu’s framework, and that “professionalism can be seen as a form of symbolic capital in what Bourdieu (1994, pp. 55-56) terms the ‘field of power’” (p. 68). I agree with Schinkel and Noordegraaf that it is productive to understand professional capital as a form of symbolic capital because it enables a view of professionalization as “a process of struggle over the attainment of professionalism as symbolic capital” (p. 89). This is precisely the process in which immigrant teachers are involved in recertification.

It is important to acknowledge that Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) have previously used the term “professional capital” to analyze education, but they have used it to refer to a different concept, namely the capital that schools build up over time by investing in the collective human,

¹⁰ In an interview Bourdieu argued: “I believe it is possible to think *with* a thinker and to think, at the same time, *against* him or her. This means that, in a radical way, we have to challenge the classificatory, and hence political logic in which – almost everywhere – relations with the thoughts of the past are established” (Bourdieu, as interviewed in Susen & Turner, 2011, p. 114).

social, and decisional capital of their teachers. In other words, Hargreaves and Fullan use “professional capital” in the *economic* sense. They also use it for the purpose of making an argument against the short-term “business capital” strategy of investing in teachers, and in support of a long-term “professional capital” strategy of investing in teachers. By contrast, I am using the concept not in an economic sense, but rather in a critical, *sociological* sense, as a form of symbolic capital that allows me to analyze the gatekeeping function of the profession.

Sociologically, “professional capital” can be understood as the capital that is accrued to an individual by virtue of his/her being a member of a certain profession; thus, being a surgeon comes with greater professional capital than being a teacher. This is the *inter-professional* conception of professional capital that helps to explain how different occupational fields are positioned in relation to each other. However, professional capital can also be understood *intra-professionally* in the sense of the capital distinctive to a profession that positions people differentially *within* their occupational field. In this study I am primarily concerned with professional capital in the latter, intra-professional sense.

Bourdieu’s concerns about the concept of “profession” need to be reconsidered in light of the processes of professionalization and deprofessionalization taking place in different professions today. Deprofessionalization is related to what Apple (1981; 2009) calls “deskilling,” which is a means of external control of a profession by dividing and simplifying the complexity that is embedded within. While Bourdieu may have been concerned that declaring an occupational field a “profession” would shield it from critical considerations of the power relations within that field, many professional groups today experience the demand for greater external accountability and thus an erosion of one of the key features of a profession: self-regulation. Moreover, as Etzioni (1969) pointed out more than four decades ago, not all

professions are created equal, and he qualified education, nursing, and social work as “semi-professions” to indicate their lower social status (as compared to, say, medicine and law) and the frequent co-existence of professional colleges and unions in these fields.

In recent years, several sociological studies have used the concept of professional capital within a broader Bourdieuan framework to analyze power relations between and within various professions, including journalism, social work, and midwifery. For example, Beddoe (2014) discusses the professional capital of social workers in New Zealand in the inter-professional sense of their relatively weak position in the regulated medical professional field. More pertinent to my argument, Djerf-Pierre (2005) considers the media field in Sweden and defines professional capital intra-professionally as “the amount of professional experience a person has in the media field, the person’s career pattern and previously held positions” (p. 270). The media field is male-dominated, and Djerf-Pierre analyzes women’s professional capital as one of the positive forms of capital that can counteract the negative symbolic capital of being female. The teaching profession, on the other hand, is female-dominated, which, as some have pointed out (Acker, 1983; Chapman, 2011; Gaskell & Mullen, 2006), goes a long way toward explaining the low social status of the profession. Professional capital will thus play a different role in the teaching field than it does in the field of media. Nonetheless, the length and type of professional experience a person has in the field of K-12 teaching, the person’s career pattern (e.g., how long someone has remained at the same school), and previously held positions are all relevant aspects of teachers’ professional capital.

Professional capital can come in many, even unexpected, forms, highly specific to certain professions. For example, Hamilton (2007) observed that for farm veterinarians in the UK, “muck and mess worked ... as an artefact within the micro-culture of the vets who drew upon its

symbolic resources to generate and to augment their professional ‘capital’” (p. 486). In other words, being willing to get dirty and having experience with getting into the “muck” and “mess” of farm animals is part of the dominant conception of being a “good farm veterinarian” and can be used as source of distinction.

While the concept of professional capital has so far hardly been used in educational research or in research on immigrant professionals, Bauder (2003) uses the concept of what he calls “institutional cultural capital” to demonstrate the institutional aspects of the credentialing process of immigrants in Canada. He claims that institutional cultural capital serves as a form of capital that “translate[s] ‘inherited’ Canadian birthplace into economic privilege” (p. 702). Hence, institutions function “as the gatekeepers of professionalism...which define entry qualifications according to their own cultural biases and agendas” (p. 703).

Similar to the concept of “institutional cultural capital” the concept of professional capital seeks to understand what credentials are constituted as valuable within particular institutional context. Girard and Bauder (2007) argue that, “In the case of foreign credentials, Canadian professional associations determine what constitutes valuable institutional cultural capital within particular legally regulated occupations” (p. 38). However the concept of professional capital aims to provide a fuller understanding of the construction of a certain profession that extends beyond the credentialing process. As such it highlights the professional specificity of different professional fields.

The concept of professional capital concentrates both on a professional field as a field that is competing with other fields in the field of power, and as a field with its own inner struggles and power mechanisms. As Schinkel and Noordegraaf (2011) argue, “professionalism as symbolic capital entails the idea that professionalism is constantly at stake, that the *content* of

professionalism is continuously contested within the limits of a *context* which, in turn, it is a defining characteristic” (p. 85, italics in the original).

I would argue that the concept of professional capital addresses some of the limitations in applying the Bourdieuan framework to research on IETs. For instance, in a study of IETs in Australia, Reid and colleagues (2014) modify the Bourdieuan terminology that was their starting point and argue that the concept of capital is “applied in a mono-cultural way, being concerned with the culture of class (the ruling class) and not the cultural diversity that characterizes contemporary global migration flows” (p. 21). Furthermore, they argue that the limited global context in Bourdieu’s work “undermines the relevance of his theory to contemporary society in general and to migration flows in particular” (p. 21). However, as I will argue next, the concept of professional capital allows a shifting of the focus from class analysis in a national context to multilayered analysis in a global context.

3.4.1 Professional Capital of Regulated Professions in a Global Era

Different fields have specific forms of capital that act as the local currency of the field and that may also be traded between fields within the larger field of power (such as with academic certification). Hence, in order to use the concept of professional capital, professionalism needs to be contextualized within a specific field (such as K-12 teaching) and analyzed as a form of symbolic capital rather than as neutral professional expertise. For example, the emphasis on fostering student self-esteem in the US and Canada is contested but remains a dominant trait of K-12 teaching in those countries. Some have argued that students should be allowed to fail (e.g., Tough, 2012), and yet emphasizing positive achievements and downplaying critique and failure has come to be regarded as professional capital in teaching in these countries.

The concept of professionalism is even more central to regulated professions such as

teaching and medicine, which “as a rule, are usually the ones that play an important role in the safety and protection of the public” (Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada, 2013, para. 4). Within these fields, professionalism is understood as being a tool employed to maintain public safety (whether physical or mental), but also results in tighter regulation and gatekeeping that discourages the questioning of arbitrary, symbolic markers of professionalism.

The concept of professional capital is useful to unveil systemic obstacles to immigrants’ success within various professional fields, including, for instance, the health professions. For example, research in the UK, US, and Canada alike has found that internationally educated nurses and medical graduates are confronted with British, American, and Canadian conceptions of “the good nurse” or “the good doctor” (e.g., Chen et al., 2010; Singh & Sochan, 2010; Slowther, Hundt, Taylor & Purkis, 2009). While recertification in nursing and medicine, just as in teaching, addresses important gaps in immigrant professionals’ knowledge of local regulations and practices, it also includes a—sometimes explicit, sometimes hidden—curriculum of what a good nurse or doctor looks, acts, and sounds like, as Reid and colleagues (2014) argue:

In all countries today barriers are erected by Immigration Departments and by professional educational gatekeepers designed to test that global teachers meet immigration visa criteria and their comparable ability to meet the standards of the teaching profession in the host country. (p. 85)

Such criteria limit the potential for “knowledge transfer” that immigrants can bring to different professions, and especially “the role of women in knowledge transfer, because of their concentration in teaching and caring jobs, rather than supposedly knowledge-rich technological and managerial posts” (Williams, 2007, pp. 362-363). In this sense the concept of professional capital captures the essence of the global institutional space of the teaching profession of this era.

3.4.1.1 *Professional Capital and Immigrant Professionals in Canada*

It has been well established in research that in Canada, “non-European immigrants are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market” (Bauder, 2003, p. 699) and that foreign-educated immigrants have higher unemployment and under-employment rates (Bauder, 2003; Man, 2004; Zietsma, 2010). It seems that immigrants are the first victims of a “highly dynamic system of production, which simultaneously creates and destroys jobs, and requires both the skilling and deskilling of the labor force” (Mojab, 1999, p. 126). As Singh and Sochan (2010) argue, there are undeniable “human costs involved in immigrating to another country, and subsequently being devalued while verifying and/or obtaining the credentials in a profession you have already been working [in] elsewhere” (p. 60). Even ten years from the time of immigration, the professional gap between immigrants and the Canadian-born population, although lessening, still prevails (Zietsma, 2010). However, Zietsma (2010) argues that immigrants who arrive from a country “with similar education systems and language of instruction” face considerably fewer obstacles (p. 4; see also Reitz, 2001).

3.4.2 *Teacher Professionalism as a Struggle over Teachers' Professional Capital*

As many scholars have long argued, teachers are the most important in-school factor affecting children's success. The McKinsey Report, *How the World's Best Performing School Systems Come Out On Top* (Barber & Mourshed, 2007), which analyzed 25 school systems worldwide to discover common success factors, points to the quality of teachers as the single most important factor. Teacher selection, education, compensation and support are identified as key features towards achieving successful education, summarized in the following principle: “The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” (p. 16). Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) concur that:

There is a widespread agreement now that of all the factors inside the school that affect children's learning and achievement, the most important is the teacher – not standards, assessments, resources, or even the school's leadership, but the quality of the teacher.

Teachers really matter. (p. xii)

However, there is an ongoing debate among teacher education scholars, policy makers, and the public in general on what defines the “quality of the teacher.” This debate is not neutral, but reflects “different ideas, ideals, and world views at the same time that they differently assign blame and praise regarding the problem of teacher quality and thus advocate specific strategies and solutions” (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2011, p. 353).

The discourse on the quality of the teacher is often woven into the discourse of teacher professionalism, which is carried under different terminologies (e.g., professionalism vs. competitive certification, professionalism vs. deregulation) (Grant & Gibson, 2011). The main question is whether teachers are professionals, meaning they need to go through certain training and acquire certain capital, or whether teaching is a gift or simple technique, meaning the field should be open to the entry of “natural” or gifted teachers. Both approaches to professionalism, although very different, employ a language of acquisition (what teachers need and the means by which it should be acquired in order to become professionals).

In recent years the teaching profession, especially in the US, the UK and Australia, has been under constant neoliberal pressure, which some would label *attack* (Sleeter, 2008b; Walsh et al., 2011), regardless of whether this attack is geared toward specific topics such as teachers' wages, working hours, and teacher organizations, or focused on teacher quality in general (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). For instance, teachers' knowledge is expected to be standardized and organized in assessment units, teacher education is being shortened, and teachers' authority

is challenged on a daily basis by both policy makers and parents (Steeves, 2012). I analyze this phenomenon from a Bourdieuan perspective as a social struggle over the autonomy of teaching as a professional field within a global context. One well-known example is the previously mentioned McKinsey Report (Barber & Mourshed, 2007) in which a private corporation provides standards of good education and teaching (one can imagine the improbability of assigning educational standards to a business company). Other active players in the field are the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), both of which have issued policies and assessment projects regarding the teaching profession (Robertson, 2012). Neither teachers nor their unions were consulted in any of these three cases.

Robertson (2012) argues that the increasing involvement of “key global agencies” in the teaching field indicates that “the mechanisms of global governance of teachers are being transformed from ‘education as (national) development’ and ‘norm setting’ to ‘learning as (individual) development’ and ‘competitive comparison’” (p. 586).

While the neoliberal discourse regarding students’ learning is constructed around the individual (Marom, 2015), the standardization of the teaching profession is constantly increasing. The current dominance of the neoliberal discourse of teacher professionalism that is focused on the standardization of the teaching profession and its reduction to a set of technical skills (Sleeter, 2008b) is a manifestation of the low status of teaching as a professional field. Such an understanding of teacher professionalism stands at the core of the call to do away with university-based teacher education and replace it with short-term in-job training (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). While this neoliberal conception of professionalism has been supported for increasing the diversity of teachers (Feistritz, 2005), it has also been criticized for its focus “on seemingly neutral standards of competence” (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 663) that erase differences

and ignore power relations.

Angus (2013) has analyzed the shift in the conceptions of the “good teacher” under the influence of neoliberalism. He describes this shift as one from a “participative-professional” conception of good teaching to a “technical-managerial” one. As a result, the kinds of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that used to count as (intra-) professional capital for teachers are no longer as highly valued:

Characteristics that were once associated with ‘good teaching’ (e.g., curriculum expertise, teaching and learning innovation, a social justice orientation, making the curriculum relevant in local contexts) have been devalued. In Bourdieu’s terms, previously asserted versions of professional capital have been contested and reconstructed. (p. 174)

Through this conception of teacher professionalism, IETs are perceived as deficient and lacking professional currency when measured against the professional ideal. IETs are often older and belong to racial or ethnic minorities, speak English as their additional language or speak English with a non-local (or non-privileged) accent. The professional capital they bring from their home countries is quite different from the professional capital of the fresh, young, and talented college graduates who can be trained briefly and “dropped” into the field (e.g., “Teach For America” and the newly minted “Teach For Canada”). Furthermore, the involvement of global actors in the field classifies teachers “through data gathering and statistical tools aimed at representing, comparing, and ranking the national geographical distributions of the ‘good teacher’” (Robertson, 2012, p. 592). According to this classification (performed mainly by Western organizations), Western countries are marked for exemplifying good education, while immigrant teachers usually come from the “wrong side of the globe.”

In addition to the global players, traditional national players such as teacher educators,

policy makers, and teacher organizations, shape the teaching profession. In Canada, these players tend to have a fuller conception of professionalism in teaching, which sees the profession as comprising a complex set of competencies and practices (for example, see BC Ministry of Education, 2012). However, these conceptions also include arbitrary cultural preferences when analyzed through the lens of professional capital. Whereas the neoliberal approach to teaching promotes the short training of “talented” teachers, many scholars critique this approach and promote a more well-rounded and less “skill oriented” teacher professionalism, arguing that the expertise and practical wisdom developed over time count (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Shulman, 1986; Sleeter, 2008b). Similar to the field of media production, in which “it takes considerable time to accumulate enough capital to get access to a senior management position” (Djerf-Pierre, 2005, p. 273), many argue that teachers reach their professional peak only after ten years of teaching (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Although teaching experience is not necessarily a pre-condition for good teaching or an indication of it, it is related to richer professional capital.

This conception of teacher professionalism values teachers’ experience; however, immigrant teachers, many of whom have had many years of teaching experience, still need to be recertified in order to be able to teach in Canada. Hence, it seems that teachers’ professional capital is not only practice oriented, but also rooted in other professional preferences.

3.5 Professional Capital and Discourses on the “Good Teacher”

In the field of teacher education, the conception of the “good teacher” is a manifestation of professional capital. Professional capital as a form of symbolic capital is expressly central in the regulated professions and in the fields where economic capital is not central (Noordegraaf & Schinkel, 2011; Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011); in these cases, professional capital acts as a form of cultural capital. I would argue that there is no hard distinction between professional

capital and cultural capital, but one cannot be fully subsumed by the other. There are professional aspects within cultural capital (e.g., professional expectations within specific cultures), as well as cultural aspects within professional fields (e.g., Japanese and American styles of negotiation). And yet, professional capital is a useful concept to delineate the entanglement of cultural and professional nuances that underlie particular professional fields. Hence, professional capital is a manifestation of the symbolic capital of a specific profession in a particular cultural context (e.g., what is distinctive about this profession, and what is considered to be the manifestation of a “good professional” in that cultural context). Both of these criteria apply to the teaching profession. In K-12 teaching, “professional capital” includes diverse ideas about good teaching and their value in various contexts. My main focus is on the intersection between the pedagogical assumptions about teaching and factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, language, and immigration. Building on Schinkel and Noordegraaf’s (2011) work, I define the concept of professional capital and demonstrate its expression in the field of teacher education through the case of IETs.

Earlier I claimed that capital is an arbitrary tool for creating a distinction, and that it has no intrinsic value other than as a mechanism of power. This is the case with cultural products or preferences, but for professional capital the claim requires some nuance. While one can distinguish oneself culturally with a preference for tennis over, say, soccer, and there is nothing inherently better in tennis than in soccer, one cannot say that a certain technique or approach in one’s profession is *merely* an arbitrary mark of distinction. Within the profession of teaching, there may be, for example, good reasons for preferring a more dialogical and child-centred approach over an authoritarian transmission model. Professional capital, then, is a complex blend of non-arbitrary—though still historically and culturally contingent—knowledge, skills, and

dispositions, and more arbitrary manifestations of these. For example, comments about people who do and don't "look like a teacher" or "talk like a teacher" are a telling reminder that, in a given cultural context, teachers adopt recognizable body language, speech habits, and even ways of dressing, that make them stand out (McNamara & Basit, 2004; Weber & Mitchell, 1995; Smith, 2005). Certainly not all of these markers are evidence-based practices, deliberately adopted because they improve teaching; some are arbitrary forms of professional capital.

Furthermore, even evidence-based teaching practices reflect more than pedagogical concerns. For instance, the OECD (2009) conception of the "good teacher" promotes teaching as facilitating and encouraging constructive learning, as opposed to the direct transmission of knowledge (as cited in Robertson, 2012). However, as Robertson (2012) argues, "constructivist teacher pedagogies (with their overemphasis on agency) link the wider project of neoliberalism to the emerging social base of production—the competitive knowledge economy" (p. 595). Neoliberalism promotes an evidence-based discourse that aims to define, and, seemingly neutrally, to measure the best professional practices. As Goldenberg (2005) explains, "this evidence-based practice is supposed to increase professional responsibility and accountability" (p. 6). Hence, pedagogical preferences can reflect global economic interests, and "as a consequence, teachers who favor (or have experience of) teacher-centered pedagogies may be judged 'poor quality' and have difficulty with qualification recognition" (Reid et al., 2014, p. 14). In this sense the professional capital of IETs can be seemingly evaluated by pedagogical criteria, while these criteria are actually driven by global economic tendencies.

IETs may be just as pedagogically effective, but if they lack a culturally specific professional capital, they are marked as not being "teacherly" enough in certain ways. In McNamara and Basit's (2004) study on newly qualified teachers of minority ethnic backgrounds

in the UK, one of the participants underscored this when she recounted that “lot of people when they ask me what I do, say, oh you don’t look like a teacher” (p. 108).

“The frustrating reality is that there is no single factor, nor consensus in the literature, about what makes a good teacher” (Pinto et al., 2012, p. 74). Of course, parents’ and administrators’ ideas of a “good teacher” in a middle-class suburban school are likely different from that in a culturally diverse inner-city school, and “good teaching” in a small rural school will look different from “good teaching” in a large urban school. Nonetheless, since most people in Western societies have substantial interaction with teachers while growing up, most of us have explicit and implicit ideas about who is and is not a “good teacher” (Britzman, 2003). And since most people send their own kids to school, the “good teacher” is both a public and a private discourse.

While “good teaching” is a fuzzy notion with many “intangible characteristics” (Pinto et al., 2012, p. 75), many have tried to identify key components for good teaching (Harpaz, 2005; Milner, 2010; Shulman, 1986). Research has identified several main discourses on conceptions of the “good teacher” (Moore, 2004; Pinto et al., 2012; Taylor, 2000). For instance, Moore (2004) differentiates between three, seemingly opposing, dominant discourses, two of which are “official”: the “competent craftsperson” and the “reflexive practitioner,” and one which is the popular image of the “charismatic subject.” The “competent craftsperson” discourse reflects a skilled-based approach that is framed by standardization and testing. However, Moore claims that the acclaimed positivism and universalism of this discourse is actually marginalizing and excluding, since “the concept of the good teacher cannot sit ‘outside’ or untouched by the larger social conversations, situations, ideologies and purposes within which it is situated: it cannot easily, therefore, make claims to ‘universality’” (p. 36). Similarly, Taylor (2000) calls this the

“technician discourse” in teacher education, which is craft-competence-oriented, and uses what Freire (1970/1997) has denounced as a “banking approach” of depositing seemingly neutral knowledge into students. Taylor argues that “the technical approach privileges and protects the dominant forms of knowledge from critique and hence lessens the possibility for pedagogies of change to be enacted” (p. 86).

The second discourse is built around the popular image of the “charismatic subject” that is commonly captured in the media (e.g., *Stand and Deliver*, 1988; *Dangerous Minds*, 1995). Although it often portrays caring teachers devoted to marginalized children in “bad neighbourhoods,” this discourse tends to be focused on a particular talented individual while overlooking the social context. Moore (2004) claims that, although seemingly contradicting each other, these discourses are rooted in the same “psychological notion of the ideal, unified ‘self’ and in a ‘modernist’ or ‘scientific’ view of teaching and learning” (p. 7). Hence, framing teaching as an individual act detaches it from political and social perspectives (see also Steeves, 2012). In the “competent craftsperson” discourse, teaching can be reduced to measured practices and skills; in the “charismatic subject” discourse, teaching is not something that is learned. In both cases, teaching is detached from such social characteristics as race, gender, ethnicity, and language.

The third discourse in Moore’s (2004) typology is the “reflective practitioner.” This discourse emphasizes the deeper knowledge and understanding of teachers; it is a more arts-oriented approach to teaching. However, this approach as well is often consumed by the competence approach, where reflexivity is focused on core skills or “self-improvement” (Moore, 2004, p. 104). Here, once again, reflexivity is detached from its potential critical and transformative power. Similarly, Taylor (2000) claims that what he calls the discourse on the

“teacher as an agent for change” is the least dominant and specific, and probably most contested and vague, in teacher education. More recently, Pinto and colleagues (2012) have added to Moore’s (2004) typology a fourth discourse on the “transformative teacher,” which refers to the teacher as an agent of change (Freire, 1970/1997); however, they also argue that this discourse is marginalized.

Nielsen (2014) has used the concept of professional capital to analyze the experiences of second-career teachers in Arizona; that is, those adults who come into the profession of teaching after having had a different occupation. She sees professional capital “as an element of cultural capital” (p. 23) and defines “professional cultural capital” as the “embodied and institutionalized experiences that may be mobilized to benefit an individual within their place of work” (p. 25). Conceptions of good teaching and the good teacher play an important role in the professional capital of the second-career teachers Nielsen studied. As she summarizes, “teachers who defined good teaching as complex and demanding, believed in consistent improvement, and were compassionate fell into the ‘professional norm’” of the school district (p. 122). Unlike Nielson’s analysis of professional capital, I analyze the concept of professional capital as intersecting with cultural capital but not an element of it. As marked by the discourses about professionalism in diverse contexts (Evetts, 2003; Freidson, 1994), I would argue that it is useful to consider professional capital as a distinct form of capital that overlaps with other forms.

Other analyses, such as that by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), identify several, sometimes overlapping, metaphors or “stereotypes” of teaching, such as teaching as a gift, teaching as a practical craft, teaching as a precise science, and teaching as a sacred calling. They argue that different discourses reflect different views on teaching; thus, these stereotypes can be broadly divided into two immense, overarching discourses. The dominant one is a neoliberal

“business oriented” discourse on teaching, in which education is seen as a business in the free market; in the other discourse, the teaching profession is understood as a complex profession that requires long-term investment.

It seems that dominant discourses on the “good teacher” are tightly connected to neoliberal tendencies that transform the teaching profession into a technical, measurable profession that does not require a long training period, assuming its candidates are talented. The problem, as Pinto and colleagues (2012) claim, is that the “dominance of a particular discourse privileges a certain conception of a good teacher—and unfairly advantages the individuals who imbue that discourse” (p. 76). Through the lens of the neoliberal, business-oriented, individualistic discourses, as I have demonstrated earlier, IETs would be conceived as deficient in most aspects. However, as I shall discuss next, in the alternative discourses that perceive teaching as a profound, complex, reflective profession that requires a long training period and ongoing professional development, IETs are also seen as lacking professional capital.

3.5.1 Professional Capital and its Conversion by IETs

IETs arrive in Canada with habitus and capital that reflect their previous locations and positions; however, should they wish to continue to be employed in their profession, they need to go through a recertification process, even if it may seem “not for the likes of us” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 202). This is important since, for Bourdieu, the match or clash of field and habitus affects how people make career choices.

Since “people consciously or unconsciously seek to protect or enhance their cultural capital by positioning themselves within the power structures” (Singh, 2005, p. 164), IETs are in an inherently deficient position in the recertification trajectory. As Frank (2013) points out, immigrant teachers are considered “skilled workers” during immigration but become students or

“teacher candidates” upon entering a recertification program. Similarly Reid and colleagues argue that “in many ways immigrant teachers are seen as ‘empty vessels’” (p. 17).

The result of the recertification process, as Han and Singh (2007) find in a study on immigrant teachers in Australia, is that “IETs try to morph into ‘Australian teachers’” (p. 300). In Canada, likewise, immigrant teachers are expected to convert their professional capital from that of their country of origin to Canadian professional capital in order to advance their opportunity to teach in Canada. As Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) argues, “teachers are seen, at least in part, as representatives of the culture, responsible for passing it on to the new generation, and one would not expect this important task to be put in the hands of newcomers to the culture” (p. 389).

As is the case in general for Bourdieu’s conceptual framework (Maton, 2008), professional capital is a relational concept that both captures and reshapes the hierarchies between IETs and other agents in the educational field, be they administrators, teacher educators or school officials. During the conversion, these agents have the power of identifying “who is worthy of being regarded” as a Canadian/American/Australian/etc. teacher (Singh, 2005, p. 164). Hence, IETs’ “low” professional capital affects their advancement in the teaching profession from the early stages of credential assessment to the process of finding a job.

A main component of teachers’ professional capital is professional knowledge; however, Guo (2007) argues that rigid ideas about what knowledge counts also position IETs as deficient. These misperceptions are supported by the commitment to positivistic universal measurement standards that adopt purportedly value-free criteria that overlook the constructed nature of knowledge. For instance, “all public school teachers in BC, regardless of subject area or level, are required to have 6 credits of coursework in English literature and composition” (Teacher

Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 6). This demand may appear to be neutral and applied objectively and fairly to everyone; however, one may wonder why “English literature and composition” (unlike English proficiency, which can be understood as a basic requirement) are valued over those of any other culture, and whether this demand does not prioritize the particular interests of Euro-Canadian dominant groups in the guise of objective criteria. Hence, the knowledge and practices that IETs “bring from their country of origin are treated as ethnic differences, deficiencies which have to be overcome if they expect to fit into the country of migration” (Reid et al., 2014, p. 19). As such, Guo (2007) challenges us to ask, “Whose knowledge is considered valuable and whose knowledge is silenced? Is knowledge racialised?” (p. 37).

This conception of professional knowledge overlooks the enrichment that immigrant teachers’ professional capital can add to a school system (Beynon et al., 2004; Schmidt, 2010b). Although immigrant teachers bring rich experiences and eclectic knowledge that are officially welcomed by Canada as a multicultural country (BC Ministry of Education, 2004), they are perceived as deficient in professional capital. Hence, the conception of a “good teacher” in Canada highlights certain kinds of knowledge that are inherently more accessible to local teachers than to IETs. It is true that some IETs lack the dominant cultural knowledge (Deters, 2011; Faez, 2010) as well as networks and familiarity with local education systems (Chassels, 2010; Faez, 2010). On the other hand, IETs can be seen as opening the field of teacher education to broader conceptions of curriculum and pedagogy. As Williams (2007) argues, in a wider context of immigration, “migration may convert what had been considered ‘common knowledge’ in one place into ‘uncommon knowledge’ (Bentley, 1998) in another place” (p. 376).

However, in the recertification process, as I will illustrate later, IETs are apparently seen through the veneer of what they lack and not what they might add. They are the ones who need

to trade and convert their professional capital, rather than creating a professional arena in which knowledge is traded and enhanced in a less hierarchal way. In other words, despite political rhetoric and actual policy, we have a process of professional assimilation rather than professional multiculturalism. In that sense, the certification process prioritizes the place of birth as a pillar in its conception of the “good teacher,” rather than promoting a more rounded and multilayered understanding of diversity as a pillar of good teaching.

It is also worth noting that whereas IETs are expected to adopt a model of good teaching that is progressive, child-centred and rooted in reflection, teacher educators do not always demonstrate the same openness while teaching IETs. In relation to Asian-Pacific immigrant teachers in Australia, Han and Singh (2007) argue that: “lecturers’ practices did not seem to show any student-centeredness in terms of engaging with the possible knowledge and knowledge networks the WES [IETs] student teachers may have had” (p. 301). Furthermore, as they come mainly from non-Western countries, immigrant teachers are perceived as being used to an authoritarian model of teaching, which contributes to their low professional capital (Myles et al., 2006). However, Cruickshank’s (2004) study with IETs in Australia found that the assumption that the school system was strongly student-centred and that immigrants would be lacking in student-centeredness was based more on prejudice and on the system’s ideal image of itself than on reality. Many of the IETs in his study “rejected the traditional/ progressive dichotomy as simplistic” and commented that teaching practices in Australian schools were much more traditional and less progressive and student-centered than they had anticipated” (p. 130). Moreover, some IETs adapt easily to child-centred pedagogies and find ways to bridge their previous and present experiences (Deters, 2011). In addition, Hugo (2005) argues that

immigrants are usually people who are capable of taking risks and who think outside of the box, which stands in opposition to their assumed conservatism.

It seems that the conception of the “good teacher,” as a representation of a particular kind of professional capital, is not being traded in a reciprocal way that can expand and enrich the teaching profession as a whole; rather it is built upon a distinction between what is “Canadian/Australian/British/etc. teacher” and what is not. Since, currently in Canada, most immigrant teachers are women of “visible minorities” and speak English as an additional language or with a non-Canadian accent (Ryan et al., 2009), this distinction acts as a sort of symbolic violence in which not only knowledge is being assessed, but also ethnicity, race and language. As Subedi (2008) claims, “non-mainstream ethnic, gender or religious identities are coded as being non-legitimate teacher identities” (p. 58). Shared racialization, however, is no guarantee of shared professional capital: as experienced Kenyan teacher Florence (2011) discovered after moving to the United States and teaching in a predominantly African-American school, she was confronted with “differences in academic accountability and classroom etiquette” (p. 12). Florence’s classroom expectations and demands labeled her as an “other”; hence, being an immigrant teacher was a source of distinction that overshadowed the shared race.

Professional capital in teacher education creates distinctions between teachers who were certified in Canada and those who were certified elsewhere. These distinctions are based on assumptions about IETs’ lack of culturally appropriate pedagogical habitus, but at the same time they reproduce an ethnic, linguistic, and racial order. In the multicultural setting of Canada, the distinctions are less class-based (although class does play a role in their formation). Much as Bourdieu’s (1984) “distinction” marks off rare and exclusive cultural products and preferences from common ones, professional capital delineates “local” from “other” teaching approaches. In

the case of IETs, a language deficiency and non-native Canadian accent are the most common marks of distinction (Chassels, 2010; Deters, 2011; Myles et al., 2006; Walsh et al., 2011; Wang, 2002; Xu, 1999). IETs have no choice but to convert their “other” professional capital to the local currency through re-entering the field of teacher education in order to be allowed to teach in Canada. Since professional capital re-inscribes the current power structure in the teaching profession, the cultural price for many immigrant teachers is high, while success is far from guaranteed.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Background

This study is designed as a form of case study research; the case under study is the “Teacher Updating Program” at UBC¹¹ (hereafter referred to as the Updating program). This program is run by the UBC Teacher Education Office (TEO) as part of the teacher education program. Sydney Craig, the former Director of the TEO, recalled that the Updating program was founded in the 1990s as “an answer to a need” when immigrant teachers began to apply for recertification. Earlier, the number of immigrant teachers was smaller and they did not need to be recertified in BC. The program is open not only to IETs but also to teachers who were certified in other provinces,¹² as well as to those who are certified as BC teachers but have no recent teaching experience, or who wish to change their specialization.

The program offers “qualified applicants the opportunity to update their teaching credentials and to become familiar with recent pedagogy and curricular developments in BC schools” (UBC Teacher Updating Program, 2012, para. 1). It includes mainly pedagogy and methodology courses and a teaching practicum. The courses are assigned based on the applicants’ profiles and the recommendations made by the TRB. The TRB does not require specific courses but rather determines its generic topics; every university assigns its specific equivalent courses based on its offerings. In the Updating program, there are no designated courses for IETs as a cohort and they join the regular courses in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program as individuals (UBC Teacher Updating Program, 2012). Program advisors who are available to discuss individual cases are assigned to the program. The Updating program

¹¹ I use the terms “recertification program” and “Updating program” interchangeably.

¹² Before the AIT agreement was in place.

admits about 10-15 students every year in both the elementary and secondary tracks. According to past and recent practicum coordinators, the participants in the Updating program are both men and women, usually in their mid-30s, and of various backgrounds, commonly East Asian, South Asian, and Eastern European.

Although updaters have been integrated into the UBC program since the 1990s, in 2012 the program was reformed to become a diploma program. This change increased the number of credits to 30 and extended the duration of the program to eight months (the regular B.Ed. program at UBC requires the completion of 60 credits and takes 12 months). Before this change, IETs were assigned a different number of credits, and upon completion of the recertification process were only granted the BC teaching certificate.

4.2 Principles of Case Study Research

Case study research originated in the 1920s, as a research method that focuses on a single, complete social unit. The basic unit of case study research is the single case. A case is an identified space in which one can see different activities as part of an integrated system (Stake, 2006). Since the 1920s, the definition of a case has expanded to a wider understanding of units—that is to say, a case can be a person, a group, or an organization—and is being used in different disciplines (Patton, 1990). Stake (2000) defines case study research as the study of a human activity in a specific place and time. This is an attempt to gain wider understanding through looking into the particular, by collecting different sources of data (Hamel, 1992). According to Yin (2009), case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (p. 2).

Case study research focuses on “real-life situations and tests views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 235); it is rooted in the assumption that in order to understand human beings, one should have an insider’s look at human interactions. Hence, case study research is a research strategy that is characterized by rich data gathered through many methods (including interviews, observations, fieldwork, documentation, and sometimes quantitative tools) (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) claims that there is a fine balance between the theoretical blueprint that frames the study and the need for the researcher to stay alert, avoid bias, and not look for an already known answer. As Flyvbjerg (2006) points out, case study research is not meant to confirm the researcher’s “preconceived notions” (p. 234).

A common criticism of a single case study design is that it is riskier than a multiple case study design, since it can be considered insufficient to gain reliable understanding, or can collapse on the practical level (e.g., through a lack of participants, or access problems). Indeed, on the practical level, I did encounter some obstacles due to the small number of potential participants in the research. The limited number of participants (among other reasons, which I will elaborate on later) led me to modify my research design.

That said, the current study meets the criteria that Yin (2009, pp. 47-49) provides to justify a single case design: UBC offers a *unique* model of recertification because it recognizes IETs as a category, whereas most other recertification programs in Canada admit IETs on an individual basis (Walsh & Brigham, 2007a). Although it may sound contradictory, the UBC model is also *representative* in that it uses an integrated rather than separate recertification model, much like most recertification tracks in Canada in which IETs are integrated into the regular B.Ed. program (Walsh & Brigham, 2007a). Hence, I assume that the Updating program shares many similarities with most Canadian recertification programs. In addition, this study

serves as a *critical test* for a “well established” theory: in this case, the theory of multiculturalism in the BC context.

Another criticism of case study research is its noted lack of generalizability; the claim is that it is difficult to create generalizations based on a single case (Yin, 2009). Especially in areas of social studies that are dominated by quantitative research (e.g., immigration and urban poverty), “case studies are often explicitly expected to represent larger entities” (Small, 2009, p. 10). One way of responding to this critique is by designing the case as a tool to reconstruct, refine, refute, or illustrate a theory. Although case study research does not necessarily lead to a new theoretical construction, it can bring out nuances, challenge conventional notions, and offer a correction to a theory. Moreover, as Merriam (1988) claims, “the general resides in the particular; that is, in fact, how most people cope with everyday life” (p. 219). Similarly, according to Burawoy (1998; 2009), case study research leans on a theory as its point of departure, which is then further developed and reconstructed in the course of study. Hence, “instead of inferring generality directly from data, we can move from one generality to another, to more inclusive generality” (Burawoy, 1998, p. 16).

4.2.1 Case Study Types

There are different types of case study research; each type highlights a different component. For instance, multiple case study is a design for examining several cases that are linked together, or a phenomenon that takes place at multiple sites without programmatic connection (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009). The idea is to look beyond the specific case, so as to “collect the cases,” with the purpose of understanding the “bigger picture,” or what Stake (2006) calls “the quintain” (p. vi).

My original plan for this study was to examine two recertification programs in BC, which offer two models of recertification of IETs. In this case, the quintain would have been the construction of the idea of the “good teacher” in BC as it is manifested in these two programs. I decided against this option due to practical limitations when conducting a multiple case study as a single researcher, as well as because one of the programs had recently been extensively studied (Frank, 2013; Rosehart, 2013). Still, the same interest remained at the core of my study design, causing me to search for other ways to acquire a deep understanding of the conceptions of the “good teacher” in BC and the role these conceptions play in the recertification process of IETs.

Another type of case study is the comparative case study. This is a distinctive form of multiple case study that is commonly used in fields such as political science and public administration (Yin, 2009). It refers to a comparison of two or more cases in which researchers “seek similarities and differences among cases on a relatively few specified attributes. The purpose of those studies is to make some grand comparison rather than to increase understanding of individual cases” (Stake, 2006, pp. 82-83). Using this design, my study would have compared two recertification models of IETs; the focus would have been on the similarities and differences in the training model, and the advantages and disadvantages of each as they arise from the comparison. I have found the comparative design to be less relevant to the purposes of my study, and more applicable to program evaluation. However, the strength of the comparison is its appeal to policy makers; this is important, since:

There is a clear disconnect between policy and research on teacher education and diversity. What is the reason? Of course there is the political dimension – this research stands in clear opposition to the neoliberal reforms, including the deregulation agenda....If scholars of teacher education and diversity are truly committed to enacting a

more just and equitable education, they must find a way to be heard. (Grant & Gibson, 2011, p. 27)

Taking this into account, I have sought a case design that would facilitate my incorporation of policy analysis into the case to make this study relevant to policy makers and stakeholders in the field of teacher education in BC.

4.3 Methodological Design

My case study design is influenced by the concepts of the “extended case method” (Burawoy, 2009) and the “extended place method” (Duneier, 1999).¹³ As an immigrant from an ethnic, audible but non-visible minority group (*viz.* Ashkenazi Jewish), and a certified teacher from Israel, this study also carries some elements of “analytic autoethnography” (Anderson, 2006).

4.3.1 The Extended Case Study

The extended case study was developed by Marxist scholars from the Manchester School of Social Anthropology in the late 1950s (e.g., Van Velsen, 1967) in order “to confront the decontextualized abstractions of structural approaches with richly detailed accounts of the actions and choices of real individuals” (Hennen, 2008, p. 454). It was revised and developed in the work of Michael Burawoy (who calls it the “extended case method”) (Burawoy, 1991; 1998; 2001; 2009).¹⁴

¹³ Both Burawoy and Duneier call their study design a “method” (*viz.* the extended case method and the extended place method, respectively). I assume this is because both suggest an overarching research strategy: the first case is theoretically grounded, and the second institutionally related.

¹⁴ There is an interesting biographic account on the extended case study in the introductory chapter of Burawoy’s (2009) book *The Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations and One Theoretical Tradition*.

Burawoy (2009) sees the extended case study as an “ethnography that forges micro-macro connections through the reconstruction of social theory” (p. xii). Similar to the other types of case study research, the context of the case is not a factor that needs to be controlled in order to gain accuracy, but something to be incorporated into the study. However, to my understanding, the extended case study is a more radical approach to the case study method. Both Yin (2009) and Stake (2006) understand case study research to be “an empirical inquiry” (Yin, 2009, p. 18); thus, they develop detailed tools to verify “the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Stake, 2006, p. 37). For Burawoy (1998), on the other hand, the extended case study is a “reflexive model of science – a model of science that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge” (p. 5).

The extended case study is rooted in a dialogue between the researcher and the participants. This dialogue is embedded in a second dialogue between the local processes in the case and the external forces; finally, it is grounded in “expanding dialogue of theory with itself” (Burawoy, 1998, p. 5). The dialogue extends the case study in four ways: “The extension of observer into the lives of participants under study; the extension of observer over time and space; the extension from micro processes to macro forces; and, finally and most important, the extension of theory” (Burawoy, 2009, p. xv). Throughout all of these extensions, the linking thread is that the case is not an isolated unit but a social space in which history and context are woven together, and social forces are being reproduced.

In the construction and conduct of this study, I have followed these four extensions. As an immigrant teacher and teacher educator, I shared my personal experiences with the participants in this study and have woven them into the other data sources.¹⁵ The extensions over

¹⁵ This aspect is also captured by the autoethnographic writing that is integrated into the study and on which I shall elaborate in the next section.

time and space and from the micro-to macro-level were followed in the case's design to include both a policy section and interviews with professionals that are related to the recertification process. These include not only professionals who work in the Updating program, but also those at the TRB and at the Simon Fraser University (SFU), Surrey campus. Hence, the Updating program was not examined as an independent social unit, but rather as piece of a wider social context.

Burawoy (1998; 2009) places special emphasis on the extension of a theory. He argues that, as we cannot see the world without our eyes, we cannot appreciate social reality without theory. Theory enables us to understand the world, but it does not capture the ultimate truth, as the world is ever changing; hence, the extended case study is a way of refuting and correcting a theory. Small (2009) criticizes the heavy reliance on theory in the extended case study, and claims that it assumes a pre-existing model of society and extends too great a degree of power to the external forces, which are portrayed as homogenous. In contrast, Burawoy (2009) claims that we are historical creatures, and our research is rooted in history; hence, we have to recognize “how theoretically embedded we are when we enter the field” (p. 9). Instead of seeing this as a bias, he argues that theory is always tested within reality, and that the extended case study is a means of reconstructing and reinterpreting our comprehension of a theory.

In this study, the extension of a theory is reflected in the connection I make to the theory of multiculturalism, and to the concept of professional capital. I employ these theoretical frameworks as starting points, but I see them as a means of extending my critical examination and not as shields from other explanations and possibilities. I revisit the theory of multiculturalism through my examination of critical multiculturalism in the BC context. And by

forming the concept of professional capital in the teaching profession, I reconstruct Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital.

Another reason for designing this case as an extended case study is its compatibility with the conceptual/methodological tools of Bourdieu.¹⁶ According to Bourdieu, the concept of habitus is a tool to be utilized in empirical research rather than an idea to be debated in theory; “habitus, then, is a means of viewing structure as occurring within small-scale interactions and activity within large-scale settings” (Reay, 2004b, p. 439). This is very similar to Burawoy's (1998) understanding of the everyday world “as simultaneously shaped by and shaping an external field of forces” (p. 15). Bourdieu suggests three steps for studying a certain field: analyzing the position of the field in the field of power (in Burawoy's terms, extending from process to force); mapping the structure of relations between position holders, agents, and institutions (in Burawoy's terms, extending from the observer to the participants); and analyzing the habitus of the social agents in the field (in Burawoy's terms, extending over space and time) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104-105).

As an extended case study, the Updating program is a case for examining and reconstructing the theory of multiculturalism and the concept of symbolic capital in the context of Canadian teacher education. Hence, the program is studied with relation to an external field of force, in this case the BC educational field as it is penetrated by such forces as immigration and neoliberalism.

¹⁶ Although Burawoy co-authored a book titled *Conversations with Bourdieu*, in which he criticizes some of his main constructs (Burawoy & Von Holdt, 2012), I find that there is a strong connection between the conceptual frames of the two.

4.3.1.1 The Extended Place Method

The extended place method is concerned with “how institutions of various sorts, especially institutions that organize power, affect the micro settings” (Duneier, 1999, p. 344). Hence, the extended place method is “more middle-range work” (p. 344) that highlights the position of institutions in the experiences of individuals. In the extended place method, the site is only a “starting point” (p. 344). The main recognition of the extended place method is that the site is not isolated; rather, it is always located within other sites. In this study, the Updating program is located within the framework of educational policy in BC, and, as such, is studied in terms of its interaction with other institutions such as the TRB and the only other designated recertification program in BC, the SFU “Professional Qualification Program” (PQP) (SFU, 2012).

However, during my fieldwork, I realized that, whereas Duneier (1999) studied a location (a few blocks in New York City) that was the centre of life for the participants in his study, the Updating program, although taking place mostly in one building, was not such an organic space for the participants in my study. This may be because of the large size of the teacher education program at UBC, the multiple functions that the specific building serves, the numerous students and programs using the building, the lack of “home classes,” or the transitional nature of the academic programs. Either way, for the IET participants the site of the recertification program was not a main factor in their experience and did not serve as a centre of gravity from which they departed and to which they returned.

4.3.2 Analytic Autoethnography

The current study has some elements of autoethnographic research. I have built upon Anderson’s (2006) five criteria for analytic autoethnography: “(1) complete member researcher

(CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher's self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis" (p. 378).

I am a new immigrant in Canada who was certified as a teacher from Israel, and I belong to an ethnic minority group. This is a position of "opportunistic CMR," which means I existentially resemble the focus group of my study (i.e., IETs). This location gives me the ability to see things that may not be "obvious" or are "blind spots" for mainstream Canadians. However, there are also some differences between the group in question and me, such as the fact that I am a PhD student, so I obviously hold the capital required to avoid the path of recertification. This position is very similar to Huisman's (2008) account that, "as much as I wanted to be on the same plane as my participants, this desire was overshadowed by the reality that I was doing this work in part to elevate my status and career" (p. 380).

The second criterion refers to my awareness of my position in the study and to the ways this affects the study; it is the understanding of autoethnographers that "they themselves form part of the representational processes in which they are engaging and are part of the story they are telling" (Anderson, 2006, p. 382). It is important to make clear that I was not a full participant in the Updating program; hence, I was not experiencing the recertification process the same way the participating IETs were. Still, I would argue that my existential position is similar enough to that of the participating IETs that it makes more sense for me to "bring myself into consideration" rather than to attempt to remain detached. This position is compatible with Burawoy's (1998) concept of reflexive science "that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge" (p. 5).

During my fieldwork, I have found myself at times in an unexpected dualistic position. In addition to being an IET, I was a teacher educator in my Israeli past. Furthermore, I currently

teach (as a Sessional Lecturer) in the teacher education program at UBC, and see teacher education as a desirable professional career for me in BC. Hence, I share many similarities not only with IETs but also with other educational professionals, and especially other instructors who teach in the Updating program. Whereas my original plan was to reflect on my position as an IET, I found myself reflecting also on my position as a teacher educator. Both voices express different layers of my personal and professional identity.

Being a teacher educator has also led me to experience unforeseen tension. In Israel, I was part of the Institute for Democratic Education (Institute for Democratic Education, 2014). This is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that directs different initiatives in both the alternative and public school systems in Israel. Child-centred pedagogies are central to many of these initiatives; furthermore, the teacher education program I headed during the last two years immediately prior to my arrival in Canada was highly student-centred. That is to say that, as an educator, I was trained in a certain school of thought that still guides my teaching and assumptions about what good teaching is. This same approach is also prominent in teacher education in BC, while many IETs were mainly trained in more teacher-centred approaches and feel more comfortable, allegedly or in reality, teaching in this manner. Hence, I became aware while conducting this study that I needed to examine my own pedagogical assumptions and make sure that they were not intervening with my observations and data analysis. What has made this process easier for me is that as an educator I am influenced by such critical progressive pedagogues as Dewey (1961/2004) and Freire (1970/1997); according to their pedagogies, child-centredness is inherently connected to critical pedagogy and to social critique.

Although both progressive education and critical pedagogy are wide frames that contain diverse and even contradicting strands, they are both symbolized by their “founding fathers” –

Dewey and Freire. Dewey (1961/2004) argued for a form of education that focused less on the curriculum itself and more on the hands-on interaction between the student and curriculum. In his view, traditional education was based on a static conception of the world, placing emphasis on relaying information and using exercises based on external motivators. By contrast, progressive education reflects a dynamic conception of the world; it is based on personal development and is conducted through experience arising from inner motivation. For Dewey, the society and the individuals are not seen as opposing factors but as two complementary forces, and child-centred experimental learning is a tool for a sustainable democratic society (Cremin, 1964; Rohrs & Lenhart, 1995). Freire (1970/1997) framed critical pedagogy as a liberating tool aimed at giving voice and supporting agency for students who were marginalized and silenced in society. As such, Freire criticized the construction of school and the curriculum as “disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance” (p. 71). Also in this case, the lived experiences and social location of the students are integral to social critique and to social transformation.¹⁷ Later transformations of this school of thought led to a divide between the individual and social components, and created a child-centred approach that is individually driven, and on which I will elaborate further in Chapter 6 (Brehony, 2001; Robertson, 2012; Ungerleider & Krieger, 2009).

While conducting this study, I held a critical view of both teacher-centred approaches and individualistically oriented child-centred approaches, which helped me to maintain a questioning eye on both approaches, as well as on my own concealed assumptions. In order to introduce my own voice with clarity and weave it into the research design, I have reflected on my experiences,

¹⁷ Before I joined the Institute for Democratic Education, I had spent ten years of my adult life in a socialistic community (the *Kibbutz*) and working in countless educational positions. During that period, my influences were mostly Marxist and Post-Marxist theories, so the frameworks of social critique and critical pedagogy have been the basis of all the other influences I have since accumulated in my life.

feelings and understanding, while taking the role of participant-observer in the recertification process. I did not write on a daily basis, but rather transcribed in a notebook or used my computer whenever a thought crossed my mind. Eventually, I entered these pieces into the data analysis program (NVivo) and used them as another source of data.

In the dissertation, my voice is clearly visible since I employ a cursive writing style,¹⁸ which stands out in contrast to the fonts more commonly used in academic writing. I agree with Preissle's argument (2007) "against privileging the abstract over the concrete, the principle over the relationship, the absolute over the relative, the universal over the particular, the objective over the subjective, and the cognitive over the affective" (p. 518). Similarly, I would argue that there is no clear-cut boundary between my "private voice" and the "academic text." However, writing in two fonts symbolizes my awareness of my dual position in this study. Here is a taste of how it appears:

I arrived in Canada on June 27, 2011 with my partner, our three children, then, 8, 6, and 3 years of age, and in the last months of my fourth pregnancy. I arrived here from Israel, a country in which I was part of the mainstream, and a member of the privileged social class, being an Ashkenazi Jew from an upper middle-class family. We immigrated here through the point system that acknowledged one of my partner's jobs, that of a college teacher, as a required profession. We invested funds (about \$3,000) and time into gathering and preparing the needed documents and, by a sheer coincidence (namely, a revision to the point system at the time of our application), received our permanent residency (PR) in less than a year. Although arriving in Canada without the

¹⁸ My first choice was to write in red, a colour that, for me, relates to emotions and engagement; unfortunately, it is not acceptable for dissertation writing.

guarantee of employment, I was certain we would find our way here, particularly since we had received our PR status based upon our holding one of the “desired professions.” In retrospect, I know that I was caught up in the meritocratic assumption that, since we are talented and hard-working, our integration would be relatively rapid. However, this turned out to be not as easy as we had imagined.... Though I do not look any different from the average white Canadian, my accent stands out and I interact differently. Everyone can tell after less than two minutes spent with me that I am “not from here.” In Israel, I taught for many years. I have a clear conception of the “good teacher” (which is very different from the “official” Israeli one) to which I hold myself accountable in my own teaching. Seeing the dominance of the multicultural and diversity-associated terminology employed in the immigration documents (Government of Canada, 2013), I had hoped that my experience would be valued in Canada.

In introducing my own voice into the study, I keep in mind the fourth criterion of analytic autoethnography, “dialogue with the informants,” in order to make sure that this study *is not about me*, but rather is rooted in a dialogue between the participants and myself as the researcher. This understanding leads to the final criterion of analytic autoethnography, “theoretical analysis,” which “draws upon our personal experiences and perceptions to inform our broader social understandings and upon our broader social understandings to enrich our self-understandings” (Anderson, 2006, p. 390).

The principles of analytic autoethnography are compatible with Burawoy’s (2009) first extension of the “observer into the lives of participants under study” (p. xv), in which he argues

that, as researchers, “we don’t have access to some Archimedean standpoint; we are always inserted somewhere in the site, which has grave consequences for what we see. And our location affects the way others see us” (p. 204). Similarly, Burawoy emphasizes the centrality of dialogue, the connection between “micro” and “macro” when performing ethnography, and the extension to theory.

4.4 Data Sources

4.4.1 Defining the Case

As advised by Stake (2006), not everything can be considered a case: a case must possess at least a few boundaries in order to operate as an integrative system and consist of certain patterns. Although the Updating program at UBC is not a separate program, but a track within the larger teacher education program, I would consider it a case. The Updating program appears as a separate unit on the UBC website; it holds specific requirements and a separate application process (UBC Teacher Updating Program, 2012). In a methodological design that is influenced by the extended case study and place method, these relatively fluid borders between the Updating and the standard B.Ed. programs are advantageous in demonstrating the micro/macro processes that operate within a case.

The Updating program overlaps with other institutions, since in BC (as in Canada in general) several different institutions have a role in the recertification process of IETs (Walsh & Brigham, 2007a; Walsh et al., 2011). For instance, the TRB evaluates foreign credentials and determines the requirements for recertification; teacher education programs carry the recertification process;¹⁹ the certification approval is granted by the TRB; and hiring processes

¹⁹ The recertification can be carried out by each of the nine teacher education programs in BC, but only UBC and SFU have designated tracks for IETs.

are done at the school district level. In this study, my main focus is the Updating program, but when I realized how entangled the recertification process is, I extended my design to include interviews with TRB employees, graduate IETs, and educational professionals who may offer a wider perspective on the recertification process from the credential evaluation stage to hiring procedures.

The borders of the case were refined during the study based on interactions with the participants, their ideas of what is important and unimportant in the recertification program, and other (than UBC) institutions involved in the case. This method for defining the borders of a case is compatible with Burawoy's (1998) extension "over space and time" (p. 17), in which the daily activities of the case are woven into the wider context and social forces at play. It is also compatible with the extended place method (Duneier, 1999), in which the researcher follows the participants and traces with them their social space as a way to define the borders of the study.²⁰ In the current study, using this approach, I decided to interview a faculty member at SFU who works in the PQP recertification program, and I also participated in two information sessions for IETs held by the TRB.

4.4.2 Data Generation: Interviews and Observations

In the current study I used interviews, participant observations, self-reflection, and documents in order to convey the many layers of the case (Creswell, 1998; Gerring, 2007; Patton, 1990; Stake, 2000; Yin, 2009). These diverse sources of data were also used as the means of triangulation (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009). Data generation took place between October 2013 and July 2014.

²⁰ For instance, when the participants in his study complained that they had no access to public washrooms, Duneier followed them to the public washrooms at the local park and to local restaurants. When he realized the participants had limited access, he extended his case to include interviews with the restaurant owners, members of the park board and members of the city council who had been contributing to this situation.

During the academic year of 2013-2014, I conducted two one-on-one semi-structured interviews with five IETs who participated in the Updating program, one during the first term of the program and the other at the end of the program. My original design was to conduct three interviews, but since the Updating program is eight months in duration, the time frame was too intense to fit in three interviews. All of the interviews were semi-structured; I held a written list of questions but I allowed the conversation to develop of its own accord in various directions.²¹ I made sure, however, that the main topics I was interested in were covered.

IETs were recruited by an email that was sent out on my behalf by one of the Updating program coordinators.²² Five participants responded to the email: four were in the secondary cohort and one in the elementary cohort. Although I sent two additional emails to the updaters in the elementary program closer to their intake date in January 2014, I received no additional replies. This may be related to the program structure: whereas secondary updaters start the program with the rest of the candidates at the beginning of the academic year, the elementary updaters join the elementary cohort in the middle of the year. According to the practicum coordinators at UBC, this structure creates a stressful adjustment period for IETs in the elementary track.

The IET participants were of various backgrounds and characteristics: four were female and one was male; three were from Eastern European countries, one was from South America, and one was from Asia. Because the 2013-2014 Updating program was small, it would be possible to identify the specific participants based on their countries of origin. I therefore opted not to disclose their countries of origin in order to preserve their anonymity. However, I did disclose the countries of origin for the participants who were graduates of the program because

²¹ See appendices: Interview Questions for IETs; Interview Questions for Faculty and Administrators; Interview Questions for TRB Employees.

²² See appendix: Letter of Initial Contact.

the number of graduates is far larger, thus making it much more difficult to identify those participants based on their countries of origin. All of the participants were in their mid-30s and had families. This profile is consistent with current research on IETs in Canada (Cho, 2011; Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013; Rosehart, 2013).

In addition, I conducted one-on-one interviews with four recent graduates of the Updating program and one IET who has a conditional teaching permit, in order to learn from their perspectives on the recertification process and their experiences in the job market. I attempted to contact graduates through the distribution list of the Updating program, but two problems emerged during this process. The first was technical: The TEO database made it difficult for me to locate IETs who had graduated prior to the last two years (before the Updating program was created as a distinctive administrative unit). The second problem was that, in many cases, people changed their email addresses after graduation, or had become immersed in their lives, and so I received no responses. My solution was to recruit graduates through a snowball method, in which I asked all of the current participants if they could connect me with graduate IETs. In this way, I was able to recruit five IETs, one full-time teacher, two on-call teachers (TOCs), one teaching assistant, and one who was not working in the school system.

I also conducted one-on-one interviews with six faculty and administrative staff who were recently or are currently involved in the Updating program; three TRB employees, including the head of the TRB,²³ who were involved in the recertification process of IETs; and the program coordinator of the SFU PQP. These interviews were intended to extend the

²³ He was moved to a different position in 2014.

perspectives of the study from that of the IETs' experiences to one of the wider institutional and structural aspects of the recertification process.²⁴

In addition to interviews, I conducted observations because “they serve as a natural analytic unit, enabling the researcher to stay close to participants’ frames of reference” (Valli & Chambliss, 2007, p. 58). Since the Updating program does not have separate courses, the courses I observed had both IETs and other B.Ed. students.²⁵ This was actually an advantage since my interest was in the “normative” teaching and pedagogical assumptions that were conveyed in the teacher education program. Building on the extended place method (Duneier, 1999), I chose the courses for observation based on the importance the participating IETs had assigned to them. I observed two classes in four courses, and one long class in a fifth course.²⁶ In one case I chose to observe a course even though it had not been mentioned as an important one by the participants; the reason is that this was an assessment course that is commonly required of IETs by the TRB as part of the familiarization package.²⁷

Based on the IETs' recommendations, I contacted the course instructors and asked their permission to observe a class or two. After the observations, I conducted a follow-up interview with the course instructors. The focus of the interviews was the instructors' conceptions of the “good teacher” that informed their teaching and course design, and their views of IETs (Simon, 2001; Valli & Chambliss, 2007).²⁸ All the instructors were accommodating and helpful. Of the five instructors whose classes I observed, four were women, two were graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), and three were sessional instructors. In addition, three were immigrants to

²⁴ When I conducted two interviews (i.e. with the five recertifying IETs), I numbered them as (1) or (2). When I only conducted one interview, I did not use parenthesis.

²⁵ See appendix: Observations Protocol.

²⁶ See appendix: Observations List.

²⁷ The term “familiarization” will be explained in detail in section 6.3.1 in Chapter 6.

²⁸ See appendix: Interview Questions for Course Instructors.

Canada, which added an interesting twist to their understanding of the conceptions of being a “good teacher” in Canada.

I had hoped to become engaged in other informal interactions with the IET participants during the breaks between classes, and before and after the school day; however, due to the intensity of the Updating program, its tight schedule, long commute, and other commitments the participants had, this did not happen as often as I had hoped. Still, I feel that with the current IETs a connection was established during the timespan of this study. I feel that this has to do with the structure of this study, with the two interviews that were spread over the course of eight months, and with the observations and email exchanges in the interim. In a few cases, the interviews took place in the participants’ own homes, or in a few cases, with the attendance of a child or partner, which made the atmosphere more personal. This also may have to do with the shared feeling all of us held that we are “not from here,” and the feeling that even if we come from very diverse backgrounds, we all have some shared experiences.

It is interesting to compare this to the interviews with faculty members; in those cases, I would sometimes encounter the interviewees in different occasions (i.e., mostly when just randomly passing one another in the hallways) a while after the interview concluded, and in most cases, they did not recognize me. However, this may not be a fair comparison, since some of these faculty members meet many people through their jobs and it could therefore be hard for them to recall them all. Nonetheless, this is still a mental note that I made to myself regarding my various categories of interviewees.

4.4.3 Documentation

I examined relevant provincial educational policies related to IETs and to the conceptions of the “good teacher” in BC. Conceptions of the “good teacher” are implicit in BC educational

policies such as the BC Teaching Standards and the “BC Education Plan” (BC Ministry of Education, 2012; BC Ministry of Education, 2011a). I also examined the UBC teacher education program outlines and mission statement (UBC Teacher Updating Program, 2012), and the syllabi of the observed courses. These documents were incorporated as policy extensions of the case and were also used to compare the written statements to the real life experiences of the IETs during the recertification trajectory.

Although I was not using critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a full methodological frame (Fairclough, 2013), I was interested to see how ideologies were transmitted to policies and formal documents in ways that could create injustice, and how language captured the construction of power relations (Bloor & Bloor, 2007).

Cochran-Smith and Fries (2011) claim that, “policy controversies are struggles over values, worldviews, and underlying ideologies as well as agreements and disagreements over strategies” (p. 340). This view is captured by the metaphor of a policy web, which refers to “the relationship between and among discourses, who the actors are, how new ideas and competing agendas enter into the larger arena, and which discourses are predominant, silenced, valorized, and marginalized” (p. 340).

In the current study, the focus is on policies, standards, and regulations that refer to the certification process of BC teachers generally, and IETs specifically. I read the different documents with a critical eye, identified dominant discourses, and examined gaps and contradictions between different discourses. I also looked for the influence of global neoliberal discourses on provincial and local policies.

4.4.4 Data Analysis

The first stage of the data analysis process was transcribing the interviews, typing up my observations and personal reflections, and organizing the different sources of data. After listening to the interviews a few times, I transcribed them by combining my summary of background and context information with long chunks of verbatim quotes (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). During the field observations, I used my notebook to record my observations and comments, and then typed them as Word documents (Frank & Bird, 1999). I gathered my reflexive notes and also typed them as Word documents. Documents of various kinds (e.g., BC policies, course syllabi, UBC documents) were organized according to the main topics.

In the second stage, using NVivo software, I analyzed the data and looked for repeating threads and patterns. In the coding process, I created a list of topics that were repeated in the interviews and observations; topics also emerged from the theoretical framework. In the third stage, I assembled the topics into several main themes and searched for connections and relationships between the different themes (DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, & McCulloch, 2011; Weston et al., 2001). During this process, I also limited the scope of the study and organized the data to answer my main research questions. Lastly, I grouped the themes into three main categories of findings, which are supported by the methodological design of the extended case study, as they reflect the connection of case and context.

The main categories of findings are:

- Barriers in the recertification process of IETs in BC;
- Players in the recertification process in BC, their roles, their intersections, and their position in the field;

- The conceptions of the “good teacher” and their effects on IETs during the recertification trajectory and especially during the recertification program at UBC.

Each category was the basis for a “Findings” chapter in this dissertation. The first findings category repeats and strengthens previous studies’ findings on barriers in the recertification process. Although this was not my initial focus, for the participants, sharing the barriers they faced was a main motivation for participating in this study. Beyond my desire to incorporate their voices into my project, this fact helped me understand that in order to unfold the conceptions of the “good teacher” in the recertification process, I needed to portray a wider institutional picture of the recertification trajectory. In that sense, the barriers these IETs faced in the recertification process were not set as the background but rather as the scaffolding for my analysis of the teacher education field in BC.

The second findings category examines in greater detail the complex institutional structure of the recertification trajectory in BC. It is focused on the construction of the teaching profession in BC and its manifestation in various gatekeeping mechanisms and policies. It also lays out the power relations among the main players in the field.

The third findings category, which is divided into two chapters, focuses on the main contributions of this study, that is, the professional capital conversion process that IETs needed to go through in order to be recognized as “good teachers” in BC. The concept of professional capital and the process of capital conversion were then analyzed in relation to the theoretical lens of critical multiculturalism that frames this study.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

The academic procedure demands that one achieves ethics approval before actual human participants can be studied, and as part of this procedure, the subjects need to sign a consent form. However, as Thorne (1980) explains, the consent procedure originated in the field of medical research and its adaptation to social sciences is not straightforward. In the social studies, the notion of risk is different, and the interactions and power relations between the researcher and participants take a different shape than they do in the course of clinical research. Hence, I asked myself what challenges and possible problems are involved in studying IETs that are not covered by the formality of the university research ethics protocol, and how I would account for them in my study.

In studies in which participants hold different degrees of power, there is the risk that some voices may be louder than others, while some may become distorted. In this case, some of the participants were IETs, while others were professionals, some of who held high positions in the UBC teacher education program and in the TRB. Thus, I needed to make sure when analyzing the data that I did not prioritize some voices over others (according to their power or lack thereof). Furthermore, this study had a component of “studying up,” which refers to “studying social actors with some significant measure of privilege” (Becker & Aiello, 2013, p. 64). Some concerns related to “studying up” are that interviewees would attempt to control or steer the interview, or even to deny access to information. However, some scholars (Becker & Aiello, 2013; Conti & O’Neil, 2007) are concerned that the concept of “studying up” implies a linear distribution of power, and they argue that power is not distributed in a one-dimensional fashion. Alternatively, Becker and Aiello (2013) analyze power as “contextually-bound and situationally variant. [It is] a dynamic and negotiated process affected by [many] factors...power

is tied to pre-existing status differences *and* context-specific factors” (p. 64, italics in the original). This understanding proved useful to my study, as I could observe how power is manifested differently in different contexts. For instance, I did not feel that the UBC faculty participants, although clearly in a higher institutional position than me, a PhD student, attempted to alter or control the interviews. Quite the opposite: I felt that they were supportive and helpful, perhaps because these faculty members tend to have critical approaches to research and were committed to supporting students’ research in their institution. But at the TRB, power differences were manifested more clearly. For instance, when an evaluator sent me (with permission) internal statistics, I responded with a request for further elaboration, after which I received an email back from the TEO Director of Certification informing me that the evaluators could no longer spend time on my research. These examples show that power was not executed in a straightforward way based on the participants’ position, but rather operated differently in the two institutions. The difference may be connected to the institution, the participants’ agendas, or my location as a researcher (internal to UBC and external to the TRB).

In addition, while writing the dissertation, I considered several possible unintended outcomes, such as the possibility that I would be creating a negative professional and public view of IETs. As argued by Thorne (1980), “especially in studying vulnerable groups, we have an obligation to try to understand, and to share with those we study, the political and social contexts of our projects” (p. 288). In this case not only are IETs immigrants, but they are mostly women and members of visible or audible minorities; hence, they belong to multiple subordinate groups (Walsh et al., 2011). In this study, the participating IETs were in an especially vulnerable situation as they tried to become certified as teachers in BC. Hence, before the interview process,

I provided the participants with an open and honest elaboration of the study, including its potential effects.

After I submitted the initial draft to my supervisor, she drew my attention to a concrete issue with potential harmful effects for the participant IETs. I transcribed the interviews myself and while reading the draft, my supervisor found a few errors in quotations that I had used in some interviews. Although all of the interviewees had had the chance to go over their interviews and make corrections, many of them may have only done so superficially, if at all. The problem, as my supervisor brought to my attention, was that these errors could have resulted from different reasons: they could have been mistakes that anyone can make when using spoken English; they could also have been mistakes that I made as a non-native speaker and non-professional transcriber; or, in the IET interviews, they could have been mistakes that the interviewees made due to some shortcomings in their knowledge of English. My supervisor was concerned that in the case of the IETs, these mistakes could be held against them as a sign of their deficiency as teachers.

In a study that examined how experienced researchers dealt with similar questions, most of the participants argued that it is important to present “transcript material with as little editing as possible in order to mirror the words as spoken” (Cordon & Sainsbury, 2006, p. 17). However, there was also acknowledgment that “there could be a fine balance between not excluding some people’s words and not doing people a disservice [such as] cast[ing] them in a possibly negative light” (p.19). This decision is also related to the identity of the participants of the study. For instance, when referring to children, who much like immigrants are in a vulnerable position, Davis (1993) is in favour of performing some punctuation and spelling corrections while retaining the unique cultural usage of the language and honouring the voices of the writers. More

pertinent to this study, Koulouriotis (2011) examines the ethical concerns of researchers in studies that involve non-native English speakers. Although not focusing on the concrete question of whether quotes should be edited, she argues for “the need to allow participants’ voices to be heard and to honor and respect the experiences of participants who are non-native speakers of English” (p. 11). In this study, I believe that respect for the interviewees was embedded into my approach, because I myself am not a native English speaker and I have the utmost respect for people who choose to occupy a public, language-embedded profession such as teaching in a language that is not their first.

In order to deal with this concern, I returned to the interviews and double-checked them; however, there were some cases in which the recordings were unclear. This could have been the result of some participants’ accents, my limited ability to hear nuances in English, and, in some cases, background noise.²⁹

I was not sure whether I should be correcting these errors, particularly in IET interviews, while knowing that some of them may be mistakes that they themselves had actually made. From my own experience as an instructor at the UBC teacher education program, I knew that although I triple-checked every item of correspondence that I sent to my students, I could still find elements of faulty grammar or spelling mistakes that I missed. Eventually, I decided to make some minor corrections in the quotations, not only because I had the interest of the IETs at the forefront of my mind, but also because the participant IETs spoke rich and fluent English (and satisfied all of the English requirements), and because some of these mistakes could have been mine. Furthermore, I would argue that, although IETs may make some English errors (second

²⁹ Although I tried to avoid meetings in noisy places, meetings with the IET participants often took place in public spaces such as coffee shops, train stations, and public libraries due to time constraints, long commutes, and a lack of available private offices.

language acquisition is not an easy process), it does not imply necessarily that they are deficient as teachers.

In order to assure the anonymity of the participants, I gave them the option to choose or be assigned a pseudonym. Most of the IETs chose to use a pseudonym; if they asked me to choose a pseudonym for them, I chose one with a similar cultural reference. As mentioned above, since there was a small reserve of IETs at the Updating program in the academic year 2013-2014, I omitted the specific countries of origin for current updaters and assigned broader categories such as Eastern Europe and Asia. These categories still convey a sufficient number of cultural identifiers without jeopardizing the anonymity of the participants. Professional participants, especially at higher levels, usually chose to use their real names, while three pseudonyms and two real names were chosen by the five course instructors (both GTAs and sessional). In the dissertation, participants who chose to use their real names are identified by their full names, and participants who chose to use pseudonyms are identified by first names only.³⁰

In order to make sure that the participants felt certain about their participation in the study and had the opportunity to revisit their thoughts, I used transcript member checks as part of the research procedure (Duneier, 1999). In doing so, I attempted to respond to the following questions: “Will research participants be distressed when they learn how they are described, characterized, and interpreted? Will they agree with how they are represented?” (Preissle, 2007, p. 526). The member check resulted in a few corrections to the interviews by some participants, and the withdrawal of two participants who were employees of the TRB. I felt a bit concerned that this “vulnerability protection mechanism,” intended to protect the IET participants, actually served participants who belonged to the “powerful” group, and whom I could have interviewed

³⁰ See appendix: List of Interviewees, Positions, Names/Pseudonyms, Dates, and Member Check Results.

under the category of a “professional interview” without a member check. However, power should be understood in a more complex way. As Conti and O’Neil (2007) argue, “power struggles ‘congeal’ in specific social practices and become institutionalized as the settings in which individual subjects are located and exercise their agency” (p. 66). In this case, the notice of withdrawal took place a short time after the Director of Certification at the TRB was unexpectedly replaced. I do not know for certain if this had anything to do with the withdrawal notices, but it demonstrates the power dynamics in the TRB as connected to a larger institutional field governed by a neoliberal government. Since the situation was unclear, I could not estimate the odds of being allowed access by the new director to other evaluators against the odds that such request would lead to further limitations on the data I had already collected, so I decided not to attempt to recruit new participants from the TRB.

Although I needed to remove some data I had wanted to use, I reminded myself that, more importantly, the member check procedure retained all the participants’ rights, and even if it had not always served my “needs” as a researcher, it created a more humane research process (Alcoff, 1991).

While conducting the research, I constantly considered my position in relation to that of the IETs in the Updating program, and to the ways they saw me; was I seen as part of their group, or a part of “the system” (Shehata, 2006)? Sometimes I was asked questions such as, “Was it too hard for you to take the recertification process, so you chose to do a PhD instead?” Wearing my other “hat,” that of a teacher educator who is interested in a future career in this field, I was also careful to prevent my decisions from being influenced by my professional aspirations. For instance, I made sure not to use the space of the interviews I conducted with

faculty members at UBC as personal leverage (i.e. by trying to “show off” my qualities and abilities).

Lastly, a main motivation for me in conducting this study was my belief that research on teacher education “has the power to influence policies and practices that impact citizens of the global teacher education community” (Ball & Tyson, 2011b, p. 412). Ball and Tyson (2011b) call on researchers to become “scholar-activists”; that is, “scholars who are openly interested in processes of becoming change agents and engaged in research that is social-justice oriented” (p. 407). Similarly, Burawoy (2009) calls for research that is engaged with “suffering and domination, hierarchy and inequality” (p. xviii). This view of research is also captured in the rhetorical question: “If (this research) is not primarily a scientific activity, what is it? It is first and foremost a political activity, a function performed within a social system” (Cronbach, 1977, cited in Stake, 2006, p. 85). While acknowledging my commitment to conduct a profound, non-biased investigation, I also view Burawoy’s call (1998) for “a model of science that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge” (p. 5) as a compass guiding this study.

Chapter 5: Barriers within the Recertification Process

5.1 Introduction and Background of the Participants

Although my initial plan was to focus on the Updating program at UBC, the IETs, during their interviews, shared many barriers they had encountered that exceeded their experiences in the program. I understood that if I had wanted to trace the complex nature of the recertification trajectory, I needed to understand how the different barriers were manifested during this process, and what role the Updating program had played in the bigger picture. Hence, this chapter does not directly respond to my research questions, but rather lays the groundwork for more complete answers found in the next three chapters.

Some of the main findings in literature regarding the barriers IETs face during the recertification process are reiterated in the current study. However, most studies base their findings on data collected from IETs, whereas in this study the data was collected from both IETs and professionals associated with the recertification process. Hence, the data I report in this chapter is well beyond the actual experiences of the current or graduate IETs and originates also from other players in the field. In this sense, the data presented expands the framework from that of individual IETs' experiences to the acknowledgement of these barriers by others who are in more powerful positions in the field. However, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, the acknowledgment of the barriers by individual professionals in various positions does not automatically lead to a systemic change of the recertification process.

I will present the data according to the categories I described in the literature review: language, systemic, and personal barriers. The professional barriers will be presented separately in Chapter 7 as part of the professional conversion process required from the IETs.

There were ten IET participants in this study: five were enrolled in the Updating program in the academic year 2013-2014, four were graduates of the Updating program, and one was a TOC on a conditional license. As mentioned before, the participating IETs came from different backgrounds: seven of the ten were women, most of them in their mid-or late-30s, with families. Five IETs were visible minorities, and for all of them, English was their second language. All the participating IETs were recognized in BC as “skilled workers”; they had all obtained post-secondary education and had had professional careers in their home countries.

Most of the participating IETs had immigrated to Canada as skilled workers. Four IETs had remained in Canada in a less planned way: Ewa had met her husband while visiting her sister in Canada, Nur and Zuzana had come as temporary workers and had then decided to stay longer, and Azi had married a Canadian woman whom he had met while traveling in Spain. Ewa shared, “I had nothing to lose, I didn’t have a family and I was in an intersection in my life, I had comfortable life in Eastern Europe but I stayed for my husband.” However, most IETs in this study had decided to immigrate with the goal of improving their lives. For instance, Camy (1) explained, “In Eastern Europe the situation is worse and worse so we decided to change, I wanted to be more relaxed.” Similarly, Peter (1) explained that the political situation in his home country had triggered his decision to immigrate.

Hence, the participating IETs had decided to immigrate as a result of financial instability or political problems in their home countries, and in the hope of securing a better future for themselves and their families. It is important to notice this “degree of voluntariness” in the decision to immigrate, since the immigration process of some immigrants to Canada, such as refugees or caregivers, can be seen as less voluntary. In the current study, all the participants had had enough means to complete the immigration process and meet the immigration demands, but

they had still faced many barriers in their attempts to reestablish their lives in BC. This was the reason for my decision not to focus on class aspects in the recertification trajectory, as the vast majority of IETs in this study came from a middle-class background that had made the immigration process possible in the first place.

I clearly realized the degree of “voluntary immigration” while on a conference trip to Philadelphia. In the two years following our own immigration to Canada, I came to see myself as the “poor immigrant,” calculating how much money I spent and basically living as I had done in my twenties, only now I was 20 years older than this and had five children... However, here I was shopping at Wal-Mart to buy some gifts for my children as compensation for attending a conference. While waiting in line to pay for them, I stood behind another shopper who took quite a while to make her own purchases. Being impatient, I moved closer to see what took her so long and realized that she was using a few debit cards for her payment. At a certain point, she called someone to figure out why one of her debit card transactions was not being processed, and I overheard her saying, ‘oh, my medical insurance is due today so I only have one dollar left.’ I felt ridiculous in my pretense to be the “poor immigrant,” as I had never in my life been in a situation in which I did not know whether my visa payment would be successful. Furthermore, my ability to immigrate to Vancouver and to become a PhD student had been an outcome of my having sufficient means to afford this process.

5.2 Language Barriers

Language proficiency and accents were described as a barrier both by professionals at UBC and the TRB and by IETs. This is consistent with the picture that emerged from Chapter 2 in which a few scholars (Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013; Phillion, 2003) argue that language fluency and foreign accents posed obstacles to the integration process of IETs.

The TRB evaluators receive the IETs' language test results as part of their credential assessment process, so they are aware of the number of applicants failing the test. The TRB Director of Certification, Shawn McMullin, argued that the language barrier is higher because of the lack of consistency between the provinces:

Right now every province is different with regard to their language competency requirements. In fact, six jurisdictions within Canada have no language competency requirements at all. So if IETs settle in Manitoba, they could be licensed and teach there for two years, and then if they move to BC, we have language proficiency requirements and we know that they haven't been tested so we would ask them to establish language proficiency here and if they don't pass, then we would deny certification, so it seems unfair to them.

In order to solve this problem, the Registrars issued an extensive study that analyzed the usage of language in class and the necessary skills required from teachers (McMullin had a leading role in this project) (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2013). The problem in this study is not its claim, supported by an extensive literature base, for the diverse layers of English required for teaching, but rather the assumption that English (and French) is the only language that matters, and so teachers should be evaluated only with relation to it. However, as Moussu and Llurda (2008) argue, every person has a native language and therefore:

Speakers cannot be divided according to whether they have a given quality (i.e., native speakers) or they do not have it (i.e., non-native speakers), based on whether English is their first language or not. In fact, what this criticism shows is the unfairness of Anglo-centrism, through which English is taken as the only language in the world that deserves attention, and speakers are accordingly classified regarding their relationship with that language. (p. 317)

In addition to the systemic problem of inconsistency between the provinces, language proficiency is a major barrier on its own. Sydney Craig, the former Director of the TEO at UBC, mentioned that “the recertification process is most difficult for the newcomers, since it is compounded by English not being their first language, and also cultural things.” Robert Shoofey, former practicum advisor and faculty advisor (FA) at the UBC teacher education program, agreed that some IETs “weren’t well received in our schools, and this was simply due to language. A lot of it has to do with discrimination and bias because of noticeable errors in grammar.”

Language proficiency is not only defined by vocabulary and grammar, but by accent, cultural nuances, and ways of interacting. The language barriers may be even greater for IETs who in their home countries conceived of themselves as native English speakers since in Canada they are considered second-language speakers. As Gary Rupert, former program advisor at UBC, recalled:

It is difficult for people from India because they speak English and they see themselves as English speakers, but they have an accent that sometimes is not really accessible to the local students...and that is sometimes true for teachers from China because they often have a strong background in the grammar but difficulty with oral language and idioms.

The conception of IETs as “English as a Second Language” (ESL) speakers is apparent in the credential assessment requirements, in which the following is stated: “Applicants who have completed any part of their education in countries where the official language is not English or French must meet our language proficiency requirements” (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 11). However, IETs from countries such as India, where English is an official language, still need to take the test, as in bylaw P2 an “official English” is interpreted as “essentially the only language used [in a certain country]” (BC Ministry of Education, 2011b, A.01.1, p. 18).

This is a problematic understanding of a “proper” language, since English has become indigenized in many countries and therefore speakers of English in countries such as India cannot be considered “non-authentic” English speakers, in comparison to the “true English speakers” in England or the US (Mufwene, 1998).

The instructors I interviewed at the UBC teacher education program showed acceptance and openness toward different accents, and understood language differences as an integral component of diversity. Anik, one of the course instructors, described:

In my group, everybody speaks French with a different accent. One of the first things I tell my students is that we are all in a different place on a language continuum and there is always room for improvement...I tell them right away, I’m not going to tolerate anyone mocking people’s language levels.

It seems that in the French cohort that Anik described, and in which two IET participants were enrolled, language barriers were less dominant since many students had different accents when speaking French. Furthermore, in the French cohort, IETs tend to have a more advanced level of French as they came from French-speaking countries or countries in which advanced French was taught in the schools.

Some IETs accepted their accents naturally and felt they blended into the diverse nature of Vancouver. As Peter (1) said, “This is Vancouver, everybody speaks differently.” However, other IETs were very aware of their accents even when they received reassuring feedback during the recertification process. As Camy (1) described, “Usually I say that I am concerned about my language and about my accent, and they [Updating program instructors] say, ‘don’t worry you’ll be fine.’” Sophia (1) felt the same while recalling, “In the linguistic class I sometimes felt not belonging, pronunciation for me is really hard so this was a challenge. It was a nightmare, some sounds were really hard for me to understand.” Miruna (2) described similar feelings of self-awareness as a second grade teacher in her practicum:

When I was pronouncing different words and they [the children] could feel that I had a different accent, they would always ask me, ‘Why do you say it this way?’ I was always trying to act very natural when it happened, I corrected myself, and this was it, I just moved on. Sometimes it bothered me a little bit because it was a disruption after all, but I tried to minimize the impact on the class.

Gary Rupert argued that language proficiency was also related to the level of anxiety and comfort of the speaker, since:

anybody coming from another country has an accent from our point of view, and if you get anxious, sometimes your accent worsens and that makes you unable to communicate. If that happens, then we sometimes advise people to take a time out and do more work on their oral language.

Rod Brown, the current practicum coordinator at UBC, emphasized this point when referring to an IET who left the practicum halfway through and quit the program: “The kids were having difficulties understanding him, and he was getting more and more frustrated as his teaching

progressed, and he started losing his confidence so he withdrew.” Hence, the performance nature of the teaching profession may intensify the language barriers.

It reminded me of one of the first times I visited my children’s school as the “representative Jew” (which is another issue by itself...) to talk about one of the Jewish holidays. I stood in front of the class and talked casually as I generally have no issues in talking in front of a class. I was asked something by one of the children, but I wasn’t sure what the question was and asked him to repeat it. And then I caught in the corner of my eyes a girl tapping on my son’s shoulder and asking, ‘Does your mom even understand English?’ I was so surprised by this, and I felt that this little girl’s remark, especially when made to my son, completely shook my confidence.

It seems that, whereas in the teacher education program at UBC there was a general acceptance of different accents, in the K-12 school system there was less acceptance, as Ewa, who has worked as a teaching assistant for the last ten years, recalled:

They wouldn’t have problems with hiring people with a British accent but if you have an Eastern European accent, or you name it, it sticks out and it doesn’t work.... there is a sort of snobbish approach that you have to have a perfect English in order to be the perfect teacher.

Similar findings were reported in other studies (Deters, 2011, Frank, 2013). For instance, Mawhinney and Xu (1997) argue that the IET participants in their study experienced “a denial of their opportunities in the name of a so-called linguistic deficiency” (p. 636). While Schmidt and colleagues (2010b) argue that “linguistic discrimination remains a formidable barrier for teachers who speak English as an additional language” (p. 449).

Rita Irwin, Associate Dean for Teacher Education at UBC, agreed that there were differences in the acceptance of language proficiency in the university and in schools:

In our circle people may even not find issues with language, but when they [IETs] get to the K-12 system, suddenly there are issues with language. Some of it might be nerves, but some of it might be how the school perceives language, what is the best English being offered, whether it is accent, whether it is grammar.... occasionally I wonder if that is a bit racist...they never call it that, but it does cross our mind sometimes.

Vandy Britton, the practicum coordinator of the SFU PQP, supported this observation:

When [there are complaints during the practicum] I talk [to school officials] about the fact that some teachers have an Australian accent, so why is it any different? Because obviously it's based on the colour of the skin... Sometimes immediately after the first day of practicum we get a call, 'I can't understand what this person is saying.' It is an uncomfortable conversation on both sides, because the person has to face the discriminative piece of it. I have more experiences in situations when school administrators called and said that there had been parents' complaints.

Hence, there is often an unspoken connection between language—especially accent—and racism and discrimination based on skin colour and ethnicity. In the K-12 system, some accents are more acceptable, or considered “easier to understand” than others (Lippi-Green, 2012).

Although the Updating program had a higher level of tolerance toward different accents, probably because it was part of an academic culture in which different accents were common, it was not completely free of language barriers. Ming, a GTA originally from China, expressed anxiety about her teaching in the teacher education program:

I have concerns about the accent, because sometimes I understand it might be difficult for students to understand what I say and it can be challenging if students are asking me questions and I may not fully understand what they say. I think language is a huge issue here, because as teachers our main issue is communicating.

When I asked Ming whether she had brought up the accent issue during the course she was teaching, she answered:

I didn't emphasize it too much because another GTA in another section [of this course] was kind of fired because her students complained about her accent. Although our team thinks it might be for other reasons, but they [the students] brought up this reason [she was also from China]. So I told my class, 'If you find that something that I say is not so clear, don't be afraid'...I wanted them to know that I know that sometimes I may not be clear so they won't be afraid to ask me to clarify. But I didn't really say much beside.

In this example, even a GTA instructor felt insecure regarding her accent. Hence, it is understandable that for IET candidates whose main professional task is teaching, language proficiency and accent can function as primary barriers.

5.3 Systemic Barriers in the Recertification Process

Structural barriers during the recertification trajectory figured very prominently in the data. An initial barrier was the lack of information and lack of access to it during the early stages of the immigration process. Similarly, Phillion (2003) argues that "a large number of immigrant teachers had little access to any information and were bewildered of where to start and what to do" (p. 44).

A few professionals at the TRB and at UBC said that the lack of communication and coordination between the recertifying bodies and the immigration authorities was a problem. As Gary Rupert stated:

I have always been and keep on being concerned about the nature of the information IETs get. I have no direct information about what are they told by “Canada Immigration” but it appears to me that people who immigrate to Canada have a poor understanding of the challenges of entering the job market...I sometimes feel anxious for them, because depending on where they’re from they are at somewhat of a disadvantage compared to local candidates.

Rupert underscored the problem of delivering information regarding teacher recertification demands to potential applicants as part of the initial immigration process. TRB evaluators also mentioned this as a problem and regretted that they had no control over what is communicated during the immigration process. As Shawn McMullin argued:

The other thing that IETs typically don’t understand is that we require original documents from the source, so they typically end up in this office wanting to give us documents, and because this is an era of documents forgery we cannot collect these documents. It will be better if they know it before they arrive in Canada because they can arrange for the documents, rather than to try to do it from out of the country.

The limited transparency of information exemplifies the imbricated nature of the immigration process of which the professional recertification process is only one part. Since multiple institutions execute the entire process, it lacks coherence and may lead to misinformation.

Another barrier in the early stages that was mentioned often by IETs as a challenging and a time-consuming task was the gathering of documents required by the TRB for credential

assessments. It took Juranika (1) a long time to gather all the relevant documents from her Eastern European country of origin:

It took me a year to get the right contact person [in the university]. Then I found the right contact but she was so busy...I kept calling her for months, every day, sending her emails... and one day by miracle she picked up the phone, and she said, 'Oh yes, you're waiting for a year. I'll do it right away.'

Similarly, Nur explained:

I had to gather all my documents from France, and there you don't pay when you ask for transcripts, which mean that they take their time and you need to be really, really polite...it took months and months. Also, the system is different so you need to adjust the documents [to the BC higher education system]; this was the most difficult thing in the process.

Peter (1) echoed this when he mentioned, "I needed to get all the documents, and gathering all the documents can be time consuming. They wanted my transcripts, which are 20 years old." Azi recalled:

You need to get all the documents and stuff sent from North Africa [asked not to share the specific country] which is not obvious because they said, 'We don't do it.' They didn't want to be told to send it to a third party. You would call the university or the employer and say, 'I need a proof,' and they would say, 'I can give it to you but not to someone else'... So it is one of the things that forced me into thinking my future and my career. [I was considering] maybe to do other job.

In her study of IETs in Ontario, Chassels (2010) similarly argues that, “an inability to access employment related to [their] education and experience [is] particularly common among newcomers to Canada who frequently face challenges related to credential recognition” (p. 16).

Another requirement of the TRB is the verification of their teaching experience within the last ten years. This was another hurdle, especially for IETs with broad previous experience, as Sophia (1) described:

The most challenging and annoying thing was [that] to get my teaching evaluations, I had to call a Latin American country and ask people to give me some references and to fill out the documents in English. I knew it was annoying for them but I had to do it. I had to call my ex-bosses and they were like, ‘Of course we will do it for you’...but of course I had to call them again and say, ‘Do you remember? I need to have these documents.’

These examples show the importance of advanced information because it is much easier to gain access to local documents before one’s immigration to Canada. Gathering the documents tended to be more difficult in certain countries and for older IETs who had been certified many years ago. In addition, in some countries where the education system was different from that of BC, there was the need to adjust the documents to the BC terminology. Cho (2011) reports similar barriers in her study on IETs in Ontario and argues that in some cases, “the challenges with paperwork and transcription forced [IETs] to give up their previous university credentials and obtain Ontario certification” (p. 140).

The information sessions organized by the TRB aimed to address some of the information barriers described so far. The sessions aimed to simplify communication with potential IET applicants, and to help clearly convey the requirements. During the sessions, the evaluators offered the following guidelines: that the documents should only be translated if no

one at the TRB could understand the original versions; that an option existed to verify some documents via the TRB receptionist, or by any member of the teaching profession in BC; and, most importantly, that some flexibility would be provided in cases of major barriers in obtaining the documents. For instance, in the first information session I attended, the evaluator mentioned:

It can take a few months to gather the documents but it all gets here eventually. When it is all here, it can take 2-10 weeks to evaluate. There are very rare exceptions, if someone's institution is refusing. If you start a correspondence and you see that it is not going to work, tell us.

However, this information was only heard by IETs who attended the information sessions, so even if IETs had done their research on the credential assessment requirements, they could still find themselves helplessly caught between their home institutions and the TRB, as Miruna (1) recalled:

While I was still in my Eastern European home country I did my homework and I looked at the demands for recertification. When I first came here I applied to a job in a phone company because the assessment process took such a long time...the University has to send your transcripts and your diploma to the TRB directly and they do things very slowly back there. One of my diplomas, it took them, honest to God, two years to print it...So I just waited and waited, I kept on calling and they kept on giving me excuses. I decided to go by the book so I just waited.

Although the TRB evaluators were aware of these difficulties, flexibility was very limited when it came to obtaining original documents. One reason was the fear of document forgery (although when I asked if this happened often, the evaluators could not remember any case in the last few years). In the second information session that I attended, the evaluator said, "It's absolutely

essential [to obtain the original documents]; we cannot say to someone, ‘Well just because in your country it is more difficult or more expensive, you don’t have to send transcripts for us,’ because this will make the system unfair.”

In this example, “fairness” is interpreted in a liberal context (Guo & Shan, 2013) as the creation of one set of rules without taking into consideration any differences that may affect certain groups more than others in applying these rules. The entanglement of seemingly objective criteria and systemic barriers accumulate to produce discriminatory treatment toward IETs that is embedded within the various stages and practices of the recertification process, as Schmidt (2010b) argues:

Discrimination included prejudicial treatment on the basis of dress, accent, perceived foreignness, immigration status, and age; and occurred in a variety of contexts including schools where immigrant teachers had been employed, schools where immigrant teachers were doing practicum placements, and Faculty of Education courses. (pp. 241-243)

5.3.1.1 Barriers within the Job Seeking Process

For many IETs, barriers continued in the job-seeking process even after they were successfully recertified as teachers in BC. There was awareness at the TRB that in the urban centres of BC finding a teaching job was not easy for anyone at the time. Referring to the job market, Shawn McMullin wondered, “Is it because they are IETs or is it simply because we produce too many teachers in Canada and there are no jobs?” Similarly, in the second information session I attended, when asked about the opportunity for finding jobs, the evaluator said:

It’s hard to get in; I’m being completely honest. But when you have a teaching certificate you can also teach other stuff...it is up to the school district. This is when speaking other

languages is useful...if you can speak French it's huge, or math, you can pretty much [be] guaranteed to find a job easily.

Two assumptions were embedded in the above quotes. The first is that going through the recertification process is useful as a tool for finding other employment (in or beyond the school system) even if it does not guarantee a teaching position. The second is that IETs do not face distinctive barriers; rather, they are as affected as everyone else by the shortage in teaching positions. It was implied that IETs may sometimes even have an advantage based on their unique language abilities. However, some IETs did feel that they faced more barriers than typical Canadian graduates, as mentioned by Nur:

I remember being told that it is going to be very easy, that French is in high demand.

Well, it was not easy at all, it was very hard. I remember some classmates who didn't have French immersion, only core French, being hired much more quickly than I was as a French immersion teacher. Maybe because they had some connections, or their parents were teachers in the district. I did it the regular way and I think that my name didn't really help.

Hence, although Nur had expertise in the most in-demand subject area (French), and although she was a native French speaker, she still faced barriers in gaining access to the school system in which she had no previous connections. Her name, which is of Arabic origin, may also have affected her chances of being invited for an interview. Azi shared some similar experiences:

Even if there is demand for French, it is not easy to get the job...I applied many times, and I didn't get interviews, and when they called me I was lucky. I applied only for TOC because I don't think that a teacher who was educated outside of Canada can go straight to a full position.

Similarly, Chassels (2010) argues, “The privileging of Canadian experience that figures prominently in many stories of limited access to employment described by immigrant professionals...is also having a detrimental impact on the hiring of immigrant teachers” (p. 24). Vandy Britton explained that the SFU PQP program attempts to deal with structural discrimination in the hiring process by taking the PQP title off the teaching certificate, “so when the school districts read it, they are not reading it with bias.” However, as she mentioned, “This is not to say that they are not making decisions based on someone’s name.” Furthermore, Goldberg (2005) argues that the reluctance of employers to hire immigrants that is grounded in the terminology of English deficiency and the lack of local experience really amounts to racist hiring practices in disguise.

Ewa shared another barrier when describing her attempts to gain access to the school system as a teaching assistant, prior to her recertification:

I went to an interview, and with my educational background and my experience of four years the interviewer told me, ‘With your experience you should be teaching at the University,’ and I thought, ‘Yes, right, I need to provide for my family.’ The interview took two hours and after one week I received a letter that they cannot hire me. I called them back and asked what went wrong. Then the principal asked me if I could volunteer for two months. So for two months I was traveling every day, for 2.5 hours to volunteer, but I wanted it so badly, and they hired me after all that volunteering and I work ever since as a teaching assistant.

Hence, an additional barrier is the common expectation of volunteer time prior to hiring. This norm, which is widespread in Canada, may seem reasonable as a way of gaining experience and local knowledge. However, this is a problematic expectation that weighs differently based on

one's location. For immigrants, who face many strains as it is, the volunteering expectation as a pre-condition to hiring is another barrier to gaining access to the job market. The volunteering expectation has been transformed into a requirement in some recertification programs. For instance, the PQP program requires applicants to volunteer "in a BC classroom, working directly with students in the age range you wish to teach" (SFU, 2012). In this sense, volunteering, although it is undeniably an important learning opportunity, changed from a self-initiated choice to a mandatory requirement.

Lastly, life circumstances limited IETs' ability to endure the long process needed to find a permanent teaching job in the saturated teaching market in the Greater Vancouver Area. IETs' ability to overcome periods of shortage or instability was altered by the necessity to provide for their families. For instance, Miruna (2) explained her decision not to look for a teaching position when referring to the job action that had been initiated in the last month of the 2013-2014 school year (the time of recertification for the IET participants in this study) and "froze" hiring throughout the summer period:

I'm not really looking for a teaching job right now. First of all it's the strike and everything that is going on in the system, it's a bit discouraging. It makes you reconsider, and think, 'Do I really want to get into it right now?' And as a TOC out there you're left with nothing, without a job, without anything...I need to have a job right now, to have something stable to support my family.

5.4 Personal Barriers

It is difficult to differentiate clearly between structural and personal barriers. In the current study, in most cases in which IETs mentioned a personal issue, this was woven into their social location, be it their gender, age, race, or immigration status. For instance, when talking

about the TRB assessment process, Ewa recalled, “They [TRB] sent me a list of courses I need to take, plus an English exam. That was a lot! At the time I was working and going through fertility treatments. It was a lot of work.” In this example, the process of recertification coincided with Ewa’s attempts to become a mother. Miruna (1) even ended up dropping out of the practicum because she had a new baby and some other family issues. At the time of the interview, she was in the midst of repeating the long practicum for the second time. She recalled that the first time, “Because I was spending so much time in the school, I just ignored my family life and personal life.” John Yamamoto, one of the two current practicum coordinators³¹ at UBC, agreed:

IETs tend to be under external pressures that are not usual for B.Ed. students, such as family issues, finance issues, just living issues...a lot of them have 2-3 kids and they’ve immigrated to a new county and are trying to get jobs. All of this naturally gets in their way of being able to see through the whole process.

Rod Brown seconded this impression: “IETs are in a different point in their lives. They have more responsibilities and typically come without a lot of resources, so the pressure on an updater is far greater than on our typical students.” Similarly, Gary Rupert, who met many IET candidates during his ten years working at the program, commented:

Many of the candidates, especially the women, have families and kids, and sometimes they don’t want to work full-time. And depending on what society they are from, they might have been strongly encouraged to do this recertification process by their husbands. Perhaps that is an obligation they feel they had to take because if it is a family that is new to Canada, it is difficult for both partners to get a job.

³¹ John Yamamoto and Rod Brown the program coordinators in the Teacher Education Office at the time the fieldwork took place, assume the roles of Co-Directors, Teacher Education, as of July 1, 2015.

The same picture also emerged from Vandy Britton:

We have currently in the PQP program people that have been in Canada for 12 years, but it has taken them this long to gather the money and their family situation in place so they could take the rigours of the program. Most of the IETs in the PQP program have families; most of them have a lot of expectations by family members, so they have a lot of responsibilities.

The above quotes highlight the intersection of personal and social constructs in IET experiences. The pressures created as the outcome of immigration are woven into gender roles, parental responsibilities, and cultural expectations. Since individual issues are inherently connected to wider social locations, neoliberal terminology such as “free market” and “merit” is misleading. Such terminology “obscures the realities of privilege, oppression and discrimination on the basis of race, class, gender and language, and gives license to those who argue equal opportunity is the appropriate and adequate response to diversity among students [and teachers]” (Chassels, 2010, p. 28).

5.5 Recommendations to Improve the Recertification Process

Some main recommendations of previous studies are repeated in this study. TRB and UBC professionals highlight the importance of providing accurate information as early as possible in the immigration process. As Shawn McMullin shared:

I take pride in how we attempt to help people here. We don't have all the answers but we certainly try to give IETs as much information. One of the things that we really try to bring to the front is information sharing, to make it easier to gain documents. We're

willing to do as much as we can to assist in facilitating this bridging format and I would like to see the rest of the country adopt something similar.

Main recommendations made by IETs were to make the process shorter, more practicum-oriented, and more flexible. Juranika (1) made a practical suggestion of doing the Updating program on weekends or evenings so IETs could work at the same time.³² Calin Lucas, a secondary math teacher and an instructor at the UBC teacher education program, who immigrated from Romania and was recertified in BC, argued while drawing on his own experiences:

I think the courses intended to IETs need to be different...90% from my growth was in the practicum. I knew the math, I knew the methods, I knew the psychology...the benefit is the practicum. I definitely think that IETs have to go to school and to learn all the new stuff.

And Sophia (1) concluded her interview by saying:

It has been a long journey for me; I would make the path for IETs easier...It's not way different what we're doing right here... The courses are helping you to gain focus on the pedagogical ideas and also to gain the vocabulary, but I think there are many things that we can cut... I started in 2011, all year I had studied English, and then in 2012 I took six credits of English, and this year it is the UBC Updating program. It has been three years of school... So let's try to find a way to make things easier and shorter for us since we also need to work... We have lots of experience teaching, many of our experiences are transferable to the BC classrooms, so let's just consider that.

³² This is actually a model that is successfully implemented in a program in Australia (Cruickshank, 2004).

5.6 Summary

IETs face many barriers during the recertification and job-finding processes. This is a long process with many breaking points; many IETs even decide not to start, or to drop out while still in the process. As Gary Rupert recalled:

Not everyone who comes here and is interested in doing the Updating program actually does it. Some are intimidated by the need to do more academic studies, some are troubled by the cost, and some are intimidated by the length of time.... Only about 60% of the people who inquire into the program ended up doing it, for many reasons; it is expensive, it is time consuming.

Shawn McMullin observed similar threads:

IETs don't understand that they would need to go back and do some retraining and they struggle with that for a number of reasons: it's expensive and it sets back their plans. Typically, they don't have the money to do a year of training, and it means that they're not able to work, so they can't support their family, pay their rent... Instead of gaining money they are actually putting out money to do this updating so this is a bit of a shock to them.

And Rod Brown commented:

The common story that I hear is that they've [IETs] never anticipated how complicated it is going to be... the story that they've been told or they believed was that it is going to be seamless when they come to Canada and things would just click in. They never imagined all the struggles they're going to have, and this is just one of many... That is a really hard process, some of them are questioning if this is the right thing for their family, like 'My

kids are growing up here, maybe at [the] time it would be a good thing for them, but is it the right move for me?' This is the typical story; it is a struggle and they never had imagined how enormous the struggle was going to be.

I feel these words echo within me. Immigration is a long journey with many obstacles, and after 3.5 years in Vancouver, Gilad and I are still in debt. It seems that professionally we are still many steps behind the point we were at in Israel. It is still not even clear if we are capable of providing for our family in a place as expensive as Vancouver. The job market is competitive and we still lack local knowledge, networks, and we will always have our accents... Looking at my children, I can say that yes, they all are English speakers, and they all have gained the advantage of living in another society, and being exposed to a different culture and language. Most importantly, they are away from wars, bombs, and a never-ending "conflict" with its outcome of an almost inherent racism. But, and this is a big "but," they are separated from the love of their extended family, from their cousins and grandparents, from their mother tongue (which they are continuously losing) and from growing up with parents who are successful and self-confident about their place in the world.

In this study, some of the currently recertifying IETs and some of the successful graduates of the recertification process were positive and accepting of the process despite the many barriers they faced, while others reached negative conclusions. Searching for a teaching position for more than four years while being employed as a teaching assistant, Ewa said:

I truly believe that in BC immigrants are not welcome. Period. I don't know if that is snobbism...maybe it is in Vancouver only and it's easier on the outskirts... I worked for so many schools, and sadly, it is pretty clear, immigrants are almost non-existing.

Or, as Gary Rupert put it, "The simple fact of life that no one would admit is that there are biases against age and accent. This is the reality; what can you do?"

It seems that in order to genuinely deal with the excessive barriers IETs face, cosmetic and sporadic measures are not sufficient and a wider systemic perspective is needed, as Schmidt (2010b) suggests:

Efforts to integrate immigrant teachers must go beyond programming approaches to include anti-discriminatory work at the systemic level with all stakeholder groups. Just as the discrimination preventing immigrant teachers from accessing the system is not limited to individuals, neither does the solution lie in working solely at the program level to prepare individual immigrant teachers for success through coursework, language development, and field experiences. (p. 250)

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, initially I had not meant to dedicate an entire chapter to the barriers in the recertification trajectory, as I felt that previous studies have done so profoundly. However, it became clear after I transcribed the different interviews and identified the repeating themes that not including this part would mean telling the story from the middle. Especially since I used the methodology of an extended case study, I felt that the barriers I described framed the case in relation to two vectors: a vertical one – the timespan of the immigration process – and a horizontal one – the social space (or subfield) of the recertification trajectory. The next chapter is focused on these two vectors.

Chapter 6: Analysis of the Recertification Field

6.1 Introduction

The repeated barriers that most IETs described prompted me to map the players in the BC recertification trajectory and the role different institutions played in creating these barriers. I realized that the conceptions of the “good teacher” were embedded in the wider construction of the teaching profession and its gatekeeping mechanisms. This chapter aims to answer the first two research questions:

- What different players do IETs encounter in the recertification process in BC? What conceptions of the teaching profession do they convey?
- How are conceptions of the “good teacher” manifested in the recertification trajectory and especially within the UBC recertification program?

According to Bourdieu (1990b), an analysis of a specific field requires the identification of the interactions and power dynamics among its different players. Therefore, although this case study focuses on the UBC Updating program, I have located it within a wider context. This is also consistent with Burawoy’s (1991) concept of the extended case study.

In the recertification process of IETs in BC, three main institutions participate: the TRB, teacher education programs, and school districts. Although seemingly a linear process in which the TRB is in charge of credential assessments, teacher education programs for executing the TRB requirements, and school districts for post-graduation hiring, institutional decisions at the various stages affect and intervene in other stages. This chapter examines the interrelations among the different players in the field as they emerged from the fieldwork, as well as through the framework of policy analysis. The last section focuses on the Updating program, which is the main site of this study.

6.2 The Connection between the TRB and Teacher Education Programs

As a unit in the BC Ministry of Education, the most powerful institution participating in the recertification process is the TRB. In 2011, under Bill-12 (the “Teacher Act”), the BC College of Teachers was dissolved and replaced by the TRB (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012).³³ The TRB mandate includes an assessment of applications for certification, the approval of teacher education programs, the issuing of teaching certificates, and the enforcement of standards for certificate holders (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012).

The creation of the TRB was also a political move that aimed to form an independent regulatory body and to limit the power of the teachers’ union. Although BC had what Gideonse (1993) calls a “professional mode of governing teacher education” that gives voices to teacher representatives, the creation of the TRB actually reflects an ongoing political tendency to limit the power of the BC Teachers’ Federation (Grimmett & Young, 2012; Young, 2004; Ungerleider, 2003). This rationale underlies Shawn McMullin’s explanation that, “the problem with the old model is that it was controlled by the teachers’ union.” In addition, under the Teacher Act a commissioner office was created as part of the TRB, which, according to McMullin, “created an unbiased pathway to proper conduct that couldn’t be influenced by the teachers’ union, because their interest is in protecting the teachers’ rights, and it’s not always in the interests of the public.” McMullin’s answer echoes the prevalent terminology used by the government in justifying limiting teachers’ representation “as being necessary in the interests of public accountability and public interest” (Young, 2004, p. 24). Under the current Liberal government this agenda is further intensifying, since, as Ungerleider and Krieger (2009) explain, in most educational issues, “the ideologies of the Liberal government and the British Columbia

³³ Under the same act the “BC Teachers’ Council” was formed as a partial replacement for the BC College of Teachers. The council is responsible for setting the standards for teachers and comprises elected and appointed members (BC Ministry of Education, 2014b).

teachers' Federation are situated close to the opposite ends of the spectrum" (p. 285).

Furthermore, McMullin's perspective is consistent with neoliberal discourses that portray unions as self-preserving organizations and alternatively promote the conception of the individual as a self-standing unit. His perspective demonstrates that the subfield of recertification is not disconnected from wider circulating dominant agendas such as neoliberalism. However, as Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue when describing the findings of an international summit focused on successful educational reforms, "all the successful countries involve teachers and their unions or associations in setting and supporting the reform agenda" (p.180). They further argue that "unionization is not a determinant variable; it all depends on how union membership interacts with other professional capital factors" (p. 180).

The TRB is the sole authority in the credential evaluation stage. The evaluation process may result in four outcomes. The optimal one is eligibility for a non-expiring professional certificate. The second one is eligibility for a basic certificate, which means that although not all BC requirements have been met, according to the AIT, applicants with a valid teaching certificate from other provinces and territories are qualified to teach in BC. The third outcome is eligibility for a conditional certificate, which qualifies applicants to teach for five years, during which time they need to meet all of the requirements. The last outcome is ineligibility for any certificate, which means that the applicants do not meet the minimum BC requirements. In this case, the TRB states, "Our evaluation report letter will describe what requirements must be met before we can issue you a certificate" (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 17).

According to data collected since 2008, the TRB received a few hundred IET applications every year; the lowest number was 189 in 2013 and the highest was 520 in 2009, with an average annual number of 400 (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2014a). According to the TRB report, in

2012, out of a total of 361 IET applications, 209 were successful, 76 were denied, and 76 were incomplete (i.e., not all the documents had arrived by the time of assessment). The successful category included applicants who applied for the second time (or, in some cases, even more than two times). The statistics also show that in 2008-2013 (the period in which the data was collected) 19-37 applicants applied annually for the second (or more) time. The successful category also included IETs who were entitled to a basic permit. There was no breakdown of the categories according to nationality, race, ethnicity, or gender.

In the case of ineligibility for certification, the TRB provides IETs with a letter stating the desired additions required to be certified as teachers in BC. IETs need to follow the requirements, which may include prerequisite content courses, English courses, and teacher education courses and practicum. As Miruna (1) shared:

They [TRB] wrote me a letter with requirements and I had to go back to school and do 12 credits, including math, science, and social studies because I wanted to teach elementary. Then I applied to Douglas College and to Thompson Rivers University for English courses, and when I finished it all I applied to UBC for the Updating program.

The pre-requisite content courses and English courses can be taken at any higher education institution in BC, while the teacher education portion can be taken at any of the nine BC recognized teacher education programs. Teacher education programs have autonomy in assigning and adjusting the courses requested by the TRB. So, while the TRB demands the minimum number of courses according to the respective bylaws (BC Ministry of Education, 2011b),³⁴ in many cases teacher education programs ask for more. This is definitely the case in the only two designated recertification programs in BC (SFU and UBC); the SFU PQP program

³⁴ The key policies that regulate teacher certification in BC are bylaw 2: policy 2 and 5 (BC Ministry of Education, 2011b)

is a full-year, full-time program, and the newly revised UBC Updating program requires the completion of 30 credits regardless of the TRB demands. The TRB website (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2014b) states under, “Overview of eligibility requirements for International Graduates”:

As part of the familiarization program, you will need to complete 12 credits of teacher education courses related to your subject area(s) and a practicum through a BC university. Regardless of the university you choose to attend, familiarization programs usually take approximately one year to complete. Many applicants who are asked to complete a familiarization program choose to complete Simon Fraser University’s Professional Qualification Program or the University of British Columbia’s Teacher Updating Program.

Hence, although IETs can enroll in any teacher education program in BC, the TRB encourages enrollment in one of the two designated programs as better suited to supporting IETs’ needs. These programs were also named in both information sessions I attended. The TRB evaluators knew that these two recertification programs have additional curricular and practicum demands, accepted these as the mandate of teacher education programs, and even supported these additional demands as a way to ensure better preparation beyond the minimal requirements. The recertification programs offer more credits, broader coursework, and a longer practicum that also make IETs eligible for student loans; however, they take more time, cost more money, and put more pressure on IETs. As Shawn McMullin explained:

We can’t control [the demands of the recertification programs]... We typically ask for a pretty scarce number of credits, we’re looking for the very minimum. I actually believe that the two bridging programs that are fully developed here in BC [i.e., at SFU and UBC] are much better suited to the individual IET, because their requirements are far

beyond what we ask. I think it prepares the individual to a much better extent to enter the school system.

Sydney Craig explained this relationship from the perspective of the Updating program:

We don't necessarily agree with their [TRB] demands, so we might say, 'In our program you also need to take another course, although you were not told you have to do it.' We might impose it and we have some push back occasionally. For example, the TRB might ask for a very short practicum of six weeks and we believe that teacher candidates need extended time, so we will push back and talk them into doing something else.

Although from the perspective of teacher education programs it makes sense to aim for what they perceive as a more comprehensive training process, the discrepancy between the requirements of the TRB and the Updating program has led to frustration among IETs, as Peter (1) shared:

I had to take the full Updating program, which is 30 credits, so of course I feel not good about it because I had to waste my time and I need to waste more money. I wish they [UBC] could follow it [the TRB requirements]. The TRB said 12 credits and six weeks of practicum so that what you do. What is the use of the TRB if the universities are not following its requirements? ...I also had to do my six credits in English before I could start the program at UBC or SFU and it's also a requirement of the universities and not the TRB.... The university should follow the TRB recommendations; otherwise, it is a waste of the recommendations. You pay money to be evaluated; it is \$300, it's a lot of money to pay for immigrants.

As Peter mentioned, although the TRB allows a five-year period to complete the requirements, both recertification programs (i.e., SFU and UBC) ask that IET applicants complete the pre-requisite and English courses prior to their enrollment in the programs. As Shawn McMullin explained:

We would indicate to them [IETs] that they can do the UBC program and upon the completion they can qualify for our conditional license and they can carry the additional coursework. We would allow them to do that because it's possible. UBC would say, 'That doesn't work for us. In order to ensure your success in the practicum we want you to do the courses before you enter the practicum,' and that's their prerogative.

Similarly, Vandy Britton shared that IETs "get a letter from the TRB. And it sounds like they can take courses anytime, but we have changed it so they are required to take the courses prior to the PQP, because we want to set them [up] for success." However, this demand of the recertification programs created a constrained time frame and put a lot of pressure on IET applicants, since many of them were unaware of this in advance. Nellah recalled:

It was so stressful because the registration at UBC is till the end of July, but then they [UBC] asked me to take two English courses. The BC College of Teachers [the certifying body previous to the formation of the TRB] said I had five years to do it, but at UBC they said, 'You have to finish it before you register.' That was another hurdle, so I said, 'Oh God, I will need to come back one year later because it will take me six months.' But then they referred me to an on-line option and I did both courses in one month. It was really stressful because I had to study 15 hours a day. I didn't see my children, but I had to do it, I couldn't afford to wait, it was quite frustrating.... I was not working, I was

trying to volunteer and you cannot get access to volunteering because people don't know you, so I did it [the on-line courses] and got admitted.

There could also be an opposite scenario in which IETs graduated successfully from the recertification program but did not fulfill the overall TRB requirements, as Vandy Britton recalled:

TRB determines what this person has to do in order to be recertified in Canada, but the university gets to decide that the student is granted an entrance to the university. For example, they also need to pass the English test and if they don't they won't be certified. I remember one case, which was heart breaking because the person was lovely and great with kids, and she was a math teacher so the amount of time that she would need to write was so small and this was the piece that failed her. It was such a disappointing thing for her. This was her dream and it was stopped again.

Hence, the interrelations between the TRB and the recertification programs created some additional barriers in the recertification process, such as a discrepancy in the requirements, the insufficient transmission of information, and a degree of inconsistency in decisions regarding IETs.

The power relations between the institutions were not necessarily experienced at the individual level; all the professionals involved in this study described functional and collaborative working relationships. However, power relations between the players in the field are embedded at the structural level and shape the recertification process and the experiences of the IETs during its completion. For instance, John Yamamoto described:

There is a displaced resentment to some extent that we get from IETs... 'Why are you making me take these courses?' I don't want to blame the TRB, but all of those

requirements are being set aside by the TRB. We are the messengers. We cannot issue the certification; we are the vehicle to get it.

The entanglement of the different institutions was also apparent in Sydney Craig's answer regarding possible changes in the recertification process at UBC: "We're part of the same game, so in order to really change the program, it [the rectification program] would have to change at a different level." Bourdieu (1984) defines a field as a "playing space, a field of objective relations between individuals or institutions competing for an identical stake" (cited in Gemme, 2009, p. 20). Craig's quote above demonstrates the nature of the recertification process as a field of struggle, in which different agents attempt to improve their positions, or in this case, their institutional positions, while also being restricted by the preexisting structure of the field.

6.3 Key Policies of Teacher Certification in BC

The role of the TRB in the recertification process is not limited to the credential assessment mechanism, but also includes the enactment of certification policies for all teachers in BC. The key policies that regulate teacher certification in BC are bylaw 2 policies 2 and 5 (hereafter bylaws) (BC Ministry of Education, 2011b) and the "Standards for Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in British Columbia" (hereafter the Standards) (BC Ministry of Education, 2012). The bylaw policies are summarized and translated into practical requirements in the "Application for Teacher's Certificate of Qualification" that every applicant is required to fill out (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012).³⁵

The Standards are the overarching declarative document for teaching in BC. The very term "standards" is contested because of the implications regarding the "standards movement" that there is a correlation between students' achievement and teachers' accountability (Fullan,

³⁵ This process will be discussed in the next section.

Galluzzo, Morris, & Watson, 1998). The Standards contains three parts: training, competence, and conduct. It opens with the following declaration:

The Teachers' Council must consider the needs of the public, especially of the students who are the 'clients' of teachers, ahead of the interests of the certificate holders. This means that the standards for teachers are to be established for the benefits of students, their parents and the society as a whole. (BC Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 1)

However, it is also argued that "the standards are intended to honour and advance the work of educators by highlighting the complex and varied nature of educators' work, they articulate the knowledge, skills and attitudes that educators shall possess" (p. 1). Hence, the Standards assumes a dual role, both to protect the public and especially the "clients" of the educational process, and to honour the complexity of the teaching profession. These two components may be contradictory, as the common institutional way to ensure public safety is through regulation, whereas complexity is embedded in flexibility and diversity. Coulter and colleagues (2007) refer to this ambiguity when arguing:

We are disturbed by the limited and limiting conversation about teaching and accountability characteristic of the current version of the *Standards*. We believe that the College is in a unique position to open a better, more authentically democratic dialogue about good teaching and educational accountability. (Concluding section)

There are eight standards, two of which focus mostly on the core conduct that is expected from teachers in BC, such as respecting students, not harming them, and acting as role models (Standards 1, 2). Four standards focus mostly on competencies that are required from teachers, such as pedagogical knowledge, effective teaching practices, the understanding of diverse learning, communication with the children's parents, and content knowledge (Standards 3, 4, 5,

and 6). The last two focus mostly on the teaching profession as a reflective, developing, and collaborative profession (Standards 7, 8).

This division is consistent with Moore's (2004) description of the dominant discourses in teacher education that was discussed in Chapter 2. To repeat briefly, Moore (2004) identifies three, seemingly contradicting discourses on the "good teacher."³⁶ The first discourse, the "competent craftsman," sees teaching as a set of skills and competencies that is identified and measurable. This discourse assumes a universal approach to teaching that is neutral and objective. However, this is false neutrality since all of the institutions and discourses contain cultural bias (Guo & Shan, 2013).

The second discourse that Moore (2004) identifies is the "reflective practitioner." This discourse portrays teachers as learners and inquirers into their own practices. The problem, according to Moore, is that reflexivity can be reduced to one of the competencies required of the "competent craftsman." In the last few years, reflexivity has become a "buzzword" in the education field, but is often interpreted as an individualistic skill disconnected from critical social examination. Thus, reflexivity can become a tool for reproducing the same power relations in the educational field. As Lorde (1984) argues, "The master's tool will never dismantle the master's house" (cited in Chinnery, 2008).

There is a discrepancy between the individualistic-positivistic approach that Moore (2004) identifies and alternative critical approaches, which is apparent throughout the Standards. The dominant discourse is individualistic and focuses on the differences among students, for instance, stating that "educators are knowledgeable about how children develop as learners and as social beings, and demonstrate an understanding of individual learning differences and special

³⁶ I shall only discuss the two official discourses here; the third one is the popular image of the "charismatic teacher."

needs” (BC Ministry of Education, 2012, Standard 3). However, diversity is only mentioned once: “Educators respect the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities” (BC Ministry of Education 2012, Standard 1). Furthermore, there is only one abstract reference to students as belonging to communities: “Educators understand, respect and support the role of parents and the community in the education of students” (BC Ministry of Education, 2012, Standard 4), while diversity in the teaching profession is not mentioned anywhere. As Robertson (2012) argues:

There is a clear convergence of agendas shaped, on the one hand, by the link between education and economic development and the way in which transformations in education are to deliver the social base for knowledge-based economies and, on the other hand, the continuing centrality of neoliberalism and new public management as the organizing ideology for competitive societies. “Learning as (individual) development” thus displaces “education as development.” (pp. 601-602)

Furthermore, Higgins (2010) argues that the Standards conveys “technical rationality” that reflects US neoliberal tendencies in teacher education, with its focus on students’ achievement and teachers’ accountability. She demonstrates how the excessive use of terms such as “act as,” “demonstrating,” and “meet” “allude to a technical rational view of reality” (p. 118).³⁷

More references to the teacher’s role are to be found in the BC Education Plan (hereafter the Plan). In the Plan, “quality teaching and learning” are defined as one of the five key elements (BC Ministry of Education, 2011a, p. 5). It is argued that “teachers are fundamental to student success. Teachers must be supported to work with students in a variety of roles: guide, mentor, coach, content expert” (p. 4); and the role of teachers is shifting from being the “primary source

³⁷ Higgins (2010) discusses an earlier edition of the Standards.

of content” to “helping students to learn how to learn” (p. 4). However, also in this case, these sentences are framed by the statement that the plan “will make sure teacher regulation protects both students and the public interest” (p. 4).

The Plan reflects the construction of teaching as a regulated profession, much like medicine and engineering. When the discourse of public protection is central, it determines that newcomers to the profession need to meet certain criteria in order to be able to practice it. In many cases in BC, IETs are considered more as newcomers to the profession than as experienced teachers who are newcomers to Canada. This is evident, for example, in the application requirements.

6.3.1 Application for Teacher’s Certificate of Qualification

The application package for IETs is similar to that of Canadian graduates; however, the implications of the requirements are different in each case. The requirements for certification in BC include five main components (which are deduced from bylaw 2, policies 2 and 5).

The first requirement is “fitness to teach,” which means being “a person of good and moral character” (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 5). Fitness to teach is determined by the results of a criminal record check, confidential character reference forms, and an assessment form. The character reference form is intended to be filled out by two people who know the applicants, but not necessarily their teaching abilities, and can testify concerning their character. The teaching assessment form is built according to the eight Standards and intends to evaluate the applicants via their most current supervisors.

The second requirement is proficiency in English or French. Proficiency is determined by a language proficiency test that every applicant who is not from a country where English or French is “the only official language” is required to take (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p.

5). The third requirement is recent teaching experience. The applicants should demonstrate at least 75 days of teaching experience within one academic year, 100 days within two consecutive academic years, or 10 weeks of practicum, all within the last 10 years (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 5).

The fourth requirement is the completion of post-secondary studies, which is divided into a few sub-categories such as the academic coursework required for secondary and elementary school teachers, and graduation from a teacher education program. Whether or not IETs meet these requirements depends on the extent to which the IETs' former institutions and programs, in both length and content, resemble the BC education system. This means that for many IETs who do not come from countries in which the academic systems and teacher education programs are similar to those of BC, additional coursework is specified. For instance, all elementary school teachers are required to have three credits in "Canadian studies," and all teachers are required to have six credits in "English literature and composition" (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 6).

Similarly, teacher education programs are evaluated according to their resemblance to the BC teacher education model, so if a program differs (in coursework, methodology, practicum model, etc.) from the BC system, additional coursework may be needed. The last requirement, "familiarity with the Canadian education system" (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 7), shows the difference between Canadian graduates and IETs more clearly. According to the familiarization criterion:

If you completed your teacher training in an education system that is significantly different from the education system in Canada, we may ask you to complete a familiarization program to learn about the culture and curriculum of the Canadian

education system before we grant you a certificate. (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 7).

This actually means that all IETs who come from non-Western countries (unless they were teaching in a similar system such as the International Baccalaureate) need to undergo an updating process. In this sense, as Guo and Shan (2013) argue, “by solely emphasizing Canadian standards, the occupational bodies miss out on an important opportunity that other epistemic views, approaches and practices may contribute to the existing knowledge base in Canada” (p. 475). Furthermore, the requirements expose the historical construction of the certification process as a gatekeeping mechanism that creates a homogenized subfield, in which the “good teacher” is white and a native English speaker (Chapman, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 1995; Sleeter, 2008a). As such, the certification process stands in sharp contrast to the image of the education system as celebrating diversity and promoting multiculturalism as an inherent and integral tenet of Canadian identity (Joshee, 2004).

On the practical level, the certification/recertification process, although bureaucratic for all participants, demands more from IETs (and also costs more: \$395 for IETs and \$245 for Canadian graduates). For instance, applicants are requested to submit verified transcripts from all previous academic institutions. In many cases this is a time-consuming and complicated process, as IETs need to gather documents from foreign institutions and have them translated upon request (Cho, 2011; Frank, 2013; Phillion, 2003). Applicants also need to provide a “statement(s) of professional standing” from “the certification body in the jurisdiction where you completed your teacher training, all other certification bodies where you hold or have held a teaching certificate [and] from all employers in jurisdictions where you have taught without registering with government certification” (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 9). This task can also be

very time-consuming and bureaucratic for IETs, especially when dealing with jurisdictions in which these demands are non-routine.

Although the certification demands are similar, it seems that their implications weigh more heavily on IETs than on new Canadian graduates (especially since the AIT was signed) (BC Ministry of Education, 2010). In diverse school districts such as the ones in the Greater Vancouver Area, the “one size fits all” approach actually serves one group of teacher candidates better than others (Apple, 2004; Kincheloe, 2010). It seems that in policies regarding the recertification process, IETs are “categorized” according to their backgrounds, and the greater the difference from the Canadian system, the more barriers IETs face. Hence, IETs are assessed less for their individual teaching quality and more by their national and cultural locations. As Subedi (2008) claims:

Dominant interpretation of an authentic identity is based on the view that the ‘real’ identity of an ethnic or racial group exists and that it can be easily defined and categorized. Consequently, the mainstream perception that individuals need to act in pre-conceived ways of being brown, black, red or yellow suggests that there is a set of performances associated with being a racial/ethnic subject. (p. 62)

When applying the Bourdieuan frame, the application requirements can be analyzed as a way to create distinction between Canadian and non-Canadian teacher candidates. Lareau and Weininger (2005) argue that there is a widespread misunderstanding of the concept of cultural capital as applying to cultural distinctions and detached from “ability measurements.” Alternatively, they suggest, there is a “need for a broader conception that stresses the micro- interactional processes through which individuals comply (or fail to comply) with the evaluative standards of dominant institutions such as schools” (p. 106). In this case, the certification

requirements are formalized as neutral standards that conceal their cultural bias. Teacher candidates are required to pay (materially and symbolically) what Bourdieu calls an “admission fee” in order to enter the field of teaching. Only if they complete the certification process do they gain the right to belong to the field. This process, however, is constructed in a way that strengthens the homogeneity of the field and turns the multicultural rhetoric into an empty shell; as Schmidt (2010b) argues, “[the] Canadian teaching profession [has a] tendency toward exclusion of non-Whites, immigrants, and linguistic minorities” (p. 285).

Furthermore, there is an interesting contradiction at the core of the certification requirements. Although the requirements should convey the agenda of the Plan that conceptualizes the “good teacher” as a leader who has the ability to help students to navigate the twenty-first century, the requirements convey a “technical-managerial” approach that is “mentally associated with top-down external control and educational conformity to specified rules and ends” (Angus, 2013, p. 171). Hence, the requirements should be understood with connection to the larger social field (field of struggle) in a neoliberal climate that aims at diminishing the capital of the teaching profession. As McGraw (2011) points out:

Teachers too are struggling to maintain their own professional and personal identities in a profession that is increasingly moving beyond their control . . . Teachers, like young people, are shoved forcefully to the side and pressured to conform to the political, social and economic agendas of the day. They too are left feeling disoriented, disarmed and disengaged. Amidst such pressure, opportunities for open dialogue are minimized and relationships suffer. (p. 110)

From this perspective, the requirements are not objective means to assure good teaching but rather an attack on the professional autonomy of teachers. As Higgins (2010) argues, “in this

regime of accountability, educators' agency in making judgments is constrained because accountability requires them to function as part of an assessment bureaucracy." (p. 117)

In this sense, IETs are an example of the ultimate erosion of teacher professional capital within the neoliberal global climate. Hence, there is a connection between the barriers extended to IETs and the increasing surveillance and standardization in the larger field of teaching.

6.4 The Relations between the SFU and UBC Recertification Programs

An additional power relation within the recertification process is between players located on the same level, namely, the different teacher education programs. As mentioned above, although there are nine teacher education programs in BC, the only two that have a designated track for IETs are at UBC and SFU. This makes these two programs a more appealing choice for IETs, as they are designed to address their specific needs, and this is of course preferable to having to patch together courses that may be available at other institutions but are not targeted to their specific requirements. In addition, these two programs are located in the Greater Vancouver Area, and hence are accessible to a greater number of applicants.

Tracing back the creation of these two programs, it seems that they were developed as an outcome of a shared process. Sydney Craig elaborated:

Originally, there was a financial incentive [to create a designated track for IETs] and the idea was for the program to move from SFU to other universities in BC so it would serve constituencies in each area. But what happened is that the financial incentive became part of the SFU budget and it has never moved...so there was an original plan but it never quite worked out this way, and SFU continued to have the program.... We protested for many years, also against the fact the College of Teachers [the certifying body previous to

the formation of the TRB] would recommend the SFU model and IETs would find out about UBC by accident.

Similarly, Rita Irwin recalled:

The College of Teachers at that time gave preference to the SFU program, so it got additional funding and was referred to on all the letters that updaters received. So almost on an annual basis we would have a talk with the College of Teachers to make them understand what we [UBC] are offering.

As a result of this budget allocation decision, SFU has developed and maintained a model of a separate cohort (or “module” in SFU terms) intended for IETs, whereas at UBC, IETs were integrated into the general B.Ed. program. This process also positions the SFU PQP as the default program for IETs. Currently, both the UBC and the SFU programs are mentioned on the TRB website (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2014b). However, in the application package for IETs, the PQP remains the only program to be mentioned by its name: “The Simon Fraser University offers a program called the Professional Qualification Program (PQP), which satisfies the requirements of a familiarization program” (Teacher Regulation Branch, 2012, p. 7).

Gary Rupert strongly supported the integrated model of UBC as opposed to the distinctive cohort at SFU, arguing that

our philosophy is to have them [IETs] integrated into the classroom with domestic students because we think they will absorb the approach to local teaching more quickly that way, because they are learning from their peers.... The foreign teachers have experiences and they have some cultural questions because they are new to the community, whereas the domestic students are very familiar and have the answers to most things including the things that are not overt...Anyway, they [IETs] are in a

disadvantage so why separate them? They would be able to share their experiences but it's not going to help them [to integrate].

However, both Rita Irwin and Sydney Craig argued that, provided the means, the distinctive cohort model was more effective in answering to IETs' needs, as Sydney Craig explained:

I wish UBC could offer this, but we endeavored to do something that is cohesive and meaningful within the structure we have. It was really in an answer to a need from IETs candidates... What we tried to do in more recent years was to put them in an intake cohort so they are part of a group.

And Rita Irwin added:

Because they [IETs] were not in the full program, they were really coming here only to satisfy course requirements by the College of Teachers. So... we asked them to take one additional course or two, because anyway, they were very close to getting a diploma, so internally they would get more recognition... We don't get enough students to have it as a separate program, so it's not viable for us to have a separate cohort just for them, and as a result, they take classes alongside our B.Ed. students. That's probably why the challenge for us is to try to give the program the integrity we wanted...we tried to make some adjustments, to be more oriented toward them.

The PQP and the Updating program take in most IET applicants; however, because of the historical trajectory, the PQP model is the only one that is designed as a separate cohort and is fully geared toward IETs. From the perspective of IET applicants, this situation has some disadvantages since, as of recently, the PQP program is being offered only every second year, the UBC program is still considered in many cases only as a second option, and other teacher

education programs admit IETs only sporadically. This provincial structure limits the ability of teacher education programs in BC to provide an accessible and comprehensive solution to the recertification needs of IETs. Sophia (1) shared the stress and exhaustion experienced by many IETs while navigating the different institutions within the recertification trajectory:

I decided to go to SFU, but they have a long list of requirements. I think the worst one was to volunteer in school for two hours a day. So I went and I talked to the person in charge and I told them, 'I think I can fill all the requirements but the only thing I think I'm not able to do is to volunteer two hours every day in a school. I'm a single mother, I'm trying to do the English six credits, and I need to work. I'm by myself here'...and they said, 'Well that's the requirements, you have to do it.' There was no flexibility... so I was like, 'This is too much,' but this was my only option, so I said, 'Ok, so I have to do it'... Then they told me, 'You have to apply a year before so you need to wait for next year, so I said, 'Ok, I'll be patient and do all the other stuff.' Then I went again and they told me, 'We closed the program for the next year, so you need to wait for 2014. We're going to do it every two years now'... It was frustrating. So I went to the TRB again and they said, 'Why don't you go to UBC?'... I went there and I just needed to finish the six credits in English.... I was registered at Douglas College but only for three credits, and by the time I went to UBC they said, 'You have to have all the credits in advance.' But Douglas had already closed the registration, and then someone at UBC told me, 'Why won't you do it in Thompson Rivers and try to do it online?' So I did it online.... three years I've been working on that; it's a long process.

It seems that the historical construction of the recertification process has shaped the power relations in this subfield, which is characterized by a few institutions competing over the

resources and attempting to advance their locations. Hence, individual agents, even if holding power positions, as do Irwin or Craig, are constrained by the historical structure and the conditions of the field (Bourdieu, 1984; 1997). This situation, again, takes the biggest toll on IETs who are the newcomers to the field, since navigating this complex system becomes a barrier by itself.

6.5 Players in the Job Hiring Process

The third group of players that takes part in the recertification process is the school districts, which are in charge of the hiring of teachers in BC. This process is mostly detached from the TRB and the recertification programs and is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The UBC and SFU recertification programs do not possess data regarding the hiring percentages of IETs in comparison to that of local graduates, and the TRB has only recently begun to gather data on the topic, which is inaccessible to me. This is an interesting and important topic for a further investigation, since, as Schmidt (2010b) discovers, in Manitoba, “teachers with heritage language accents are treated with open hostility in some settings, devaluing multilingualism and suggesting that inclusive and equity-oriented policies can have little impact on the discriminatory practices evident in some schools” (p. 244). If this data were publicly available, the job prospects of IETs who have completed a recertification program might become a further incentive or disincentive for other IETs who are considering recertification.

6.6 The UBC Updating Program

6.6.1 Background

In this section I give, for the purpose of this study, a general introduction to the UBC program as a main player in the recertification subfield. I focus on the program’s goals and the

conceptions of the “good teacher” that are embedded within it. A detailed account of the professional capital conversion process will be given in the next chapter.

UBC has a well-established teacher education program that was founded in 1956 and has since prepared hundreds of teacher candidates yearly. Although in the last ten years there has been a drop of nearly 300 candidates per a year, teachers who are UBC graduates still compose about 55% of the province’s teaching force (Teacher Education Office, 2010, p. 7). The UBC program contains elementary, middle, and secondary tracks that are divided according to different themes in the elementary track, and subject areas in the secondary track. It also has a Native Indian Teacher Education Program that was established in 1970.

The UBC teacher education program is declaratively committed to the principles of social justice and equity, as emerges from its mission statement:

Teacher educators at UBC are aware that enacting global citizenship necessitates a dialogical approach to issues of social and ecological justice, equity, sustainability and social action... Teacher candidates need to inquire systematically into their own practice, with an eye toward enhancing learning experiences for all students in school settings and other learning environments and an eye toward understanding teaching as a moral activity guided by ideals of human good, conceptions of what is educationally valuable, and views about how persons ought to treat one another. (Teacher Education Office, 2014 para. 2)

In 2006, under the title of CREATE³⁸ (Community to RE-imagine Alternatives for Teacher Education), the Faculty of Education initiated a process of redesigning its teacher education program (Teacher Education Office, 2012); the revised program was officially

³⁸ When referring to the current UBC teacher education program, I use interchangeably the terms B.Ed. program, the revised program, and CREATE program.

launched in the academic year of 2012-2013. The CREATE program is a 12-month B.Ed. program, which is intended to make it competitive with other teacher education programs elsewhere in Canada. This is important since, in accordance with the AIT, graduates of Canadian teacher education programs can teach throughout Canada. This structural revision demonstrates the relative heteronomy of the field of teacher education (Bourdieu, 1985) and the influence of other players in the field (such as competing universities), as well of the educational and professional policies on the UBC program. For instance, the CREATE program aims to develop “a new vision for teacher education” (Teacher Education Office, 2012, p. 1), but this vision is influenced by external forces in the field of teacher education. The following statement demonstrates this dual position (Teacher Education Office, 2010):

Labour mobility is not a provincial affair any longer. While our program needs to consider our provincial obligation we must also ensure we are not narrowly defining ourselves as a teacher education institution for the province, indeed, we are educating prospective educators for the nation and the world. (p. 6)

Hence, the CREATE philosophy of preparing teachers “for their roles as educators in both local and global contexts” (Teacher Education Office, 2012, p. 1) is also a pragmatic necessity for keeping the program competitive and attracting international candidates.

The CREATE program retains the thematic model of the elementary cohorts and expands the focus on subject areas in the secondary cohorts (Teacher Education Office, 2013a). In the “philosophical basis” of the revised program, it is declared that, “as Faculty at a research-intensive university, UBC teacher educators consider inquiry to be a hallmark of teacher education and development” (Teacher Education Office, 2012, p. 1). Thus, one of the main revisions of the program is its increased focus on teacher candidates’ systematic inquiry into

their own practices, which is implemented in the form of three inquiry seminars that run throughout the program. The other main revisions include an emphasis on “diversity, and social and ecological justice,” a “mandatory course on Aboriginal education,” and “infusion of Aboriginal perspectives throughout the program” (p. 1). The CREATE program also contains a new model of practicum that includes an enhanced experience in a broad educational setting (Teacher Education Office, 2012, p. 1).³⁹

The CREATE program emphasizes five main strands that are to be integrated into different areas of the program: “Inquiry and dialogical understanding; curriculum, pedagogy and assessment; social & ecological justice and diversity; language, literacies and cultures; and field experiences: school and community” (Teacher Education Office, 2013a, p. 3).

In an evaluation done after the first year of the CREATE program (Teacher Education Office, 2013b), a major change in satisfaction rates was reported in regards to “meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners,” in which 62% of the teacher candidates, in comparison to 38% in 2012, reported that they felt “confident about my understanding of Aboriginal learners” (p. 16). The other two main additions received high satisfaction rates as well, with 72% of the teacher candidates agreeing with the statement, “The program helped me to understand inquiry based teaching” (p. 17), and 68% agreeing that “[the] enhanced practicum was an important part of the program” (p. 18).

6.7 The Updating Program as Part of the CREATE Program

The Updating track, as mentioned before, was integrated into the general B.Ed. program. It was revised in 2011 to become a 30-credit diploma program that takes eight months to

³⁹ The enhanced practicum is a three-week practicum in addition to the ten-week one. It is designed for teacher candidates to experience teaching in different communities and informal educational institutions such as museums and community organizations.

complete. IETs in the secondary track begin their academic year with their peers and graduate in April, following the long practicum, while IETs in the elementary track join their peers only in the second term, in January, and finish in June. Both groups usually do not take the enhanced practicum or the inquiry courses, but mainly subject-specific methodology (in the secondary track), general methodology, and assessment.

The program coordinators knew who the IETs were since they held a different practicum number; however, course instructors did not necessarily know about the IETs or the Updating program. As Robert Shoofey shared, “usually FAs don’t know who IETs are. The TEO prefers not to let them know unless asked.” This lack of identification is either an institutional decision or an outcome of what Rita Irwin described as a wider challenge in the B.Ed. program:

I’d like to think that it [the UBC program] is a coherent program, but we have our challenges. Part of it is the largeness of this place. It has its advantages but it’s a harder place to have that personalized communication.

Irwin was concerned that the size of the program led to a limited awareness among instructors of the various aspects of the program that were not closely related to their own fields of expertise. Some course instructors echoed this concern. For instance, Ming argued, “I’m not sure whether I know them [IETs] all. I know that at least two students in my course used to be teachers in their country.... I just know a little bit but I don’t know very clearly about it.” And Alayne Armstrong argued, “I know that I saw one student’s name and I tried to figure out the codes, but I don’t know about it specifically.” For other instructors, being unaware of IETs’ designation was part of their teaching philosophy, as Calin Lucus described, “Every year I have a few [IETs]. I’m not asking them, I try not to remember them, because I’m trying to be objective and not to give anybody a different kind of treatment.” This statement conveys a prevalent assumption among

professionals that giving the “same treatment” equals being objective and fair. However, studies have challenged this assumption and suggest more complex methods for teaching diverse student populations (Gale & Densmore, 2000). Furthermore, this approach resonates with prevalent conceptions in teacher education, such as the notion of meritocracy (Milner, 2010) and the conception of the “good teacher” as colour-blind and disregarding differences (Moore, 2004).

Since IETs were few in number and were integrated into the general program, many instructors who had IETs in their classes were unaware of their unique position. This situation was amplified due to the cross-faculty structure of the teacher education program, in which instructors were sometimes appointed to departments in the Faculty of Education and sometimes to the TEO. The limited awareness of the existence of IETs in the program was useful for this study’s purpose, since the teaching was not specifically geared toward IETs, and conveyed general assumptions about teaching and the “good teacher” in the CREATE program.

6.7.1 Conceptions of the “Good Teacher” in the CREATE Program

The CREATE program, which was launched one year prior to the initiation of this study, provided a good opportunity to identify the conceptions of the “good teacher,” since it is the outcome of a long process of redesigning the vision for teacher education at UBC. Rita Irwin described her expectations of the revision process: “There is an emphasis on inquiry, on social justice, on diversity, on Indigenous perspective. I would hope that these pillars would come through in all the programs.” Sydney Craig who, like Irwin, took part in the revision process, explained that:

Good teaching has something to do with engaging learners, it has something to do with giving learners autonomy, it’s about good instruction and professional behavior, it’s about a disposition toward the role you’re going to play in your professional life. It’s

more than imparting knowledge, and it's about creating good citizens, good human beings.

The instructors I interviewed were informed of the goals of the CREATE program, although each of them emphasized themes that were more closely related to their teaching perspectives and subject areas. For instance, Anik explained:

We're really focused on inquiry so I think we take the stance that students can't leave after one year knowing everything there is about teaching. But we want to create in our students a disposition toward being lifelong learners...ultimately we want to create teachers who believe in the potential of each student and who believe that every student in BC has the right to a good education for who they are as individuals.

Alayne Armstrong explained that, "the goals this year seem to be helping the student teachers to become inquirers into what they're doing, that teachers are researchers all throughout their career, and they need to start now with the basics." In these two examples, it seems that a main conception of the "good teacher" was built around inquiry. This focus represents teaching as a reflective profession that requires continued learning and development (Moore, 2004). In other words, a main characteristic of the professional capital of teachers is that it is rooted in practice and in a critical reflection on this practice (Britzman, 2003). As I demonstrated earlier in this chapter, this approach stands in sharp contrast to the requirements of the recertification process that diminish the extensive previous experiences of IETs.

Some instructors, especially GTAs who taught only one course, had their own interpretation of good teaching within the prism of their course. For instance, Ming, a GTA in an assessment course, told me:

These young teachers, usually they are more passionate and I want them to see advanced techniques in terms of assessment, because sometime I feel that the outside has changed a lot, but what happens in classrooms stays the same, like 20 years ago...I think it will be great if they can bring something new to the schools they are going into.

While Violet, a GTA in an ESL-focused course, explained:

A good teacher needs to be sensitive to students' culture and ethnic background and linguistic needs. We have a lot of ESL [in BC schools]. Being an ESL myself, even at the level of a PhD there can still be some language barriers that greatly impact how ESL students are being socialized into the desired community, the mainstream Canadian school system...I feel that UBC as a leading university should do more.

And Calin Lucus shared:

My goal is to try to move away from the "general teacher." We try to define as a class what our goals as professional math teachers are, what does it mean to be a good math teacher.... how are we different from, let's say, English teachers. Are we or are we not? Because if we're not then we are definitely not specialists, but if we are, then we have to work to delineate ourselves a little bit from the big group of teachers who are our colleagues.

In these examples, the instructors emphasized conceptions of the "good teacher" that were related to their teaching areas. For Ming, it was being proficient and innovative in assessment, for Violet it was being aware of ESL learners and their needs, and for Calin the focus was on the unique skills and professional identities of math teachers. All three examples shared an understanding of good teaching as context-related, nuanced, reflexive, and critical. These

components are connected to both the needed skills of the “good teacher” in the “competent craftsperson” discourse, and to an understanding of the “good teacher” as a “reflective practitioner” (Moore, 2004).

In the interviews I conducted with course instructors, they shared some of the ways in which their understanding of good teaching was translated into their teaching practices. For instance, Alayne Armstrong explained how she demonstrates good teaching:

Just by modeling different techniques and different ways of connecting to the students. I started off the year in both my classes by putting them in seating plans and I continue to shuffle them around. I believe it is important for a good teacher to create a community. I come from a middle school where students get into tight groups of cliques very quickly, so I’m showing them a practice that I use in my own classes to try to prevent it from happening.

As Violet explained:

I try not to provide a very fixed personal definition of the good teacher...but we have critical classroom discussions...I always remind myself to be sensitive to my students’ background and ethnicity, not only to the non-native background and accented English and factors that might influence the lived experiences of the non-native speakers, but I’m also sensitive to the burden [borne] by white students. ... I usually answer their questions by asking them questions, to get them to think about this [the controversial questions]; maybe they can take these questions with them to the rest of their lives.

And Anik shared:

Good teaching sometimes means taking a step back and letting the students be at the centre of the teaching.... Sometimes it's hard to do as an instructor...it's hard to let go of that control. When students are presenting the readings, I'm not presenting the readings and I'm not sure that they are going to cover everything that I wanted, so it's a bit unnerving for me because...you have to let go of that control, but good teaching requires it.

Different instructors shared different ways by which they translated their conceptions of the “good teacher” into their own teaching practices. Many responses provided by the instructors and other professionals at UBC, as well as by themes in the CREATE documents, demonstrated an understanding of the “good teacher” as a “reflective practitioner,” and highlighted the importance of diversity and the acknowledgment of differences between learners. However, this prevalent discourse was at times disconnected from the structure of the program in which, for instance, instructors were unaware of the existence of IETs in their classes, and the opportunity to acknowledge their unique position was very limited. It seems that there is a gap between the explicit discourse and the construction of the actual recertification program (Cross, 2005). Whereas acknowledgment regarding the importance of diversity was prevalent in answers extended by professionals, the structure of the recertification program did not always support this discourse. As I have demonstrated earlier, this is partly due to the construction of the recertification trajectory, in which the Updating program has been affected within this subfield by more powerful institutions.

I was further interested in ascertaining whether there was a gap between the answers given in the interviews by the instructors and the actual teaching in their respective courses. The

design of this project as a case study allowed me to accumulate data from diverse sources, and to compare the data gathered in the interviews with the data gathered from the observations.

6.7.2 *Conceptions of Good Teaching which Emerged from the Course Observations*

In teaching (as in all applied knowledge fields), there is always a potential gap between the declared pedagogy and its practical implementation. Hence, I was interested in observing classes, in addition to interviewing their instructors, in order to determine how conceptions of the “good teacher” were conveyed in their teaching, class structure, and interactions with students. I observed two classes in two math methodology courses, two classes in an assessment course, two classes in an ESL-related course, and one long class in a course of the French cohort (I do not disclose the full titles of the courses in order to protect the interviewees’ anonymity).

This observation process is both interesting and humbling. It is a very unique experience for a teacher or student such as myself to be present in a teaching situation while holding a position in which he/she is not required to lead the class or to participate in it and can thus merely observe, as an outsider, both the students and the teacher. First of all, I noticed how outnumbered teachers were, and how dependent they were on class feedback, despite their being in a position of authority. During my observations, my “dual role hat” became very clear. I had begun this journey from my personal interest in IETs, with whom I share the immigration experience. But during the observations, I identified even more closely with the instructors and reflected on my teaching practice in comparison to theirs. With my “teaching hat” on, I felt that observing other instructors taught me a great deal. There was something to learn from each one of them, via the methods they used, the wide practical knowledge they demonstrated, and

their knowledge of the BC teaching context. In Israel, I had felt that I understood the teaching field sufficiently well not only to participate in it, but also to create my own alternative space within it. Here, as a sessional instructor, I myself am a small part of the puzzle; thus, observing other instructors teach their courses expanded my own teaching perspective. What was expressly revealing for me was the difference between instructors who are also schoolteachers and instructors who are not. It seems that the former group has numerous practical tips and examples to offer. I remind myself that I need to return to the field, in one way or another, in order to not merely provide pedagogical declarations without also offering practical implementations.

In the observed courses, most students appeared to be in their mid-twenties, about 60% female and 40% male, and predominantly white. A few of the students (3-5) in each course, most of them female, were more mature than this, and among them were the participating IETs. In the math methodology courses, it seemed that there was a higher percentage of students of Asian origin, while the French cohort contained a higher percentage of white students. In all the courses I observed, unless I knew who the IETs were, I would have had trouble identifying them as they were integrated with the other students.

The nine classes I observed had different subject areas and instructors, but they shared many similarities such as dynamic teaching, extensive group work, interactions and participation, and the involvement of the instructors. For instance, in most classes, during group activities, the instructor either sat with one of the student groups or rotated between them. All the classes I observed exhibited a warm atmosphere. For example, their students laughed and interacted with one another, and brought food to the class to share with their fellow students. The IET students

seemed to be quite engaged in participation in all of the classes I observed. They took notes in their notebooks, asked questions, and took part actively in the activities there. I assume that this was unrelated to my presence, since they knew I had no involvement in their courses or grading.

For some IETs who came from different teaching environments, this teaching style was surprising and sometimes required adjustment, as Nur explained:

We had to come to class with a box and share how the things in the box “talk about you.” It was very new to me; you don’t talk about yourself this much as a teacher in France. I remember an instructor showing the picture of her husband and her baby and I was really shocked, it was just completely new. Now I understand why she was doing that and I appreciate this. It is very useful to create a relationship with students, but that was surprising.

Juranika (1) shared:

In my home country we were just sitting in our spots and [in courses], it was almost all writing but there was almost no interactions between each other, so when I finished my university studies I didn’t know half of the students’ names. But here after two months I know everybody’s names and it is important.

Similarly, Nehlia thought that the Updating program was helpful “because you learn to teach in the Canadian way.... how do you start the class, the icebreakers. I did not know about these things.”

These examples reflect the differences in the conception of the “good teacher” that IETs encountered in the Updating program, and these differences were manifested in many layers of the program, such as class delivery, interactions, and teaching methods. This is consistent with

my understanding of the conception of the “good teacher” as a form of [professional] capital that is translated into many mundane micro-interactions (Reay, 2004a).

It is important to remember that for the IETs the Updating program was not the beginning of their journey in Canadian education. As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, they had already faced many barriers at the credential assessment stage, and had usually needed to take English and other pre-requisite courses. Hence, the IETs entered the Updating program with previously accumulated Canadian cultural capital. Their experiences in the program added another layer to the complex experience of immigration and to their initial interactions with the gatekeeping mechanism of the teaching profession in BC. In comparison to these initial interactions, it seems that the recertification period was a “softer” experience, as it was mediated by more personal and pedagogical interactions.

When I applied the definitions of the “good teacher” provided by the five instructors to their actual teaching, I found mostly overlap. If I were to construct the definition of the “good teacher” from the actual teaching I observed, I would say that it was student-centred, open to discussions, encouraging of critical thinking, and creating a respectful space. That is not to say that the teaching in all the courses was similar. Teaching is a personal profession that reflects one’s personality, ideas, and social location (Janusch, 2015); hence, the instructors had differences in their teaching and class management styles.

A detailed examination of the teaching style of each instructor is not the focus of this study; however, I assumed that some of the differences may be related to the instructors’ different social positions. For instance, the two GTAs who are also non-native English speakers did not spend much of their class time on direct teaching, but used various instructional approaches and group discussions. I may have related this to their alleged lower confidence in

their English-language skills, but two native English-speaking instructors spoke even less. In this example, and I would argue that this applies to most of the cases, the instructors' personality, social position, and teaching style operated simultaneously during their teaching. In addition, I could observe a difference in class management styles between the male and the female instructors. In the first case, although his teaching still provided much opportunity for discussions and students-led activities, the instructor was more dominant, and was also the only one among the instructors wearing formal clothes. But was this difference related to this particular instructor's gender, content area (math), or his having been trained as a teacher in Romania? On the other hand, the instructor who raised the most thought-provoking questions and opened critical dialogue was from East Asia, where teacher-centred pedagogies and authoritarian teaching styles are supposedly prevalent. So what role did her culture play in this case?

This is to say that the intersections of individual features and social location work in complex ways, and it is problematic to create a linear connection between certain categories (be it gender, ethnicity, or immigration status) and a prescribed teaching outcome. By locating this study within the framework of critical multiculturalism and applying the concept of professional capital to it, I have aimed to look critically at these binaries. When cultures are conceived as static, the implication is that some cultures should eventually be abandoned in favour of the dominant culture, which in this case is conceived of as mainstream Canadian culture (Cho, 2011, p. 48). A main argument of this study is that, in the case of IETs, a unidimensional linear connection is too frequently assumed. This was evident in the certification requirements that evaluated "good teachers" solely based on their resemblance to the mainstream, English-speaking Canadian model. I will further expand on these binaries in the next two chapters.

6.7.3 The Experiences of IETs during the Updating Program

The classes that I observed in the teacher education program at UBC were conducted in a student-centred manner that opened up spaces for interactions and sharing. My previously mentioned perception of the classes also emerged from the interviews with both IETs and course instructors. Still, most IETs felt that they had limited space to share their unique perspectives as experienced teachers from other countries.

Two IETs felt that they had sufficient opportunities to share their own experiences. Camy (1) felt that she had the opportunity to share her personal life if she wanted to, and that other teacher candidates were interested in her past experiences. Similarly, Miruna (1) recalled, “I always related to my past work in my home country. I got plenty of opportunities to share and I did feel welcome to share my ideas in class.” However, some other IETs like Juranika (1) felt that in the reality of the program there had “not very much [space to share], except for the introduction in the first class, and that’s it.” Peter (1) shared, “Nobody asked me about the Eastern Asian system, nobody asked me to open and share, which system is different, which system is not so good. I didn’t have this opportunity.” Sophia (1) added, “I didn’t get much space to talk about my experiences and background... Not everyone was a teacher before so probably it’s like a show off.”

It may be that the small number of IETs in the program and their unique position made them feel that their experiences were not relevant to the other students. The small number of IETs in courses also contributed to a lack of information about elements which may seem obvious to local teacher candidates but were new to IETs. As Nur explained:

I had a lot of things I wish I had been told at UBC. Most of the class was not from other countries so they didn’t need to say things because most of the students knew them, but it

would have made a lot of sense to me... Like here you need to have a grade point average (GPA) so marks are extremely important to students and families. I didn't have that piece before. It took me a long time to understand it.

And Camy (1) recalled:

I have times when I feel overwhelmed, because there are so many things you need to learn and I'm supposed to have experience in teaching and to know things, but I'm aware that there are so many things that I don't know.

Most IETs felt that they lacked some local knowledge, cultural understanding, and familiarity with the Canadian school system. They felt that they had a lot to learn and were willing, and in most cases eager, to expand their professional knowledge. In that sense, the participant IETs understood “good teachers” as “reflective practitioners” (Moore, 2004) that are expected to constantly develop their practice. However, although the courses were carried out in a dialogical way, the unique position of the IETs was not acknowledged adequately according to most IETs participating in this study. While all the IETs felt that the courses opened up opportunities to gain new understanding about teaching in Canada and to interact with both instructors and other teacher candidates, many IETs felt that their experiences and knowledge were not incorporated into the program. This state of affairs has negative implications for IETs as well as for the educational system in general, since, as Williams (2007) asserts, “potentially, migrants are significant actors in knowledge transfer, especially where international borders constitute substantial economic and cultural barriers” (p. 362). IETs entered the Updating program as experienced teachers, but it had not been established as a professional development program, but rather as a form of training for novice teachers. This conception of IETs is also conveyed in the terminology of “Updating program” and “updater,” which implies that IETs’ professional capital

is out-of-date and thus positions them negatively. As Schmidt (2010b) argues, “teachers from other countries are regarded as visitors to be benevolently tolerated until such time as they return to their countries of origin with the wisdom they have gained from a more ‘progressive’ school system” (p. 245).

When recalling my own experience in the PhD program, I find many similarities. I have also always had the feeling that I could share my experience and participate in activities if I wanted to. But at the same time, I felt that my personal location such as being an immigrant, non-native English speaker and a mother, was never really encouraged in the academic space. Such social constructs were often discussed theoretically, but not as personal experiences. This might not just be the case for IETs, but it might be the case for many others, and could lead to all sorts of feelings of “otherness,” since “allowing space” and creating a truly inclusive space are two very different things. Maybe this is the difficulty with such great concepts as diversity and multiculturalism: if one does not ensure that they are truly implemented, they might become unfulfilled promises; they are there for one to take, but one needs to make the first move towards taking them....

From the perspective of course instructors, what IETs experienced as a lack of acknowledgment was an outcome of being “one additional task” among too many, as Anik reflected:

I wish I had more time to give them [IETs] more space to shine in my classes.... To shine a bit more based on the fact that they are already certified, I gave them some opportunities but I think I could have done more.

While Ming explained:

This course is only three weeks; many [students] have classes almost every day, and need to do assignments in every course... If I had a smaller group, or if they [IETs] were grouped, then I'd definitely do it differently, but thinking about this intense course [assessment]. I also have 40 students and many of them haven't had a chance to teach before; what they need is very basic principles.

For other instructors, IETs were one example of the general diversity of the teacher candidates' population. As Alayne Amstrong argued:

I teach all my classes differently because they are all made out of different people. So I'm not doing anything special, but my research is on groups so I can see groups as having different needs or interactions. So I'm not really focused on students who are recertifying; they are just another member of the class that [has] their needs.

IET experiences can be located on a wider continuum of previous teaching experiences (for instance, increasingly more teacher candidates have had experiences as ESL teachers abroad). Rita Irwin argued, "Much is based on the individual instructor...my suspicion is that it wouldn't be so much about recognizing international experience; it's about instructors who don't recognize teaching experience."

It therefore seems that to create a truly inclusive space, instructors should adapt their instructional practices to reflect, that IETs come not just with different cultural backgrounds, but also with considerable teaching experience. The lack of a designated cohort for IETs in the teacher education program made this possibility more difficult. This is notable when comparing Rita Irwin's perspective to that of Vandy Britton. For example, Irwin explained, "If numbers were such that we could offer a unique program, that would be preferred. Then I feel we would

have the chance to be much more responsive to that group of teachers, recognizing their past experiences.” In comparison, in the designated cohort of the PQP, Vandy Britton shared that, “Much of what they are doing in the program is unpacking how they taught, unpacking how they were in their own countries *versus* who they are expected to be in the classroom here.” In that sense, the historically prominent location of the SFU PQP program in the recertification subfield resulted in a greater amount of material capital, allowing the program to create a designated space for IETs, which reproduces the structure of the field and the power dynamics between the institutions.

IETs reflecting on the Updating program shared many good learning experiences and interactions, as well as the desire for more recognition of their unique position there. However, when locating the Updating period in the larger context of the recertification trajectory, a more complex picture is revealed, as Ewa recalled:

[The Updating program] is nothing in comparison to the job hunt; it’s a nightmare, and then you have to be kind, you have to be, ‘Oh I’m so thankful, oh I’m so appreciative, oh I’m nobody and I know nothing’...Universities are welcoming the international environment, but this is only at the university; outside, the foreign knowledge and experiences are not welcome. I think it’s considered as a threat; obviously it’s wrapped up in a different package, but deep inside, this is what it is.

In the next chapter, I look at the capital conversion process that is required from IETs. Whereas some of the IETs’ more difficult experiences occurred before or after the updating period, the Updating program was the main site for the professional capital conversion process, and as such, required deeper investigation.

Chapter 7: Capital Conversion in the Recertification Trajectory

7.1 Introduction

From the data presented in the previous two chapters emerged a complex picture of the recertification process with its many barriers as well as positive experiences and interactions. I do not wish to convey a black and white picture, but rather to analyze the complexity of the recertification process and its outcomes. The experiences of the IETs during the recertification trajectory were not an outcome of their interaction with a single institution, but of a process into which several institutions were interwoven.

I will argue that the main structural problem in the recertification trajectory is that it is, albeit not entirely, a power-embedded mechanism. In the previous chapter, I demonstrated this argument by analyzing the power relations among the institutional players in this subfield. This is how my focus shifted during this study, from the IETs' experiences to the structural factors; hence, I was most interested in the mechanisms that reproduced IETs' experiences. As part of that analytic lens, I applied the concept of *professional capital* to the field of teacher education in BC. The concept of professional capital draws on Bourdieu's (1984) conceptual framework and captures the conceptions of the "good teacher" in BC. Based on the data to be discussed in this chapter, I identified four main components that construct the concept of professional capital in teacher education in BC:

- Cultural/Linguistic/Content Knowledge
- School Culture
- Assessment
- Pedagogy

After presenting these four components, I analyze the recertification trajectory with emphasis on the Updating program through the lens of professional capital conversion. According to Bourdieu (1984), in different fields, a different value of capital “produces a strategy of reconversion” (p. 125); hence, there is the need to look at a specific field and analyze its unique form of capital conversion. In common usage, conversion has two main associations. The first and more mundane association is that of currency conversion, which always involves some loss of currency. The second association has the deeper implication of changing one’s belief or identity, as in the case of religious conversion. In the context of this study, the first level of conversion involves converting IETs’ previous professional capital to professional capital in the new context, whereas the second level involves an identity conversion for IETs that goes beyond just the professional level. The distinction between the two meanings is not clear-cut, as professional identity is closely related to personal identity. As Janusch (2015) claims, “teacher knowledge is derived from personal experience” (p. 4). The currency “conversion fee” is the price IETs have to pay for the professional capital they need to enter the field of teaching in BC. I choose to use the term “conversion fee” because I think it is more effective than “admission fee” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, P. 107) in conveying the deeper change that IETs need to go through.

This chapter aims to expand the answer to the second research question: How are conceptions of the “good teacher” manifested in the recertification trajectory and especially in the UBC recertification program? It will also answer the third research question: What kind of professional capital is embedded in the conceptions of the “good teacher” in the recertification trajectory? What kinds of assumptions underlie this capital?

7.2 Professional Capital in Teacher Education in BC

7.2.1 Cultural/Linguistic/Content knowledge

The teaching profession is linguistically and culturally embedded and requires different kinds of content knowledge. These three components often intersect as in the example that Juranika (1), who recertified as a French teacher, shared:

For me, English words are the line where I'm not comfortable. For example, we were talking about Halloween costumes and someone said, 'I was a nerd,' and I didn't know what it means...it's a teenage word, but for them it was probably very interesting that I didn't know that English word.

In this example the word “nerd” captured both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Camy (2) described the connection between language proficiency and class management when she had to deal with behavioural problems during the practicum:

Class management was harder, because I had a higher level of insecurity because of my English. There are some differences in how to talk and address problems here...in these situations you need to have the clear discourse, and they [the students] were taking advantage on it ...I just didn't feel very comfortable to talk to them because when you talk one-on-one about discipline it requires delicate interaction.

Calin Lucas, reflected on the connection between content knowledge and culture:

They [IETs] are definitely in a different position in a lot of ways. It is actually a negative position, because they are going through a big change, and I speak for myself, you come from a system that is completely different from what you encounter here.... you come from a culture that is having different values regarding teaching mathematics and you end

up in a system which is completely foreign. I know individuals who are overly qualified mathematic-wise, but they couldn't make it in the class, because they did not adapt to the cultural shift.

Hence, there is a foundation of cultural, linguistic and content knowledge that is embedded in the teaching profession within a certain context, and a lack in one of these components also affects the others. This is a mark of professional capital as a form of symbolic capital in which "one's reputation and the respect received from the community will influence the value of the other forms of capital held by a given agent" (Gemme, 2009, p. 22).

Camy (1) gave a specific example of cultural knowledge in the Canadian teaching context:

They were talking [in one of the courses at UBC] about usual things that teachers do in high-school, like lines...that is when the students are told to write the same things like ten times. I didn't know about that. Or [putting] stickers on the hand, this is another popular thing that I didn't know about.

Cultural knowledge was not necessarily specific to the teaching profession, as Camy (1) shared:

I feel that I miss something.... because they [other teacher candidates] had all their life to learn and I need to catch up with them. There are so many things that they just know, that are just so normal for them but I didn't hear about...Like we talked about "Archie," and I've never heard about that. So I asked my colleagues, 'Did you read Archie?' 'Yes, of course'... So many things that I don't know about and I don't know where to start to learn...

Miruna (2) demonstrated the width of cultural knowledge she felt she needed to "catch up" on:

If you've been to the school system in Canada, your background knowledge is wider, you know the games kids play, the songs, poems... Truth is, when you come here from a different country you can't learn them all. At some point there will be a situation when they play a game outside and you have no idea how that works... this may surprise them, 'How come you don't know it, you never played it?' You're trying to learn as much as you can but you cannot catch up with everything.

These examples show two appearances of cultural knowledge. One is specific to the teaching profession, such as class management knowledge, or ways of interacting with students, while the second is grounded in a wider cultural perspective, such as references to local popular culture. I would argue that both appearances have more essential and more arbitrary components. For instance, part of the teaching profession in every context is class management and it is hard to imagine a successful teaching activity without any form of class management. However, there can be many forms of class management, and the differences may be cultural, reflect personal preference or circumstantial factors, or a combination of any of the above. In the examples above, the IETs felt overwhelmed and lacking in knowledge when facing more specific, context-related, arbitrary aspects of professional knowledge (e.g., using stickers for rewards). Although most IETs had vast experience in class management in their home countries, their lack of knowledge of this specific type of class management increased their feelings of deficiency. Hence, the professional capital of teachers is constructed by many arbitrary components; however, it is conveyed as an essential quality, and thus is experienced as overwhelming and intimidating.

An essential piece of professional teachers' knowledge is embedded in a language. Robert Shoofoey argued that language issues had emerged more during the practicum:

Classroom teachers are not very tolerant of people who have problems communicating, and I cannot blame them. Perhaps they should be more understanding, but from my experience, SAs are not willing to accept teacher candidates who make errors in grammar and spelling because at the end of the practicum they need to sign the final report confirming the candidate is ready to assume the role of a teacher.

Being ESL speakers was a constant source of stress for most IETs. As Myles, Cheng and Wang (2006) argue, “worries about the obvious non-native English accent and concern about English language proficiency can add to an already charged situation” (p. 236). The only counter-example was given by Sophia (2), who after attending a course focused on ESL learners (which was one of the courses I observed), shared:

It was a relief for me; the instructor was very clear that we are going to use English in an easy communicative way to reach everyone, even immigrants...I learned that English is not only one, so I don't need to take my English to the perfect level...that the way I speak is not bad English, it's just a different way... And that not having native English doesn't mean I cannot teach effectively.

Sophia (2) shared how adopting this approach helped her during her practicum:

I told them [the students], ‘You know, there are different ways to speak the language, and if I make mistakes don't make fun of it. We're here to learn and we need to respect each other like I'm respecting your mistakes in Spanish.’

In this case, Sophia gained confidence when she learned in the course that she was not expected to have “perfect English.” However, this example was an exception. As Reid and colleagues (2014) argue:

The insistence in Australia, the UK and North America on testing the professional knowledge of these teachers within English-only lens...devalues the multi-lingual, multicultural teaching experience of many global teachers, mistaking the age of globalization for the age of English hegemony. (p. 20)

When analyzing the main sources of knowledge that construct the concept of professional teaching capital in BC, it seems that what is at stake is “the linguistic [cultural] and theoretical knowledge which does not count” in Canadian teacher education (Singh & Huang, 2014, p. 211).

7.2.2 *School Culture*

As explained in Chapter 3, teacher education is a heteronomous field (Bourdieu, 1984); hence, teachers’ professional capital is affected by other fields, such as the field of K-12 schooling. Teachers are the gatekeepers of the school system and are therefore expected to convey and reproduce the dominant discourses. Since IETs did not grow up in the Canadian school system, they may be perceived as being unable to serve effectively as gatekeepers, as they often have different ideas about the school system. Both IETs and professionals shared many examples of the differences between the school culture of BC and that of other places. For instance, Miruna (1/2) recalled when describing her practicum experience:

It was harder for me because everything was new. I didn’t go to school here so I didn’t even know how things were done...I feel it would have been easier for me if I had at least gone to high school here...then I would have felt more as a Canadian.

From his over ten years of interactions with IETs, Gary Rupert described some of the main differences:

They [IETs] have difficulties operating in the local school culture. They have trouble sometimes adjusting to the casual manner of BC classrooms...the social part of school is often a challenge, and the casual way that students interact with their teachers, the dress style, the ubiquitous use of a phone...these things do trouble them somewhat because they are usually not used to dealing with it.

I identified three main differences in the school culture between BC and the participating IETs' home countries: the position/image of the teacher, the autonomy given to teachers, and the practical conditions of schooling. I will attend to each of these differences below. One main difference within the school culture is *the position and the image of the teacher in the school community*, as Peter (1) shared:

Teaching there [in his East Asian home country] is very different from Canada for a number of reasons...the teachers are regarded in a higher status than the students. Over here they are like this [shows same level with his hands] and there it is such [shows one hand higher than the other]. So in terms of giving instructions it is easier there...the teacher would tell the students to do something and most likely they'll do it.

And Azi shared:

Most education is left for school. The parents and community rely on school to educate the kids, more than the parents... A good teacher in North Africa is in charge. The parents only intervene when there are behaviour problems or something that the school can't deal with. It is usually something that the students themselves don't want, because if it reaches their families it is a serious matter...The good teacher is supposed to be responsible, educated, supposed to know everything, well mannered, well respected in the community.

The professional capital of teachers in these examples is highly regarded; teachers are viewed as authority figures and are respected by both students and the school community. This position is translated into teachers' interactions with their students and their expectations of them, as Nehlia recalled:

To be a good the teacher in Mauritius, you need to work a lot, to prepare a lot, to give them a lot of homework, contrary to what my kids are experiencing here...you spend a good deal of time teaching the content...here the teachers are more friends, they [students] call the teachers by their name. We never do it there, you don't even know the first name of your teacher. Hierarchy is very important...in Canada the teachers are friends.

Similarly, Peter (1) shared:

You have to be very strict with the students in terms of them doing the work. No eating in the class, no small talk in the class. When it's time to work, you work; when it's time to do other things, do other things. Things are very controlled.

These differences in interaction style were also apparent in the interactions of IETs in the Updating program; as Calin Lucus shared, "IETs are very different from the other students...it's all about culture, they talk to me in 'Sir;' they don't call me by the first name.... it's a different approach." In comparison to the more authoritative image of the teacher in their home countries, when describing the teacher position in BC, Nur argued:

The students here are more informed. They don't see the teacher as an authority who knows everything; they think that teachers can make mistakes and they are not afraid to stand up for themselves, and their parents are not afraid to challenge the teacher.

Nehlia reflected, “Children in Canada are used to having their own way. They always tell you, ‘We have the right to do it.’” And Peter (2) added, “In the East people respect the authority of the teachers. They say, ‘Good morning,’ to you first; here they won’t say it, even if you’re standing at the door.”

In these examples, some of the different discourses on the “good teacher” are conveyed. In many countries, teachers are first and foremost expected to be the “competent craft person” (Moore, 2004), and their competence positions them in a more authoritative role in comparison to the students (both in knowledge and in the modeling of proper behaviour). In BC, by contrast, teachers are also expected to be “reflective practitioners” (Moore, 2004) and, hence, engaged in constant feedback and critique from colleagues, students, and parents. Furthermore, in many of the IETs’ home countries, the school system is very competitive and the academic demands of students are very high; hence, teachers are expected to use their time for teaching without interruptions. As Nehlia shared, “In classroom it’s down to business.”

The above examples show that teachers’ professional capital is influenced by the culture of the school, which is itself located within a wider social field. This supports my assertion regarding the heteronomy of the field of teacher education. Schools reflect the wider social and cultural foundations of different societies, which put IETs in a confusing position. The immigration process leads to a change in the teaching field and thus unsettles the IETs’ professional capital. IETs may be expert professionals in their home countries, but after immigrating, their professional capital is untangled from its surrounding field. The outcome of this process creates “holes” in the IETs’ professional identity; these holes are created in areas of disjunction between their habitus, capital, and field.

Since teaching is a personal profession that delineates one's identity (Frank, 2013; Janusch, 2015), and since professional capital is embedded in one's habitus, this process may lead to a wider identity rupture. Bourdieu (1979) observes such a case of a traditional society undergoing a sudden transformation in its extreme in Algeria. He argues that such a situation can lead to a "hysteresis" effect, a "state of being 'out of place and time' [that is created] where structural field conditions alter before changes in the expectations produced by them" (Grenfell, 2004, p. 68, cited in Gemme, 2009, p. 25). Indeed, many of the quotes by the participant IETs demonstrated such feeling of being "out of place and time."

Another main difference within the school culture that many IETs shared is the *level of autonomy given to teachers* in BC in comparison to that in their home countries. For instance, about the degree of freedom teachers have in designing the course curriculum and its delivery, Peter (1) recalled:

Things are very structured in my [East Asian] home country. You're given a set of syllabi to teach for a year and you have to teach everything. I had to write a report every day, and at the end of the week the report was submitted to the head master and he made sure that you've done all that is required.... Here you don't check the homework of the students, there you need to check all the homework... We had centralized exams, so everybody had to teach and gear toward the centralized exam. Here, it's up to the teacher, it's up to you to give the grade. So things are not so structured here and that's why I believe things are more relaxed here.

Similarly Camy (1) shared:

In my [East European] home country we were stressed about the program. We had to teach all the materials and all the lessons, even if I would like to stay more on a subject, I

couldn't... it was on the list for the exam. I didn't like it; the students just end up memorizing things for the exams.

Nehlia recalled:

In Canada, teaching should be fun; you need to find ways to keep the learning interesting, like icebreakers, games...but if you do it back home people would think, 'This teacher is having too much fun; she's not working'.... It is very competitive and even the children won't be willing to have games at school, like here.

And Miruna (1) recalled:

[In my Eastern European home country] you do more textbooks work than here in Canada. You are still bringing your own contributions, but if you don't work at least a little bit from the textbook parents will get worried and you will get comments.

Lastly, Zuzana shared:

Back home [in Slovakia] we were bound to follow the curriculum in a strict way, it's prescribed, but here there is more freedom. You have the curriculum that you need to follow but you can choose the way you want to teach, you can do your own things, you can make up your own lessons.

It seems that in many of the IETs' home countries, although teaching is regarded as a respected profession, teachers have less autonomy in designing and in delivering the curriculum. Teachers have a designated and supervised role to fill in the schooling system, and the functionality of the system is prioritized over the freedom of teachers. Teachers are regarded highly if they fulfill their designated roles; however, they are not expected to challenge the system or to act as educational leaders. In comparison, in BC, the discourse on teaching as a

reflective profession is prevalent. For example, as mentioned before, a main revision in the CREATE program was the three inquiry seminars intended to promote reflexivity and critical examination as core constructs of the teaching profession.

However, IETs shared some advantages of a more structured school system. For instance, at the beginning of the short practicum, Camy (1) was surprised by the lack of clear curricular guidelines to be followed in every class:

I'm not sure if they have some general guidelines...I don't have a document to tell me...and I asked my colleagues who are from this system and they told me, 'You will just need to ask your SA or your students'...I would prefer to know before, just to be prepared.

And Sophia (2) added, "I needed to make everything from scratch, all the lessons, so it was a lot of preparation...I didn't have books, I didn't have anything. I spent so many hours working on that." In these examples, IETs highlighted the advantages of having a set curriculum that allows for consistency and knowledge transmission between teachers.

These examples highlight the connection between the professional capital of teachers and the field in which it is located. They also demonstrate the degree to which prevalent conceptions of the "good teacher" are entangled within wider social constructions. However, it seems that for many IETs, being "out of place" did not lead to a hysteresis effect, but rather triggered agency and critical reflection. As Janusch (2015) argues, "the process of having to relearn professional scripts can simultaneously tear down and increase professional confidence" (p. 16). Although the participant IETs came from countries that did not construct teaching as a reflective profession, they demonstrated reflexivity in describing the cultures of teaching in their home countries and in BC, and saw the advantages and disadvantages in both. Maybe the immigration experience

that puts one into a hybrid position between two countries and often two cultures triggered a more reflexive awareness. As Williams (2007) suggests, “migrants may have a particular capacity for reflexivity” (p. 367). Or perhaps the teaching profession is an inherently reflective profession, as it is a profession that is rooted in social interaction. As such, “facing challenges in the professional acculturation process can generate a transformed self—one that has been described as hybrid by Bhabha composed of both who they were and who they are becoming” (Janusch, 2015, p. 16).

Lastly, some of the differences in the school culture were the outcome of *practical conditions of schooling* such as class size and available recourses. As Peter (1) shared about schooling in his home country, “interactions are less, there is more one-way, because the classes are big, 40-45 students.” Sophia (1) shared the differences in resources between schools in BC and those in her South American home country: “My daughter was given a computer in school and I was, ‘Wow, surprising’ ...they have all the resources they need.” Similarly Camy (1) recalled, “In my home country, we didn’t have computers or laboratories.” Hence, the differences in the school culture are not only the outcome of cultural norms or pedagogical conceptions, but also of local circumstances and funding possibilities.

7.2.3 *Assessment*

Since a big piece of school culture is assessment, and since the participant IETs made many references to this topic, I decided to single it out under a separate title. Most IETs felt that there were many differences between assessment practices in their home countries and those in BC. For instance, in their home countries, traditional, test-oriented assessment methods were commonly used, whereas in BC more formative and diverse assessment methods were expected, as Juranika (2) shared:

My SA was always asking, ‘How do you know the students have learned it?’ and I didn’t know, because when I was a student our teachers just knew because we had tests or quizzes. But here they have this formative assessment and you need to touch base with every student during the lesson... if not, my teaching is not good.

Not only were the assessment methods different, but so were the assessment cultures. Many IETs felt that in their home countries students received a more direct and critical evaluation, as Peter (1) reflected:

In my home country we have ranking, we have grading. All the students know where they stand. After the test you tell them, ‘You’re number one,’ or ‘You’re the last in the class,’ so they know they have to work harder if they want to go up... here they care about their students’ feelings too much. I don’t want to say things that may hurt you, so we coach them, very nice, ‘Nice job.’ In my home country if the student is not performing, it is clear he needs to work harder or he fails.

Similarly, Nehlia recalled:

It is day and night in comparison to Canada. In Mauritius it is very competitive, you have to work really hard to get access to the best schools. We have the ranking system and all the children want to succeed, they want to get good grades to get access to the best schools.

In comparison, when describing the BC assessment culture, Nur shared an example:

One of the first things that strike me [in the Updating program] was the marking. The impression that I had in the program is that it is impossible for me to fail, and I understood that once I’ll be a teacher that is one of the expectations from me, that you

couldn't really fail someone...I remember making fun of this 'sandwich strategy.' When you need to say something bad to a student you have to start with something very positive and end with something very positive. We were supposed to practice that and I remember doing something like, 'Oh, you are such a good cook. I've noticed that you don't do your homework as often as you should but I really like your long hair'.... because for me it was just funny.

IETs' examples highlight the strengths of BC assessment methods which are student-centred and aim to support one's learning by providing constructive feedback, but also the blind spots and problematic outcomes of certain methods for assessment, as shared by Juranika (2):

I had issues with students who didn't do their homework and I had to ask them nicely, 'Why didn't you do it?' When I was a student, if I didn't study I just got F and that's it; I didn't get another chance. So I think things are more complicated here, and I've always asked myself what these students are going to be able to do later on in life if I'm just looking after them constantly.

Similarly, Nur recalled:

Here, students are not shy asking you about their marks, and I didn't expect that. It is given to students in Canada, but in France students don't normally argue about their marks. They respect the authority... here, the students are standing up for themselves even when they are wrong.

And Camy (2) added:

I gave two students a low grade for their writing assignment and I said, 'Ok this and this, you think that you're very good at French but you still need to learn, you still have to

work on your writing and to participate in class.’ So my SA said, ‘You shouldn’t give their names. Be careful not to embarrass them in front of the others.’ For me, it didn’t seem like something bad, it was just the reality. And when I gave them a quiz and some kids got low grades and I mentioned that, the SA said, ‘You should only praise the good grades, not the bad ones.’ My perspective is that they are here to learn and we should tell them if something is good or not, but here [in BC] it is to focus on what they did good. Even if there are not many things that they’ve learned you need to find something good first.

As mentioned, many IETs appreciated the various assessment tools and interactions over how to conduct assessment of students in BC. However, their observations exposed some of the problems underlying this approach, such as the perception of students as clients and the consequent surveillance of teachers to make sure that they do not “harm” the students/clients. This approach seems highly connected to the neoliberal discourse that challenges the professionalism of teachers, and “the recognition of their right to make autonomous judgments about how, in particular institutional and classroom contexts, to develop their students’ capacity for democratic deliberation, critical judgment and rational understanding” (Carr & Hartnett, 1996, p. 195). As mentioned in the theory section, even when the conceptions of the “good teacher” are built upon tenets such as student-centredness, these tenets do not necessarily convey purely pedagogical ideas, but also sometimes exert contradictory influences from the wider social field.

Some of the participating IETs noticed that the “soft” approach to assessment did not necessarily mean that the school system in BC is not grade-oriented. For instance, the negotiation

around grades demonstrates the important role marks play in entering higher education, as Nur described:

Here, marks are extremely important to students and families. And I didn't have that piece before, and once I understood why they [students] were challenging the marks and why the criteria is so important, because it's defining their future.

In this example, Nur demonstrated the prevalence of the concept of "performativity" (Ball, 2003) in the BC school system that posits test scores (as well as school ranking) as main indications for future success. Hence, what seemed at first glance like a dichotomy between "hard" and "soft" assessment approaches is not so clear, especially when seen in a wider context.

The IETs' reflections demonstrated not only their attempts to adjust to a different assessment culture, but also some of the tensions within the assessment culture in BC. Some professionals shared the same observations, especially if they were familiar with assessment models outside of Canada. For instance, Calin Lucus shared:

I think that there are shifts in the whole school system in BC that are not necessarily liked by teachers or driven by teachers, and I don't think they are necessarily positive to the system overall. Once you take away, and again this is a personal idea, the external motivator, and you have it all intrinsic, you're in the wrong world. I was living in the communist system for a long time and it was built on intrinsic motivation, and it failed.

And Ming shared, "In my class we try to see different ways of assessment, assessment of learning, assessment for learning...in some Asian countries like in China or Japan we emphasize assessment of learning, so it is good to be exposed to this language."

The IETs could see the advantages and disadvantages of the different assessment cultures in their home countries and BC, as Peter (1) concluded:

We cannot pressure the students here, so we do what we can and the rest is up to you, but in my home country we do pressure you. We call the parents, we send you to the head master, we send you to counseling, if you're not performing. So you just have to blend the two systems.

It seems that although IETs were constructed in the recertification trajectory as lacking in their understanding of good teaching, by being exposed to multiple discourses and by identifying both their advantages and shortcomings, IETs actually demonstrated a more nuanced understanding of good teaching and of diverse teaching strategies.

7.2.4 Pedagogy

Another major difference between the professional capital of teachers in Canada and that of other countries was pedagogy. Whereas many IETs came from teacher-centred systems, the BC system promotes a student-centred pedagogy (Cruickshank, 2004). Many professionals shared examples of the more teacher-centred pedagogy that IETs tend to have, as Vandy Britton described:

For some [IETs], it's a hard lesson because in their home countries, they walk in, everyone would stand, they talk and would expect everyone to be quiet. No teacher here can do it. It's a different relationship from what many of our IETs have experienced in the past.

And Gary Rupert agreed that:

They [IETs] sometimes have trouble dealing with the focus on interactive learning; they come from a community that is mostly lecture-based and they are frustrated when their lecture approach doesn't work because the students are too restless...The majority of

them [IETs] are used to a presentation style, lecture-based style where there are materials to be gotten through...and the teacher just stands and delivers the materials and the parents are happy with that and the officials are happy with that.

Alayne Armstrong also agreed that “in different countries, sometimes there is the sense that the teacher is the authority and the teachers tell the students, and by telling the students, the students learn.” John Yamamoto supported these recollections by relating that:

In certain cultures—Asia is probably the most prominent, India perhaps as well—there is more of a traditional approach...more of a stand and deliver from the front of the class, more rigid control, and they’re coming to the Canadian culture which is “looser.”

Rod Brown shared the same impression:

It’s the stand and deliver approach in which they [IETs] stand and give information, which they’re used to, and in the Canadian culture, it can be used at times, but if it is the predominant approach, it’s a problem. You need to be engaging your students in a variety of ways. You would hope that there will be differentiated learning, personalized learning, these things. Sometimes IETs don’t have that understanding.

Lastly, Shawn McMullin shared a personal example from his own teaching experience in Japan to demonstrate the differences in pedagogy:

The culture and climate within the school system [in Japan] is drastically different than that of Canadian schools...the system is still very much teacher-centred rather than student-centred. So the students would go into class, they sit, they listen, they take notes, there is very little group work, class discussion, and there is very little class management because of the discipline of the students.

Although most of the above interviewees used qualifiers in their responses, the overall picture emerging from these extensive examples was of the construction of IETs in an almost unified way, as holding teacher-centred hierarchical pedagogies. This prevalent conception of IETs does not recognize, or emphasize, variations, and leads to a rationale of capital conversion.

Many participant IETs also described the pedagogical differences between their home countries and BC. Camy (1) recalled, “In my home country it was more traditional. Everyone has a textbook open and the traditional way was just to open the book and explain.” Similarly Miruna (1) recalled:

We were a communist country and in the past it was a lot about teaching traditionally. The structure of the materials and the teaching style was pretty much standing in front of them [students] and expecting them to memorize.... after the revolution things gradually have started to change, but you still have a lot of old teachers that teach in the old methods.

And Peter (2) shared:

At the beginning I was told by my SA that I talk a lot. In my home country, during the lesson, we can demonstrate a lot of things and here you teach less...if the students don't do their homework, and they do it in class, so it defeats the purpose of homework. But because they don't do it and there is not much the teacher can do about it, they do it during class and then teaching time is less.

Juranika (2) shared similar feedback she received from her FA: “When my FA did her observation, she told me I was too much at the board, that it is too much teacher-centred, that I'm not trying to connect with them, to circulate.” And Camy (2) recalled:

Everything [in BC] is very student-oriented: it's all about the students, the content is less important...students should have a lot of activities, interactions, group activities, less lecturing. This is what I needed to adjust because our style is more to explain and to focus on grammar.

Whereas most professionals tend to describe the differences in pedagogy as a dichotomy, the IETs had a more nuanced understanding that included critical reflections on pedagogies both in their home countries and in BC. For instance, Peter (2) shared, "I would marry the two [systems], because I see the advantages and weaknesses of both; if the class is dominated by Asians, so maybe more up, more challenging. If it's a mixed class, so more the Canadian way." And Zuzana added, "I think it's individual, it's about the personality of the teacher.... I didn't feel it was a big adjustment; I felt it is easier for me [in BC]." In the first example, while acknowledging the advantages and disadvantages in both educational systems, Peter also made an essentialist distinction between "Asian" and "Canadian" students. I would argue that most people make essentialist assumptions from time to time. However, in this study I aim to focus on the essentialist assumptions that are embedded in the institutional and structural aspects of the recertification process, because they lead to systemic marginalization of non-mainstream teachers.

These examples are supported by a study of IETs in Australia, in which Cruickshank (2004) argues that they "rejected the traditional/ progressive dichotomy as simplistic" (p.130) and supported "a combination of hands-on practical demonstration sessions along with more traditional lecturer input" (p. 130). Furthermore, as Kubota (2010b) argues in a different context, it is easier "to essentialize students' culture and language and create a rigid boundary between the dominant language/culture and that of the other" (p. 282).

In Chapter 8, using the theory of critical multiculturalism, I make a distinction between acknowledging the differences in various educational systems and thus in the professional capital of teachers and essentialist assumptions towards “categories” of teachers.

7.3 Professional Conversion Process

It seems that there are some acute differences in knowledge, school culture, assessment, and pedagogy between BC and some other countries; these factors are at the heart of the professional capital of teachers in each context. In Canada, entering the teaching profession, which is a regulated profession, requires an evaluation process and specific training. The recertification trajectory of IETs can be understood as a way of gaining local professional capital, a necessary learning process that is needed for re-entering the teaching profession in a different place. Furthermore, as is emerging from the data, the recertification process triggers a learning process that is important if teaching is to be understood as a reflective, context-related profession (Britzman, 2003; Gay, 2002; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Still, I would argue that the recertification trajectory should not be understood as being a specific case of a professional acquisition process, which is integral to all professional fields (Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013; Janusch, 2015), since IETs are already trained professionals. However, the recertification process does not acknowledge their expertise and thus is not designed in a reciprocal way, but rather as a mandatory, one-sided process. IETs are expected to gain the professional capital that is promoted in BC, where the “good teacher” is conceptualized as a reflective practitioner who employs a child-centred pedagogy. Yet, in their training process, IETs’ previous experiences and knowledge are not utilized as leverage to challenge and enrich local conceptions of good teaching. This is problematic, since as Pratt (2002) warns us:

Across North America and increasingly the world, there is a move within education to adopt a constructivist view of learning and teaching. In part, the argument for this move is a reaction against teacher-centred instruction that has dominated much of education, particularly adult and higher education, for the past fifty years or more. While I do not argue with the basic tenets of constructivism, I do resist the rush to adopt any single, dominant view of learning or teaching. Unless we are cautious, I fear we are about to replace one orthodoxy with yet another and promote a “one size fits all” notion of good teaching. (p. 5)

In this section, I analyze this process through the lens of professional capital conversion.

As I mentioned earlier, the participant IETs had chosen to immigrate to Canada and they were aware of the difficulties involved in the immigration process. Still, many were overwhelmed by the recertification demands when these were added to the stress of immigration (I can attest that one cannot be fully prepared for all that is contained under the title of “immigration”). As Rod Brown shared:

[IETs] are forced to do it [the recertification program] if they want to be able to teach in BC. Once or twice a year I would get a call from an updater saying, “I don’t have the time and the resources...why do they make me do so much?’ So there is a resentment coming into the program and I think sometimes it’s a barrier too, because it’s not coming here with a sense of excitement and wanting to be a better teacher, wanting to improve their craft. It’s because the TRB told them they have to do this.

Similarly, Gary Rupert shared:

There is a huge pressure on them [IETs] to change and to adjust. In fact, we’re saying that what you’ve done in your career already in the last 10-20 years, we’re not valuing it,

we want you to stop doing that and we want you to change how you do things... You were successful in your country, people respected your work, they thought you were a good teacher and now you come here and we say, 'No, this is a bad method; don't do it any more'... You are asked to change very quickly.

These quotes demonstrate not only the conversion process that is required from IETs, but also some of the inherent tensions in this process. These tensions are the outcome of both the power relations that are embedded in the process, and the demand that IETs exchange their previous professional capital in a short period of time. Furthermore, since, as Vandy Britton reflected, "In a time of stress we revert to what we know, to the traditional." The intensive period of the recertification process amplifies these tensions.

In the recertification trajectory, the power relations were enacted into many, sometimes technical, institutional procedures. These procedures operated in parallel to many supportive interactions with individual professionals who were involved in this process.⁴⁰ The TRB as the main gatekeeping institution of the teaching profession in BC initiated many of these procedures, as Shawn McMullin described:

One of the mandates of this government and its administrators is to put more weight on what professional excellence means in the teaching profession...[that is why] we have teaching standards. We use the same set of regulations for all applicants whether they were trained in BC or in Nova Scotia or in Romania. The difference is that many of the requirements that we have wouldn't apply to Canadian-trained teachers, simply because they are coming from an educational system that is very similar to BC.

⁴⁰ I will demonstrate these interactions in section 7.5.2.

McMullin's reply demonstrates a top-down, standardized understanding of the professional capital of teachers that is consistent with the neoliberal discourse. "Such presumed neutrality and objectivity of technical-rational approach to education implicitly endorses the status quo. It assumes neutrality and 'common sense' within a paradigm of accountability, compliance and 'performativity'" (Angus, 2013, p. 172).

McMullin shared an example from another regulated profession to demonstrate the responsibilities of the TRB:

My sister is hygienist; I know what she has to do to maintain her license. As credential evaluators, if we won't keep up, we're behind. We're behind in terms of we'll miss things; we won't know the latest developments. And that is why I promote and encourage my staff to do this learning on credential assessment and foreign education systems.

Hence, the TRB aims to be current and updated with regards to developments in the teaching profession in different countries. This is a challenging task that, as McMullin himself recalled, demands constant learning. Still, professional standards are never neutral and always contain some biases (Guo & Shan, 2013), so constant learning does not necessarily challenge the core assumptions that are embedded within the standards. Furthermore, McMullin's rationalization demonstrates another important concept that Bourdieu employs when analyzing a given field: the illusion. It is "a tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and practical mastery of the games' rules" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, 93, cited in Gemme, p. 20). Hence, it is the internalization of the importance of the game and its rules by agents in the field that justifies the necessity for their position and actions.

The assumption that the TRB can obtain an accurate picture of the teaching profession worldwide, without integrating IETs' local knowledge into this process, is pretentious. As Violet shared:

One of the main reasons that made me take the PhD track, although I was a certified English teacher in Taiwan, is that when I came to Canada I was told I have to take many courses because I came from a different B.Ed. system. I felt this was very much unfair because in most courses the content, theory, and even the textbooks are very similar, so just because I'm not Canadian and I wasn't trained in Canada, I need to read the same text, same theories; I felt angry.

As a participant observer in one of the information sessions at the TRB, I also felt the dominant power relations underlying the standards-oriented professional discourse:

We are sitting in a meeting room in the TRB. The atmosphere is very professional, the presentation very concrete, and the evaluator goes over all the elements in the credential assessment process in detail. What felt before the session like a bureaucratic nightmare becomes less so. I had been thinking before of becoming recertified; however, I remember the first time I opened the TRB website and it just looked so complicated that it discouraged me from pursuing this route. After the session, it still seems like an annoying bureaucratic hoop, but at least a manageable one. Thus, I'm not sure if the information session feels welcoming...maybe it is the lack of some cookies or even a glass of water, or else it is the singular focus on information without the incorporation of even the slightest amount of "small talk." This makes the session a bit too professional and less personal. The vast expertise IETs bring to the process is completely

unacknowledged; the sole focus is on the requirements. It seems that the other IET participants also feel relieved once the session is over. One says, 'It feels less complicated; I was a bit stressed.' The evaluator replies, in the first personal comment made yet, 'We set it because we know it's helpful; I cannot imagine what it is like coming here from a different country.'

The overall sense of appreciation that IETs demonstrated in the information sessions may be understood, using the Bourdieuan conceptual frame, as a sign of their power deficiency in the recertification trajectory. Hence, IETs see themselves “completely through the dominating definitions” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 146), which limits their ability to resist what has been imposed on them.

However, one should not be mistaken in assuming that this institutional deficiency is only confined to IETs. I would argue that the recertification process of IETs is an extreme example of the broader currents circulating within the field of teacher education. As such, it exposes “the decline in the professional autonomy of teachers over the past three decades” (Angus, 2013, p. 172). In those decades the standardizing neoliberal discourse took the lead in the construction of the conceptions of the “good teacher,” and in defining the professional capital of teachers.

7.3.1 Conversion Mechanisms

When viewing the main gatekeeping mechanisms of the teaching profession in BC, such as the Standards, one can argue that IETs are affected by a broader policy context in the province in which “teachers’ capital – specifically their pedagogical knowledge, which is valued primarily in schools and other education institutions – has a low exchange rate in context of policy text production” (Gale & Densmore, 2003, p. 42). However, in the case of IETs, power relations were translated into many specific institutional decisions that were made on their behalf, such as

whether to be re-certified as elementary or secondary school teachers, and in what subject matter to qualify themselves. These decisions that were sometimes dressed up as “expert advice” are good examples of power discrepancies in the recertification trajectory. For instance, Sophia (1), who was an elementary teacher in South America, recalled:

The TRB studied all my documents and they showed me two paths: if I do the elementary track then I need to take many more classes, and for the secondary track if I'd be teaching Spanish, then I don't have to do that much.... so I was thinking about it, and I decided not to keep on with elementary teaching.

In this case, as well as in two other cases in this study, the IETs changed their subject areas or their K-12 focus based on the TRB recommendations. The IETs interpreted these interventions as expert advice that would increase their chances of establishing a teaching career in BC and prioritized them over their initial preferences. Yet, finding employment related to a specific subject area following a faster route to certification in BC may not be always the case. Often, however, the TRB considerations prioritized the Standards over the IETs' professional orientation, which reflects the deficient position of IETs in the field and the expectation that they would subordinate their professional identity to its rules. Sophia (1) described similar type of “institutional paternalism” in her interactions with other institutions during the immigration process:

I went to a social worker in an employment organization and I told him that I want to be recertified, and he told me, ‘No, you cannot do it here; it is kind of impossible to be able to compete with Canadian teachers, and being realistic, you're not going to be able to do it.’ He said, ‘You have to think of something else; you have to go home and think of what you want to do instead of teaching, and let's talk about it and I can help you with that.’

In this case, Sophia was advised to change her profession altogether in order to be able to find employment in BC. Miruna (2) described a discouraging interaction with her SA prior to her practicum:

It was told to me over and over, even before I started the practicum, that I should reconsider it [being certified as a teacher] because my experience was totally different from the Canadian experience. So that was supposed to be, I guess, a warning for me regarding my different background and experience.

These two examples demonstrate the extreme paternalism and gatekeeping mechanisms in which the professional capital of Sophia and Miruna was devalued to the point that they were advised to leave the field “for their own sake.” I felt some of this paternalism in the first information session I attended at the TRB:

We are sitting at the entrance, three potential applicants and myself; all three are looking at the application package they received from the receptionist. The TRB is very quiet; the receptionist says good morning and sits quietly. At 9:57, the evaluator comes in; she waits for three minutes and then says loudly to the receptionist, ‘I don’t tolerate late so if someone is late tell him or her that it is too late to join.’ I feel like a school kid who is being scolded in class on behalf of her late peers... I wonder why this should be my first encounter with the teaching profession in BC.

The barriers within the recertification trajectory led to frustration among IETs. However, several of the professionals considered these feelings to be “negative emotions” IETs needed to overcome in order to succeed in the recertification process. As Rod Brown shared:

When they [IETs] are trying to hold on to something that they know, that is when the problems happen, instead of embracing certain things ... If they can drop that resistance piece, if they can drop the fight...this is just the system. Leave the fight aside and embrace teaching.... If they're fighting all the way along, rumbling that, 'I shouldn't be made to do it,' it's pretty hard to be successful.

In this statement Brown ignores the possibility that IETs may “fight” or resist precisely because they embrace teaching, and because they are trying not to lose the good things they knew from their previous teaching practice as they become socialized in a new habitus. Similarly, John Yamamoto reflected:

When there are problems, one of the most common kinds of statements that students would make is that there is an under-appreciation of their culture here, that we are imposing a kind of a cookie cutter approach on how you teach in Canada, and I've always found it a bit disappointing... sometimes I feel like this is the main argument, that we're not appreciating them and there should be almost seamless kind of thing.... and sometimes I think that people [IETs] fail to put themselves in another person's shoes as to why these policies might be in place... I feel like this is our fault; that the burden is placed in our hands more than it should be.

Although all the professionals I interviewed expressed appreciation for IETs' capabilities as teachers, the underlying assumption was that IETs were the ones who needed to adjust to the Canadian system, and that IETs' resistance was considered not only disruptive but also “unfair” to the institutions that are trying to help them. Rather than seeing IETs' critique as a trigger to a more dialogic recertification process, it was being marginalized as a personal deficit. Hence, instead of “challenging the construction of ‘difference as deficit’ (Cummins, 2003) and rejecting

the neoliberal view,” these views convey the assumption “that successful integration in the host society is solely the responsibility of the individual immigrant” (Schmidt, 2010b, p. 237).

If the recertification trajectory is to be understood as a capital conversion process, it follows that IETs are required to prove that they have adopted the new professional capital in order to gain access to the Canadian teaching profession. Hence, IETs’ self-judgment is not at the core of this process; rather, they need to convince the recertifying institutions that they have successfully transformed their capital. As Peter (1) shared:

I have to fit in the system. It is the way it is, and otherwise I won’t be able to get a job ...
I tried to learn the Canadian way because this is the culture here and this is the way things are done. I’m different but I learned to fit myself, to adjust myself to the system...I would just put it this way: if I can follow the Canadian way then I’m a good Canadian teacher; if I practice my way then I’m not a good Canadian teacher, because they judge me, not I judge myself. This is their criteria, it is not my criteria; it’s the Canadian criteria.

It seems that the IETs are judged for being not sufficiently Canadian, yet a “Canadian” way of teaching is most certainly elusive if at all definable. Thus the conception of the “good teacher” in Canada is built upon an arbitrary distinction between what is “Canadian” and what is “not from here” with IETs always at risk of being marked as “outsiders.” Furthermore, whereas Kim (2010) argues that immigrant academics have what she calls “transnational identity capital” which allows them to bring valuable “‘outsider’ perspectives that [help] them cut through received wisdom” (p. 587), it seems that in Canadian teacher education transnational experience is not (yet) recognized as contributing to one’s professional capital.

The desire to fit in is also reflected in Sophia’s words:

You always learn something, even from bad experiences...I feel stronger now as a person. Every day you are getting to know the place you live in and the people who surround you, and if not, you're never going to be part of this society. We made the choice to be here so we have to work for that, we have to find a way to do it; I have to survive here, I have to have a job.

Using the Bourdieuan frame, these examples demonstrate the deficient position of IETs as players in the recertification field (game). Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) argue that in a given field players try “to increase or to conserve their capital...in conformity with the tacit rules of the game and the prerequisites of the reproduction of the game and its stakes” (cited in Gale & Densmore, p. 42). However, they explain that players can also:

Transform, partly or completely, the immanent rules of the game. They can, for instance, work to change...the exchange rate between various species of capital, through strategies aimed at discrediting the form of capital upon which the force of their opponents rests... and to valorize the species of capital they preferentially possess. (cited in Gale & Densmore, 2003, p. 42)

It seems that IETs are in an unlikely position to transform the game, as they are positioned as students (i.e., not as professionals) in a game that is controlled by professionals (be it academics or policy makers). Since in the Updating program IETs “play” as individuals, their ability to be recognized as a unique group and to initiate changes in the program is further limited. This position is especially salient in the case of IETs, but also reveals general challenges facing the professional capital of teachers, since, as Angus (2013) explains:

Being a member of a profession implies the ability...to define the professional field of teaching in terms of its distinctive cultural and symbolic capital. Members of the teaching

professional field, then, should be willing to define, assert and defend a body of norms and knowledge that, although never entirely stable, gives them grounds for claiming internal and external legitimacy. (p. 174)

Hence, wide and active participation in a constant reconstruction of the professional capital of teachers is the mark of a strong profession. There is a delicate balance between perseverance and change in every given field. It seems that teachers' participation in the construction of their profession has been diminishing in recent decades as an outcome of global forces external to the field (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). However, inside this professional field, some voices are also prioritized over others, as the case of IETs demonstrates.

Miruna (2) gave an example of the reproduction of prevalent conceptions at the time of her practicum:

There is sometimes an expectation to try to adapt yourself to the teaching requirements and even to the teaching style of your SA...I think most SAs [are expecting this], even without realizing. They may say, 'I want you to be yourself,' but then they give you feedback that some of your methods are not ok...because they would have done it differently. This makes you wonder, what do they really want from you? But the bottom line is that you want to please them, as you want a good report.

This example demonstrates the power relations that are embedded within the practicum, in which novice teachers need to subordinate their ideas to the ideas of their supervisors who are the gatekeepers of the field. The above examples demonstrate that many of the IET participants were struggling to obtain professional legitimation while still maintaining their personal identity.

Whereas some core ideas are needed in any profession, an exchange of ideas is also important if the "good teacher" is to be understood as a "reflective practitioner" (Moore, 2004), and

especially in order to diversify the field and open it to alternative conceptions (Cochran-Smith, 1995).

7.3.2 *Obstacles in the Conversion Process*

During the recertification trajectory, some social constructions were conceived of as interfering in the conversion process. For instance, many professionals shared the view that age and gender affect one's ability to acquire new professional capital. As Calin Lucus recalled:

The older you get, the harder it is to change and to embrace a new culture... They [IETs] need to change themselves, they need to adapt, and it's a hard thing. You can be a master teacher in your country and then you come here and someone who is ten years younger than you will tell you you're not good enough...but if you won't adapt you'll not survive.

Similarly, Gary Rupert shared:

It is more frustrating for men than for women. The women seem somewhat more willing to adapt. But the men, who often have been teaching in high school or sometimes in college and are used to the lecture style where students didn't question them, they have some difficulties.

Rod Brown recalled, "The typical student is 25-26 years old; the average age for an updater here is significantly older than that... They have a typical kind of, and I mean it with all due respect, an ego of an older person." And John Yamamoto added, "One of the areas where there is traditionally the largest kind of problem rate is older male. The older the man is, there might be more potential problems."

Throughout my professional career as a teacher and a teacher educator I have supported child-centred pedagogy and the proclaimed professional capital that is

promoted in BC. I also acknowledge that different educational systems operate in different ways. So why does this process bother me so much? I think it is partly because of the detachment of the progressive language from the social context of immigration and diversity. And also, it is becoming increasingly clearer that one's age plays a significant role. It is not that I believe that older necessarily means wiser, but there is something about this child-centredness and celebration of youth that is troubling. As if the preferred teacher is this young, carefree teacher who is part of the general celebration of youth that is conveyed in the media, and through which all other age groups seem not to be updated but rather deficient. Maybe it's just that I'm turning 40 myself and feeling that I'll soon be "deported to the sidelines of society," or the other underlying assumption that professional ego is bad, at least in the case of IETs.

Rita Irwin shared a general observation about success rates in intersection with gender and age in the B.Ed. program: "Generally speaking, more guaranteed success resides with these who are young females...but what does it say? That's not necessarily a good thing." The important question, as Irwin suggested, is whether those with little previous teaching experience adapt to fit the image of the "good teacher" quite easily, while those with more established previous professional capital have a more difficult time making the transformation. However, the teacher candidates who are "more difficult" to transform may be the ones who have the greatest enrichment potential for the teaching profession, as they come with previous experience and unique perspectives. As Williams (2007) argues, experienced professional immigrants "can develop valued insights into embedded and encultured knowledge. Moreover, potentially they could acquire roles as brokers and boundary spanners, if international borders constitute

significant barriers to transfers of personal knowledge” (p. 367). Furthermore, the problem may not reside with the IETs, but rather with teacher education programs that are better suited to young, middle-class, white women and thus reproduce the dominant image of the “good teacher” and the same composition of the teaching profession (Chapman, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 1995; Sleeter, 2008a).

Using the Bourdieuan frame, it seems that there is a connection between the low status of the teaching profession in the external professional field (as a non-prestigious, female-dominated profession) and prevailing stereotypes within the field regarding age and gender (Etzioni, 1969). This connection works in both directions: not only does the perception of the teaching profession as female-dominated contribute to its low status, but it also constantly reproduces the actual composition of the field. Indeed, professionals in the field are striving to increase the professional capital of teachers and their professional autonomy in the face of constant neoliberal attacks (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Steeves, 2012). However, within the field the prevalent image of the “good teacher” is still that of a young, white female, which in turn affects the image of the “good teacher-candidate.” It seems that in order to genuinely transform the field, more than the “right rhetoric” is needed (Cross, 2005). Furthermore, these stereotypes can be understood as arbitrary components of the professional capital of teachers in BC, namely, as dominant conceptions of the “good teacher,” as I will demonstrate next.

7.4 Arbitrary and Essential Components of Teacher Professional Capital

As I explained in Chapter 3, it is important to differentiate between the arbitrary and essential components of professional capital in specific professional fields. When discussing the concept of cultural capital in educational research, Lareau and Weininger (2004) argue that “before the *effects* of cultural capital could be analyzed in a given context, its *content* had to be

empirically specified” (p. 117, italics in the original). They argue that this is especially important since there is a prevalent tendency in educational research to use cultural capital as a distinction between “highbrow” and “lowbrow” culture. However, according to them this usage is applicable to the specific French context in Bourdieu’s time, and should not be generalized to all fields. I find this argument also applicable to the concept of professional capital; hence, what is considered to be professional and what is not is specific to different professions and to different contexts of the same profession.

I do not suggest that different professions should not have any distinctions that define their unique qualifications, as this would eliminate the concept of professionalism and would assume that everyone could work in any field without acquiring relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities. My main point is that in professional fields there are always arbitrary components that are entangled with the essential ones. These arbitrary components may be the outcome of the historical development of the profession. For instance, teaching is historically a female-dominated profession so the image of the “good teacher” may share some similarities with that of the “good mother” (although caring is not determined by gender, and ideas of “caring” and the “good mother” also have racial and class features; Thompson, 1997). Arbitrary components can also be the outcome of influences of the larger social world; for instance, the image of the “good teacher” as a talented young professional is influenced by the image of young professionals in the neoliberal context. In this case, global players that participate in the field of teaching reshape its professional definitions.

Arbitrary components can also be specific to a local context, especially since teaching is a regulated profession in most countries. The complex intersection of arbitrary and essential components in the teaching profession is demonstrated in this dissertation by the example of

IETs in BC. IETs shared some examples of arbitrary components in the professional capital of teachers in BC. For example, most school systems have mechanisms for punishment and reward, so it can be argued that “class management” is an essential piece in the teaching profession. But as Camy shared, she was not familiar with the particular methods for class management that were prevalent in BC (e.g., writing lines and stickers). And yet, as Camy described, this lack of arbitrary components could make one less of a teacher in the eyes of Canadian colleagues and students.

Arbitrary components are not only specific to methods for assessment, cultural knowledge, or class management routines, but also to more general conceptions of the “good teacher,” as Miruna (2) shared:

I was given the feedback that I have to be a lot more enthusiastic... my FA pointed out that Canadian applicants tend to be more enthusiastic...I did feel a little uncomfortable with that comment...thinking back on that, it made me feel a little bit of an outsider... I mean, I think I'm a very enthusiastic person...but I can't be like that the whole time. That's where a lot of the feedback was coming from, that's what the FA wanted from me. That is why I felt that I do need to change: I do need to blend in more because I wanted to do well...For both practicums I felt like enthusiasm level was one of the most important focus of the practicum, and what surprised me the most was that never ever in my home country was I classified as a teacher who is not enthusiastic or as a teacher who is not passionate.

This example demonstrates that one of the marks of being a “good teacher” in the Canadian context seems to be overtly displaying enthusiasm. However, one may ask if there is an inherent connection between enthusiasm and good teaching, and how exactly enthusiasm is measured.

When I was listening to Miruna, I experienced a sense of revelation, as she put into words something that had bothered me before, although I had not been able to make the connection. I had encountered this focus on enthusiasm the first time I lived in North America, when I was in Houston, Texas. I remember being completely surprised by what seemed to me like a fake cheerfulness that people demonstrated all the time. This was very different from my experiences in Israel, which is not to say that people there are not enthusiastic, but rather that they do not wear their “smiling faces” all the time. I’ve noticed how my kids developed a wide-open smile while being photographed, whereas in previous family pictures they had exhibited many more types of facial expressions. I didn’t like it then and I still don’t; for me it was something that is more concealing than revealing of one’s true feelings, so I wasn’t sure what interaction was expected of me. Eventually, I just tried to surround myself with people with whom I can talk directly, and I categorized what I felt was a “fake enthusiasm” under “American habits,” like the tendency to say, “Oh my gosh,” in a pitchy voice. However, I had never connected this observation with the teaching profession.

After the interview with Miruna, I went over all my teaching evaluations from the last three years (in which I taught eight courses at UBC), and indeed I found out that the most excessive phrase to describe my good teaching qualities was that I am “very enthusiastic.” After talking with Miruna, I understood that in a way I was lucky because something that is embedded in my teaching (or personality) was perceived in the Canadian context as enthusiasm and thus was regarded as a mark of good teaching.

Enthusiasm as a mark of the “good teacher” is broader than a specific strategy of teaching or class management, as it says something more general about the qualities of the “good teacher.” But it is still arbitrary, as displays of enthusiasm may be regarded as superior or even in contrast with other teaching qualities such as depth or critical thinking. Positioning enthusiasm as central to the teaching profession is tightly connected to the image of the young, talented teacher, which goes back to the observation made by Rita Irwin on the higher success rate of young female students in the program.

Lastly, I want to return to the observation I made earlier about IETs being seen more as newcomers to the profession than as experienced teachers who are newcomers to Canada. The entanglement of arbitrary and essential components within the construction of the professional capital of teachers in BC prioritizes many arbitrary components that are grounded in the specificity of the teaching field in BC. And thus, instead of seeing IETs as professionals who need to learn the new context of their teaching (and can enrich the local context), they are seen as lacking essential qualities for becoming “good teachers” in Canada. In Chapter 8, I will suggest some solutions to this problem.

7.4.1 Thin/Thick Conversion

At the beginning of this chapter, I argued that conversion has two meanings: one is what I have termed “thinner” conversion, and which in the frame of this study focuses on the professional level, while the other is “thicker” and involves identity and self-transformation. I chose the terms “thin” and “thick” to distinguish between different levels of involvement or engagement of human behaviour. These terms also relate to the concepts of “thin” *versus* “thick” description, a distinction that has a long tradition in qualitative research (Denzin, 1989; Geertz, 1994; Ponterotto, 2006). It differentiates between a “superficial account” of human behaviour

(Holloway, 1997, p. 154) and a rich interpretation of human behaviour within a context while “[ascribing] thinking and intentionality to the observed behavior” (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 539).

It seems that for some IETs the professional capital conversion process was easier than it was for others. For instance, Camy (2) described a thinner conversion process:

It is still me; it changed my teaching style and my teaching philosophy. I’ve learned to be more flexible and not so hard on myself and on the students, to be more relaxed...I need to be aware all the time, so it adds another level of stress... If I was focusing on something else, I was kind of slipping back to my old way of doing things. When I was very tired, I went back to my grammar teaching. I need constantly and consciously to take this way [of teaching].

In this example, Camy reflected on the professional change she went through, and was aware of the continuous effort she had to invest in order not to “fall back” to her old professional habits. But although she describes deep professional changes, such as in her teaching philosophy, she did not feel she had changed as a person. The professional capital conversion process in this case was one of teaching philosophy and methodology, which was a difficult process that demanded awareness and at times caused stress, but was not embedded in Camy’s deeper layers of identity.

Other IETs, like Sophia (2), described a thicker conversion process that demanded a higher personal price:

It is so hard, being in the middle of a jungle of English speakers, Canadian people, so hard...being placed in a place you don’t want to be in, and you don’t know how to behave...I made a personal comment to one person in the practicum, and he didn’t come to me to talk about it, but started talking to others... they turned it to a big problem, and it had nothing to do with my professional hat, it was a personal comment, and I made it

clear that it's not going to affect my job... You have to be really careful with the things that you say... They are not aware that we are coming from a different culture and there are things here that we're not used to see, so for us it's shocking, but it doesn't mean that we're not going to accept it; it's a process... It was such a big thing, and I was saying to myself, 'Just say nothing because they are going to take it wrong....' We have to be really, really careful with what we say. But now I know I cannot talk to anyone about my personal thoughts, about culture, about the Canadian culture, about things that we see here; it's going to fail my professional work.

In this example, Sophia described a professional conversion process that affected her sense of identity, relationships, and beliefs. She posited Canadians as “they,” IETs as “us,” and felt that she as an IET cannot be truly understood; thus, she was forced to present the required professional capital without exposing her emotions and true ideas. In this sense Sophia did not really “convert” to the Canadian professional capital, but rather was like the Anusim⁴¹ who were forced to convert but secretly retained their religious identity. Sophia used what Bourdieu (1984) calls “annexation strategies” (p. 304) to hide her true feelings.

Miruna (2) shared another example of thick professional conversion:

It made me wanting to blend in more. I think that is what happened to me... At some point, I tried to come with my own experiences and share them with the class, and it was great, they were really excited about it. On the other hand, you cannot always go back to your background. Most importantly, when issues start coming up you cannot use your background as an excuse, so I did want to blend in... because you don't want them to think that you're too different.

⁴¹ During the Middle Ages, in Spain and in Portugal, Jewish people were forced to convert to Christianity or face severe persecution. However, many of them continued to observe Judaism secretly.

In this example, Miruna understood that if she wants to succeed as a teacher in Canada she had to “blend in” and adopt the local professional capital. Miruna was aware that this was a thick conversion that operated on deeper layers of her identity. As she explained, “The paradox is that I do feel it has not only to do with my background but also with my personality.” However, in this case Miruna also did not fully conform to the expectations, as she shared:

I don’t know if I’m going to have a class of my own I’m going to act the same way.

Probably not, because this is not in my nature.... I think you need to stay true to yourself and make that to work well in the classroom. There are a lot of people out there that maybe are not constructed that way, overly enthusiastic, and to just say maybe you’re not meant to be a teacher because of that; I don’t think that’s fair.

It seems that for the participant IETs, going from “master” to “student teacher” was more like a religious conversion than learning new professional skills. In Chapter 1, I argued that the teaching profession is both a public and private profession; it is public, as schools are public domains, and it is private, as most of us were students and have first-hand impressions of teachers. When referring to the capital conversion process, another aspect of teaching as a private profession is revealed, and the professional capital of teachers conveys not only professional skills but also other aspects of one’s identity. As Steward (2010) claims, “Teacher identity is extremely personal and particular... [It] is embodied; a part of their very being, their skin” (p. 48). In Miruna’s case, her assumed lack of enthusiasm was implied to be part of her personality and not only her teaching role, whereas in Sophia’s example, subscribing to a new professional identity meant also redesigning her wider social interactions. Pertinent to this point, Deters (2011) argues that IETs’ professional identity is “associated with beliefs, values and ways of being, [that] are deeply internalized [and thus] when a person’s professional identity is not

acknowledged, there is a tendency to resist acculturation because one's self identity is threatened" (p. 213).

7.5 Alternative Factors in the Recertification Trajectory

The process of capital conversion is embedded in power relations; however, to my understanding, it does not mean that all that happens during this process can be understood in a one-dimensional way. A main critique of Bourdieu's conceptual frame is that it does not allow ample space for resistance and agency (Goodman & Silverstein, 2009; Lane, 2000; Singh, 2005). I would argue that during the recertification trajectory the participant IETs demonstrated agency and creativity, found alternative sources of strength, and established supportive interactions.

7.5.1 Agency

Portraying the recertification trajectory through the lens of professional conversion does not exclude the role of agency. In Bourdieu's conceptual framework (1984; 1990; 1997), both structure and agency interplay in a given field. Some scholars argue that the structures seem to overpower agency in most cases (Gemme, 2009; May, 1999). However, Reay (2004b) identifies agency as one of the main features that constitute the habitus. She describes agency as the source of individual choice and action, while it is simultaneously constrained by the other habitus features such as embodiment, which is the way the social world is imprinted on the individual. Hence, agency can be understood as the self-initiated action of individuals facing constraining circumstances and self-constraints. Similarly, Kelly (2007) justifies the usage of the term agency rather than choice because

the word choice tends to be equated with entirely self-generated and intentional actions.

The common understanding of the word choice tends to mask the circumstances under

which people make decisions; particular material conditions, cultural practices, and social networks influence individuals and shape their decision-making. (p. 8)

While “forced” to participate in the teacher education field in order to regain access to their profession, and while encountering many barriers, the IETs still found various sources of strength. As Nehlia shared:

You just need to have devotion; I always think that when there’s a will there is a way. I set up my mind, I wanted to be certified and I did it... I had the guts to do it, but it was difficult. Now that I’m thinking of it I don’t know how I did it, all these exams, the lesson planning, working till two in the morning. If you’re not really strong-willed you’re not going to be able to do it.

Similarly Juranika (1) described:

I had my moments when I said, ‘I cannot do it. I cannot adjust myself to this kind of culture.’ Maybe I was too tired, I was crying for days and in the weekend I rested and the next lesson went really well and I thought, ‘Maybe I could do it.’

And looking back at the end of the long practicum, Sophia (2) recalled:

It was the hardest time of my life... I told my daughter [14 years old] I wasn’t able to help at all in the house. I was working almost all night, I stayed at home in the weekends to work...But now I’m going to graduate as a teacher in Canada and to get my citizenship. It took me five years to be able get a decent job in this country and to work in the field of my experience...it has been really hard but I think I’m ready to start working and being a Canadian tax-paying citizen.

In these examples, IETs demonstrated strong will, persistence, and perseverance. IETs' agency was also demonstrated in their ability to change and adjust their teaching styles through critical reflection on the professional capital in both their home countries and in BC. For instance, Nur shared:

I understood as soon as I was in a classroom in Canada that you couldn't be confrontational with the students here, that you have to be very careful with what you're saying, and that it is very important to have a good relationship with your students. So as soon as I started the practicum I realized that a lot of things that I've learned were useful.

Juranika (1) returned to her own experiences as a student as a bridge between her previous and current professional capital:

We learned that students won't like the materials if they don't like us, so we have to make them like the teacher, and I had a reflection on my past as a student, really it is true! Because I wanted to study history and become international lawyer, but in high school I had a teacher who was racist... I always felt it and I was not interested any more. He kicked me out of my interest. And the reason I chose French is that I loved my French teacher.

And Peter (1) shared, "So maybe there is something positive; students are not so fearful, they can be more loosen up. Certainly, this is something that I have to learn, loosen up myself." And Nur added, "Here you are very much accountable for everything you do. I see the good point of it now, because I'm very careful in what I do, so I'm more accountable toward myself too." In these examples, the IETs demonstrated how they made sense of and created connections between their previous professional and personal experiences and the professional capital they needed to acquire in Canada.

From his perspective as a practicum advisor, John Yamamoto described how IETs use their agency to try to influence practical decisions, such as practicum placements:

Because you're dealing with people who are older and have families, etc., they don't tend to be the typical person who is renting an apartment in Kitsilano, and so you get a lot of people that are, like, 'I need a placement in Surrey because this is where me and my family live and I got to be close to home.'

On the same note, IETs shared examples of their agency in their choices of teachable subjects and in their insistence to stick with their preferred professional track. For instance Juranika (1) recalled: "I don't want to teach English, it's not why I'm paying so much money and taking time off work... For me it has to be challenging: I want to do intensive French." While Miruna (1) explained:

I chose to take a French course because I considered it to be an asset... I find it strange that many teacher candidates here don't want to take French. In intermediate schools you would have to teach French, but they don't want to take it.... I worked hard on this and I can bring it as an asset. I need to work a little bit harder and to give a little bit more to stand a chance.

In this example, Miruna understood that she needed to work extra hard to increase her chances to find employment, and used French as her leverage. However, these examples were few in comparison to the many examples the participant IETs shared in which they subordinated their will to the requirements of the field. This is not to say the IETs lack agency, but rather, as Kelly (2007) argues (referencing the work of Reay (2004b)), in a different context, "external (cultural, political, and economic) circumstances as well as...internalized filters on the world...make 'some possibilities inconceivable, others improbable and a limited range acceptable'" (p. 10).

Other qualities that IETs demonstrated and were a source of strength during the recertification trajectory were humility and flexibility. As Nehlia described:

I'm really a very adaptable person. I'm very flexible and I'm a keen learner, because teaching is learning. Teachers are learning all the time, so you need to be modest; you try and if it doesn't work you try something else.

And Peter (1) shared:

I believe humility is a virtue everyone has to cultivate; nobody can be up there all the time. If you want to learn something you have to be humble. I don't have Canadian experience; all my 20 years of experience are of East Asian experience, and my SA has 10 years of Canadian experience so I have much to learn. Age doesn't matter, it's the experience.

All of this makes me aware of the price one needs to pay in moving to a new place, and the pride one needs to swallow. Humility is a strong disposition, and if you embrace it in your life you can find the strength to go through many barriers. But where is the line between humility and defeat? When does being willing to change too much permeate your own sense of being, and what does it erase? And why is this mainly a one-sided story that demands this hard process be carried out by those who need to fit in and not by those who receive them? Or is it just me who is too proud?

It seems that in the recertification trajectory, the IETs faced bigger challenges than typical teacher candidates, as is apparent in John Yamamoto's reflection:

In the majority of time the success stories from updaters are purely the fact that they persevered through everything and finished. I had a number of them who've said, 'It's been a really long process with many problems, and family problems and pressures, but we finally finished it'... and they are really grateful, just that they've made it.

This quote shows the feeling of accomplishment IETs have when they finish the recertification trajectory; however, their achievement does not erase the difficult experiences they go through and the price they have to pay along the way, as I will demonstrate in the last section of this chapter. Furthermore, IETs' stories of resilience and overcoming demonstrate their capabilities and strengths as individuals and as teachers, and the loss to the education system in Canada of discouraging many such teachers through the recertification trajectory.

7.5.2 Supporting Interactions

During the recertification trajectory, supportive interactions with professionals countered the institutional pressures IETs were exposed to. These interactions occurred especially during the Updating program. A main characteristic of these supporting interactions was the acknowledgment of the professional capital and past experiences of IETs. For instance, Anik described:

I try to value their skills and what they bring to class. Because they are already certified teachers in their home countries, I try to treat them as such: 'You are educators, and here is what you need to know for teaching here.' We cannot ignore their baggage and their experiences, so it's finding that happy medium between openness to new ways and what's comfortable for you.

Similarly Vandy Britton shared:

Some of the people [IETs] are amazing but they all need to know how things work here, and our intention by having the program is not to change them into Canadians in the sense that they have to throw away what they have brought with them from their country. It is absolutely the opposite; the population here is so diverse so we expect our teachers to be equally diverse.

Rod Brown described:

A lot of these updaters are seen as valued assets to schools, the principals, and teachers know that they're coming with past life, with a skill set that our typical 25-26 year-old candidates don't have. The majority of schools and SAs embrace these students.

Supporting interactions were highly appreciated by IETs, as Ewa described: "[During the Updating program] I felt appreciated, my country, my background, I didn't feel sticking out, or that they could hear my accent, or that there is something wrong with me." And Camy (2) shared how the interaction with her SA supported her in the practicum:

It is typical for Eastern European teachers, we tend to see the negative parts first, so I first saw what I didn't do well during the practicum, and my SA always told me the good parts of my teaching; it was very helpful.

Sophia (1) described the importance of encouraging interactions on her decision not to give up on her teaching career:

I was volunteering in a secondary school in the area, and they asked, 'What happens with your teaching plans?' And I was like, 'I think I need to just forget about teaching and do something else'... and they were, 'No, don't give up it's not an easy path but you'll find

a job. You're a Spanish teacher, we need you here.' So they encouraged me to do it, and I said, 'Yes, let's do it;' I will at least try.

Supporting interactions were important not only for IETs to feel that they are being acknowledged, but also as a tool to allow IETs to reposition their professional capital through a dialogic process. Anik shared an example of such an interaction:

I had two students from France for whom my pedagogy was completely different...but we talked about it, we compared, what's working for them, what is shocking for them... I think the communication piece is the key, because if you just say, 'It's this way or the highway,' that doesn't work and students don't respond well to that. But if they feel like they've been listened to and their points of view are being heard, then it goes a long way toward getting them to be open toward other methodologies.

Hence, supportive interactions during the Updating program helped IETs to go through the required professional adaptations in a constructive way, as Juranika (1) described:

I wasn't really in my safe zone, but my FA always said, 'You have to go out of your safe zone, that is the only way you learn about yourself and about your students. You have to try new things, otherwise you're going to be bored of yourself,' and this is a good approach.

Similarly, Peter (1) described how his relationship with his FA helped his professional adaptation, as well as the active role he took in shaping this relationship: "Right at the beginning I told her, 'You have to tell me what I need to learn, what I do wrong,' and she did it. I have no reservation about it because only when she tells me, I'll learn," while Anik shared her perspective as an FA:

During her practicum one IET was struggling with how things were done in her classroom and she sort of broke down into tears and felt a bit overwhelmed. So I brought her back to when she was teaching in her country and just made her feel better and gave her that sense of confidence again. Like, every context it is going to be different but you know that you are a good teacher, you had a lot of success with teaching in the past; go back to that place in your head and find that confidence because it's there.

These examples bring up the importance of supportive interactions during the recertification trajectory. Deters (2011) similarly highlights “the importance of acceptance by established members...which enabled access to material resources, guidance and opportunities for practice” (p. 211), while Frank (2013) argues that IETs “would be well-served to be placed in nonthreatening mentoring situation” (p. 34). However, from the perspective of professional capital conversion, IETs are trying to gain legitimacy as “good teachers.” In Bourdieu’s (1984) words, IETs need to acquire “a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability” (p. 291). Hence, even supportive mentoring relations cannot be seen as symmetrical, as they are embedded in power, as one side is mentoring and the other is the recipient of this mentoring.

While most professionals expressed their acknowledgment and appreciation toward the IETs, not many shared concrete ways of translating this appreciation into daily interactions and teaching practices. If, as Reay (2004a) argues, capital is translated into mundane micro-interactions, then these few supportive interactions, although important, were not sufficient in challenging the prevalent professional capital in the recertification trajectory, as I will demonstrate below.

7.6 Deficiencies in the Professional Conversion Process

The recertification trajectory involves institutions, structures, and interactions; hence, it cannot be understood as a simple, coherent process. Especially when focusing on the Updating program piece, many IETs shared good experiences and constructive learning processes. However, of the ten IETs participating in this study, only Zuzana described a seamless recertification trajectory, in which she did not encounter memorable challenges:

I never felt like an outsider or a stranger. I think this is a very useful process, because we come from a different teaching background and this process gives us direction to the expectations here... I feel lucky that we can do it as teachers; that we don't have to go through the whole training all over again.

It may be that what made the recertification process easier for Zuzana was that she arrived in BC from Slovakia as a young female teacher without previous experience. Furthermore, Zuzana thought that the recertification process was relatively easy, as she explained: "I found out that it is not that difficult to become a teacher [in BC]. You don't need to go through the whole process, just to do the recertification" (she did the Updating program when it was only six months). For personal reasons, Zuzana also never applied for a teaching position, so she did not experience this part of the rectification process that posed many barriers to other IETs.

However, for the other nine IET participants in this study, the recertification trajectory triggered feelings of deficiency. As Peter (2) shared:

Here, they want to standardize everything, even if you want to be a janitor... a doctor needs to do five years again and then he ends up as a taxi driver... I think that this is a fundamental flaw in the Canadian way of absorbing immigrants to the society. So

immigrants end up overqualified to the jobs they do; why does a pharmacist end up in McDonald's?

Similarly, Ewa recalled:

I love studying so I would do it again in a heartbeat. But having known then what I know now...how many hoops do I have to jump through? Everybody is telling me, 'Be patient, you're almost there,' and when I'm thinking I'm almost there, there is another hoop, and another one and another one.... I work already for ten years below my qualification. How [much] longer can I do it? I'm not 20 years old anymore, we have a certain background...our life here, it's a struggle and to get recertified it's a struggle on top of it.

Azi shared, "[For the last three years] I work as a TOC so I don't have a secure job and not the social conditions, and sometimes I feel it was a waste, to do all the studies and with all the experience that I have."

Current updaters, such as Miruna (1), were more optimistic. However, she also shared some concerns: "Teaching is not in-demand profession and there is a lot of competition, so they pick the 'picture perfect' teacher and maybe my accent will put me in a disadvantage." In her second interview after completing the Updating program, Miruna (2) still shared the same concerns: "I feel like I'm in a disadvantageous position. I'm sure it's hard on every candidate but it's probably a little bit harder on us, coming from a different background." As I mentioned earlier, Miruna decided not to look for a teaching job and to go back to her previous job in a telephone company. Juranika made the same decision.

It seems that not only did the recertification trajectory have barriers at all stages, but also that overcoming barriers in one stage did not guarantee success in the next. Many IETs even chose not to begin this process due to its many demands, as Nehlia shared:

I know so many immigrant teachers who work as teacher assistants. They don't want to go through the process. They're terrified, they say this is too difficult, Canada asks for too much: the English exams, the practicum, the language courses...and it is very frustrating because they work as educational assistances when they were teaching for long time in their countries and they cannot do it here because they don't have the certificate.

However, among the IET participants in this study, even the successful graduation from the recertification trajectory did not guarantee the successful integration into the teaching profession. The recertification process demanded so many mental powers from Miruna and Juranika that they felt discouraged to start the "real" struggle of finding a job.

The deficiency many IETs described was well known among professionals in the Updating program. As Rod Brown shared:

They [IETs] were very successful back home, so coming into this program and coming back into the classroom.... I think some of them feel – I'm not sure [if] demeaning is the word, but – comparing what they were doing back home, it is difficult for them to accept, 'This is where I am right now.'

Gary Rupert referred to deficiency in the job market: "They [IETs] are competing with local graduate students, so they are being less hired unless they have some special qualities." This view was also conveyed in one of the TRB information sessions; in answer to a question about hiring opportunities as a secondary English teacher, the evaluator replied, "It's going to be difficult to compete with people like me." And Vandy Britton shared, when talking about the practicum, "There is discrimination...there is perception that working with IETs would be more work...some would go, 'I'm not interested.'"

The difficulties found in entering the job market added another barrier to those already faced by IETs during the recertification process. For some IETs, the recertification journey ended in discordant tones, as Ewa shared:

We all have gifts, we all have something to offer, yet, there are reasons behind why I'm not getting hired. Maybe I'm getting older, I don't know...I was already in the system and everyone were telling me I'd be hired on the spot...so I guess I may be good enough to be a teaching assistant, but maybe I'm not good enough to be a teacher, despite all my experience, despite all the years. I worked for the district, they trained me, I have all the certificates. I've got a lot to offer, and yet it's not enough.

The problem is that whereas IETs are required to convert their professional capital, successful conversion in the eyes of the recertification program does not guarantee successful integration into the teaching profession in BC. As Cruickshank (2004) argues in the case of IETs in a designated program in Australia, "Spending two years in teacher education without the guarantee of gaining employment as a teacher at the end of this process was a risky step to take" (p. 129). Furthermore, as Singh (2005) argues in the case of Asian immigrants in Australia, it does not "guarantee them protection from, or the erasure of, routine...racism, discrimination, and harassment, nor does it compensate for the costs involved in the denial of their ethnicity, language, or civic rights" (p. 167).

While IETs need to overcome various barriers and to "pass" various tests during the recertification trajectory (Reid et al., 2014), being successful in this process is disconnected from being successful in real life (i.e., finding a job). There is clearly a profound gap between the demand for "bureaucratic accountability" (Bales, 2006), which applies the same criteria to IETs,

and the system's ability to actually provide successful outcomes. Ironically, the weight is solely bared by IETs and not the recertifying institutions.

Chapter 8: The Recertification Process through a Multicultural Lens

8.1 Introduction

In the previous three chapters I presented the complex recertification trajectory of IETs. Chapter 5 presents the barriers IETs encounter during the recertification trajectory. Chapter 6 locates these barriers within the heteronomous field of teacher education in BC by identifying the major institutional players and their intersections. I paid special attention to the Updating program, which was the starting point of this study. Chapter 7 analyzes the recertification trajectory through the concept of professional capital and the process of capital conversion.

The recertification trajectory involved many experiences and interactions. In the previous chapters, I presented the recertification process not as simply good or bad, but as complex. However, in this chapter I will highlight the problematic nature of the recertification trajectory when set against the declared nature of Canada as a multicultural society that promotes and embraces diversity. It is important to note that all the professionals that I interviewed in this study cared about teacher education in BC and were committed to making teacher education meaningful; hence my focus is not on “bad” individuals, but rather on the systemic and institutional factors that are at play in the recertification trajectory.

This chapter elaborates on the last research question of this study: In what ways do [professional] assumptions intersect with race, ethnicity, gender, language, and immigration [in the professional capital of teachers in BC]? I begin by presenting references to diversity and multiculturalism in the recertification trajectory, after which I critique two themes that emerge from this examination: essentialism and reciprocity.

8.2 Celebration of Diversity

This study is located within the theoretical frame of critical multiculturalism, while the methodology of an extended case study aims at theoretical reconstruction, in this case of the prevalent concept of multiculturalism (Burawoy, 1999). It seems that the construction of diversity in the recertification process was mostly embedded in the liberal understanding of multiculturalism and not in critical multiculturalism. Locke (2010) summarizes May's (2003) main characteristic of critical multiculturalism as follows: "Acknowledging the role of ethnicity and culture in identity formation *without* essentializing them; recognizing unequal power relations as part of life...; recognizing the way in which certain cultural knowledge can become marginalized in society; [and] recognizing the social situatedness and provisionality of one's 'speaking position'" (p. 87, italics in the original). I will now demonstrate how these components were mostly missing from the recertification trajectory.

The Canadian educational and policy discourse is suffused with references to diversity as something to celebrate, especially in urban areas such as the Greater Vancouver Area. Hence, not surprisingly, references to diversity were prominent in interviews with professionals who highlighted the importance of diversity in the teaching profession. For instance, Anik shared:

BC, and Vancouver specifically, is such a multicultural city... What is the Canadian culture? I won't even be able to define it, and so I don't think it had been an issue in my classes. It's becomes a matter of celebrating diversity and where people are from.

Similarly, Rita Irwin strongly supported the value of IETs as increasing the diversity of the teaching profession:

I think all of us should really value international experience...there is nothing like bringing together people from different international backgrounds; you don't get it any

other way. We need to be exposed to one another, learn from one another; we're benefiting a lot from these individuals being in our program and becoming teachers in the province.

And Sydney Craig was also very supportive of diversity in teacher education in BC:

We also have in our [B.Ed.] program a very large percentage of candidates who are children of immigrants, for whom English is still not the first language spoken at home. And they are graduates of our school system, and they have a different culture too. There is no unique Canadian culture anymore. There was more when I was a child, but now there isn't. It's a multicultural student body.

All the professionals participating in this study expressed their support of multiculturalism and diversity, and thought that these were being conveyed in the certification policies and the Updating program. However, statements such as "There is no unique Canadian culture anymore," or "What is the Canadian culture?" overlooked the hierarchical construction of different cultures within the Canadian society, as well as the "speaking position" of the interviewees, who all belonged to the privileged group (Canadian-born, white, native English speakers). Furthermore, the above comments demonstrate a profound paradox for the IETs – if there is no single clear-cut "culture" why is it that they are constantly being judged negatively for not understanding and representing it sufficiently?

Whereas references to the importance of diversity and multiculturalism were prevalent, there was a disjuncture between this terminology and the construction of the subfield of recertification. Hence, the unanimous support of multiculturalism was not really embedded in the recertification trajectory, but rather acted more as a superficial tokenized discourse (Cross, 2005). Such a concept of diversity may actually function as a gatekeeping mechanism, "whereby

internationally educated teachers demonstrate the strength of their self-willed conversion—integration—into culturally acceptable objects of entertainment for their superiors and their followers” (Reid et al., 2014, p. 101).

When I asked about factors such as racism or discrimination toward IETs, this was usually dismissed or referred to as an individual disposition or specific exception. As Vandy Britton argued, “I’m genuinely thinking that there isn’t a lot of discrimination; some are so openly discriminatory that it is shocking, but it is very few.” Similarly, Anik shared, “Honestly, I haven’t seen it [racism/discrimination]; it has not been an issue in my classrooms.” Calin Lucas argued when referring to barriers IETs face, “From my point of view, I don’t think it has anything to do with race, it has to do with culture.” Additionally, Rod Brown recalled, “When you mix them [IETs], nobody is going to be able to pick up who is the updater. Our whole student body is a cultural mix.” And John Yamamoto seconded, “I hope that this doesn’t happen, and if it is, I’m not aware of it.”

These examples are consistent with the frame of liberal multiculturalism as they minimize the role that unequal power relations still play in Canadian society (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Henry & Tator, 2009). Furthermore, in the few instances when discrimination was mentioned, it was referred to not as integral to the Canadian society, but rather as transmitted to the Canadian society by immigrants. For instance, John Yamamoto shared:

If a person has a strong accent and doesn’t speak English very well, and he also happens to be Chinese [you might think that it is racism], but I don’t think it is... If there is discrimination, it comes from people of the same ethnicity... We had some issues regarding Mandarin teaching. It seems that there is a hierarchy of one’s origin in China

and the Mandarin one speaks... There is an inherent discrimination amongst this group of Chinese speakers.

And Rod Brown added:

In certain groups or subcultures, this is where some of the strongest discrimination and racism is somewhat happening. Because they're bringing something over from a country where they've been in, where there is segregation and different castes and ranks happening, and they bring it here.

It seems that among professionals in the field of teacher education in BC there was unanimous support of diversity and a genuine belief that diversity is promoted and embedded in the recertification process. Furthermore, discrimination and racism were seen as exceptions, or as brought to the Canadian culture from the "outside." This again is consistent with a frame of liberal multiculturalism, "which continues to objectify otherness" (Sharma, 2010, p.114). However, some contradictions appeared within the seemingly homogeneous diversity discourse, as I discuss next.

8.3 Cracks in the Diversity Discourse

On a superficial level, most IETs felt comfortable in the Updating program, as well as in the diverse social structure of the Greater Vancouver Area. However, some deeper currents ran beneath the declarative multicultural appearance. For instance, Nur, a native French speaker from France, shared:

At the classroom, I'm often asked by parents, 'Are you really from France?' And I know that it is because they Googled my name and it comes out as an Arabic name... In the first month, some students could not understand my French, and the vice-principal didn't

tell me directly but I sensed that he thought that they couldn't understand my French because it was not good enough for the students. He didn't believe I was from France and he was not the only one. It's happening over and over – it is because of my name.

Azi, who immigrated from an Arabic country in which French is an official language, shared similar experiences:

Sometimes people assume that you are not really, really fluent in the language...they will prefer a teacher from France...Nobody told that to my face but I felt it. I don't think you can blame people for that. Sometimes, it's just... they have stereotypes about people if they are coming from Arabic countries.

These statements and the observations made by Rita Irwin and Wendy Britton regarding comments from school professionals toward IETs (see section 5.2) demonstrate some essentialist racist assumptions, hidden beneath seemingly “neutral” questions, and embedded within social interactions. Dion (2007) argues that when referring to the Indigenous people of Canada, “one way or another, teachers, like many Canadians, claim the position of ‘perfect stranger’ to Aboriginal people” (p. 330). I would argue that people also claim the position of “perfect stranger” to IETs and other immigrants; this neutral position, however, is only a veneer covering hidden cultural and racist assumptions. As Subedi (2008) argues, “[the] normative practice of privileging white identities as a symbol of teacher authenticity or legitimacy influenced how the teachers responded to what constituted teacher capability and responsibility” (p. 58).

Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 2, IETs are not one unified group. The recertification trajectory of individual IETs was affected by the unique intersection of social categories they belonged to. It seems that IETs who belonged to racialized groups were experiencing more overt and covert racism than white IETs. Vincent, Rollock, Ball, and Gillborn

(2012) demonstrate how “Black parents seeking to operate in White-dominated fields can have their cultural and social capital devalued, rejected and treated as illegitimate when they come into contact with educational institutions ” (p. 350). They conclude that, “White power holders may refuse to accept as legitimate the capitals held by Black families” (p. 342). Similarly, in the above examples given by Nur and Azi, it seems that white power holders in educational institutions had doubted and devalued their professional capital based on their racial and cultural affiliation.

Sophia (2) shared another example:

We cannot trust other teachers in the teacher community, because they don’t know how different is our culture and what is the process that we need to go through...so they don’t understand, they take things wrong, [they think] that we are against what they have here as Canadians... So it’s better to stay with people of the same community. A friendship cannot happen at work, you cannot trust people...it’s easier with immigrants because they get it, but Canadians don’t get it.

This example demonstrates a binary in the understanding of cultural differences that is constructed around who is Canadian and who is an immigrant, and overlooks the hybridity and situatedness that play within every culture. In contrast, as Hurtado and Silva (2008) argue, “critical multiculturalism emphasizes hybridity and variation rather than consistency and homogenization” (p. 20). In addition, the above examples demonstrated two tactics IETs used in dealing with discrimination. While Nur and Azi accepted these encounters as part of their integration journey and even saw them as an opportunity to change people’s perceptions, Sophia decided to retreat and limit her interaction with non-immigrants.

Some IETs also felt the cracks in the multicultural appearance during the Updating program. For instance, Sophia (1) shared a feeling of isolation when interacting with local teacher candidates:

There were many Canadians in that class and they spoke fast and they were not really close to the immigrant teachers. They had their own group because they communicate easily and they didn't want the non-native speakers in their group.

Camy and Juranika shared similar feelings of distance from the other students, but they related them to the age difference (being older than the average TC) and not to cultural or linguistic differences.

8.3.1 Reciprocity

Whereas the IETs were expected to be willing to change, adjust, and adapt, in the few situations in which IETs described being in an advantageous position, the local participants did not demonstrate the same willingness. Furthermore, some IETs felt that they needed to be careful not to threaten anyone. For example, Nur shared:

Because I am from France, there was this expectation that my French would be the best, so I had to be very careful when I was judging their [other students'] French. I was actually full of admiration for them growing up here and learning French. I felt no pride about speaking French; I didn't work for it... I remember a student being offended and thinking that I have been criticizing her French, so I had to be very careful about that; I was not giving my opinion about anyone's French.

In this example, Nur's advanced French intimidated the other students, so she needed to make sure that she did not stand out too much. Peter (2) shared similar feelings when referring to his extensive teaching experience:

My [teaching] experience is not an advantage as such. Maybe it's something to unlearn because I was a teacher for 20 years in a certain style, and suddenly I need to switch style... I need to adjust; I cannot change my class for me, I need to adapt myself to them.

In this example, the advantage of being an experienced teacher actually becomes a disadvantage and something to "unlearn." Both examples demonstrate the "management of otherness" (Sharma, 2010 p. 114), in which IETs are expected to "fit into" their social construction as immigrants with deficient professional capital.

The willingness of IETs to adapt is inherent to the logic of the recertification trajectory; Gary Rupert shared an example of an updater who attempted to promote his previous professional capital:

We have one student right now, a male who is constantly telling his classmates, 'Oh this is the way we did it there,' and his classmates are not happy about that; their response is, 'Well, we don't care, this is the way we do it here. Stop talking about it.' And he's not getting the hint, so he's creating social difficulties for himself as well as instructional difficulties. Since he's like that, since he says 'No, the way I did it in my home country was so successful,' he doesn't understand the need to learn a new approach, so he's hurting himself and he's annoying his classmates.

The institutional expectation from IETs to adjust willingly to the Canadian system is not distinctive to the UBC teacher education program. For example, in a report that was issued after

the first year of the “Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers” at the University of Alberta, under the title, “Characteristics of successful participants,” it is stated:

Successful participants are able to fully integrate their past experiences and training as teachers into a new teaching context in Alberta. They demonstrate perseverance, tenacity and a positive attitude. They are dedicated to the teaching profession, which they often see as a vocation. They maintain determination to find their way back in schools and classrooms despite the many challenges they face in this endeavor. (People and Research Division, Professional Standards Branch, 2012, p. 58)

This terminology portrays “good IETs” as a form of “model minority” that is capable of overcoming challenges and achieving success by maintaining a positive and determinate stance.

Ming gave a counter-example when describing “mainstream” students’ reactions to different assessment tools she taught in her course: “I try to give my students other opinions. Because I feel that when I talk about testing, they find it disgusting or evil.” In this example, whereas IETs were expected to adapt to progressive means of assessment, local students could be resentful and stick to what they conceived of as good assessment practices.

While the IETs needed to demonstrate openness and willingness to change, some IETs felt that their local classmates did not need to demonstrate a similar openness toward potentially new knowledge or experiences. Furthermore, whereas IETs were required to exchange their professional capital and adjust to the dominant conceptions of the “good teacher,” the dominant professional capital could remain intact under an abstract discourse of diversity. As Sharma (2010) argues, “the appreciation and knowledge of *other* cultures ...is manifested as a difference against an invisible Eurocentric frame of reference” (p. 114, italics in the original).

These examples are distressing since most IETs felt that the professional capital of teachers in Canada had some disadvantages, and that some things could be learned from their past experiences. For instance, Nehlia reflected, “I like the system [in Mauritius] in the sense that the pupils back home are more disciplined; here I think that the teacher spend more time in classroom management than in actually teaching.” Similarly, Peter (1) reflected on the two school systems:

When I see students not doing their work in my home country I can go and tell them, ‘Do your work. ‘Here, I cannot. I need to ask, ‘Do you have a problem?’ You need to be very gentle with the students... You cannot talk to them like a strict father would talk to a child; here they are more like customers – you have to treat them like a businessman would treat a client.

Despite the prevalent discourse on diversity in teacher education, most IETs did not have the opportunity to share their previous professional capital, but rather were primarily expected to adjust to the Canadian model. In the professional exchange process, the currency of foreign professional capital was treated as weaker than the local currency. This demonstrates, from the perspective of critical multiculturalism, “the way in which certain cultural knowledge can become marginalized in society” (Locke, 2010, p. 87). As such, this case study exemplifies the double standard in the multicultural discourse in the field of teacher education. While cultural differences in Canada are assumed to be located on a leveled mosaic, in practice some cultures are prioritized over others (Dei, 2000). That is not to say that all differences should be overlooked or accepted without reservation, or that the teaching profession in a multicultural society should be a profession without a legitimately shared core, but rather that “the notion of cultural inclusiveness [should] lie more in the willingness to negotiate teaching and learning

strategies than in the adoption of any specific approach to pedagogy” (Cruickshank, 2004, p. 135).

8.3.2 *Essentialism*

In this study, I use the term essentialism for the assumption that people from similar cultural/ethnic/racial groups have similar collective characteristics. This is opposed to the frame of critical multiculturalism that acknowledges “the role of ethnicity and culture in identity formation *without* essentializing them” (Locke, 2010, p. 87, italics in the original). Essentialist views emerged many times in the interviews I conducted with professionals, in which general categories were assigned to IETs based on their places of origin. For instance, in one of the TRB information sessions, the evaluators said:

Some of you will be asked to complete a familiarization program. In BC, it [the system] is very student-centred; in other countries it is not like this. Like in China, you stand in front and the students follow your orders... In China, there is no class management, none; they just listen.

Shawn McMullin shared:

If we take Japanese teachers, for example, and they arrive in Canada and they apply to us and we’ll issue for them a license and they would enter a Canadian classroom, they would fail miserably because they wouldn’t be prepared to what’s going to be in front of them.

These examples reveal assumptions that all classes in China are taught in the same way, or that all Japanese teachers would fail to teach in the Canadian system without being retrained. It seems that, as Sharma (2010) argues when rephrasing Homi Bhaba (1994), “the containment of

difference constructs ‘cultural diversity’ as an ‘object of knowledge,’ compelling it to be encountered as a category to be discovered, *observed, evaluated*” (p.114, italics in the original).

I know that I myself am not “above” this essentialism. We are trying to figure out where to head when my PhD journey is over, putting aside for a moment our monetary and employment considerations; the school system and the community are the most important issues for us to deal with. When meeting with a few realtors, the “Asian question” always seems to rise. And it is always with an introductory comment of some kind that is intended to make clear that the realtor has no personal problems with Asian people. BUT they still find it essential to declare that the latter’s culture is not community-oriented, and very much academic competitiveness-oriented (and here usually comes an example about the grandmother picking up her grandchildren from school to hurry them straight back home, or the many after-school classes Asian children need to take). When it is our turn to speak, I find myself answering in the same awkward manner that it is not that I have anything against Asian people, but for us it is really important to be in a progressive environment where our children can play outside and the community is strong. Ultimately, I feel guilty when I observe, with my researcher hat on, that I am still buying into these essentialist assumptions. But, is it not too risky to simply ignore these assumptions? And how can you talk about cultural differences without falling into using these stereotypes?

Whereas essentialist assumptions about minority groups were common, when similar assumptions were expressed about “mainstream” teachers, they raised immediate resistance. For

instance, I observed a class discussion at UBC in which one student countered as follows: “I begin to resent academic discourses that assume the existence of non-respectful white teachers holding white supremacy attitudes; [these academic discourses] make me get a bit defensive as a teacher.” Violet, the course instructor, had pointed to the concept of institutional racism and acknowledged the “burden of whiteness,” while saying, “Many whites are positioned as oppressors, as if the white native English speaker has automatically become an oppressor.”

As a teacher educator, I sensed the important potential this conversation held, and was impressed by the acknowledging and reassuring response Violet gave. I had many similar discussions in my own courses since I started teaching at the B.Ed. program. And I am still surprised by how vulnerable and defensive members of the dominant group are toward anything that smells like essentialism...as if they always expect to be treated as individuals. But, there is also a contrasting tendency that I am aware of in my classes: the fear to ‘say something wrong,’ particularly on such controversial topics as diversity, Indigenous issues, and social justice. Hence, there is a prevalent critical discourse in teacher education, but beneath it there are essentialist assumptions, as well as the fear to share these thoughts and be categorized as “racist.” To open the floor to conversation, I try to share my own thoughts as much as possible. For instance, I shared that when I joined my son’s field trip and realized that there were only four white children in his class, I felt awkward, and then I felt bad that I felt awkward. I shared this because I believe that the mere acknowledgment of our “embarrassing thoughts” could lead to real dialogue and more complex understanding.

Dion (2007) describes a similar tendency when discussing Indigenous related themes, and she argues that since students know that

stereotypical representations are inadequate...there is a fear and a silence involved in addressing this content. The fear of offending, the fear of introducing controversial subject material, the fear of introducing content that challenges students' understanding of the dominant stories of Canadian history all support the claim for the position of perfect stranger. (p.331).

It seems that a liberal framework of multiculturalism can serve as a shield from engaging with a more critical understanding of multiculturalism, one that does not overlook the messy and controversial assumptions hidden beneath the superficial celebration of diversity.

Unlike the essentialist assumptions made by professionals about IETs, the IET participants held a more complex conception of their professional capital that was not dependent solely on their countries of origin or cultural affiliation. For instance, Peter (1) recalled, "I interacted quite well with the students [in his Asian home country] because I think the one way is very boring...and students can learn better when you are closer to them and they are not afraid of you." And Camy (1) shared:

For my generation [in her East European home country], being a good teacher means to be competent, to know very well your subject, and also be modern. It's about trying to use new methods and trying to change the traditional way... a great teacher has everything but is also interactive, uses group activities and open in the relationship with children.

In these examples, although both Peter and Camy were from societies that presumably follow a teacher-centred education model, they described their teaching style as more open and child-centred. Violet referred to the gap between these external and internal teaching conceptions:

I think that at the teacher education administrative level, they are not aware of this subtle sub-diversity; they tend to over-generalize the essentialism, and they assume, 'Of course Asians are teacher-centred.' These views are very ignorant because they have the assumptions without knowing these teachers and their training. But I'm not totally buying into the strict dichotomy of Asians being teacher-centred and Canadians being student-centred. I have observed and known a few Canadians whose teaching is totally teacher-centred and some teachers in [Asia] who are more student-centred.

No one would deny that there are differences between the school system in BC and other school systems throughout the world; however, most IETs, even if from a very dissimilar background, felt that they could adjust and find the middle ground between the two systems. Furthermore, some IETs saw similarities between the diverse systems, although from the essentialist perspective they are assumed to be very different. For example, when comparing her previous experiences to those of other local teacher candidates, Juranika (1) shared, "The students I had in the class had the same schooling experiences, teachers at the board, etc. They didn't have this student-centred, approach although they were ten or more years younger and grew up in Canada."

It is very clear that not all IETs are similar even if they come from a similar background; however, categorizing IETs and their assumed needs/deficiencies is easier than creating a leveled recertification trajectory that is open to differences and nuances without essentializing them. As Cruickshank (2004) argues:

The findings challenge any notion of overseas-trained teachers as a homogeneous group.

The need for flexibility in program organization and delivery was a constant theme. Such flexibility, however, presents problems for teacher education programs operating in a context of shrinking tertiary funding. (p. 134)

I agree that another barrier to the creation of a more flexible and nuanced recertification trajectory is that it is designed as a systemic tool to certify masses of IETs without possessing sufficient resources to support IETs as individuals. However, as such, it reproduces some essentialist assumptions about IETs based on their culture/country of origin. This is even more troubling since BC's educational system promotes diversity and multiculturalism as its main values (Ministry of Education, 2008). Furthermore, it seems that IETs of visible minority groups in particular perceived negative essentialist assumptions being made about them, whereas it happened less with IETs from European backgrounds. As Gary Rupert observed, "It doesn't happen very often with European IETs. That is usually not a problem; I don't know why."

8.4 Enriching Diversity, the Lost Capital of IETs

The integration of IETs into the BC school system is important on many levels, first and foremost because they are passionate teachers who are committed to the teaching profession, as Miruna (1) shared:

I love working with children and I think that teaching gives your life satisfaction on the personal and professional level...you actually make a difference in someone's life...

What I like about teaching is that you are constantly learning, you are always changing. You are learning so much not only about the kids and the way they learn but also about yourself. That is what I like about teaching and that is what drives me back to teaching here.

Similarly, Sophia (1) shared:

For me teaching is more than giving knowledge. It has to be even deeper: educating kids for being good citizens, teaching them about life... I want to show in teaching that the ideal person needs to be honest, respectful, and value others for who they are.

These two quotes demonstrate the entanglement of the professional and personal within the professional capital of teachers (Deters, 2011; Frank, 2013). For both Sophia and Miruna, being a teacher meant not just holding a job title but also a positioning of their place in the world. This also explains why the capital conversion process for many IETs is so dramatic, as it reshapes their understanding of themselves and their connection to the world. As Huberman (1993) argues:

Teachers don't just have jobs. They have professional and personal lives as well.

Although it seems trite to say this, many failed efforts in... [education] are precisely attributable to this neglect of the teacher as a person — to abstracting the teacher's skills from the teacher's self, the technical aspects of the teacher's work from the commitments embedded in the teacher's life. Understanding the teacher means understanding the person the teacher is. (p.viii)

The integration of IETs into the teaching profession is also essential for promoting a deeper understanding of diversity and multicultural education, especially in the Greater Vancouver Area, where many students are immigrants who come from the same background as some IETs. As Vandy Britton shared, "There are areas in Surrey where the population is mainly Indo-Canadian, and some IETs, because of their background, have a better understanding [of this community]." And Peter (2) shared, "For students who have difficulties understanding English I

can switch to the language they know, if they are from China, or Hong-Kong, or Taiwan. I believe I can help them more; I can connect to them better.”

Furthermore, regardless of their origin, many IETs felt that, as immigrants, they have a high sense of awareness of immigrant students. As Nehlia shared:

I’m more sensitive to minorities. These are children of immigrants, and so you just try to give them a little bit more attention, because they’re new. Some of them arrived just three months ago and they’re shy. Being an immigrant myself, I know what they’re going through, I understand their experiences; it’s difficult for them to make friends, you can feel it.

IETs can also strengthen and enrich the understanding of diversity and multiculturalism of “mainstream” students by their presence in classrooms and by sharing their experience and knowledge. As Nur recalled:

[I share] my different background when it comes to my country and culture, such as Muslim history. The perspective is very important, so I always tell my students, ‘Always try to find who is telling you the story’...I’m very much aware of it and I think it has to do with my background. And students actually love to have teachers from other places, because we’re bringing songs they didn’t know, slang they didn’t know. They understand that you can be a son of an immigrant and be born in France because most of them are like that too.

Sophia (2) added, “I enjoyed teaching them that Spanish is not only Mexico, tacos, and enchiladas, and to expose them to other things. I think it was interesting for them and they will not forget it.” Similarly, Miruna (1) reflected, “They [the students] were really curious about

how was life back home, what was it like teaching back home, how were the kids. They've asked many questions; it was such a big mystery for them." And Vandy Britton shared:

There was a student teacher from India and they did a project on India [during her practicum], but the text that they used in school was really inadequate and quite racist.

The perception was that everyone in India was poor and very backward...and she [the IET] was able to paint a much broader picture of what India is really like.

In these examples, IETs used their previous experience as teaching tools to enrich students' perspectives and knowledge. Furthermore, the IETs' presence in the classrooms triggered a dialogue that promoted a deeper understanding of multiculturalism through a critical reflection on essentialist assumptions. As I presented in Chapter 2, scholars highlight the importance of a diverse teaching force, and argue that a homogenous teaching force contributes to the reproduction of power relations and the marginalization of learners from minority groups (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Cummins, 2003; Santoro, 2008). Homogeneity in the teaching force may lead to "[artificial construction of] identity and knowledge formation as static and normalized within neocolonial frameworks, rather than as processes of negotiation that are grounded within societal power relations" (Schmidt, 2010b, p. 236). As an alternative, the framework of critical multiculturalism can offer an "unsettled pedagogical space," in which both teachers and students can explore "the marginalized yet fluid identities that the students bring, as well as the dynamic interactions of race, culture, and language" (Kubota, 2010a, p. 109).

However, while many professionals and school children were aware and appreciative of the qualities that IETs bring to the Canadian school system, the recertification trajectory did not transmit that same message. It seems that the main message that was conveyed in this process

was of a teaching profession that prioritizes assimilation over diversity. As Reid and colleagues (2014) argue:

It is clear that Western Anglophone educational institutions do not add value to the diversity of languages present among internationally educated teachers (and students). Little attention is given to extending and deepening their bi- or multilingual capabilities. The diversity of languages and educational theories among internationally educated teachers is not mobilized to make the schools—or universities—in which they work stronger. (p. 101)

In Ewa's words, "In BC you don't value and appreciate people from the outside; if you have it from outside, we don't need it because we know better." Hence, although IETs had a lot to offer to the Canadian school system, their potential contributions were often disregarded. Lareau (2003) distinguishes between the possession and the activation of capital. She explains that although people may possess similar capital, some may be able to activate it more than others based on the structure of the field and the powers at play. It seems that "the activation of capital" (Lareau, 2003, p. 196) by IETs was made harder because of the systemic and institutional devaluation of foreign credentials and the misrecognition of international experience in the field of teacher education in BC. The "lost capital" of IETs demonstrates the disparity between multicultural rhetoric and institutional reproduction in teacher education in BC. This loss stands in stark contrast to the image of Canada as a multicultural society. In the concluding chapter I recap the explanatory power of the concept of professional capital in teacher education and suggest some ideas for further research and practical implementation.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Summary of the Study

In the concluding chapter of my dissertation I will repeat the main themes presented in this study, followed by some concluding thoughts. I will end with recommendations that emerged from the findings of this study and with possible directions for further research and applications to other fields.

Several main themes were presented in this study. I began by presenting the barriers that IETs face during the recertification trajectory and thus expanded on some previous findings in IET-related research. The Bourdieuan conceptual framework enabled me to analyze systemic issues with an institutional rather than individual focus. Hence, by using the concept of “field,” these barriers were examined not only through the experiences of the participant IETs, but as resulting from the construction of the recertification trajectory. In particular I used the concept of professional capital in the teaching profession as a supplement to the Bourdieuan framework. I argued that within the teaching profession it helps to shed light on power-embedded assumptions about good teaching practice. This is useful both for understanding the particular predicament of IETs, and for subjecting these culturally embedded assumptions to critical scrutiny. The differences between the professional capital IETs bring, and the professional capital they are expected to convert this currency into, provide valuable opportunities to revisit “how we do things,” and why.

I demonstrated how the construction of the recertification process put IETs in a deficient position as newcomers not only to Canada but also to the teaching profession. This position minimized IETs’ previous knowledge and experience and resulted in prioritizing local Canadian knowledge while essentializing and categorizing “other” knowledge. The methodological design

of an extended case study enabled me to expand these findings from the subfield of the recertification process to the larger field of teacher education, and to connect some of the barriers IETs face to larger struggles within the field of teacher education in an era of neoliberal policy. I argued that the prevalent tendency toward assessment and standardization impacts the autonomy of the teaching profession. The concept of professional capital is useful in capturing the external forces that shape the field of teacher education nowadays and the attempt “to distinguish old from new professional work, especially in neoliberal, economized times” (Noordegraaf & Schinkel, 2011, p. 111).

While analyzing the recertification trajectory as a subfield, the concept of professional capital was used to explore the reproduction and gatekeeping mechanisms that are embedded within it. I demonstrated how the recertification process could not be analyzed as a neutral, objective quality-assurance mechanism, but rather as a power-embedded process that, although using the terminology of diversity, still reproduced the same construction of the teaching profession.

I demonstrated how IETs not only need to overcome many barriers, but also, explicitly and inexplicitly, need to prove that they have successfully exchanged their professional capital before they can be acknowledged as “good Canadian teachers.” This process is even more problematic since, as I noted above, the notion of “Canadian” knowledge itself is vague and contested. Yet, paradoxically, it is conveyed as a coherent construct when contrasted with “non-Canadian” knowledges and when IETs’ professional capital is judged in this environment.

Lastly, I contrasted the recertification process with the declared conception of Canada as a multicultural country, which led to my understanding that a deeper and more critical conception of multiculturalism is needed in order to increase the integration of IETs and to

challenge the conception of the “good teacher.” Such a critical perspective is desirable if we are to achieve a truly reflective and inclusive teaching profession.

9.2 Concluding Thoughts

In Canada, as in many other Western countries, there is an inherent tension between the increasing neoliberal influences in education that turn teaching into a more standardized profession (Grimmett & Young, 2012), and the understanding of teaching as a complicated and context-specific profession that demands many varieties of knowledge and practice (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). By using the concept of professional capital, this tension can be understood as an inter-field struggle over the economic and symbolic control of the teaching profession. Neoliberal tendencies, which aim to diminish the self-regulation and self-governance of the teaching profession in North America, result in shrinking resources to pre-service teacher education. In Canada, scholars argue that the AIT is a move in this direction (Young & Grimmett, 2015).

Indeed, in recent years Canadian Faculties of Education have reduced programming and support for IETs (Schmidt & Gagné, 2015). Although in BC there is still a designated model of bridging programs, the SFU PQP program is currently only offered every other year, and the UBC Updating program does not offer any unique support for IETs. It seems that under current neoliberal policies the future of designated programs geared toward IETs is uncertain.

The aforementioned Agreement on Internal Trade has been described as “an omnibus, multi-lateral, agreement that represents the application of international free trade thinking and language to the Canadian domestic economy” (Henley & Young, 2009, p. 21). One could speculate that if an international labour mobility agreement for teachers were to be developed, this would be a positive development for IETs as recertification requirements might be reduced

or dropped altogether. However, Bourdieu's framework of social and cultural capital, expanded with the component of culturally specific professional capital, suggests that IETS would likely still be distinguished and marked as "outsiders."

This distinction between what is Canadian and what is "from the outside" was marked by assumptions made during the recertification trajectory toward IETs based on their country of origin and context of previous teaching experience. Although such assumptions were hidden under pedagogical justifications such as the need to adjust to the "Canadian way of teaching," it seems that this distinction acted as a way of reproducing racial, ethnic and cultural hierarchies in the teaching profession. Furthermore, pedagogical distinctions were often portrayed as a binary between child-centered and teacher-centred pedagogies. However, there is no clear-cut or singular model of good teaching across teaching contexts. Moreover, the current prevalence of child-centred pedagogies reflects not only pedagogical interests, but also, as Sorensen and Robertson (forthcoming) argue, "the formation of institutions and processes at a global scale, to frame, measure, and sell a particular brand of teacher; one who is flexible, privileges constructivism as a pedagogical approach, and who used 'evidence' to make teaching and learning decisions" (p. 4).

Hence, the construction of IETs as "outsiders" and as lacking professional capital is prevalent in both inter-field and intra-field discourses on the "good teacher," although they contradict one another in many ways. Following the logic of the first approach, IETs are not the outstanding university graduates who are promoted in such policies as "Teach For America" (1990), or in the McKinsey report (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). Following the second approach, IETs do not have the "right" Canadian professional capital and thus need to prove that they have converted their capital from their countries of origin into Canadian capital in order to be allowed

to enter the teaching profession. Hence, it seems that there is a double barrier in the professional field of teaching when it comes to IETs. On the one hand, professionalism discourse is at the crux of the dispute over the position of teachers and teacher education in the social world. On the other hand, within the field of teacher education, a certain conception of professional capital is valued. This results in a discriminatory mechanism that promotes homogeneity within the teaching profession, and excludes diversity and multiculturalism.

It is important to remember that IETs are not one essentialized and unified group and that their recertification trajectory was affected by their individual social location. The concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) is useful to delineate the shared and different experiences of diverse IETs during the rectification process. For example, it seems that the professional capital of IETs who belonged to racialized groups was more often devalued. Similarly, factors such as gender and ethnicity played a role in increasing or denying access into the teaching profession. Age, gender, and level of previous professional experience also played a role in how complex the professional capital conversion process was. And of course, the way individual IETs “played their cards” and the degree of agency that they had demonstrated affected their individual trajectory.

However, my aim in this study was to highlight the institutional and structural aspects of the recertification trajectory that made this process hard for all participant IETs (although for some more than others) and for the many IETs who decided not to pursue this track. Kim (2010) suggests that “transnational identity capital” (p. 589) carried by mobile academic intellectuals is deemed valuable and is highly “transferable in the contemporary globalized academic and socioeconomic fields.” (p. 589); however, it seems that in the field of teacher education, international experience is not yet recognized as advancing one’s professional capital, and is rather seen as a

form of deficiency. As Schmidt (2016) argues:

The difficult employment market for teachers in many urban centers in Canada does not sufficiently account for the exclusion of IETs from the profession. Rather...systemic barriers complicate the situation, with IETs advised to go to substantive, or what I have deemed herculean, lengths to establish positive connections in schools and pursue additional qualifications. Without meaningful contexts and processes, these strategies ultimately prove to be questionable for securing permanent work. (pp. 7-8)

Particular to the case of the Updating program, I would argue that although UBC does not offer a separate cohort for IETs, some structural changes might be possible in order to make the program more attuned to IETs' needs. Firstly, since SFU is currently offering its program only once in two years, UBC could offer its program in the alternate year and attract more applicants. I would suggest that even a short course or seminar aimed specifically at IETs would be helpful in acknowledging their unique place and in helping them bridge their past and current experiences. It also seems that for IETs in the elementary track the program is especially challenging since they join an existing cohort in the middle of the year. It is important to see if this situation could be changed. Lastly I would suggest changing the name "Updating Program" to a different name such as "Bridging Program" that implies reciprocal process and does not imply that IETs' professional capital is "out of date."

9.3 Recommendations and Further Research

A few directions for further research crystallized for me when conducting this study. On the theoretical level, I am interested in the construction of the concept of "enthusiasm" in teaching and in teacher education. I have the impression that it contains some of the core

conceptions regarding what it currently means to be a “good teacher” in Canada and the United States, although there may be variations within these countries depending on geographic context and school population.

Two aspects regarding IETs’ post-graduation trajectory are beyond the scope of this study: the first refers to the hiring procedures of the school districts and their implications for IETs; and the second is the case of IETs on the job market, including the number of them who are actually able to find permanent teaching positions, and what happens to those who do not. Both aspects can be interesting to investigate through a mixed-method study in order to provide both quantitative and qualitative data on this issue.

Lastly, a more nuanced study that examines the proclaimed East/West dichotomies regarding schooling and teaching may supplement the concept of professional capital and allow for an exploration of future implications for the school system within the particular diverse profile of the Greater Vancouver Area. Specifically, in regards to this last point, I found interesting the observation made by the practicum advisors regarding tensions in Mandarin teaching during the practicum. This may lead to an interesting case to follow up on, namely, the perception of the “good Mandarin teacher,” and how this conception resembles or differs from that of the “good Canadian teacher.”

9.3.1 Applications to Other Fields

I would argue that in any professional context it is important to identify professional capital and how it is being constructed. In the teaching profession, this capital is conceptualized under the image of the “good teacher.” Furthermore, it is important to ask what the essential and arbitrary components of this capital are, and what they should be for the teaching profession in a multicultural democratic society such as that of Canada. I am not sure that all the answers to this

question can be determined, as we reside in a rapidly changing society within a global world where many regions are experiencing increasing influxes of immigrants. But, possibly merely opening these complex questions can be the first step toward discovering some answers. Such a process cannot be effective without inviting IETs to participate in the discussion and to incorporate their knowledge and experiences into re-constructing the teaching profession and teacher education to better tackle these challenges.

I would argue that the IET *recertification process* may be improved if it is possible to distinguish between essential and arbitrary components of the professional capital of teachers in Canada. For instance, Canada is a multicultural society and one cannot discriminate against students based on ethnicity or gender even if in some IETs' home countries, such division is normative. Needless to say, such essential components also apply to "mainstream" Canadian candidates, who, although having grown up in a proclaimed multicultural society, may still hold prejudicial assumptions (Orlowski, 2008). Furthermore, when dealing with arbitrary aspects of the teaching profession, the recertification process should become much more symmetrical and actually embrace other teaching methods, class management ideas, and cultural diversity.

On a practical level, it seems that currently, the recertification model of a designated cohort is better suited to acknowledging the unique position of IETs. However, if this model is not applicable, this study highlights the importance of incorporating IETs' vast experiences and knowledge into the mainstream B.Ed. programs, not only because teacher candidates and educators can learn from these experiences, but also because it can be a call for a more reciprocal and multicultural form of teacher education.

This study is not limited to the recertification programs, but to *teacher education programs* in general, as it overlaps with two other "categories" of teachers: those of minority

groups and experienced teachers. As I have demonstrated in this study, IETs are often from ethnic and/or visible minority groups; hence, the lens of professional capital can also be relevant to examining dominant cultural definitions that are embedded in the teaching profession and can affect teachers of minority groups regardless of their immigration status. In addition, in this global context, increasingly more teacher candidates enter teacher education programs after they have been teaching in other places, including, very frequently, overseas. Hence, this study raises the question of how to create more inclusive and dialogical teacher education that incorporates and acknowledges past experiences and does not treat teacher candidates as *tabula rasa*.

This study is focused on the structural barriers that are embedded within the recertification trajectory, and because it expands on and highlights some of the barriers that can be reduced (which would make the recertification process accessible for more IETs) it may be of use to *policy makers*, both in BC and in other provinces, who design and oversee the recertification trajectory. Furthermore, this study demonstrates some problematic assumptions that underpin the professional capital of teachers in BC, as well as the discrepancy between the good intentions of professionals in the field and the biases and blind spots that are embedded systemically.

This study is also relevant to *teacher recertification bodies in other Western countries*, many of which face an influx of IETs on the one hand, and a teacher shortage on the other. This study calls for a critical examination of the initiation of IETs into the teaching profession in different contexts, and for making IETs part of this process and not merely the object of it.

Other regulated professional fields that have recertification mechanisms for foreign-trained professionals, such as medicine, engineering, and nursing, could also benefit from this study. It asks which aspects of the professional definitions are essential and which are arbitrary,

and how to allow and utilize the rich knowledge and practices that professional immigrants bring with them.

This study is also applicable to other *educational studies* as it focuses on the capital conversion process in educational fields, and as such, is opening the floor for further research using the lens of professional capital for viewing other professions and social institutions (e.g., other regulated professions, such as social work and nursing, or other professional immigrants, who often struggle to gain full acceptance when working in Western contexts).

Lastly, I hope that this study is also of use to *IETs* in the various stages of their journey, as a source of strength and as a call not to forget where they came from and what they possess to give to this country that is their new home.

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Appendices

Appendix A : List of Interviewees, Positions, Names/Pseudonyms, Dates, and Member Check Results

Date	Full Name/Pseudonym	Position	Number of interviews (in case there is more than one)	Member check results
08.11.2013 12.04.2014	Juranika	Current IET	(1) (2)	+ With Modifications
24.10.2013 02.05.2014	Camy	Current IET	(1) (2)	+
25.11.2013 17.05.2014	Peter	Current IET	(1) (2)	+
13.12.2013 12.05.2014	Sophia	Current IET	(1) (2)	+
28.02.2014 22.08.2014	Miruna	Current IET	(1) (2)	+
08.02.2014	Ewa	Graduate IET		+
14.02.2014	Nur	Graduate IET		+ With modification
28.03.2014	Azi	Graduate IET		+ With modifications
20.12.2013	Nehlia	Graduate IET		+ With modifications
09.12.2013	Alayne Amstrong	Course instructor UBC		+ With modifications
02.12.2013	Calin Lucus	Course instructor UBC		+
05.03.2014	Violet	Course instructor UBC (GTA)		+
11.12.2013	Anik	Course instructor UBC		+
04.02.2014	Ming	Course instructor (GTA)		+
30.02.2014	Sydney Craig	Former head of TEO UBC		
06.02.2014	Rita Irwin	Associate Dean for TE, UBC		+ With modifications

Date	Full Name/Pseudonym	Position	Number of interviews (in case there is more than one)	Member check results
1.11.2013	Rod Brown	Practicum coordinator UBC		+
1.11.2013	John Yamamoto	Practicum coordinator UBC		+
23.10.2013	Gary Rupert	Former program advisor UBC		+
29.04.2014	Bob Shoofey	Former practicum coordinator		+ With modifications
17.12.2013	****	TRB evaluator		Withdrew
17.12.2013	****	TRB evaluator		Withdrew
17.12.2013	Shawn McMullin	TRB Director of certification		+
28. 01. 2014	Vandy Britton	Program coordinator SFU		+

Appendix B : Interview Questions For IETs

* Questions 1-10 will be asked only in the first interview.

1. To be accepted to the Updating program you must have an approved degree from a degree-granting institution. Where and when were you originally certified as a teacher?
2. Are you currently being recertified as an Elementary or Secondary teacher? What is your subject matter (for secondary teachers)? Is the subject matter/school level you are currently being certified toward different from your previous one? If so, why?
3. I'm interested in how and why you decided to become a teacher in your home country. Can you tell me about it?
4. Can you tell me about your teaching experiences outside of Canada?
5. How would you describe a "good teacher" in your home country/culture of origin? What does he or she do? What are her or his qualities?
6. Can you try to remember whether you agreed or disagreed with predominant (common/official) ideas about the "good teacher" in your home country/culture? Did you have any alternative ideas about this?
7. Can you tell me about your decision to immigrate to Canada? How long have you been in Canada?
8. Can you tell me about your experiences from the K-12 school system (as a parent or a volunteer) in Canada and in the Vancouver area (if you have lived in other places)? In what ways is the K-12 system similar/different in your home country?
9. Why and when did you decide to enroll in the UBC Updating program?
10. Did you encounter any challenges in being accepted to the program/ in the credential assessment process?

11. Do you encounter any professional challenges in becoming a teacher in Canada? Can you tell me something about these (in the first interview the focus is on course work; second on the practicum; third on perspective)?
12. How do you feel in the recertification program in general? Can you give me examples of times when you may have felt less or more comfortable?
13. Can you tell me about your experiences in the coursework/practicum? What do you find easy, or difficult? What is different from what you have previously known and experienced about teaching?
14. Do you think that you have opportunities in the Updating program (through courses or otherwise) to bring your voice and experiences of teaching outside of Canada? Can you give me examples?
15. What is most important for you in the Updating program? How so?
16. Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with faculty members, administrative staff, faculty advisors (FAs), school advisors (SAs), IETs, and “mainstream” teacher candidates?
17. In your view, what does it mean to be a “good teacher” in Vancouver/BC? Can you give me examples?
18. What ideas of the “good teacher,” in your opinion, are conveyed in the recertification process, practicum, and courses?
19. Have your conceptions of the “good teacher” changed during the recertification process and can you indicate what influenced such changes?
20. How do you think the teacher Updating program could be improved (courses, practicum, in general)?
21. Is there anything I did not ask and you would like to share?

Appendix C : Interview Questions for Faculty, School Advisors and Administrative Staff at UBC

I will conduct one semi-structured interview with faculty and administrative staff in the teacher Updating program. In the interview I will use some—but not necessarily all—of the following questions. Other questions may emerge during the course of the interviews:

1. Can you please tell me what your position in the Updating program is and how long you have been working in/or been connected to the Updating program?
2. How would you describe the goal of the Updating program? How is it similar to or different from the goal of the regular B.Ed. program?
3. What can you tell me about the history of this program? How was it formed and why?
4. Are you aware of changes that may have been made to the program over the years? Why were they made?
5. Is there anything different between the Updating program and the regular B.Ed. track?
6. What is the relation between the Updating program and the Teacher Regulation Branch?
7. What types of candidates typically apply to the Updating program? Is there a “typical IET”
Can you try to identify her/him?
8. Can you give me examples of typical or distinctive experiences of IETs who have gone through the program (e.g., in course work, practicum)?
9. What do you perceive IETs are struggling the most with in the recertification process? Can you give me examples?
10. What mechanisms are there for students (such as IETs) to bring their voices and experiences (outside of Canada) into the Updating program?
11. What is your understanding of a “good teacher” in the BC educational system?

12. What do you think the teacher education program at UBC promotes as good teaching? Is this conception different in anyway in the Updating program?
13. What (if any) perceptions of the “good teacher” do you believe IETs you have worked with, have? Are they any different from Canadian born candidates?
14. Can you share with me examples of success stories among IETs that have gone through the recertification process?
15. Is there anything I did not ask and you would like to share?

Appendix D : Interview Questions for Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB)

Employees

1. Can you please tell me what your position is in the TRB and how long you have been working in/or been connected to the recertification process of IETs?
2. What can you tell me about the history of the recertification process/programs in BC? Why and when they were established? Did they undergo any major changes?
3. Do you have any knowledge regarding how many IETs apply to the TRB every year? How many are certified without needing to enroll into a recertification program?
4. Do you have any knowledge about where the applicants are from?
5. In relation to the recertification of IETs, could you tell me about specific programs and differences among the nine teacher education programs in BC? Do they all follow the same patterns or are there different models?
6. What is the connection between the recertification programs/tracks and the TRB?
7. Does the TRB prefer a certain recertification model (separate/integrated)? If so, why?
8. Are you aware of any challenges IETs typically experience in the recertification process? Please describe.
9. In what ways are the requirements of the recertification process affected by policies at the federal level (for example the inclusion of the teaching profession under the AIT)? How much is determined at the provincial level?
10. How would you describe a “good teacher” in the BC educational system?
11. In your view, what conception of the “good teacher” is promoted in the credentialing process?

12. How have the IETs that you have worked with thought about what a “good teacher” is and does? Would you say that is different from how Canadian-born teacher candidates think about the “good teacher”?
13. Do you think different recertification models for IETs have different/similar conceptions of the “good teacher”?
14. How many IETs actually start and finish the recertification process in a year?
15. Do you have any knowledge about the number or percentage of IETs who are hired as teachers after they are certified in comparison to “mainstream” teachers?
16. Can you share with me examples of success stories among IETs that have gone through the recertification process?
17. Is there anything I did not ask and you would like to share?

Appendix E : Interview Questions for Course Instructors

1. Can you please tell me what your position is in the UBC teacher education program and how long you have been working in/or connected to it?
2. Are you aware of the UBC teacher education program goals and operations?
3. What is your understanding of a “good teacher” in the BC educational system?
4. What do you think the teacher education program at UBC promotes as good teaching? Do you understand good teaching in a similar way?
5. Is there a conception/s of the “good teacher” that you think you are conveying in your course? In what ways?
6. Before my research, were you aware of having IETs in your class? Do you know something about the Updating program?
7. Do you teach differently if you know one or more of the teacher candidates are IETs? If so, how?
8. Is there anything I did not ask and you would like to share?

Appendix F : Observation Protocol: Teacher Education Courses

Overall purpose: To document the conceptions of the “good teacher” in UBC teacher education courses and the experiences of internationally educated teachers (IETs) in these courses. As not all IETS take the same courses, the courses for observation will be determined based on their significance for the IETs participating in this study. The class observations will be followed by an interview with the participating IETs and course instructors.

Research questions: What is the content of the class? How is the class being taught (method, time structure)? What conceptions of the “good teacher” (and related discourses) are evident in class (curriculum and “hidden curriculum”)? How active are IETs in class? Which students (IETs and other) are not actively engaged in class?

Location for observations: Courses in UBC teacher education program that the IETs participating in the study define as important, and for which the instructors agree to my observations.

Supporting observations: Visual and other evidence that would supplement data on the conceptions of the “good teacher” in UBC teacher education program, such as physical layout of the classroom, including seating arrangement.

Focus of observations: Conceptions of the “good teacher” are embedded in different components of classes such as formal presentations, discussions, small group activities, assignments, and the instructor’s teaching style. These conceptions may be implicit in other discourses and concepts such as:

Schooling and pedagogy: child-centred, teacher-centred

Professionalism discourses: “competent craftsman,” “reflective practitioner”

Policy related to teachers and teaching (BC Teaching Standards, BC Education Plan)

Critical discourses: transformative teaching, social justice, diversity

IETs/non-IETs interactions and responses

--possible friendship groupings, social relationships (e.g., who want to work together)

--body language, tone, paraphrased and exact quotes (indicators of engagement, communication)

IETs'/instructors' interactions and responses

--body language, tone, paraphrased and exact quotes (indicators of engagement, communication)

--patterns: which IETs participate, nature of response, gender, race, ethnicity, etc.

General

--processes, such as how diverse opinions are negotiated

--content of the discussions, key themes with details

--evidence of attitudes to accented speech, non-mainstream use of language

--identities, relations, affect

--evidence of learning, by IETs

--evidence of confusion, resistance, by IETs

Researcher introspection/Auto- Ethnography

--documentation of my feelings and personal reactions and the context for later analysis

Documentations: field notes. The focus of the study is on IETs; other students will only be mentioned generally as part of the context.