ADJUSTING TO THE DEBRIS: A PHENOMENOLOGY OF EXILE

by

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Abstract

This thesis will address the difficulties children of newcomer families face as they transition to life in a multicultural country like Canada. As immigrant families represented about 39 percent of total immigrant landings in British Columbia in 2013, there is an increasing need to accumulate knowledge about the development and adjustment of the children from this population (BCStats, 2014). The lives of First Generation immigrant children are marked by dramatic adjustments due to difficulties with language, family dislocation and culture shock. The following will examine the current approach of the BC Ministry of Education in its aim to make newcomer students feel at home- and thus, adjusted.

The underlying question of this research investigates whether adjustment should, in fact, be the end goal of newcomers? And what critical aspects of the lifeworld of newcomers are neglected when the aim is to cultivate acculturated individuals? In answering this question, this thesis will first analyze how adjustment is defined in the domains of dominating theories, current research, as well as pedagogical practices geared towards newcomers. It will be illustrated that the majority of studies dedicated to immigrant children has overlooked the emotional experiences in navigating the education system, and has instead opted to measure proficiency in the English language as a marker of adjustment. Yet the struggles of newcomer children run much deeper. In a phenomenological exploration of adjustment and critiquing its necessity as an aim for both policymakers and newcomers, the ideas of three authors, Søren Kierkegaard,

Mikhail Bakhtin and Homi Bhabha will shed light on the lifeworld of immigrant children in order to propose a new approach to the recognition of this group.

This thesis can enhance the understanding of educational leaders when it comes to addressing diversity in education, for they are in a favorable position to acknowledge the struggles children must face in bridging their past and present experiences, and to incorporate them into strategies to counteract the many negative experiences they may be receiving in education.

Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Parmis Aslanimehr.

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Acknowledgments

Words cannot describe my gratitude towards Dr. Barbara Weber and Dr. Steven Taubeneck, without whose encouragement and passionate input would not have made the completion of this undertaking possible.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This room doesn't even look like a classroom- it definitely doesn't look like my classroom back home. No more brick walls and flickering fluorescent lights. No fear of my hair showing from my white headscarf, when I used to await the entrance of my teacher. No more laying my hands flat on my desk each morning as my teacher would check if my nails were cut, or showing her that my math homework from last night was perfected-- which we all knew was done by my parents, because what 6-year-old is expected to know addition and subtraction? That was back home in Iran, at least. Here, in Vancouver, the cold, concrete and dusty rooms were replaced with desks and chairs assigned to me, and we had a carpet in this cozy classroom. I could draw my name tag and color it in any way I wanted on my first day of school in Canada. My second grade teacher walked in, and her warm smile brought all the comfort I needed. I still couldn't believe that my classroom looked more like a playroom. I couldn't understand a word my new teacher was saying, and it was especially difficult to decipher her words when the boys behind me kept snickering. Within minutes those same boys started to kick my chair. Ignoring them didn't make the kicking stop, so I left my chair and headed straight to my smiling teacher's desk with all my fury to point out what just happened: I opened my mouth and nothing came out. In English, I knew nothing, but inside I wanted to tell her everything. Staring blankly into her face, I was silenced. Welcome to Canada, I told myself.

The word, "debris," from the title of this work is reflective of the experience I have described above from my first day at school in Canada. As families embark on a new

journey to a new country, the sudden shift in living is comparable to an earthquake that shatters the daily details we take for granted. The moment I described may only consist of the first minutes of stepping into my second Grade classroom, but that very memory discloses so many themes, such as finding myself to stand out amongst others; the atmosphere of the room; my teacher; gender relations; language; and recognitions of differences, that remain hidden and ultimately unexplored in the literature surrounding newcomer immigrant children. Therefore, the main task of each newcomer is to begin to sort, and hence, 'adjust' to the various debris that clutter their post-migration experiences. I introduce my work with an anecdote, because such a narrative style is exactly what is missing from the overarching views intended towards newcomer children. Using language in this way is a poetic intervention that should urge educators to listen closely to the way newcomer children narrate their stories to themselves and to others.

Another term included in the title of this research is "exile." Generally, this word tends to carry more political rather than emotional overtones, and its placement in the title relates to the investigative nature of this thesis that questions educational policies. Yet the word also denotes a mental form of exile, which rests at the foundation of this work: The inability to return home, or to feel at home, as a result of undergoing immigration. The following thesis will speculate where home can be found, whether it is desirable, or even necessary?

1.1 Multiculturalism in Canada

One of the most distinguishing markers of Canada is its policy of multiculturalism which was officially adopted in 1971 (Government of Canada, 2014). The implementation of this policy meant that its citizens could freely identify with their culture of heritage with no barriers to the development of a shared Canadian identity (Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism, 2006). Following this policy, in 1985, the equality rights article of the Charter, Section 15, recognized that every individual has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour or religion (Government of Canada, 2014). When the cultural contents and customs of diverse cultures are recognized, the resulting culture is a culture of humanity or what Homi Bhabha (1994) described as "a liberal notion of multiculturalism" (p. 50). This Canadian constitution of multiculturalism has been incorporated in the foundations of many institutions in recognizing diversity. For example, schools in Canada may operate under the hegemony of multiculturalism, with the intent to make all students feel welcome, yet the practices and programs used to educate have been criticized as indicative of an assimilation agenda instead (Garza & Crawford, 2005). The translation of policies and its objectives into practice can at times be challenging and thereby ineffective.[1]

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[1] One does not need to look that far back into the history of British Columbia to discover that the last Residential School, which separated children from their families and systematically forbade acknowledgement of Aboriginal heritage and culture, closed its doors in 1996.

For newcomer immigrants, the policy of multiculturalism encourages a celebration of a home culture embedded in a shared Canadian identity, but to forego addressing the difficulties in reconciliation of contradictory elements present in both cultures is a form of misrecognition of newcomer immigrants that can have damaging effects on the shaping of identity (Taylor & Gutmann, 1994). Thus, in order to capture the promise of multiculturalism, it is important to look at concrete situations of social interaction, contexts and purposes between people. To be able to make connections between how codes are used in specific contexts and how individuals are able to understand how to act without falling short of the others' expectations is the individual task of minorities (Colombo, 2010). To focus on everyday multiculturalism that occurs in the differences between individuals, is one way of identifying how individuals construct social realities and attribute meanings to them (Colombo, 2010). In other words, everyday multiculturalism directs attention on the fractures and spaces comprised in this cultural mosaic we call Canada.

Yet, can everyday multiculturalism be attainable for all, even those whose cultural heritage enclose the greatest contradictions with Canadian society at large? For such individuals, culture becomes untranslatable, and they step into a minority position of feeling in-between-- what Bhabha (1994) referred to as an assimilationist's nightmare, which shifts one to "an ambivalent position of hybridity" (p. 321). Managing the differences is an inner project for each newcomer individual. This chapter will familiarize readers with the varied experiences facing many newcomer immigrant children. Mainly,

what is entailed in living as an immigrant and being recognized as an immigrant? And what problems does immigration invite for the self and other?

Firstly, the common experiences of many newcomer children will be depicted, before the policy of the British Columbia Ministry of Education in assisting the needs of this demographic is introduced. Next, the unveiling of the aims and assumptions of multiculturalism in educational policies towards newcomer students will lead to the formulation of the research question that will guide the remainder of this thesis. Finally, this chapter will end with an overview of subsequent chapters which are designed to challenge the current perspectives of policymakers influencing the pedagogical practices used in assisting the transition of newcomer immigrant children into Canada.

The New "Immigrant"

Given that each newcomer arrives to Canada at unequal starting points, the challenge in bridging differences is an especially perplexing burden. Whether a newcomer may be arriving from a place of migration, diaspora, or displacement, drives cultural translation into a complex form of signification (Bhabha, 1994). The government of Canada recognizes each individual as an immigrant in accordance to his or her Generation Status, which is distinguished by whether the parents of an individual were born in Canada. To be designated the title of an 'immigrant' is reflective in the history of intercultural contact in Canada, which spans from the settlement of non-Aboriginal peoples over a period of almost two centuries.

In what ways does the history of the word, 'immigrant', and its assignment to individuals overlay the experience of each newcomer? Although the writings of German

Philosopher, Walter Benjamin, are not directed towards immigrant children, his recollections on his childhood appropriately resonate with the experience of immigration. He elaborated on how names are meaningfully interwoven with the way one experiences the world, and insisted on reflection on the interrelations of experience that names may provide for us (Regier, 2010). He used street names to illustrate how a label reflects its history, our link to it, and their unchanging individuality that lingers due to custom and the conservatism we uphold, that becomes apparent when people have shown reluctance throughout history in the renaming of a certain street. Therefore, the names given to structures affect the kinds of experiences of that person by setting the expectations of those experiences, just like streets and avenues can influence the way we experience the urban fabric. For example, in speaking about street names in the city, Benjamin described that the meeting of two streets, known as the corner, can in fact be very meaningful due to the histories embedded within their structures (Regier, 2010). In the context of newcomer immigrants, it is in the meeting of the person with the foreign place, similar to the corner, where it can be a space of intervention, or what Bhabha (1994) would call "a space of intervention emerging in cultural interstices" (p. 12). Through the experience of leaving home and transplanting oneself in Canada, very much like the formation of a street corner, one is then appointed the name of an 'immigrant,' with its history and expectations that are attached both for the newcomer and the host. The common abandonment of person-first language evident in the literature and in everyday language when using the term, 'immigrant child,' may hide certain connotations, while other perspectives of the child slip away. Perhaps such expectations form boundaries that do

not exist for the 'Canadian' child. Histories occupy themselves with relationships where interactions can be seen in their simultaneity as well as their continuity (Bakhtin, 1981). Likewise, a label can be very limiting given its implied expectations that have been dictated by its history, however, its meaning continues to be transformed with the ongoing influx of visible minorities immigrating to Canada since the 1970s (identified as the Fifth Wave) (Wiseman, 2007).

For instance, the newcomer immigrant of today is bound to redefine expectations since the ability to create cultural spaces, and to maintain social ties beyond formal citizenship has become much easier in the digital age, where travel has become more accessible. Given that many countries have lowered their barriers to immigration, more back and forth travels across borders are made possible, which characterize immigration as not always a unidirectional journey as it has been depicted in the past (Crosnoe & Fuligni, 2012). Many newcomers of today are transnational; with having one foot here and one foot home, with both places competing for their sense of belonging, making it difficult to pinpoint where their heart is situated. As the name, 'immigrant', will reappear countless times in this thesis, it is crucial for readers to consider the connotations held in this label, for as Bhabha (1994) mentioned, "governing bodies hold a responsibility to acknowledge the past that continues to haunt the name of the present" (p. 18). Furthermore, as the histories attached to labels evoke expectations of how one is to behave and how others behave towards the individual, the word 'newcomer,' has been intentionally chosen as a peaceful approach in undoing certain expectations readers may have towards 'immigrant' children. The term, 'newcomer,' simply refers to an individual

who is new to a space and faced with new experiences, while the many possibilities that can follow remain unknown.

Despite the creation of boundaries drawn by labels, all immigrants can be described as refugees. If we turn to the Latin word, *refugere*, which translates to shelter, then all newcomers can be described as seeking refuge. However, whether it is necessary to seek home is at the focus of this text. This piece is written for those who have crossed the border at least once, including the transnational immigrants who remains here and there. As immigration invites a variety of experiences as unexpected visitors for children, some of the obstacles will be shared in the following sections.

1.2 The Reality of the Newcomer: Problems and Prospects

The proportion of the foreign-born population in Canada is at the highest it has been in 70 years. Immigration accounts for half of the population growth in Canada, and this number will reach 100 percent by 2026 (Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism, 2006). Many assume that children of newcomer families have an easier time accepting and adapting to the place of settlement, but making sense of the new can be especially disruptive for children since they merely represent the luggage that accompany the family, as they have no say in the decision of the family to migrate. Immigration is a choice for an adult, but it has already been chosen for the child. Children must leave behind family, friendships and places to enter into a new public space that serves as reminders of differences in skin colour, religion and ethnicity. In comparison to parents, children are given a head start in becoming acquainted to Canadian culture as a result of

schooling, and the risk of stigmatization makes implementing any school-based reform a complex task.

It is important to observe everyday multiculturalism in identifying how different institutions deal with the differences within. The newest members of Canadian society, regardless of age, must attempt to identify and reconcile their unique norms, by internalizing the frameworks of a new society in accordance to one's interpretation of its values, norms and goals that are normative in that culture. Such rapid absorption into a new culture obligates children to choose between what is taught at home and in mainstream society. In some cases, many newcomer children may bear guilt after witnessing the sacrifices made by parents to provide them with better opportunities. Consequently, many children of such families uphold high educational aspirations as a way of ridding their own feelings of in-debtness to parents. Hence, it will be demonstrated that the academic success of a student is not always representative of an adjusted status in Canadian society. The struggles that children feel at school are entangled with their relationship to the family, while they attempt to be accepted into the host society.

Problem of Belonging: Living on the Hyphen

Where does the newcomer go after recognizing the differences that lie between the old and the new? Having resided in Canada for 20 years, I am an Iranian-Canadian who has kept my ties with my country of origin. Although I have spent the majority of my life in Canada, I still do not identify with being an Iranian or Canadian; I am living on the

hyphen. I am on the bridge that connects both Iran and Canada, and I suppose many newcomer children at a young age are assigned the task of building their own hyphen, between the culture of the past and the new, and between the public and private spheres of their lives. Immigration changes and challenges the dynamic of the family and possesses the potential to destabilize family life. After all, parent-child disengagement and intergenerational conflict even among the most intact families can occur (Irving, Benjamin, & Tsang, 1999). The accumulation of years in a new country continually situates the newcomer on the hyphen. I remember the people I felt so close with back home, suddenly became alien to me whenever I would interact with them. As two places may feel foreign at times, the newcomer becomes the Other in both locations. The feeling of dislocation is what may propel many to reside in the in-between, pulled and pushed to different sides. Bilingualism, dual culture, multiple identities and belonging are sources of confusion and crisis that can destroy or build this bridge. How one is to make meaning from living on this hyphen is left to the discretion of each newcomer. Yet this space, or what Bhabha (1994) referred to as a third space, also offers participatory involvement where a free person can be born. Despite the discomfort and uncertainty buried in remaining on this hyphen, newcomers are also granted the privilege of returning to this space in-between to enjoy the view from both sides. When children are introduced to such circumstances upon arrival to Canada, connections to domains beyond the immediate family, such as the education system, carry responsibility in shaping the post-migration experiences of the child.

1.3 Multiculturalism in Education

To skip over the struggles of a newcomer population is to establish the foundations for oppressing them. Often in classroom settings, it is assumed that non-English speaking and English speaking students can interact harmoniously and work collaboratively. Yet the reality remains as Valdés (1998) suggested, that children regularly hear bits and pieces of artificial sounding language used in drills in their English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes, while teachers attempt to use overly simplified English to give students access to the curriculum.

Initially upon settlement, newcomer children must grapple with a sense of loss. Loss can be of objects, people and places. Even a beloved toy from the country of origin can be experienced differently in a new environment (Oxman-Martinez et al., 2012). These children tend to express the feeling of a space between themselves and others (Kirova, 2001). One study even suggested that children of newcomer families often fear never being able to recover from the losses that are left behind (Koplow & Messinger, 1990). The capacity for tolerating change and loss, and withstanding loneliness are put to the test at a young age.

As children discover themselves to stand out and be overlooked at the same time, how everyday multiculturalism is to be incorporated into the classroom climate is put into question. Educators, community members and policymakers must attend to the experiences of families in order to evaluate the practices of policies dedicated towards them.

The educational policy frameworks of British Columbia acknowledge that newcomer students may experience trauma as a result of dislocation upon leaving their homeland, causing many to appear withdrawn and fatigued (Government of British Columbia, 1999). Furthermore, the policies emphasize that ESL services should respect the language and culture of origin of the student and build upon the existing abilities of students (Government of British Columbia, 2009). Although each province has its own regulations for accompanying the needs of First-Generation immigrant students, the guidelines established by the British Columbia Ministry of Education serve as an example of the problems that ensue in the management of the acculturation process of newcomer immigrant children.

In an effort to familiarize teachers with the struggle of newcomer students, the British Columbia Ministry of Education outlined four successive stages each newcomer child is expected to experience in his or her attainment of adjustment in the host society: 1) *The Honeymoon Stage*, characterized by feelings of happiness for the novel experiences; 2) *The Hostility Stage*, which are initial feelings of hate and frustration generated towards North America; 3) *The Humour Stage*, such as acceptance of the new ways of living; and finally 4) *The Home Stage* is achieved, where the immigrant student eventually becomes "native in the sense that where they live is their home and they accept that they are here to stay" (Government of British Columbia, 1999, p. 6). The implementation of this guideline is especially challenging in a multicultural country like Canada, since differences lie between the cultures and experiences of teachers as well as between the students (Heusch & Rousseau, 2000). To predict that each newcomer will bypass stages

in reaching 'Home' (Stage 4), the question remains if home can be a feasible state for all newcomer children? Furthermore, is home even a necessary stage for the transnational immigrant of today, who freely maintains social ties with the country of origin and lives on the in-between? If home is what the educators are preparing students for, then what essential aspects are they losing sight of?

Losing the Journey

To hold preconceived expectations of the acculturation journey of young children, as suggested by the Ministry of Education, opts out the possibility of getting lost in the same journey and devalues the opportunities held in being lost. To appoint stages for each refugee to bypass, closes the possibility of other turns that may arise over the course of this journey, in the same fashion an adult may dismiss the mistaken ideas of a child. If the focus is on the goal that home will eventually be reached, I ask, is it wrong to get lost in this journey? In relation to this question, Benjamin elaborated, "not to find one's way about in a city is of little interest […] But to lose one's way in a city, as one loses one's way in a forest, requires practice" (Szondi & Mendelsohn, 1978, p. 491). Benjamin depicted that to lose one's way, morally and spatially (known as *Verirrung*) is not to be bereft of direction, but is an ability that can be granted to us through practice. He meant that not to have a clear referent when one has lost its way, will heighten the sensitivity of a traveller, and the accompanying state of insecurity can make our experiences much richer. In place of pre-determined stages, to shed light on the uncertainty and challenges dominating the experiences of newcomers, is to allow those students to recognize the

new again; because when we are lost, we can in fact gain a heightened sensitivity. By "lost", I do not imply a loss of identity; but to devote our attention to the moments of insecurity or "unhomeliness" that creep on the newcomer, and in response, to seize them as instances that may enrich one's experience of acculturation. If being lost can be valuable, then why rush home (over the course of only four steps)?

Perhaps by granting each child an opportunity to plan their own journey, devoid of stages and expectations, then moments of being lost can also serve as a seedbed for unique meaningful understandings. Some may argue that to leave each newcomer to individually devise a journey that is of their choosing, may gear them towards a state of loneliness. Yet, what may also result is solitude. Unlike loneliness, in solitude one lives amongst others but never apart from one's self (Palmer, 2004). Often, educational practices celebrating diversity emphasize the value in community; yet for newcomers, being included in activities among a large classroom is not the same as feeling assured that students are connected to each other. If attention shifts to the interrelations of the inner life of each newcomer, where solitude and unity can be cultivated, then adherence to the stages of adjustment becomes a less urgent matter.

The British Columbia Ministry of Education (2009) emphasized that integration in aspects of Canadian life does not imply a rejection of traditional ways. They defined integration as being included in an education setting with peers, and being provided with the necessary adaptions to enable English language learners to become successful in those settings. However, I predict that teaching practices can become problematic if influenced by the stages of adjustment, since adults have depicted them, yet the active involvement

of the adult in relation to the child in such a process is missing. If educators adopt the assumption that all newcomer immigrants will eventually reach Stage 4 of adjustment (the 'Home' stage) then the guidelines, convincingly enough, reduce the involvement of educators. Perhaps policymakers assume that adjustment is a process that must organically take its course for each child. Therefore, by taking adjustment as an endpoint for all newcomer immigrants for granted, how one is to arrive there remains vague.

The British Columbia Ministry of Education (2009) listed strategies in the same guideline in assisting children overcome their culture shock without rejecting their past, when advising teachers to mentor students by helping them "navigate North American bathroom facilities […] opening and closing of doors […] and waiting for one's turn" (p. 12), for example. Although guiding newcomer students with such North American customs is productive, it nevertheless focuses on the embodiment of what is deemed adjusted behaviour, and foregoes assistance with any emotional needs of the student. Bhabha (1994) elaborated that a historical event is represented through discourse that is beyond the author's control. He related this to Hannah Arendt's notion that "the author of a social action may be the initiator of its unique meaning, but as agent he or she cannot control its outcome" (p. 18). Similarly, by illustrating the experiences of each child through stages, poses the question that if one cannot control the outcome of where they will be, then why plan the journey for them? If, as the Ministry of Education has stated that home is the final stage each newcomer will reach, then perhaps the guideline is guaranteeing the inevitability of a sense of adjustment stemming from Canadian society. However, to label the endpoint of acculturation as 'Home,' may not resonate with many

newcomers for they already have a sense of home from their place of origin. To be unhomed for whatever reason, does not make one homeless (Bhabha, 1994).

1.4 Research Question

It is apparent that the stages which are predetermined for each newcomer student do not address the role of the private sphere in reaching adjustment. For example, unique family ties are also essential in the adjustment of children, for strong family ties have been linked to academic achievement, regardless of disadvantaged socioeconomic status, which can help immigrants overcome their structural shortcomings (Valenzuela and Dornbusch, 1994). The attainability of adjustment is questioned when an individual is unable to fully identify with the new place of settlement or the home culture, and experiences lower self-esteem, higher uncertainty and lower overall life satisfaction as a result (Haritatos & Benet-Martínez, 2002). Such an outcome can lead to a reduced capacity to identify with both cultures, which can hamper adjustment (Hogg, 2003; Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). Therefore, in order to comprehend the meaning of adjustment, it is critical to turn to the public and private sphere, the past and the present, and the psyche of the social, which are linked in an in-between temporality (Bhabha, 1994, p. 19).

As multiculturalism has influenced an educational guideline that envisions an end-state of home for its newcomer population, the conflict that occurs in the public and private spheres of newcomer children, question the feasibility of home as an equal opportunity for all. Does the seeking of adjustment pave over attention that could be

given to other important initial experiences of life in Canada? If yes, then is adjustment a necessary goal for educators to impose on this population?[2]

Is a newcomer child adjusted after surrendering to his or her new culture? Perhaps other inner negotiations unique to each individual are at play. The challenges that newcomer children encounter are relegated to the private sphere; whether it is an inner battle or one with others. The intergenerational conflict present in homes absolves institutions of education of responsibility and deflects attention from the discrimination immigrants continue to face (Ngo, 2008). To box each student in a pre-designed stage is an oversimplification of all the experiences of newcomers, serving as a solution that soothes rather than heals the problem— leaving it up to each child to make meaning of differences on their own.

Although the stages designed by the British Columbia Ministry of Education are only an example from one province, nonetheless an assumption is conveyed: To perceive the struggle of reconciliation between cultures as a systematic process ineffectively grants an endpoint to an unforeseen future. It also deters educators from intervening in the process for the passing stages reinforces the adoption of an attitude of *this too shall pass* towards the newcomer student population. The guidelines also communicate another belief: Every newcomer is seeking 'home' in Canada. It is crucial to define what is meant by adjustment, and whether adjustment should be the end goal of newcomers in a place of settlement. A closer examination of adjustment in relation to the everyday realities, the

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[2] In turn, is adjustment a necessary goal for newcomers to strive towards?

lifeworld, can clarify whether encasing the varied experiences of each newcomer into stages does not also shut a space where liberation could unfold.

If we practice everyday multiculturalism and attempt to recognize instances where individuals continuously communicate their differences, then the journey of immigration will appear to be unpredictable; hence, why many children will feel lost. Furthermore, as previous sections described that many newcomer immigrants arrive in Canada with a sense of home that is already intact (due to their transnational status), then the expectation that adjustment will unravel over a series of stages does not adequately fit the realities of all newcomer children. Therefore, the main question informing the current text will explore the necessity of adjustment: Should adjustment be the end-goal of all newcomer immigrants? Specifically, I have organized two sub-questions to help direct the examination of the topic of the main question:

1) Is adjustment attainable for all newcomer children?

2) Is adjustment a *necessary* goal for newcomers and hosts?

So as to approach the question of whether adjustment is an attainable and necessary destination for educators and for newcomer children to persevere, I plan to use phenomenological methodology to guide the exploration of this question. The justification of such an approach as an appropriate method of investigation will be shared in the next section.

1.5 Methodology

In order to explore adjustment and the necessity of its aims, I will approach this question using phenomenology which shows how words, concepts and theories shape and give structure to our experiences (Van Manen, 2007). In a way, "phenomenology is a project of sober reflection on the lived experience of human existence" (Van Manen, 2007, p. 11). This is in response to the theories that have trickled down to the climate of current classrooms; and here I will use my recollections to show the discrepancy of the lifeworld with the overarching theories and policies of education. By stepping into certain moments, such descriptions can be used to critically evaluate how adjustment is currently portrayed and to question its projection on newcomers.

I plan to reflect on my experiences through consulting three thinkers who have written on the concepts of despair, language, and culture. In other words, I will explore adjustment through a reflection on the lived meaning of the experience of a newcomer immigrant child. This phenomenological writing is retrospective as it is a reflection on experience that is already passed. Such an approach speaks to hermeneutic phenomenological research, where the people, its histories and cultures, and events precede the attempt to explain it; and scholars of phenomenological research attempt to describe phenomena as they appear in everyday life, knowing that such a practice will never be complete (Goble, 2014). Similarly, I will approach my childhood experiences using phenomenological writing because I do not intend to bring an explanation for the nature of the lifeworld, but rather a description of how it appeared in my consciousness, to elicit a deeper understanding of the realities newcomer children face, in contrast to

how they are depicted in the literature. Such a method allows for my personal sphere to be recognized by the public.

In line with phenomenology, the reflection on my childhood experiences will be thoughtful, yet maintain possibility since this approach deliberately rids itself of theoretical or prejudicial interpretations (Van Manen, 2007). Phenomenology acknowledges description as an interpretive process, and as an interpretation of a phenomenon, it demands the use of a hermeneutic style. By retelling my childhood experiences, I invite new interpretations and understandings that are made intelligible (Van Manen, 2014, Location no. 6093). The examples that I bring from my childhood would be recognized by the field of phenomenology as having evidential significance; where the memories make the experience of adjustment understandable, as they may not be directly sayable (Van Manen, 2014). It is crucial to use anecdotal experiences in addition to philosophical concepts, because "concepts are already generalized bits of language" (Van Manen, 2014, Location no. 6414); and therefore, to only define adjustment through concepts impedes the understanding of an experience.

Van Manen (2014) presupposed that phenomenological research evokes understanding through pathic mediations of language, which bring about pathic forms of knowledge that transcend the common cognitive function of language. To explore the research question of this thesis through phenomenological writing, is an especially suitable approach, since professions in the field of education and policymaking require sensibilities and sensitivities that are concerned with pathic capacities to curate the development of current and future generations of children passing through the education

system. Ontologically, this thesis has presented subjective views of reality from the perspectives of myself, representative of the immigrant child, and from my interpretations of the authors and from the interpretations that the audience will take from this work.

About the Author

Each researcher brings his or her own set of experiences that influence the focus of the research process, its questions of study, along with its interpretations. Since Chapter 3 will describe the personal experience of the researcher, it is crucial to identify the autobiographical roots of my interests in this topic of study.

I immigrated to Canada with my family from Tehran, Iran in the summer of 1996 at the age of seven. While coming to Canada provided me with new opportunities and freedoms, it also created barriers. The excitement I felt for foreign experiences were intertwined with feeling displaced at the same time. I spent the initial years wanting to move back and writing numerous letters to my friends and family in the hopes of staying connected with what I identified as my only true home. The distance I felt between myself and my peers, because I was unable to express myself, made me feel like a spectator of my own life, and so I watched others be who I was back home. At the time, my teenage brothers and I resented our parents for making the decision to immigrate. But growing older, I realized the sacrifices made were to rescue us from the denial of basic opportunities, such as wearing a mandatory veil, and a way for my brothers to escape conscription in a country that could break into conflict overnight.

In Canada, however, I soon realized that my identity as an Iranian followed me everywhere, and so I consistently found myself caught between incompatible sets of expectations by Iranian and Canadian culture. The experience of living in-between both cultures has been a central aspect of my life and continues to capture my research interests. As I look into the educational frameworks and research conducted on adjustment, the reliance on quantitative methodologies and stage theories does not speak to the daily strife of a newcomer child.

1.6 Structure of Thesis

In an effort to reveal the hidden assumptions of the Ministry of Education for newcomer children, the following thesis will focus on evaluating whether adjustment is an appropriate objective for newcomer children and their educators. It will explore the pasts that haunt the present in both the public and private sphere of any newcomer child embarking on a personal journey to Canada. It is currently unclear whether an adjusted newcomer student is one who is deemed to function and contribute economically to society; or does it appear in moments of assimilation, total identification; or whether adjustment can be defined as an ability to maintain equilibrium between sameness and difference, remains unknown.

If we understand the experiences of each individual for what they are, we can stop anticipating the next expected phase and instead attend to pursue meaningful experiences, regardless of where it might lead. Perhaps stages have emerged in an attempt to censor the possibilities of different turns and uncertain destinations of arrival

for each student. Possibly, adjustment may not be a stage to be fulfilled in a pure form, but can instead be found in the spaces that define one's own and the other's identity, as well as one's own and the other's difference (Colombo, 2010).

Chapter 2 will be a literature review of how adjustment is defined in accordance to the dominating theories, research and pedagogical practices, which will identify the criteria by which its attainment has been perceived. The overview will describe what the existing lenses have failed to capture in the lifeworld of the newcomer, when it comes to defining adjustment and in turn, striving for home. To elicit what the literature has neglected, I plan to use my experiences as a newcomer child in a phenomenological approach to gain a deeper understanding of the value in recognizing the lifeworld of children. The works of three scholars, existential philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard; Russian/Soviet philosopher and literary critic, Mikhail Bakhtin; and author of contemporary post-colonial studies, Homi K. Bhabha will immensely contribute to actualizing my image of the conceptualization of adjustment. Their voices will frame a retrospective illustration of my initial experiences as a newcomer child in Canada and therefore, provide a profound understanding of significant moments that confront newcomer children, which have not been previously acknowledged by educators. Particularly, I will focus on the privilege in experiencing loss, the role of language in the everyday experiences of this demographic, and the fluidity of culture, in order to grasp what is meant by reaching home.

As it was described that the lives of most newcomer students are marked by a sense of loss, Kierkegaard's notion of despair, as an event that impedes identification

with the world and its given functional settings, can uncover the opportunity withheld in the experience of loss that many newcomers face.

Also, since previous research has found that refugee children are much quicker to learn the language of the dominant society than their parents, due to immersion in school and parents having limited exposure to opportunities to learning English, language can obscure the attainability of adjustment in both the home and school (Valentine, Sporton, & Nielsen, 2008). The irony lies in the fact that newcomers, despite their multilingual competencies, are often described as being out of place because their language does not fit the expectation of a particular space, and so their identities are viewed as not belonging. In fact, the role of language in the making or refining of identities thus becomes critical to examine (Valentine et al., 2008). The writings of Bakhtin (1991) regarding notions of dialogic consciousness, that account for human authenticity, and his view that one must travel into the space of the other in order to understand his or herself, resonate with the role of language in the arrival at adjustment.

Finally, to clarify the necessity of adjustment without exploring the role of culture renders the conceptualization of adjustment incomplete. To address this gap, Homi Bhabha's idea of third space will be considered to avoid essentializing the culture of an immigrant as something that is static and fixed, but is situated in-between the home and host society where most newcomers tend to remain or fluctuate.

Lastly, Chapter 3 is devoted to a resolution to the question I leave open in this chapter: Should adjustment be the end goal of newcomers? It explores the problem of human authenticity in the lifeworld. Through phenomenological framing of my

childhood experiences in connection to the ideas of Kierkegaard, Bakhtin and Bhabha, I seek to understand the moments in the lifeworld that influence the path to living life as an adjusted immigrant.

In response to the existing stages of adjustment, I will then propose a new model that can guide the journey of each newcomer student: A perspective which considers the possibilities held in the experience of loss, the role of language in the spaces that one co-occupies with the other, and how those repeatedly shape the concept of culture. Many educators may feel apprehension in guiding newcomer children due to the absence of communication through a common language. Such doubts may be derived from a lack of knowledge of culture and the inner struggles tied to adjustment. The following chapters will suggest that educators can in fact turn to individual children as a source of knowledge in assisting them with the debris of settlement that overshadows their lives.

Chapter 2   A Landscape of Literature

This chapter begins with a critical overview of the most prevalent theoretical models of adjustment, followed by a review of the research and pedagogical practices geared towards guiding the newcomer immigrant towards adjustment that have stemmed from theories of acculturation. A brief history of theoretical models that have emerged in identifying acculturative strategies in immigrants will be introduced. Specifically, one of the most prominent theoretical models of acculturation that has been devised by John Berry, will be critically analyzed.

Following theories of adjustment, the kinds of research that have been used in measuring acculturation will be provided in order to familiarize readers with the criteria of qualities that continue to be used as signifiers of adjustment. As theories and research shape behaviors, the following section will then critically examine the kinds of pedagogical practices that have been adopted by educators inside classrooms in helping newcomer students attain adjustment. As it is unclear what is meant by adjustment, through surveying relevant theories, research and pedagogical practices, readers will become familiar with criteria that continues to label newcomers as adjusted.

Given the portrayal of adjustment in these domains, I will then indicate important areas that have been neglected by theorists, researchers and practitioners. The consequence of abandoning such important factors, such as the private sphere, will be at the focus of Chapter 3. Consequently, this chapter will end by introducing the main concepts of three philosophers, Søren Kierkegaard, Mikhail Bakhtin and Homi Bhabha, which will frame my childhood experiences in the following chapter. Particularly, the

idea of despair from Kierkegaard, dialogical consciousness taken from Bakhtin and third space of Bhabha will not be discussed in relation to each other, but will serve as interlocutors with my experiences as a newcomer child that will challenge prevailing theories and practices in the aim towards newcomers. Perhaps the positions of these authors can pave a new perspective in the accommodation of newcomer children.

2.1 Adjustment in Theory

The term that closely describes adjustment is from cultural psychology, known as *acculturation*, which characterizes the changes a newcomer undergoes in the domains of language, values, and cultural identification (meaning, the attachment towards a host or heritage culture) as a result of continuous and direct contact between two distinct cultures (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010).

The majority of the research and theory view acculturation as a universal process for all immigrants which discredits the complexity of experiences in adjustment, making its conceptualization and measurement a case for controversy. The lack of attention towards gender, age, race, ethnicity, social class, and religious affiliation are examples of areas that have been ignored, and has contributed to viewing cultural groups as homogenous (Bhatia & Ram, 2001). Early theoretical models of acculturation were unidimensional in that the immigrant would undergo changes along a continuum: One pole represented adapting to the host society, and the other pole represented maintenance of the culture of origin. To be considered as adjusted to a new culture, in

this sense, meant that in time, a newcomer would shift from their ethnic cultural identity to be absorbed by the dominant culture (Gans, 1979; Gordon, 1964; Park, 1928). One example of a unidimensional model of acculturation is the theory of assimilation, which predicted that the more one retains ties to the culture of origin, the more likely that person would experience hardships in adjusting to the host society. The research that followed based on this theory would measure the level of involvement in the host culture, to conclude that greater involvement in the mainstream society would result in a decrease of engagement in the culture of origin (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgaday, 1991; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000).

The main problem with unidimensional models of acculturation lies in its failure to hold other factors that shape adjustment for each individual. For example, individual differences in one's pre-migration exposure to the host country, language education, along with the influence of social class, education, gender, prejudice in the mainstream society are neglected (Ryder et al., 2000). In other words, unidminensional models are preoccupied with the single task of pinpointing the adjusted status of a newcomer. To neglect such external factors, wrongfully assume that each newcomer is responsible for their failure or success in the new place of settlement (Pajouhandeh, 2004).

In contrast to unidimensional model of acculturation, the emergence of bidimensional models viewed the heritage and host culture as being independent of one another, where adjustment consisted of two independent processes: Adjusting to the culture of origin and to the host society develop separately; rather than on a continuum. The most extensively researched bidimensional theory of acculturation is John Berry's

acculturative framework. Berry outlined that newcomers will embody one of four strategies, depending on which cultural group an individual identifies with the most: 1) *Integration*, occurs if one equally and fully associates with both cultures; 2) *Assimilation*, may result from absorbing the values of the mainstream society and denying the culture of origin; 3) *Separation*, when newcomers maintain their culture of origin and reject the new society; and finally, 4) *Marginalization*, could occur if a newcomer rejects both the mainstream and the culture of origin. The studies on immigrants that followed from Berry's theoretical model suggested integration to be the ideal mode of acculturation, for it is the strategy least likely to harbour acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1989).

Although the model of John Berry can support the conceptualization of adjustment and encourage policymakers to pave paths directed at developing integrated immigrants, it has also been criticized. For example, the attainability of an integrated status may not be realistic for those whose values contradict the values of the mainstream society. For instance, for a child who is Muslim and must only consume meat that is *halal*, the kinds of food offered in schools or at a peer's house are instances that challenge an integrated status.[3] Perhaps for an integrated individual, such clash of values in one domain of life, do not allow one the freedom to switch between cultural codes.

Another criticism of Berry's framework refers to marginalized individuals who consider themselves to be distant from the cultural identity to which they prefer to belong. However, it is not always the case that individuals prefer to distance themselves,

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[3] *Halal* is an Arabic term which translates to permissible. Halal meat adheres to Islamic law where the slaughtering of an animal must be done through a specific process that involves a Muslim reciting a dedication in its preparation.

but a failure to belong has lead the newcomer to be marginalized (Rudmin & Ahmadzadeh, 2001). In fact, a marginalized individual should not be viewed as one who is suffering, as is often the case. One study found that immigrants classified themselves as marginalized by choice, because they did not want to associate themselves with the superficial aspects of both cultures, and instead chose to emphasize humanity in a liberalist attitude against prejudices (Kim, 1988).

While John Berry's acculturative framework is bidimensional, the studies resulting from this theory place the newcomer on a continuum of heritage to mainstream cultural identification; congruent with unidimensional models. Similar to the stages discussed in the previous section, Berry's theoretical framework also boxes an individual under a label, based on the assumption that all newcomers embody the same psychological processes in reaching adjustment. To regard newcomers from diverse cultural groups in homogenous terms disregards the specific experience of children, for example, in how they adjust to mainstream society. As we will acknowledge in the next section, the majority of the research aimed at the experience of acculturation in children is adult-centered as well.

2.1.1 Adjustment in Research

We live in a world where Canadian immigration policy emphasizes economic self-sufficiency, along with the skills and education needed to support economic growth, as the constituents in measuring an immigrant's worth (Li, 2003). Unfortunately, due to the majority of the aims in research intended towards immigrant children, it becomes evident

that children are involuntarily swept into the lens of being viewed as one day becoming economically self-sufficient adults and areas like their sense of loneliness have received little attention from researchers. For example, in one of the largest studies about children's educational performance and social, cultural psychological adaptation, Rumbaut (1994) showed that lower self-esteem in children correlated with poorer school performance. Yet in such a study, the emotional and social hardships experienced by children from immigrant families have yet to be adequately examined (Kirova, 2001). In addition, most research with various immigrant groups has failed to represent the perspectives and voices of immigrants in the process of acculturation, and has relied heavily on quantitative methods for measuring an individual's level of acculturation.

Many studies regarding immigrant children has surpassed their experiences and have instead opted to measure the value by the end product of their struggle. For example, terms such as "intergenerational educational mobility" of immigrant children are of concern for researchers so that these children can still become contributing adults to the economy, even if their parents have attained less years of education (Puyat, 2013). This is not to discredit the value in such research, but a heavy focus on the material output these families contribute to public revenues and how much they cost in terms of use of services only feeds into the literature that seeks to confirm such a population can have a very strong academic future despite social and economic disadvantages facing them (Shields & Behrman, 2004; Tillman, Guo, & Harris, 2006).

As the research continues to focus on educational outcomes such as enrolment rates, drop out rates, and average GPAs of newcomer children, in place of incorporating

the voice of the child, the linguistic and educational outcomes at the centre of the studies mask the processes through which immigrant children navigate the education system (Tillman, Guo, & Harris, 2006). If they are not having an outcome, then they are not contributing to society and therefore do not belong. Terms such as human capital, social capital, educational mobility, and upward mobility, are part of the lingo that dehumanizes the experiences of children and treats them as an investment of a multicultural society. Even the universal need to belong has been coined as 'social capital,' and morphed into an expenditure through which immigrant families and their children can successfully integrate. Attention to the emotional hurdles that lead to such outcomes are deemed unnecessary because the aim is on measuring the outcome of the child.

Furthermore, the literature on teacher education is vague about what teachers should know to effectively support the education of new arrivals to Canada. Goodwin (2002), in examining 579 articles published by the *Journal of Teacher Education* between 1980 and 2001, found only a handful of articles including immigrant children and the importance of responding to their educational needs. Also, in the *Journal of Teaching* and *Teacher Education*, between 1985-1999, no article suggested strategies, skills, and appropriate content knowledge for teachers about how to accommodate immigrant children (Goodwin, 2002). The *Harvard Educational Review* in its call for papers acknowledged the lack of sustained inquiry and dialogue about the education of immigrant learners. Clearly, the lack of research on everyday experiences of newcomer

children prevents educators from establishing suitable educational goals and corresponding practices.

Despite the contributions in policy and practice that large-scale studies regarding acculturation can provide, the reliance on secondary sources of data to draw conclusions about newcomer children has its limitations. For example, many studies have surveyed the age of the mother at migration, immigrant generation, and parents' level of English proficiency. Yet such measures overlook the unique experiences at the child-level in developing an in-depth understanding of immigration (Bodovski & Durham, 2010; Cabrera, Wight, & Fagan, 2010; Galindo & Fuller, 2010). Acculturation continues to be an area of psychology, sociology and education in which more empirical and conceptual work is needed, particularly when the majority of research focuses on English language competency and professions, while proximal influences remain unexplored.

2.1.2 Adjustment in Practice

The theories which guide the research in acculturation have dictated many pedagogical practices concerning immigrant children. Before any reform can take place, many existing issues in the classroom must be addressed. Educators may often wonder how to assist diverse students in becoming accepted members of the classroom community, if they cannot rely on a common language to communicate (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2001). Preschool teachers, for example, find their teaching challenged when confronted with obstacles such as English language limitations, low immigrant achievement, and low parent involvement in the school

(Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). Therefore, arriving at an understanding, or connecting in a classroom setting among students with limited English proficiency and cultural differences increases the complexity of the task of an educator. At the same time, the classroom climate is influenced by the overarching pedagogical framework of the education system in North America, that heavily relies on high-stake testing. Due to this structure, educators may adopt a bureaucratic thinking in order to prepare English-language learners for such a world, so they may highly encourage the use of English-at-all-times to a culturally and linguistically diverse population (Reyes, 2008).

Some English language learners may adopt switching between languages when speaking and writing, and teachers may discourage such code-switching by worrying that it can inhibit their English acquisition; instead of acknowledging that code-switching allows students to express their ideas more completely (Brooks & Karathanos, 2009). These methods overlook the daily struggles of immigrant students, and tend to occur in classrooms with teachers who have had the most years of experience, as was indicated in a study by Constantino and Faltis (1998). It can also be harmful when teachers hold deficit attitudes about English language learners due to a lack of information and awareness (Curtri & Johsnon, 2010). In other instances, some teachers may be eager to help students speak, so when the child pauses or becomes quiet, teachers may resort to proposing many words for the child to consider. This well-intentioned practice is referred to as the "tsunami of words," for its powerful display silences dialogue with immigrant children, because it causes them to become more quiet as teachers offer more and more words (Keat, Strickland, & Marinak, 2009). Many educators may also lack the patience that is

needed for they may be unaware that it takes four to seven years of English language instruction for students to reach classroom norms.

Educators must realize that the lack of language is only one obstacle which children must overcome (Kirova, 2001). Many of these worries stem from a major cause of the problem that teaching in linguistically diverse settings is not a required course for those would-be teachers in British Columbia, for example. It is surprising that many teachers may not be equipped with the skills necessary for teaching newcomer students; even though 25 percent of kindergarten to grade 12 students in BC are classified as ESL learners (Vancouver School Board, n.d.).

Unfortunately, teachers often report that the challenges are related to the apprehension that they might not have accumulated enough knowledge of various languages, family traditions, and cultural assumptions to serve the needs of each child and family (Barnett, Yarosz, Jung, & Blanco, 2007). However, English comprehension is not a solution to the negative experiences children have in school, since misunderstandings can occur on a nonverbal level as well (Emme, Kirova, Kamau, & Kosanovich, 2006). Miscommunications occur because each child gathers meaning from a given message in accordance to his or her own cultural heritage. Thus, nonverbal translation is a vital asset in seeking adjustment to a new culture, though its importance receives very little attention in classrooms. Perhaps such misunderstandings in nonverbal translation contribute to the fact that one in five children of newcomer families, especially those of visible minority groups, experience discrimination during adjusting to Canada (Morton et al., 2002). Understanding that such children perceive their opportunities in

life as diminishing, and acknowledging that they struggle with a weak sense of belonging, are integral to providing support to children of immigrant families (Shields & Behrman, 2004).[4] In fact, teachers are not aware of the special needs of immigrant children and may instead choose to adopt a colour-blind approach in the misguided notion that such behaviour is appropriate.[5]

Another potential issue pertains to accessing programs for immigrant children and their families, that are often not utilized. Early educational and after-school programs hold the promise of reducing ethnic group-related inequalities in children's cognitive skills and social competence, but children in immigrant families are less likely to participate in these programs than children from native-born families (Takanishi, 2004). At the community level, a combination of a lack of culturally inclusive programs and the limited awareness of community resources and services has resulted in low levels of participation of immigrant children and youth in such services (Schleifer & Ngo, 2005). Besides language barriers, parents of such children may not fully understand their rights

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[4] Barbara Weber, a professor of philosophy, psychology and education, recognizes such resistance from educators to stem from a fear of conflict that provokes educators to patch over all inconsistencies in understanding the otherness of the child, instead of adopting a desire to understand children and establishing an asymmetric relationship where the child can guide the educator into their realties (personal communication, March 24, 2016). This proposed view of educators towards the child relates to Emmanuel Levinas's account of metaphysical desire; where human longing is an ethical phenomenon. The desire is what allows the subject to become the subject, leading to its true self, in hearing the call to responsibility placed upon it by the other (Dalton, 2009). Perhaps before turning to the newcomer child, educators must first attend to discovering an inner desire to understand the other, which in turn can promote a more open perspective towards students.

[5] Thus, to address teachers' anxieties about not being able to communicate effectively with students who cannot comprehend English, teachers do not need to be proficient in diverse languages. Where English may not be fully understood, nonverbal behavior can speak effectively. Body language has been linked to communicating how much a teacher cares about a student, expectations, as well as connecting or derailing meaning (Kirova, 2001).

or feel comfortable discussing their concerns with educators. Reform seems unlikely because immigrants lack a vocal political base from which to advocate for their needs, having been occupied with the challenges of settling in (Cochran-Smith, 2000). Special education classes can be an important vehicle for providing support for children experiencing difficulties in school, yet children in immigrant families tend not to participate in these programs (Shields & Behrman, 2004). This is why a sensitive approach that accounts for the moments of struggling to adjust to everyday life needs to be woven into the climate of the classroom.

2.2 The Missing Pieces in the Lifeworld

The criticisms of the most extensively researched theoretical model of acculturation point to the complexities involved when newcomers are assigned labels. It is not always the case that immigrants possess one label in most contexts of their lives, and if they do, its manifestation varies, which makes its observation a difficult task. When theories of acculturation classify individuals under the label of a status, the newcomer and host may be mislead to believe that one can unproblematically integrate the values of the dominant culture with one's own ethnic group. However, Bhatia and Ram (2001) emphasized a constant process of negotiation, intervention and mediation tied to political and historical practices that are also shaped by race, gender, sexuality and power. To understand the complex processes involved as newcomers navigate themselves between cultures, and to situate their experiences within larger sociocultural contexts, may challenge the notion of adjustment as the end-state of a newcomer's experiences. Thus, it

is important to examine the unique combinations of social-contextual variables that may influence and question the triumph of adjustment.

In a fashion similar to John Berry's model, much research has turned to capturing adjustment in immigrants either through fluency of English, academic success in students, or professional outcomes; as if material outcomes are reflective of the adjusted identity of an individual. Not only sociocultural variables are neglected in the theory and research regarding acculturation, but much of the existing literature overlooks the fact that unlike adults, young newcomers are undergoing major developmental changes while adjusting (Aronowitz, 1984; Pawliuk et al., 1996; Phinney, 1989). Thus, young immigrants are faced with the additional task of establishing their identity in the context of a foreign culture, causing their development to be intertwined with the emotional demands of migration. The separation of one's inner life from the genre of acculturation has been largely responsible for harboring label-generating multidimensional models and stage theories, as the realities of everyday experiences are abandoned. In turn, the lack of knowledge possessed by educators in assisting newcomer population, in addition to an overarching educational policy that perceives adjustment to settle over time, masks over the realities of children. Accordingly, what remains neglected is attention to the voices of newcomer children: Their lifeworld, consisting of all the immediate experiences and the people encountered on a daily basis, which have not been adequately incorporated into theories, research, and practices.

Many newcomers are exposed to two different (and often conflicting) domains: One domain is the private sphere, which is also the reminder of the heritage culture, and

the other is the public sphere, consisting of the school, peers, and media. Both of these different worlds impose pressures to conform, or to master the art of adjusting the knob of being too Canadian and not Canadian enough. Thus it is not surprising when intergenerational conflict accompanies many newcomer families upon settlement (Pawliuk et al., 1996). As children must make sense of the new, while holding on to the old, the inner negotiations and contradictions can color the world of the child with uncertainty. To untangle how the struggle with loss contributes to adjustment, I will use Kierkegaard's notion of despair. His book, *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Oriented Deliberative in View of the Dogmatic Problem of Hereditary Sin,* will inform this thesis with the idea that uncertainty should not be disregarded, but by working through our inwardness, the feeling of despair should be embraced with open arms. Additional articles by Patricia Huntington and David Roberts will supplement the idea of despair, as these authors have reflected on loneliness and defenselessness in relation to Kierkegaard and self-realization. Kierkegaard's views oppose stage theories that see hostility as only a fleeting phase on the journey to adjustment, and instead offer an ongoing model of adjusting to despair.

Furthermore, home is the everyday space that is shaped by the parents' language rules and norms. Linguistic hegemony at home is an important matter because language may be difficult for children who have been speaking English at school all day, and for the parents, it is a vehicle through which their child can be tied to the original culture. In other words, the language of the home is the only tie that creates a sense of belonging to the home culture. Especially for immigrant families, to revive the language of the home

is to leave the possibility of a return to the home country open in their geographical imaginations (Valentine et al., 2008). However, emphasis on the practice of language in the home has yet to receive attention in pedagogical practices. Although research has deemed English proficiency as a marker of an adjusted status, how language works to hamper or to aid adjustment is unclear. Language is not a marker of adjustment but a cause of tension. The classroom is a monolingual space, and ironically for a newcomer who has already mastered another language, their multilingualism is rarely recognized as a skill (Valentine et al., 2008). Inside many classrooms, English is the ruling factor that disables children from expressing themselves effectively. It is the people who transform spaces, and the dominating language they speak regulates the perception of belonging.

When speaking of language within the lifeworld, I am not concerned with the words or structure of language, but the role of language in how newcomers make sense of their identities within everyday encounters at home and school. To contribute to an understanding of the role of language on the journey to adjustment, Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of dialogic consciousness will be used. Specifically, his writings from *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (1981), will attend to an awareness of what connects or disconnects children from others, and how language can change the way space is ordered. Another author, Lyudmila Bryzzheva, who has written on dialogical consciousness and its link to the struggle for freedom and authenticity facing bilingual individuals, will supplement the exploration of the role of language.

Finally, as many educators perceive a lack of knowledge from culture to be the culprit impeding successful implementation of adjustment, the idea of the third space

from Homi K. Bhabha's book, *The Location of Culture,* shows that culture is constantly being negotiated and is not simply carried from one country to another. Rather, educators should not be concerned with retaining facts about the varied cultural practices of their students, since Bhabha suggests that cultural production is the most productive where it is most ambivalent. What Bhabha (1994) referred to as "the art of the present," (p. 110) are the moments that cultural differences are articulated with language and identity is mutually constituted (Valentine et al., 2008). His conceptualization of culture will be supported by another author, Bic Ngo, whose article illustrates the way culture and identity are constructed within the double movements of discourse and representation.

The current neglect of emotional struggles, the language, the spaces and people that make up the realities of children in educational institutions, raises questions about the conceptualization of adjustment. To shift attention to the lifeworld, we can gain a clearer recognition of the experience of immigration, in order to answer the question whether adjustment should be the aim of newcomers and their educators.

The main sources of the struggle many newcomers undergo stem from loss; the inability to relate to others, as in English attainment; and the perception of culture that shapes behaviors. Such areas of conflict are not easily apparent and accommodated when children are viewed as undergoing stages guaranteeing adjustment. As these issues overshadow the lifeworld of newcomer children, the following section will share the key ideas which will supplement a phenomenological investigation in considering the attainability and necessity of adjustment. Specifically, the dialogical consciousness of Bakhtin will be applied to language; the notion of despair from Kierkegaard will explore

loss; and the idea of third space from Homi Bhabha will define culture to illustrate the consequences of failing to address the blind spots in the existing literature. Often the experiences in the private sphere, the discourse in the spaces of the school, streets, social groups, home, and with friends define the lifeworld of newcomers. Perhaps *moments* are what shape the state of a newcomer rather than *labels,* including moments of experiencing the very implications of labels.

A philosopher of language, Mikhail Bakhtin, whose ideas will later be used to explore the notion of adjustment, also valued the moments that comprise the lifeworld. He argued that "moments shape the definitive image of the man, his essence, as well as the nature of his entire subsequent life" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 116). We must shift to the moments, a living thing, rather than the labels that box and silence the inner negotiations newcomers must make. I am referring to the lifeworld of individuals: The spaces that are saturated with real living meaning which allow everyday life to be realized within it. The ideas of Bakhtin, Kierkegaard and Bhabha, will be introduced in the following sections and will guide the phenomenological investigation of this thesis.

2.2.1 Mikhail Bakhtin and Dialogical Consciousness

Without communicating through a common language, isolation befriends many newcomer children in the classroom. Before arriving at solitude, a gained comfort in being with the world, I would like to emphasize Mikhail Bakhtin's philosophical model of how one must travel into the space of the other in order to understand his or her own self (Bakhtin, 1990). Upon examining the lifeworld of newcomer children, it becomes

difficult to decipher whose voice is adding meaning to experiences (Steele, 2013). To be devoid from the 'crowd' or public, which is common for newcomers, is also a reality of the lifeworld. For Bakhtin, to be with oneself and any resulting meaning that is made on one's own (a characteristic of solitude), also contains within it a voice in one's consciousness that is inflected by other utterances in a dialogue. One who utters a monologic word speaks, but his utterances are on borrowed time (Bryzzheva, 2002). The portrayal of adjustment as stages makes it difficult to determine whose voices are occupying the inner realities of newcomers. Bakhtin (1981) expressed that the "internal content is absolutely private: […] the goal by which it is guided, all its trials and exploits are of an exclusively personal sort and have no social or political significance" (p. 109). It becomes necessary to pay attention to the figures whom one actively engages in dialogue in order to understand the private consciousness of individuals.

He offered that voices in dialogue are not a mere oral exchange between two speakers, but representative of relationships that are not fixed but rather shift in accordance to power relations; hence, the boundaries between the self and the other are "flexible, ambiguous, often deliberately distorted and confused […] similar to it being constructed like mosaics of the texts for others" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 69). For Bakhtin, boundaries are the pivotal territories where the self emerges. Subjectivity itself, cannot be located outside language and is in fact a dialogic phenomenon. As language plays a powerful role in the lifeworld of newcomers, it can provide a context for examining how we can attend to the voices of this demographic.

It is important to focus on the role of language rather than stages, because moments of language can be points of departure, and sites of events to find their denouement (Bakhtin, 1981). Perhaps, to lose the concern over measuring the levels of adjustment, Bakhtin's ideas of dialogic consciousness lift the lid off boxing newcomers under labels, so that we hear their own voices. In this work, we will consider the role of the voice of one's own and the other actors of the lifeworld where the dialogue "faces outward away from itself, toward the listener-reader, and to a certain extent this anticipates possible reactions to itself" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 257). The next chapter will describe in more detail how the voices in dialogue are 'centripetal forces' that push one out in different directions and end up participating in a 'centrifugal movement' that pulls one together (Bakhtin, 1981). There is a dialogue between points of views each with its own concrete language that cannot be translated into the other (Bakhtin, 1981). Although an encounter with a new language provides newcomers with a place to be creative, it is unknown whose accents their words reflect (Valentine et al., 2008). What is in fact negotiated is the expressive dimension of the shared language. We long to belong and to participate, but both have their limits. As Bryzzheva (2002) explained, to participate imposes rules of engagement, and to creatively transcend, we turn to the freedom to exercise our unfinishedness. Bakhtin's notion of dialogic consciousness will account for one's ideological becoming. As Bakhtin can assist in understanding interactions with others, another philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard can attend to the inner struggles in relation to oneself that also apply to the struggles of adjusting for newcomer children.

2.2.2 Søren Kierkegaard and Despair

Educators, classmates, friends, and family are all active participants in each other's lives. Sometimes there may be little distance between people to allow for individual freedom. However, another key player in the private sphere of the child is the solitary self who is also an active participant. To live in solitude allows the pursuit to channel one's freedom. One can feel liberated when an understanding has been reached in seclusion because of the belief that we freely came to it on our own and hence, the understanding is more meaningful. The Danish philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard, in his work, *The Concept of Anxiety,* expressed concern with how the public paves over the agency of the individual, and in turn, compromises the truth of existence (Steele, 2013). Borrowing his existentialist themes, especially the struggle for meaning, can be beneficial in our understanding of the turmoil of everyday life in the life of the newcomer child.

Kierkegaard, himself, was a solitary individual who had first-hand experience of concentrating on his inwardness over a period of six years (1842-1848), when his immense authorship took place. Although relating his conceptualization of despair to the lives of young children may be criticized as unrelated or too "dark," it nevertheless resonates with many of the experiences of newcomers.

For Kierkegaard (1844/2015), the inevitable characteristic of life, "anxiety[,] can just as well express itself in muteness as with a scream" (p. 144). Simply because many newcomer children are seen as silent in classrooms, or may be deemed as adjusted due to high achievement on exams, their inner world remains hidden. Through exposure to novel experiences in different spaces across individuals, despair creeps at different times

though difference spaces (Steele, 2013). The experiences following immigration interrupt childhood for many young newcomers, and forces one to become a spectator of oneself, of what one could be in the new country and what one could have been back home. Kierkegaard is not concerned with the discovery of despair, but the working through of it-- the ability to be anxious in the right way (Steele, 2013). Kierkegaard (1844/2015) pointed out that, "anxiety is freedom's possibility" (p. 188). We experience anxiety because we are shaped by possibility. In possibility all things are equally possible, the terrifying and the joy reside closely to every human being: "When one has thoroughly learned that every anxiety for which one feels alarm can come upon him the very next instant, then we will give actuality another explanation" (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015, p. 188). Perhaps anxiety and the feelings of uncertainty are inevitable because we are constantly reminded of possibility. Instead of searching for a quick fix in ridding anxiety, Kierkegaard explained that it is unavoidable, and to gain consciousness of life's struggles and our relation to them, brings us closer to achieving a sense of freedom.

Kierkegaard distinguished humans from animals based on one quality-- the spirit. The body and mind are synthesized via the spirit, and it is due to possessing spirit that we experience dread, and this motivates individuals. Therefore, when we are exposed to possibilities, the moments where we recognize a freedom to act, despair generates the possibility of agency and creating oneself. He specifically spoke of children experiencing dread when they constantly seek adventure, and display a "thirst for the prodigious, the mysterious" (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015, p. 40). We can feel despair not only for who we are now, but due to an ontological concern with becoming (Steele, 2013). The spirit is also

characterized by an unpredictability and wildness that can be terrifying because it cannot be anticipated since its manifestation of the past does not predict the future (Huntington, 2006). For example, when confronted with a foreign experience, as many newcomers undergo, one cannot rely on looking to the past as a point of reference. The spirit, in a way, is what makes adjustment a fragile process.

What must an individual do and what can an individual do? These are questions that relate to the limited self and the unlimited self that is shaped by possibility. The unlimited self is the underlying Kierkegaardian theme that can relate to the private sphere of an individual (Steele, 2013). Every situation that is experienced promises an array of possible points of interest, either in immediate or later reflection (McKnight, 2004). This is why infinity or the possibility of some situations can be very dangerous, because "no matter how deep the individual has sunk, it can sink still deeper, and this 'can' is the object of anxiety" (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015, p. 37). Perhaps John Berry's labels of assimilation or separation are in a way an escape from the external and inner forces in conflict, or the difficulty of living on the hyphen. To run away from this task of becoming is a weakness. In contrast, certain finite situations are comforting, because as Kierkegaard described, one can always prevent oneself from learning something absolutely from them, which could lead to discomfort (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015, p.188). Similarly, the stages from "Honeymoon" to "Home" are anticipated finite situations that are made in an attempt to take away the dizziness of what can come from the infinity Kierkegaard mentioned. Similar to a paved road, the stages that have been preplanned for newcomers are making an infinite situation finite by muting the possibilities of who one can become,

for it dissolves the mystery of where one can be. However comfortable, the road is nevertheless absent of possibility.

Kierkegaard pointed out that we can gain freedom from consciousness, if one knows how to understand his or her own inwardness. He made a distinction between understanding and to understand, in that "to understand what you yourself are saying is one thing, understanding yourself in the saying is another" (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015, p. 171). In a way, many newcomers who are unable to communicate in English are left in a forced silence, often feeling misunderstood. This sense of misunderstanding is not only attributed to their English proficiency, but what's also going on inside. Therefore, it becomes important for them to be able to understand themselves.

It cuts worry both for the person and the host to plan ahead and aim for adjustment. Kierkegaard claims that merely to survive physically does not deliver any essential meaning to our existence. It is our task to undergo transformation through how we live life, in our understanding so that how we bear what life brings must be qualified by spirit. To awaken to spirit, freedom can be ventured (Huntington, 2006). This is the problem with the research, because it fails to capture the processes young children encounter and actually undergo. No matter how well spoken in English or accomplished on report cards, underneath is an encounter with many possibilities of what might surface. Kierkegaard can suggest an attempt of working out a synthesis of a new consciousness for newcomer children.

Another factor that relates Kierkegaard to the experiences of newcomer children is the experience of loss as a central struggle. Kierkegaard stated that individuals who

experience loss will become withdrawn. The loss is seen as an event and not the contents of what is lost; what lies beneath this loss is despair. Feeling this emptiness, the self escapes from the conditions of concrete everyday life. At that point, "unfreedom makes a prisoner precisely of itself" (Kierkegaard, 1967, p. 110). To reach freedom is an accomplishment that must be done individually. It cannot be taught through formal education, nor can it be taken for granted due to cultural reasons.

Generally, Kierkegaard recommended to his readers to move out of the predictable and into the unmanageable, because this vulnerable situation forces individuals to reflect on their helplessness (Roberts, 2014). Such a viewpoint is exactly what is missing in theory and practice geared towards the adjustment of newcomers, for they are given pre-meditated guidelines. The more aware one becomes, the more responsibility one has to live well. To refuse this awareness, as Kierkegaard implied, is to fall into a sickness of spirit and loneliness is this disease. Ironically, the educational guidelines are geared towards promoting a sense of well-being, but to overlook the moments of loss is exactly what is preparing students for loneliness. In doing so, they are "interrupting progress towards spiritual fulfilment by reducing levels of consciousness" (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015, p. xii).

The beauty in Kierkegaard's work is the impossibility in reaching concrete interpretations, which leaves his writing open and applicable to many experiences.[6] As there is much silence in the lifeworld of a newcomer child, the inward turn toward recognition or becoming caught up in external forces is important to understand in self-

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[6] This is not to say that I am an interpreter of Kierkegaard, but I view his writings as a guide in understanding the experiences that newcomers may have.

creation. Therefore, the idea of working through despair rather than to disregard it, as suggested by Kierkegaard, should be used in the newcomer's coping with loss and contradictions.

As much as working through loss is an important contributor to adjusting, it is also an inner project that many undertake while situated in-between two cultures. To live in this third space, as will be further explained in the following section, is to make possible the originality of vision. When individuals immigrate to a new country, they can either construct their conceptions of the world by weaving many resources, or some may be robbed of the opportunity to participate fully. The next section will explore the final concept of signifying or creating culture in relation to adjusting.

2.2.3 Homi Bhabha and Culture

Unfortunately, many may view culture as normative and bounded within identity (Bryzzheva, 2002). However, the 'new' wave of immigrants, mainly the transnationals who continue to maintain ties with different parts of the world, challenge the conceptualization of culture as a fixed phenomenon. As the next chapter will elaborate on dialogical relationships in relation to Bakhtin, such interactions are also cultural. It is important to identify the role culture plays in adjustment because cultural image can become a danger when the "performance of the truth or the lack of it impedes the dialectical process of cultural [...] communicability" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 194). Although I speak of heritage and host culture, many may misinterpret each as having a homogenizing force that does not allow negotiations to come through. To avoid

essentializing culture as a singular, shared culture of a collective, the perspective of an author of contemporary post-colonial studies, Homi Bhabha, who believes that theory itself can promote practical political change, will be examined. Culture, according to Bhabha (1994), is composed of the "patches and rags of daily life and are repeated and turned into signs of a coherent national culture" (p. 209). To remember the complex interactions among everyday life and how they're interwoven paints a much clearer image of how culture emerges. A culture is not whole, and culture and identity are the result of differentiation in social relations (Ngo, 2008).

Since the sense of belonging is challenged by immigration, Bhabha saw such marginal individuals as ending up in the third space, or inbetweeness. To live in the third space is not by choice, but due to the inability to identify and sustain a dialogue with the other because of an inability to fit oneself into the world (Bryzzheva, 2002). Bhabha pointed out that when meanings and values are misread, this takes place at significatory boundaries of culture, and becomes known as the problem of cultural interaction. Therefore, Bhabha's notion of third space, as the space that intervenes in the development of culture, calls for enunciations of new meanings. He emphasized that being situated in the in-between are the spaces within and among individuals, and cultures do not maintain a single position but form identities in an on-going process. So, to translate one's heritage culture in the new space becomes one of the tasks of many newcomers. In the following section I will interrogate the idea of leaving one's home to re-actualize a self-image.

Although many policies recognize cultural diversity, Bhabha's views challenge this idea, and instead, he recognizes cultural difference. Whereas in cultural diversity, a culture is objectified as source of empirical knowledge, cultural difference is the point of contact at which two or more cultures meet. This meeting of cultures is where problems occur, because culture then becomes something that is enunciated. In the third space, enunciation tends to take place in this ambivalent area of discourse, where claims about the purity of culture are invalid. To express culture, or to enunciate, is an active process of translating cultural signs, and such signs are in turn read anew in this act.

Enunciation is the expression of a culture, and since culture is constantly in development and not pre-given, it can only be uttered. This process brings with it a divide between the traditional ideas of reference and the articulation of new cultural meanings and strategies in the present. As cultural diversity becomes static, cultural difference becomes a process of identification and "the authority of culture as a knowledge of referential truth that is at issue in the moment of enunciation" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 51). Bhabha values cultural difference much more than diversity since cultural difference possesses the possibility of articulation in a way that could combat fixed ideas of culture the host may hold toward the newcomer.

To have fixed ideas about a certain group consists of repetition, rigidity and order as well as disorder, according to Bhabha. This is a danger of different cultures in contact. When certain moments contradict our beliefs of a certain group, Bhabha explained that in defense of remaining dominant and ridding anxiety, and also to seek pleasure, one may then resort to stereotyping. To move beyond binary understandings of culture and

identity as traditional/modern or immigrant/host, Bhabha's ideas point to the significance of attending to changes that take place in the in-between. For example, a bicultural individual can bring new cultural accents to something conventional in the host society, giving it a novel status. As Bryzzheva (2002) explained, what may be conventional for an American student may be novel for a Russian immigrant, which can change the life of the latter, and offer a new point of view for the American student if he/she is in dialogue with the Russian student. Bakhtin (1981) viewed relationships as dialogical when it enters the world of the "author, of the performer, and world, the listener and reader" (p. 252). How everyday interactions with others are interwoven in the third space can depict an understanding of culture that is much more relevant to the present-day newcomers and the understanding of multiculturalism.[7]

The next chapter will draw on the ideas of Bakhtin, Kierkegaard and Bhabha for a phenomenological exploration of the lifeworld to question the attainability and necessity of an aim for adjustment.

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[7] However, any understanding realized in the third space must be taken with caution. It has received criticism that emerging identities left uncriticized and instead viewed to be as inherently positive and progressive, are problematic because it can mistakenly romanticize newcomers' identities (Mitchell, 1997).

Chapter 3   Examining the Lifeworld

Currently, the existing research and publications have not brought the voices of Bakhtin, Kierkegaard and Bhabha to collectively address immigrants, and specifically, newcomer children. I do not intend to synthesize the voices of these authors, but will use my experiences as a newcomer child in a dialogue with their ideas, to uncover a deeper understanding of the lifeworld, or the experience of acculturation. Although I am writing from the point of view of one child, from two decades ago, I can imagine my experiences to occur for certain kinds of newcomers from the present and those of the future. Certainly, I do not intend to generalize such a journey for I am aware that the experiences of an Iranian newcomer in Canada will be vastly different from a newcomer student immigrating from Britain, for example. I may not share the same experiences of many newcomers from the past, the present and those of the future, but we all share the task of creating meaning from our encounter with the new. The notion of despair and the possibility entrenched in the inner negotiations from Kierkegaard; followed by Bakhtin's understanding of dialogic consciousness in language; and the contributions of Bhabha's third space in communicating culture serve as the concepts that will investigate my real lived experiences to uncover adjustment as a phenomenon that is far different from its current depiction. I take, borrow and re-arrange ideas and worldviews from different philosophers who work in different traditions. Through the dialogue with my experiences, the perspective of the lifeworld is directed outward and inward, taken from my past, and directed to the future. I understand that there is so much left unexplored,

but these voices give me an opportunity to attain some aspects of the answer to the infinitely large question of whether adjustment should be a final state.

The reason these three authors were selected is not only due to a new approach but each of them has made a significant impact on my views towards the past. Although I question the tendency of labels in ignoring individuality and unpredictability, I do not wish for my recollections to spin into a generalization of the experience of adjustment for all newcomer children. Alternatively, in describing moments from my childhood, this kind of phenomenological writing will use a revocative method which brings experience vividly into presence so that "the reader can recognize unreflectively (unmediated by reflection or thinking) these experiential possibilities of human life" (Van Manen, 2014, Location no. 5984). By revoking my words, I am revoking "the cognitive claims that words have made on us, [as] we try to restore our contact with lived life" (Van Manen, 2014, Location no. 5990). Through sharing certain anecdotes, I will recreate experiences but "in a transcended (focused, condensed, intensified, oriented, and narrative) form" (Van Manen, 2014, Location no. 6205). By reflecting on specific examples from my childhood experiences, under the guidance of the three thinkers, my examples will then be a re-creation of the realities that may be common for many current newcomers. Such a phenomenological approach challenges current research, theory and practice because it will concentrate on moments dependent on spaces and the people occupying those spaces, including one's relation to oneself, as the elements in the practice of adjusting.

The following section will conclude with an answer to whether 'home' should be a necessary goal for newcomers and hosts. Through these thinkers, I hope to illustrate the

entanglement of the private with the public sphere, where adjustment is a fragmented experience rather than a series of stages. What is missing is a model that speaks to all types of newcomers, including those who may never reach a sense of adjustment. Instead, I propose that attention be given to the moments of struggle (the present), rather than a focus on the outcome (the future), which is materialized through academic achievement, English fluency, and labels of acculturation status. Perhaps by using my voice as an example, I can evoke the many voices that are similar to mine, as my words continue to be co-owned by others who read on.

3.1 The Inner Struggle

Some newcomer children, like myself, may initially be robbed of a language to connect to their new environment, and so they become observers under the cast of possibility. As the boundaries of performance in their new environment may not resonate with the child and are not of his or her choosing, moments of contradictory feelings may ensue. Newcomer children must cope with the experience of loss and culture shock, yet the current avenues of response fail to address their actual experiences. Such is evident when labels of acculturation status develop expectations of an adult's view towards a child; the research uses measures of English fluency and academic success as markers of adjustment; and available pedagogical practices, such as ESL, fail to target the emotional turmoil many may be experiencing.

The daily experiences that newcomer children encounter are much more complicated. For example, the possibility of actions in any situation, and how one is to make decisions, place individuals at a crossroad. In order to transcend the possibilities

imposed by society, I will focus on developing the concept of despair, where I will not

discuss various existing interpretations of the self, but only illustrate its central

components, as elaborated by Kierkegaard.[8] Although the context of each newcomer

child is unique, many may never fulfill the criteria of reaching adjustment, as outlined by

researchers, theorists and educators. Specifically, in the eyes of policymakers, those who

drop out of the education system or become classified as marginalized may appear to be

lost on their journey to achieving adjustment. On the other hand, Kierkegaard, would

value such unhome-like experiences as holding potential to heighten the awareness of

spirit, which in turn can enable greater intensity in uplifting or sinking directions

(Huntington, 2006). The following section will not address the difficulties an immigrant

must overcome, because the harsh realities have already been depicted in previous

chapters. At this point, the focus will be on how specific experiences influence the

development of the self in relation to the other on the journey to adjusting.

Kierkegaard described the self as not an essence, but a relationship that is formed

by a synthesis of opposing elements. In *The Sickness Unto Death,* Kierkegaard (1849/1980)

wrote:

A human being is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self?

The self is a relation that relates itself to itself or is the relation's relating itself to

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[8] Before I continue to acknowledge lostness, this is not to discredit the value in social dependence (which will be explored in more detail through Bakhtin). Kierkegaard himself addressed that participation in social discourse is necessary for the development of genuine self-knowledge (Nielsen, 2006). The choice made for oneself could be confused with the choosing of culture's traditional ways of acting (Nielsen, 2006), and many newcomers may not have reliable social support in the school at the beginning of their resettlement; therefore, to briefly turn away from the other and address the self through a focus on inwardness takes priority.

itself in that relation; the self is not the relation but is the relation's relating itself

to itself. A human being is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal

and the eternal, of freedom and necessity, in short, a synthesis. A synthesis is a

relation between the two. Considered in this way, a human being is still not a self.

(p. 13)

A human being is spirit, which is the self, and the self is full of contradictions. There is a

basic misrelation between the synthesis and self-image, and the only way for an

individual to come to terms with him-herself is through despair. The misrelation in the

self's relation to itself is known as despair (Kierkegaard, 1844/2015). For newcomers, and

drawing from my own experiences, moments of misrelation would hit when I couldn't

process the English text on the paper in front me, when I would be called upon in class

to answer and panicked about the sound of my accent rather than the content of my

words; when I missed my room back home; especially, having to sit amongst others for

hours everyday, and feeling bored. In Kierkegaard's recommendations, one could either

retreat from the despair, or greet it (McKnight, 2004). To be situated in an uncertain state

satisfies Kierkegaard's notion of process towards genuine self-recognition. However, this

process does not unfold naturally, but is a possibility that must be won and renewed in

situations (Huntington, 2006).

When I was unable to understand my peers and did not have the means to do so,

imagining what could unfold in the future became a difficult task. Similarly, studies

regarding newcomer children have found some to be unable to envision a hopeful future.

I felt stuck, because as human beings we should be able to go beyond finiteness into the

infinite, and forget the present in order to imagine what we might become in the future (the eternal). These are the structures of opposite elements present in the self, according to Kierkegaard. When the possible, the infinite, cannot be filled, that is despair. The inability to go beyond the finite and to remain in the temporal, perhaps may make an individual appear as assimilated or separated, because denial of contradictions may become the only viable options for some individuals. To simply give into immediate possibilities, remain unaware of the possibilities, and turn to existing institutions to evaluate oneself through achievement, is another example. But, to abide in ways that satisfy the standards of institutions which offer points of identification for the self should not be confused with a growth in spirit. One can easily achieve mastering a language, excelling in grades, living up to the expectations of parents, and unknowingly give into peer pressure. Adjusting does not unfold in steps but within encounters of possibility of who that child chooses to become in different interactions. For many who are feeling isolated from the misrelation and despair, the choice may be to perform like classroom peers, or to sit alone-- A state many cannot bear, and what Kierkegaard may presume would prevent one from becoming a self.

The culture one resides in provides a sense of significance: The culture of the home and the classroom are examples that contribute a sense of meaning for one's task as well as laying out the paths and goals in life. The cultures of such domains also carves roles of performance of various degrees. In other words, to feel grounded in the cultural fabrications of a society, the individual defines himself or herself by externals (Roberts, 2014). Kierkegaard believed that individuals lose a sense of themselves in the immediacy

of the world when they pursue what is external, such as defining oneself by possessions and titles in comparison to others (Roberts, 2014). Such tendencies unfold within the boundaries created by one's culture of what is acceptable. As one moves through the routines imposed by culture, and happens to face the insignificance of one's actions, one would then feel like living as others do.

However, giving in to the manageability that culture portrays also has its limitations. For example, to award the title of an 'adjusted immigrant child', may establish a false self; for one appears within society as grounded after succeeding the goals provided by that society through earning good grades, speaking fluent English and hopping through stages dictated by educational policymakers. This danger is what many may call an enslavement, though it appears to the individual, and in this case, the policymakers, as freedom. In this false illusion there lies a possibility of becoming what Kierkegaard would label a 'non-self;' which is a disintegrated, groundless person who seeks to maintain a coherent illusion in a false reality.

A 'non-self' may arise when feeling conflicted as a seemingly adjusted newcomer, by conforming to the society of the West and denying its clashes with one's habitual ways of living. Perhaps these very individuals continue to be classified as assimilated or separated in the research, for they fully embody the rules of belonging to a specific group. I recall that my other Iranian acquaintances who immigrated around the same time as myself would refuse to speak in their native tongue, or to be mistaken as a Canadian for possessing lighter physical features was welcomed as a compliment. Perhaps some

individuals may appear to be adjusted, but disentangling the contradictions is too much of a demanding task.

When one feels helpless and stuck in the immediate situation, such a level of consciousness is haunted by boredom, and wrapped up in a constant pursuit for sensual experience (Kierkegaard as cited in McKnight, 2004). When I was unable to relate to others because I could not understand the English language, boredom became a common theme in my life. In this state, everyday reality became something external to relate to, because I could not understand what was being said, and interactions with anyone outside of the family became noise to bear. Reality became difficult to comprehend, situate, and control. If we listen to Kierkegaard, then boredom is also what can propel one into action to fill the possible by imposing a form. For example, in an effort to fit in, many may succumb to any sort of peer pressure, slip on different personas, in order to repair from the misrelation, simply because there lies a great passion for playing out many different possible personalities by choosing one of the large array of experiences of the immediate (McKnight, 2004). However, to attend to Kierkegaard's idea of becoming a self: One must be able to relate to opposing poles in an authentic and cohesive manner, because contradictions are what allow one to transcend a situation, to reflect on life and its direction (Roberts, 2014). Otherwise, to escape the discomfort through denial, to experience the world without much thought, is to live in spiritlessness (Nielsen, 2006).

In order to deter the daily discomforts contradicting newcomers, then individuals should dedicate awareness to their struggles. To Kierkegaard, the self is not found in culture, but begins with the recognition of one's lostness (Roberts, 2014). For those who

immediately jump to fit in, those who deny the confusion, possess the possibility of growing lonely and uncomprehending, forever nostalgic for what has been lost, and unknowing how it became lost. But those who remain in the third space have an opportunity to allow the confusion to jolt them into an awakening (Huntington, 2006). For a newcomer who is in-between two cultures, the expectations in each domain lose fixity. To recognize and accept that one does not fully belong to either culture brings one actually to a favorable position to recognize the contradictory feelings rather than to deny them altogether.

Surely every individual feels contradiction in their lives, but newcomer children are constantly reminded of inconsistencies. For example, I came from Iran, an Islamic country where males and females were segregated from elementary to secondary institutions. Of course this was not the case in Canada, and it already felt strange to be in a classroom with other boys and to have playdates with them even more so. Though this was the norm in the public sphere, there lay a possibility to become someone else, like others but inwardly conscious of the disapproval from home. It should not be assumed that the more experiences one undergoes, the closer one becomes to genuine self-recognition and ultimately feels at 'Home.' Rather, I believe, each experience holds a potential to reach an understanding or a denial. An awareness is not a direct cause to live in accord with oneself, it is only an opportunity. As Huntington (2006) illustrated, to grow aware is to make the choice to accord with the self no matter how much contradictory pressure arises. And yet, it also implies that one can fail to live in accordance with oneself, despite the increased awareness that moments invite, and that would be a refusal to grow

in spirit. Thus instances of isolation, boredom, and the clashing of values may set the grounds for a false self if the underlying despair is left unattended.

3.2 Waging with Language

So far, we know that to assign newcomers under labels of acculturation status are inadequate methods of identifying adjustment, as labels become transient when the self encounters different states of belonging depending on varied situations. Furthermore, pedagogical practices and research view ESL instruction as a means to making newcomers feel at home in Canada. However, Bakhtin would disagree with the idea of English proficiency as an instrument to reaching adjustment, and would instead value language in relation with others, dependent on the kinds of shared spaces as suitable predictors of adjustment.

As much as isolation is embedded in the everyday life of a newcomer, to consider the interdependency in language that is depicted by Mikhail Bakhtin may alleviate some of the struggle that is felt individually. For those who freely choose to leave their home country, the new space of settlement may be full of 'event potential.' But for individuals who are forced to leave home, as is often the case with children, there may not be much to seek in the present location and hence, the door to their past stays open. This awareness takes place against the backdrop of other people's words; through other social voices.

One of the greatest contributions of Bakhtin's dialogic theory expands on how individuals experience how they're experiencing their lives through the dialogic relationship with the other (Bryzzheva, 2002). To consider the dialogic relationship with

the other, there lies much event potential, both for one's own self consciousness and the other. The old material of the past may not be applicable nor accessible, and the new space can be a place to invent new meanings. The emotions one undergoes are mediated by discourses that are marked by social values. The history of discourses shapes the ideas and images of who we are, and that is how we are identified and identify ourselves by responding to the presentations that have identified us (Ngo, 2008). The lives of newcomer children and how they narrate their experiences to themselves and others provide a context for educators to answer to their voices.

In dialogue one is repeating, resisting, or creating how he or she has been identified. Until I came to Canada and had to repeatedly answer to the question, "Where are you from?" it never occurred to me that I was observed first as an Iranian and not myself. I entered the process of re-description, because I was asked. As we draw on discourses to make meaning for ourselves, others use discourses available to them to identify us, but that is not to be confused with understanding the other. Language allows for endless re-description of the world, making it borrowed and creative as "it weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with a third group […]" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276). In the context of newcomers, language is not only the tool for communication and identification since it carries one to the public sphere (if English proficiency is attained), but can also be the portal to the traditional ties to the family.

Bakhtin (1929/1984) expanded on attaining self-recognition through dialogue with others when he wrote, "I cannot be myself without an other; I must find myself in

the other by finding an other in myself (in mutual reflection and mutual acceptance)" (p. 287).[9] Furthermore, he elaborated that the boundaries between the self are fluid and language can cross these boundaries freely and into the "private property of intentions; it is populated […] with the mention of others" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 294).

Yet the main struggle of recognizing oneself in dialogue with others, for newcomers, is the initial inability to connect. With no common language, to even attempt to find an other, such interactions are easily hit with cultural difference; in such interactions, borders are drawn between the self and other. To cross into alien territory and express one's own difference becomes the challenge. As many are forced into isolation in the classroom from lacking English proficiency, they may be involved with the group without fully identifying with the other, and maintain allegiance to the self while continuously crossing from one context to the other. Similarly, I remember many newcomers clustering towards those who spoke the same language in the school, because as much as the alien territory holds event potential, understanding may not always reach fruition. As newcomers remain in dialogue with the private sphere, such as the family and friends from home, they inadvertently deepen these boundaries and risk putting themselves in marginalization.

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[9] This can be related to Vygotsky's "Zone of Proximal Development." That development cannot take place if it is too far removed from what one can do with the help of the other at the moment when learning is taking place. That transformation must take place not at present-on-hand location of the recipient, and not too far into the what is yet-to-be; so that the learner can bridge the distance neither on her own but with the help of the other. Unfortunately, many newcomer children are left feeling isolated from learning either at the hands of educators and with peers because of an inability to communicate with a common language; thus the zone of proximal development is out of their reach.

In a way, newcomers are unprepared for the experience of crossing borders of language: The spaces in which interactions unfold depict moments where a newcomer could be integrated; or to retreat, such that one could then be marginalized; while in another context one is separated from the world. In turn, when the other is unable to cross into the boundary of the newcomer, what could develop may only be a touristic understanding of the other. The inability to cross the boundary of the other is apparent in the practice of diversity festivals and international food day in classrooms.[10] Therefore, the spaces one occupies and the language with the other are the forces driving one to temporary states of assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration. But the present research, which seeks to classify the acculturation status of individuals, has failed to recognize that adjustment levels shift depending on the spaces individuals occupy.

In mutual dialogue, the other and the self actively define each other. As much as I speak of becoming closer to oneself in the aim towards adjustment, by recognizing inwardness, those who proposed the means of stage theories claim that adjustment is eventually granted through time. But according to Bakhtin (1981), the present time "moves into the future and the more actively and consciously it moves in to the future, the more tangible and indispensable its inconclusiveness becomes" (p. 30). From this perspective, the phenomenon of becoming is an inconclusive process. To view moving into the future as incomplete, contradicts the stage theories that view adjustment as a finalized future state in the journey of immigration. Perhaps instead of attending to an

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[10] This is in reference to educational institutions holding events such as 'multicultural day,' as they practice outward experiences of 'culture' through foods and activities that may only breed stereotypes because as Bhabha explained, it causes fixed boundaries.

inconclusive future when everyday life becomes a problem, a focus on the present struggles may be a more preferred approach. In particular, consideration should be given to the *location* of living that becomes a space for search and longing.

The interactions one engages in are shaped by the specific spaces in which they move and encounter others. In other words, language is a situated practice. Particular spaces, such as the home and the school are produced through hegemonic practices (language of culture of origin at home and English in the classroom). All of these have their regimes that regulate communicative practices and encounters between different linguistic performances. Therefore, to speak a given language is determined by the location of dialogue, which can then define individuals as feeling 'in place' or 'out of place' (Valentine et al., 2008).

In speech, to understand the other is an active process: The word fits into one's conceptual system filled with "specific objects and emotional expressions, and is dissoluble merged with the response, with a motivated agreement or disagreement […]" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 282). In the context of two individuals with cultural values vastly dissimilar from one another, can the dialogic relationship still occur with certain aspects of one's own and the other's conceptual system? Does such a relationship hold the potential to break through the alien conceptual horizon of the listener?

One way to cross the horizon of the listener is to see yourself as an other would see you, and return to an initial axiological position to begin to distinguish my word and the word that is mine, in comparison to the word and the word of the other (Bryzzheva, 2002). Perhaps even educators, as hosts, can look around and see the horizon of others,

to allow speakers to insert new insights into their meaning. Every utterance is an arena of intense interaction and struggle between one's own and other's word that is being waged, which characterizes the dialogical process. In such interactions, language is not a marker of adjustment, but a tool. Language becomes relational, and every word said, is borrowed from what has been said before and in anticipation of what will be said, in response. In relation to newcomers who make the informed choice to immigrate, such individuals may not be as aware of their alienation, and commit themselves to reinvention, because such individuals have longed for a chance to become creative (Bryzzheva, 2002). But involuntary immigrants, such as children, must work towards a sense of freedom. How can children recognize their own voice, when that voice is socially created, and even chosen for them by the family?

Bakhtin saw that interactions "demand our unconditional allegiance... It enters our consciousness as a compact and indivisible mass; one must either totally affirm it, or totally reject it." (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 343) How can children distinguish their own voice from other authoritative voices? The presence of many social voices struggle for influence within consciousness. The new voice in conflict with the past can partly account for children who absorb a new language and reject their primary language. I remember having many Iranian peers immigrate later than myself, who would forget their native tongue shortly after migration. Bakhtin might propose that the types of interactions entering the consciousness of newcomer children, and claiming authoritative voices, are responsible for causing such students to totally affirm them, at the price of losing their language of origin.

Another type of influential interaction that is encircled by social voices could be with the self. One way to distinguish social voices is through moments of opposition, because the distinction of unique voices is illuminated (Bryzzheva, 2002). When in opposition, I state that I have attended to the word of the other, and I have designated it as a starting point for the production of my own word. Perhaps in such an opposition, the newcomer child can then self-consciously work through a reconciliation of a misrelation, as Kierkegaard has described. As conceived by the curriculum theorist, William Pinar, his method of subjective reconstruction is one way newcomers may work through the problem of distinguishing social voices, by becoming 'temporal' beings through simultaneously living in the past, present and future. In this way, the newcomer child must turn to experiences of the past (the "regressive") and imagine the future (the "progressive") and understand the here and now (the "analytic") in order for the self to become expanded and finally, mobilized (the "synthetical") (Pinar, 2003).

These verbal repertoires contribute in opening up language to the possibilities of different enactments of the self in different frameworks. It is not the case that learning the English language transforms who we can become, but it is an opportunity for self-identification or self-loss. What is then threatened is loss of meaning in communication, in the inwardness, and of course in cross-cultural interpretation. This paves what will be explained in the next section, as Bhabha (1994) described a "hermeneutic project of the restoration of cultural 'essence' or authenticity" (p. 179). The encounters of difference must be represented in different areas of social life and at home, by overcoming the difficult task of lost meanings and judgments that are produced in cultural negotiations.

In interactions lie a necessity to maintain continuity with the home, while being pulled to the community puts pressure to adapt to the changing contexts (Colombo, 2010). The next part will elaborate how immigrants are also handed the task of enunciating their differences, and ultimately their cultures.

3.3 Creating Culture

There is no guideline for how one can be liberated in the space in-between; it only remains a place of potential. The experiences of the newcomer take place in the third space: A space that represents the specific implications of the utterance (Bhabha, 1994). Previously in relation to Benjamin, I expressed how labels set expectations of our experiences and influence how one goes about exploration. Bakhtin also saw how terrestrial space can transform a place into a historical life for its people. For example, everyday life in Italy reveals the profound history of its locality (Bhabha, 1994). Meanwhile, in understanding what is meant by culture, a closer look into the everyday life of a newcomer can reveal how the classroom, the school, and the community define (or redefine) its boundaries. As much as Kierkegaard points to an inward struggle taking place in reaching adjustment, the individual is also situated in a culture that defines the self in relation to functional sociality (Nielsen, 2006).

The language used in everyday life creates culture: Whether in internal dialogue with oneself or externally with others, the emergence of an interstitial agency may result

(Bhabha, 1994).[11] Bakhtin developed the idea that words in dialogue carry social accents and multivoicedness. To draw on this, then the social voices populating our everyday language can become the co-authors of new metaphors or meanings. Furthermore, culture too is collaborative in its "disturbing practice of survival and supplementarity-between art and politics, past and present, the public and the private [...]" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 251). The negotiations are consistently opening out, remaking boundaries, and exposing limits of the claims of concepts like race, immigrant, class etc.

As others use discourses to identify, define, and make expectations of us, we also draw on discourses to make meaning for ourselves that takes place between the threshold of the consciousness of the self and other. In the private sphere, one observes the foreign territory with like-others; and in the school, one is on their own. The public's expectations of who that person should become may collide with values and expectations of who one could become, and who one is at present (Ngo, 2008). For instance, I recall the Iranians in my school in Canada were unlike Iranians back home. They displayed a hyper-insistence on enunciation, in which they proclaimed themselves to be Iranian but also distanced themselves from the image of Iran of the West, for its portrayal in Western media as being linked to violence. And so, Iranians referred to themselves as Persians. Growing up in Iran, there was never an insistence on displaying 'Persian Pride' as there had been in my school in Canada. Newcomers gravitate towards those who make valid their words of the world and themselves. Perhaps this was the aftermath of being transplanted to a new home, and a means to grip their roots in a practice that simultaneously defied and

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[11] Viewed as simultaneously social selves influenced by collective discourse, internal dialogued selves, going beyond socially dominating narratives (Amoamo, 2011).

redefined the West's expectations.[12] The uniting of 'Persians' in the school was a resistance to the demands of Western culture and reflective of power and political positions.[13] These very discourses are political because they lay out power relations. In this way, the collision of the expectations of the public sphere with one's cultural identity can lead to acts of redefinition. When groups begin to enunciate their culture, then certain implications apply for how newcomers are viewed and what educational initiatives result from the discourses of how educators view certain groups. For example, Ngo (2008) asked what kinds of initiatives result when Muslim immigrants are portrayed as patriarchal and sexist? There are political implications for what educators choose to emphasize and deny. Discourses shape different ways of teaching.[14]

As instances call on individuals for re-expression, Bhabha specifically identified such spaces as the "cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 56). I experienced such a state when I was often told to make Iranian friends. However, my inability to relate to 'like' others served as a reminder that it is wrong to assume that those who share the same language as myself, might also share the same views and experiences. Instead, I

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[12] Such an affirmation of a Persian status can also be indicative of a rejection of the Islamic Republic as well as its precursor (W. Pinar, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

[13] Even Persians began creating different groups amongst themselves: The ones who had been in Canada the longest labeled newcomer Iranians as 'Fobs' (Fresh off the Boat), for newcomers were reminders of tradition; thus viewed as backward, unintegrated, and needing of assistance.

[14] But every individual is constantly changing over time and space; similar to Bakhtin's account of the chronotype of metamorphic characters that continue to "show how an individual becomes other than what he was" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 115). Taking this view into account, then the complete objectivity of a culture becomes a fantasy.

often ended up in the third space, trying to negotiate my differences even with other Iranians, but still couldn't fully identify myself with that group, despite my fluency in Farsi. In a way, the third space brings up feelings of uncertainty because one cannot belong here or there. But those who remain in this space are also privileged, for the very inability to relate inclines one to be a detective of the differences. To be able to pick out moments of difference from both cultures, also buffers the rigid boundaries between the self and other. Cultural analysis will always be incomplete and open for future interpretations; because each practices their own and multiple meanings.[15]

3.4 Adjustment Revisited

Thus far, we have turned to Kierkegaard to visit the experience of loss and despair; Bakhtin illuminated the negotiations in language; and Bhabha pointed out that culture is dynamic and the third space can be a place of creativity. Their ideas will be summarized in more detail, in order to question the necessity of seeking adjustment.

The existential ideas of Kierkegaard do not offer a map, where to run through its course guarantees an eventual attainment of an Aristotelian happiness (McKnight, 2004). In *Sickness Unto Death*, Kierkegaard (1849/1980) portrayed that there is not one single living human being who has not undergone an inner strife, or an anxiety about something unknown, or a possibility. In his view, nothing about becoming is predetermined, and despite one's efforts in choosing resolutely, one will fall into misrelation. However, if

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[15] This space can sometimes become noisy with others' accents that may compose the meanings, and at other times serve as a centre of inventions of meditational means.

tensions are recognized and resolved, then one can make the correct choice to leap into the next stage (McKnight, 2004). Similarly, there is no promise that to achieve certain phases, a feeling of home, or adjustment, may be attained because Kierkegaard warned that despair awaits and signals its presence at rare intervals through an inexplicable anxiety. Isolation characterizes the experiences of most children, but there are also those individuals who willingly choose not to belong. Those who are not headed 'Home,' may not belong to the stages, and reside in the space between. A more comprehensive model would also cultivate solitude for such individuals as well.

As much as social isolation can cultivate reflection resulting from inwardness, which is valuable in gaining authenticity in a flood of discomforting experiences; yet to let all ideas live and stay in an individual's consciousness is to allow it for death. Ideas develop and live when they give birth to new ideas and that happens in dialogic relationships with others. This is how the private life bleeds into the public sphere. Even if I appreciate Bakhtin's notion of multivoicedness, and our words truly are co-authored, the fact that we produce words in contexts that pertain uniquely to us, makes us the primary authors of our word, since it is impossible to replicate my location with the social voices. As many children are multilingual, that already opens them to many possible enactments of the self in different contexts. From Bakhtin we can acknowledge that due to sharp existing gaps between two categories, such as the word of teachers, which is authoritative, and those which are not acknowledged in society, the history of an individual's ideological consciousness is shaped (Bryzzheva, 2002). Whose words are to win in this struggle can be determined after exploring many possibilities. To attend to

Kierkegaard's insistence on exploring tensions, and the more consciousness the more self, we can become responsible of the word that informs our being.[16] Therefore, as negotiations are constantly accentuating the realities of newcomers, the space for reflection becomes necessary. For those children who have yet to connect with the other, and are only observers of their experiences, the space of boredom and silence can actually become a liberating place: Creativity can result because there has yet to be an unuttered future word.

One is not locked into social settings but can transcend and move into a sense of freedom from the location of entanglement. Sometimes, to be implicated in one's becoming and being, one must lose one's way, and this can be achieved through moving away from a familiar location.

As children must spend hours of their day inside the classroom, I recall losing my way from a redundant existence through a journal. It felt wonderful to write, because I couldn't hear my own voice in broken English. When in vocalizing my words in English, my accent was a reminder of my difference; in writing, my voice was heard at the same volume as everyone else. The paper became that place of escape, and I would write mostly about how much I did not like my life in Canada.

However, I was distraught to discover my teacher was also reading this journal and handed it to my ESL instructor as a cause of concern. Before another person could

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[16] Striving to become the self one ought to become is correlated to letting others be themselves in their own self-being (Steele, 2013). Indeed, by engaging the self and despairing over it, one recognizes on their own a fallibility that could lead to a tolerance of the failings of others. However, this process does not guarantee a more empathetic, socially and emotionally adjusted self; rather, a more heightened sense of their own self-knowledge.

peer into my reality, I ran over and immediately ripped up the pages. I stopped writing after that incident, and continued to merely tolerate my experiences and left it to time to ease the burdens. I felt ashamed of the other recognizing the negativity I was feeling because I felt that my feelings were unjust, especially for a teacher who had done nothing intentionally harmful towards me. The expectation was that I should not have harboured negative emotions in a multicultural place, and to the eyes of policymakers I was merely a newcomer going through the "Hostility" phase, at the halfway point to "Home." Looking back, I realize what was missing was a climate of openness instead of diversity, and a space of reflection for the possibility of beauty to come through; altogether a more conscious existence in solitude. I was rarely given opportunities to question my reality when I was denied reflection, and so I gained a dependency on time. Of course we can appreciate by now, the one productive space for attaining awareness is the space in-between. At the same time, we can learn from Bhabha that there is no inherent purity of culture, that educators must not obtain cultural facts to adjust their practice. Acknowledging the third space as located in-between where meanings and symbols of culture have no fixity, also allows for the birthplace of dialogue to take an open form.

In evaluating the necessity of adjustment in stages, David Kennedy (2006), in *The Well of Being*, wrote that the problem with any stage theory proposed for children is that that they are embraced by a capitalist educational system, for if the adults gain knowledge of where children are heading, then they can arrive there beforehand and plan the journey for them. All this does is create distance between relationships of the adult and child for it removes the responsibility of the adult to intervene in the

experiences each newcomer may be facing. Uninformed of how to welcome children, educators may then resort to pseudo-cultural recognition by practicing holidays, traditions, and sampling of food to ground a sense of belonging. Yet, both newcomers and hosts must cease huddling under the umbrella of multiculturalism to fix difficulties, and instead concern themselves with the future as something that is beyond control and inconclusive, but not beyond accommodation.

Preferably, attention should be given to how newcomer students create new places in their transnational practices. The classroom, the playground, the country of origin, their home, are not external to their identities and sense of belonging; rather, identities emerge in relation to situations that are continuously changing.

A New Vision

As home is left in the country of origin, home then becomes a feeling that is carried to another place. To feel at home in every domain of the public and private sphere is an ambitious expectation, as put forth by the ministry. From one social group to another, one encounters many authoritative and internally persuasive voices (Bryzzheva, 2002). At any given moment, language represents contradictions between the past and present and between different social ideological groups (Bakhtin, 1981). As a result, how one is to react to the voices in spheres seems a more plausible expectation than reaching adjustment as a destination. It is unrealistic to constrict children under labels and stages, since physical spaces are neither containers nor static. Thus in a chaos of voices, the hard labor is to translate to a familiar context, and this space can be as liberating as it can be

constraining. To invent new metaphors, to address the challenges, is a chance to illuminate what can be liberating to one's human authenticity (Nielsen, 2006). When authoritative words are moved in the sphere of internal persuasiveness, an individual can gain a critical perspective on his or her life (Bryzzheva, 2002). Attending to the problematic moments can allow one to become a founder of his or her own reality.

What should replace the model of stages is a perspective that rescues important moments of crisis-- one that holds the potential in an individual becoming other than what he or she was, through the method of reflection. Bakhtin wrote that a reflective individual would have the opportunity to appropriate an authoritative word by making it internally persuasive and speak to other accents of one's consciousness. Most importantly, to reaffirm an authoritative word or reject it-- to make a value internally persuasive one then becomes free by accepting a word from consciousness from his or her own unique location (Bryzzheva, 2002). Once a newcomer has reflected, they can attempt to question the authoritative word that is imposed on them and introduce it into a dialogue with other authoritative accents. This is a privilege that dependent individuals do not have. I am only realizing after a dialogue with Bakhtin, that I can identify the authoritative voice of policymakers that prohibited me from rejecting this voice over other accents. I propose that the experience of each individual should be perceived as unique. The relationships between the child and adult, peers and to oneself do not speak to the dominant paradigm within education in which each newcomer is expected to bypass phases to gradually arrive home. Unfortunately, by placing the focus on the destination, everyday moments that hold the potential for adjustment are disregarded,

while individuals who may never feel at home are excluded. Instead, I propose a model that creates space of possibility than a phase to be reached.

3.5 Conclusion

In the context of newcomer children, it has been illustrated that culture is not static but constantly being created; differences are negotiated in language, while struggling with loss in the backdrop. As many feel in-between two ways of living, then individuals reproduce social processes at the intersection of different points in time. So objective and subjective realities cannot be separated; entanglement is a state that remains. Even if the same people continue to occupy the same space, they continue to produce meanings that people attach to those places. It is a space in which newcomers use social ties to create places for themselves, and often this can unfold within the third space (Ehrkamp, 2005). The following will summarize the main points that we can take away after a phenomenological deliberation with Kierkegaard, Bakhtin and Bhabha regarding adjustment.

3.5.1 In Praise of Loss

With an influx of individuals immigrating from different countries, each with different histories, to hold stages against them is currently the only viable way of securing control over the unpredictable experiences of each student. However, I suppose that Kierkegaard would see this as modern culture's way of making identification objects available so that the individual becomes protected from the daunting confrontation with

his or her own despair; and so the search for security and convenience is the motivation of spiritless individuals.[17] In the context of stages of the BC Ministry of Education and John Berry's labels, regardless of being identified as at 'Home' or 'Integrated,' one continues to undergo despair, and to deny this is to resist the present. However, to direct effort to recognizing uncertainty can renew a sense of wonder, because no matter how passionately some may delve into their novel environment, the twists and turns in becoming remain inscrutable. We can deepen our understanding of the paradoxical nature of self-realization if we turn to Kierkegaard's formula, ''the more consciousness, the more self.'' Therefore, with Kierkegaard, we can entertain the idea of cultivating comfort with instability. The perspective I am suggesting is not for educators to impose on children, but for educators to acknowledge in themselves. The first step educators must practice is to give up control and expectations. Instead, the lived experiences of newcomer children should be considered.

3.5.2 The Voices in Language

As previously described, language and spaces are mutually constituted (Valentine et al., 2008). Adults who wish to accommodate the needs of newcomers must also gain awareness of small moments in specific spaces that influence the acculturation of each student. In communication with these different spheres, and language being a situated practice, the agents in interaction are interdependent. In other words, if a child has

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[17] Examples of identification objects include titles gained through marriage or a job, for example. Another title to consider is an 'integrated immigrant.'

difficulty speaking a language, the lack of linguistic competence is viewed in terms of the child's lack rather than of the educator's. However, in a different context their competencies may be construed differently since the space of language shifts. Children are plunged into the labor of involuntary self-reinvention and must pick out the multivoicedness in their understandings. Due to such shifts in relations, understandings of individuals become fluid and non-essentialized and narratives of identity loosen their roots in a place of origin, but continue to be created through linguistically regulated places.

Since the attainment of adjustment is uncertain, newcomer children may be unable to look into the future. Bakhtin's proposal that the future is the location to actualize one's authentic human unfinishedness is a challenge for involuntary newcomers. For many, their point of reference is located in the past, and to not lose touch with their past could be a way to actualize their unfinishedness in the future. Therefore, a linear series of steps is not applicable as many must go backward in order to not lose touch with their homelands. As a result, the educational climate must welcome newcomers to express their private sphere.

Bakhtin described the present as the incomplete world-in-the-making. Encounters that take place in the present are stamped with a seal of inconclusiveness which in turn, develop a relationship with our own unpreparedness. The significance of those interactions are renewed as the context continues to unfold, and the relationships to the current life in which the self and other are intimately co-participating. Bakhtin argued that the future is where one can actualize an authentic human unfinishedness. But for

children who are involuntarily settling in a new place, their unfinishedness is located in the past, or home country. Therefore, how children may keep in touch with their past becomes an important question. If in the present we are moving towards an inconclusive future, then uncertainty is also a marker of culture. Bhabha (1944) pointed out that, "the time of liberation is a time of cultural uncertainty" (p. 51), which implies that people are giving shape to movements, and in this zone of instability people must join to question. As the future is uncertain, the interactions emerging in the present, and the task of seeking comfort with uncertainty, all characterize the notion of culture that should take priority over the end goal of where one must arrive.

In describing the most open dialogic relationships, Bakhtin speaks of a polyphonic novel, one where the author's consciousness does not transform the consciousness of others into objects, but senses their equally valid consciousness, as open-ended as itself. In these interactions, the novel reflects and begins to recreate other understandings with their worlds, and restores them in their authentic unfinalizability. Similarly, the relationship of educators with students is unfinalizable for each, and just as much as educators transform the experiences of children, children can transform that of educators' understanding of students.

3.5.3 Welcoming Differences

As redefinition emerges in spaces of in-betweeness, then to seek grounding in a stage or a label may be something fleeting, and its outcome (Home) even more so. Language can reorder space, and space can also shape hegemonic communicative

practices. If all this generativity is taking place in the everyday life of newcomer children, then who has the right to assure what the outcome will be? Where is the model for those who are isolated because it has been decided for them, or those who choose not to belong?

The allure in stage theories rests in the belief that time bears the responsibility of fulfilling certain steps. However, time does not heal all wounds, time holds the *potential* to heal; the possibility of it not taking place can still occur. It is very possible for one to move backwards, it is just as possible to start from feeling at "Home" and end in "Hostility." [18] There is no guarantee that even if Stage 4, adjustment, is granted, one is to remain permanently adjusted.

Rather, children should not be expected to progress through time, but actively assisted in the present. This is what Bakhtin calls, crisis followed by rebirth: The moments of feeling like an outsider, moments of being silenced, moments that call on one to articulate cultural differences are the lived experiences that should be the aims of educators.

3.6 Recommendations for Reflection

I have written on my experiences, and it is apparent that I did not bypass stages but ventured through ever-shifting fragments. With Kierkegaard, we understand that despair is inevitable as we encounter contradictions. To attend to this despair requires inner work, which can be promising as one can come out of it feeling like a self. Therefore,

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[18] One could even argue that as much as home may be desirable for some, it can also be a boring destination for others (B. Weber, personal communication, March 24, 2016).

classrooms must acknowledge the discomfort many children might be feeling, and allow ways for that to appear. Otherwise, many students may be at the danger of becoming a non-self who immediately give into situations in ridding their contradictions out of the initial boredom experienced in the classroom and on the playgroup.

Given the moments of contradictions, and the fact that immigrant children are usually outnumbered in classrooms, it can be easy for them to lose a sense of who they are becoming. This calls for a creation of space to reflect a crucial introduction into classrooms. To deny approaching the relations between individuals is the same as performing mindless tasks of assigning ESL worksheets that occupy no meaningful space. What must come through is the private sphere- more specifically, the self, the home, the family. How children react to the demands of their sociocultural environment, and their ability to transform existing understandings in each sphere is a difficult task. But what may be needed is an approach that acknowledges the presence of uncertainty, in the Socratic manner of keeping a final meaning in doubt. To relate to newcomers in this manner sustains the notion of difference, and enjoyment can prosper in experimentation with different possibilities.

For readers who may wonder what an implementation of a space that speaks to the realities of newcomer children may entail, one approach may be for educators to practice a Community of Inquiry (CoI) with their students. The lived experiences of children can be recognized in a space that draws on reflection while maintaining group cohesiveness when addressing the questions newcomer children may have through a Community of Inquiry (CoI) method. This practice has been described by John Dewey as

an interpersonal and reflective approach for arriving at agreement (Bleazby, 2006). The philosopher and educator Matthew Lipman further expanded CoI as a part of philosophical inquiry used to foster the thinking skills of children (Pardales & Girod, 2006). Here, the process of philosophical inquiry can lend sensitivity to how children make comparisons of their lived experiences in their past and present environments, reflect and feel as they strengthen their reasoning abilities, mutual understanding, as well as self-awareness. To philosophically address the journey of immigration using the Community of Inquiry method, is one way for newcomer children to live through their questions.

Instead of assuming that all newcomers will feel at home, educators must create spaces where they can realize incompleteness, and accept the uncertainty that can come about in a sense of solitude. It is important to create space to reflect on one's own, space to reflect with others, and a space that doesn't force children to shut the door to their past by opening a new one. For those located in the in-between, one can then find courage to look beyond this space and infuse it with a life that is still becoming, cut loose of a destination.

An idea of dialogic consciousness resonates with multiculturalism since it advocates the plurality of the crowd, the finding of oneself in another; which I presume can also happen in Community of Inquiry settings. However, this is not a guarantee for newcomers, as they do not initially have the means of crossing the horizon of the other. Therefore, Bakhtin's notion of finding the self in the other is a possibility that should be earned. What must come before is Kierkegaard's recommendations of working through

one's misrelation, and in this case the uncanny moments in solitude. It is important to inwardly attend to the many novel and contradictory experiences, because newcomer children must first know who they are before they enter into zones of expectations that seek to define them and are called to negotiate their differences in language, while enunciating their culture from the third space. If inner wisdom is encouraged in the first place, then adjustment is not a surrender to the voices and struggles that occupy the life of newcomer children. A space for reflection can help children clear the chaos brought from loss and misrelation. A space, such as a Community of Inquiry, fulfills Bakhtin's idea of finding oneself in another and it can be a practice of everyday multiculturalism; because tensions are worked through, leading to comfort in the in-betweeness. Yet, for educational leaders who do not intend to impose a pedagogical practice towards newcomer children, they can focus on creating a perspective that is prepared to anticipate the problems that such children encounter, to reimagine a conversation with these students and to adjust towards a horizon of understanding.

To recognize one's inner struggles and contradictions should not be misconstrued as a promise of multiculturalism. Educators can intervene in moments of negotiation by providing spaces relevant to the needs of newcomers, without imposing a destination. To attend to these experiences, labels must be eradicated, for they plan expectations. Placing too much faith in multiculturalism impedes assisting this overlooked group, which in turn creates borders and encourages cultural tourists. To simply make pockets of potential in everyday life can provide students with the means to an awareness.

In that way, "Home" may never be reached as a permanent state, and that's something to be celebrated; because if reaching home is the destination, then the involvement of educators will eventually come to a halt. But in an open space of reflection, a sense of home may not coincide with one country, like Canada, but found in a certain idea, a principle or an understanding.

To make sense of the new while holding on to the old is only a potential. It requires work from oneself, and is intertwined with others, in a jagged process that unfolds in unknown directions. Each child is committed to the project of maintaining inwardness, and the re-description of the self in language, as new borders are lost and created. The message from all three authors calls for ongoing activity on the part of the individual. If there is constant effort being made on the part of the newcomer child, then adjustment as a final destination fails to capture the lively creation of movements. Yet, *adjusting* may be a more appropriate description of the experiences of a newcomer child. In this sense, the child is not boxed in a stage, but constantly adjusting to moments handed to him or her in the present that may cause one to feel assimilated in one context, or at home in another. The concept of home, too, may be more transient than normally understood. Steven Taubeneck, a professor of philosophy and literature, captured this fleeting idea of home as:

> It may not be related to any one place, but to many places; it may not be related to any one time, but to many times. "Home" itself may be a moment, or series of moments, in a moving process. Moments within movements. (personal communication, April 15, 2016).

Educators may lose sight of the potential in everyday experiences if the focus remains on the destination. As much as immigration brings many aftershocks to daily life, it is also an opportunity. After all, an immigrant may have left home, but continues to carry its threads and weave it into daily experiences (S. Taubeneck, personal communication, March 18, 2016). Canada may never feel like home for many newcomers, but the journey of immigration grants each individual the possibility of freedom when they can see with new eyes. It is my hope that whatever word that would ensue from the spaces of reflection, can set the grounds for attaining a sense of liberation. This can't be achieved if newcomers are to arrive at home and stay there. Educators must hold spaces of reflection, free of expectations of any direction, to practice everyday understanding of pain, isolation, in a space not geared for adjustment, but to acknowledge the adjusting movements of the child.

Many newcomer children may never go home again, but that is not a problem. To experience home in moments does not make it any less enjoyable. Educators should cultivate conditions that make in-betweeness a place that gives children courage to recognize their inwardness before they go about negotiating their differences with others. If they attain such courage, then children may not assimilate but be inclined to pick out differences from both cultures and create understandings for themselves. This promotes self-empowerment for the decisions of the child are less at the mercy of predetermined stages, labels, educational practices and a profiled idea of culture. Instead, the child is moving towards self-creation; hence, living with more intentionality. Perhaps by recognizing children in this way, educational leaders become closer to accomplishing the

promise of multiculturalism. It is false to expect each child to run through the same trail,

because you can't run and be aware of your directions.

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