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TRANSCENDING DIFFERENCE:
MONTREAL EDUCATORS' RESPONSE TO DIVERSITY

by

Gina Valle

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Giuseppina and Domenico Valle

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ABSTRACT

At the heart of this inquiry are eight Montréal educators and their teaching experiences in multicultural schools and classrooms. These female and male practitioners represent different racial, ethnic, linguistic and class groups, and a range of teaching experience. This study considers how their understanding of diversity shapes and informs their teaching practices in the specific socio-political, cultural and linguistic venue of Montréal, Quebec.

My theoretical framework brings together the work of established scholarship, and examines contributions to the issues of language, culture, and identity, as they impact multicultural education and the learning and teaching environment in schools. This qualitative inquiry is guided by my own multicultural awareness as a bicultural Canadian and an educational researcher. I use case study methodology as a form of inquiry within qualitative research, collecting field notes from various sources, and searching for stories that provide insight into the educators' wisdom and practical knowledge. The teachers' stories reveal the knowledge, attitudes, skills, awareness, and values that contribute to dialoguing across difference, and provide us with an image of what a multicultural educator might look like.

The overarching theme of this study is the potential fusion between educational theory and classroom practice. The educators profiled offer a framework for communicating and relating to pluralistic learning and teaching environments, and open the possibility for meaningful dialogue about diversity in classrooms, schools, and the community at large. In affirming the harmony of cultures in their schools, the teachers breathe life into new multicultural spaces where cultures intersect, and where new forms of understanding are created. Several themes emerge in this study: the educators' changing role in a multicultural teaching environment, dialoguing with 'other', and the rewards and challenges of providing equitable educational opportunities for all students.

Given the shifting racial and cultural composition of Canada's population, education must prepare students and teachers for life in a multicultural society. Teacher education programs must evolve to address the needs of changing racial and cultural student populations, and engage teachers in learning experiences to enhance their effectiveness in multicultural classrooms. The study concludes with recommendations for integrating multicultural perspectives in teacher education.

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Chapter One: Introduction and Overview of the Study

Montréal is a city rich in culture and steeped in history. Language debates dominate the media, as the city's sizeable French and English communities struggle to preserve their linguistic rights and institutions. The language battle has wearied even the most politically-inclined Quebeckers, to the point that the sophisticated rhetoric from each side falls only on partisan ears. But what is the true cultural reality of this cosmopolitan city? In spite of the 'two solitudes' dilemma (MacLennan, 1945), and a unilingual French landscape mandated and enforced by provincial law, Montréal continues to boast that bilingualism and biculturalism can flourish within its neighbourhoods.

Montréal was my home for over six years. Before moving to Québec, I had made only half-hearted attempts to understand the complex dynamic at work in this unique Canadian province. After leaving my childhood home in Toronto, I settled into life in Montréal assuming it was much like the city I had left behind. Arriving in 1994, I had missed most of the fall-out from the failure of the Meech Lake Accord in 1992, and was yet to experience the nail-biting tension of the 1995 Referendum. As a newcomer, I felt I could not possibly grasp the complexity of Québec's cultural and linguistic debates. However, within a matter of months, I began to notice that my cultural and linguistic identity in the province was shifting. I was now categorized as an Allophone (a person whose first language is neither French nor English) and not as an Anglophone (whose first language is English), even though I communicate most effectively in English. For the first time in my experience, people were calling into question my ethnic origins when I began to speak French.

Although Italian is the first language I spoke as a child, I feel most comfortable communicating in English. However, I have always had a keen interest in the French language,

which I studied throughout high school and university. I suppose it was the notion of growing up bilingual in Anglo-Saxon Toronto that motivated me to sign up for French courses year after year. My exposure to the language continued while I worked as an educator and pedagogical consultant across Canada and Europe. Over the years, my fluency in French has proven to be very rewarding, since it has opened doors for me in my personal and professional life. Moreover, my studies in France, employment in Québec, and French-speaking friends and family members, have all brought me closer to the language.

Since I had decided that my 'practical' commitment to the Canadian debate about Québec was to speak French as often as my energy and goodwill would permit, my proficiency in the language improved. Nevertheless, I was unsure whether I was sufficiently competent to undertake my doctoral research in French. So, I proceeded to conduct my study in English schools, until I was struck by the irony that as an Allophone, born and raised in Toronto, university-educated, and relatively bilingual, I was carrying out doctoral research in Québec in only English schools. After much reflection, and upon the recommendation of my thesis committee, I made contact with French schools and began to work closely with other teachers. After all, if my study was to examine multicultural issues in Montréal classrooms, I needed to demonstrate the same spirit of open-mindedness which should be at the core of being a multicultural educator, and furthermore to do so in a bilingual context.

Everything about my life in Montréal was becoming increasingly bilingual. I soon found myself working, shopping, entertaining, collecting data, assessing arguments and sending e-mails in French and English. I read, socialized, attended meetings, accessed services, took courses and returned telephone messages in French and English. In essence, I found myself drawn into what is unique about the city: its bilingual nature. Somehow, Montréalers manage to express themselves in both languages and by doing so, give credence to the city's French and English

heritage. At local festivals or political events, and even in the printed material that arrived at my doorstep each day, I was continuously reminded that the bilingual flavour of Montréal is a rarity in a largely unilingual anglophone Canada. Therefore, if my study was to focus on teachers in Montréal, it unquestionably needed to portray the authentic character of the city, the *messy* bilingualism that so accurately characterizes it. As such, it is my hope that the specific cultural, linguistic and political venue of Montréal will deepen the conversation on multiculturalism, as the city and our country continue to grapple with the spirit and definition of diversity and attempt to live harmoniously within that reality. In this study, the terms 'multicultural' and 'multiculturalism' define the cultural, linguistic and racial diversity that exists within our classrooms and our society at large, and does not suggest my partiality towards either the federal government's policy on Canada's growing diversity or Québec's response to the province's increasing diversity (see chapters five and seven).

How my lived experiences have fuelled my research

In 1995, I conducted research as a participant observer in a four-month Multicultural/Multiracial preservice course offered by the Faculty of Education at McGill University in Montréal. After completing my research, I came to understand that the voices of experience were missing from the teacher education curriculum: the voices of teachers who are immersed in diversity each day. As a result, this thesis grew out of my recognition that the insights of **experienced** practitioners were difficult to find in teacher education programs. This study will therefore focus on eight Francophone, Anglophone, and Allophone practitioners who have been teaching from ten to forty years, and examine how their understanding of diversity has had an impact on their teaching.

As an Italian-Canadian, my lived experiences as a bicultural individual in Canada have brought an appreciation for the challenges that new Canadians encounter in this land they seek to call home. In an effort to conform to mainstream society, for many years I refrained from examining my dual identity, or rather "my second way of seeing the world" (Bateson, 1995: 159). As an individual exposed to more than one way of viewing the world, I searched for meaningful insight into the patterned discordance that eventually came to fuel my research. Hence, the point of departure for this inquiry is with myself, and the cultural and linguistic travels I take from one "borderland to the other" (Anzaldua, 1987: 5), mindful of the competing loyalties that frame my decisions and actions. As a child of southern Italian immigrants, I have struggled to reconcile the home and the school, "the private and the public" (Rodriguez, 1982: 17). Often, in order to avoid rejection by the mainstream culture, I chose to "conform to the values of the culture, and push the unacceptable parts into the shadows" (Anzaldua, 1987: 20). Over the years, as a first generation Canadian, I have learned to maintain and modify my first culture, to render it valid and workable in the new society, with the intent of developing a "capacity to pick and choose among the behaviours and assumptions that would otherwise have remained unquestioned, and even to invent new ones" (Bateson, 1995: 160).

Although I have long believed that changes needed to take place in our classrooms and school curriculum, I nevertheless remained on the periphery of the public school system, reluctant to play an active role in bringing about the developments that I felt needed to occur. Since I only connected with a handful of teachers throughout my primary and secondary education, I saw little evidence that, as a teacher, I would leave a memorable imprint on any student. In due course, it was a love of learning and a curiosity about teaching that led me to apply to teachers' college. However, my frustration and disillusionment with my preservice experience kept me from teaching in the primary classroom, and it was only a matter of months

before my faculty of education experience led me to pursue graduate work. While I resisted going into the elementary classroom, I recognized that walking away from teaching was not the answer. Eventually, my graduate studies offered me a framework within which to understand my experiences, as I came to accept that my reluctance to revisit my past was due to the discordance I felt regarding my dual identity and culture.

Although I believed that school and teachers had played a relatively insignificant role in my development as a person, I nevertheless questioned why I continued to pursue my goals within the educational system. I came to recognize that the inability of my teachers to address effectively my bicultural dissonance created a longing to bring to current teachers an increased understanding of multicultural issues. My research as a participant observer in the faculty's preservice program served to underscore the need for greater representation of teachers' voices of experience in the teacher education curriculum. For example, the faculty course curriculum for elementary and secondary preservice teachers at the time focused almost exclusively on the prescriptive ways in which to address issues of difference in the classroom, and furthermore, provided prospective teachers with relatively few opportunities to observe and spend time with good teachers in action. Indeed, my teaching experiences have given me an appreciation for some of the challenges facing the Canadian educational system, some of which are inextricably tied to the multicultural character of our country. Hence, given the shifting cultural and racial composition of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 1994), a priority in education must be the preparation of teachers and students for life in a multicultural society.

Overview of the study

My theoretical framework draws upon the contributions of Banks (1989, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2001), Corson (1993, 1998, 2000), Cummins (1986, 1989, 1992), Feuerverger (1989,

1991, 1994, 1997), Giroux (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994), Nieto (1992), Taylor (1992), Wong Fillmore (1982, 1983, 1985), regarding the issues of language, culture and identity and their fundamental impact upon the development of the individual in Western cultures, and more specifically on multicultural education and the learning and teaching environment in North American schools. In an attempt to more accurately ascertain the personal and professional awareness, attitudes, skills and values inherent in successful encounters of difference, I have turned to a number of scholars to guide me in the discovery of pedagogies that focus on dialoguing across difference. Bateson (1989, 1995), Burbules & Rice (1991), Delpit (1988, 1995), Geertz (1973, 1983), Greene (1993, 1995), Gudykunst (1986, 1988), Gudykunst & Kim (1992), Lynch (1986, 1987), offer a framework within which to understand the qualities and characteristics that need to be present for successful dialogue with 'other' to unfold. A more elaborate discussion of these scholars' contributions will be examined in chapter three of this study.

After having conducted a review of the literature that examines teachers' stories in multicultural environments (Casey, 1993; Feuerverger, 1997; Foster, 1991, 1992; Henry, 1992a, 1992b; Ladson-Billings & Henry, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; McLaren, 1989; Phillion, 1999; Thiessen, Bascia & Goodson, 1996), I selected participants for this study based on the degree to which they were immersed in diversity in their classrooms and schools, rather than on the basis of the participants' racial group, class, gender or school grade. This thesis, therefore, offers the stories of educators and provides a reflective analysis of their teaching experiences as they face the growing diversity in their schools and classrooms. Their insights are documented in French and English to highlight the linguistic "bordercrossing" (Giroux, 1992) that they undertake each day in their schools, and in their classrooms.

As a means by which to profile the wisdom of these experienced practitioners, I utilized case study methodology (Huberman & Miles; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1988, 1994; Yin, 1984, 1989) as a suitable form of inquiry within qualitative research. Hence, this thesis is an interview case study (Mishler, 1986) grounded in the specific location of stories which I have collected from experienced teachers of various cultural, racial and linguistic backgrounds in Montréal (Carter, 1992; Coles & Knowles, 1992, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1992, 1995, 2000; Elbaz, 1991). I was drawn to certain aesthetic qualities of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman-Davis, 1997), such as the importance placed on recording the evidence of 'good practices', and the importance of reshaping the relationship between participant and researcher. In the end, selecting a methodology that captures the *goodness* of the experienced teachers' practices creates a space to contemplate what educational research is all about. This methodology encourages the educational researcher to explore what is good, what works, and what is of value so that we may move ahead with educational innovation and reforms. In the end, I searched for stories which provided me with "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of the teaching practices and expressions of goodness which my participants shared in their conversations.

By telling and sharing my own life history in chapter two (Cole, 1991, 1994; Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995; Plummer, 1983;) and creating a framework of understanding around my narrative of experience, I learned to recognize different types of knowledge and offer different ways of representing experience (Carter, 1993). My story and identity are embedded within my expression of culture, language, diversity and the "unconscious myths" (see Feuerverger, 1991) learned within my family. As a result, the cultural knowing and multicultural awareness from my personal story have guided me in this research, and heightened my appreciation and respect for diversity in the micro-world of the classroom, and in the macro-world of the educational system. An analysis of my life experiences intensified the lenses through which I observed my

participants and interpreted the findings that emerged. As such, case study methodology is the vehicle I used to access the personal, practical knowledge of the experienced practitioners (Bourhis, 1984; Connelly & Clandinin, 1995; d'Anglejan, 1984; d'Anglejan & De Koninck, 1992; Levine, 1990; McAndrew, 1991, 1993a, 1993b).

In attempting to understand and address the challenges facing teacher education regarding cultural diversity, this thesis contributes to the discussion on multicultural teacher education in the following ways: firstly, it will attempt to forge a more substantial link between educational theory and classroom practice; secondly, it will profile the qualities and characteristics of a multicultural educator by outlining the awareness, attitudes, skills and values an educator should develop in order to teach successfully in a multicultural environment; thirdly, it will provide contextual examples in the form of stories, where a "third space" (Taylor, 1992) is created between learner and teacher; fourthly, these issues are examined within the climate of Québec nationalism, which in some ways is competing with the notion of multiculturalism in a Canadian context; and lastly, it will outline the criteria regarding good teaching in a multicultural environment.

Corson (1998) suggests that Canada can be a model for other countries because it offers "an approach to social justice that other countries might learn from. While Canada is sadly lacking in the enabling structures to make it all work, it already has the legislation, the attitudes and the national mindset rather firmly in place" (p. 14). Canada, as an immigrant-receiving nation with a bilingual, bicultural history, has the potential to profoundly inform and advance the discussion on multiculturalism in western societies. The historical presence of Canada's bilingual "two founding nations", situated within an increasingly multicultural reality, places our country in a strategic position to demonstrate the challenges and rewards of living in a pluralistic

society, and guide the global discourse on living equitably and justly in a context of difference. The pedagogical discussions and interpretations in this thesis are devoted to this possibility.

The dissertation consists of ten chapters. This first chapter provides an introduction to the study and a brief overview of its theoretical framework. Chapter two illustrates how my experiences as a bicultural person in Canada have given me a greater appreciation of the challenges that new Canadians encounter in their adopted country. The starting point for this inquiry is "beginning with myself" and the cultural and linguistic travels I take on a daily basis from one borderland to the other (Cohen, 1991; Cole, 1991, 1994; Feuerverger, 1997; Hunt, 1991). The cultural knowing and multicultural awareness I have developed has guided me in this inquiry and heightened my understanding of the complex multi-layerings of diversity. In chapter three, I provide a detailed description of my theoretical framework, outlining the established research on issues of language, culture, and identity and their impact upon the individual in western cultures, and more specifically on multicultural education and the learning and teaching environment in schools. Chapter four highlights the methodological considerations that I selected in pursuing this study. As mentioned earlier, to profile the wisdom of the experienced practitioners, I surveyed possible methodologies for my study, and identified case study methodology as the form of inquiry within qualitative research which I would employ.

Chapter five introduces the eight teachers profiled in this study through the use of vignettes. The teachers represent different racial, ethnic, linguistic and class groups, and are veteran educators with ten to forty years of teaching experience in Montréal. They share not only their present experiences, but also their past, providing an important continuity to demonstrate how they have adapted to their changing teaching environment. In chapter six, the teachers provide their insights on the awareness, attitudes, skills and values that are essential in contributing to the grand dialogue across the chasm of difference. The teachers offer a

framework within which to communicate and relate to their students in pluralistic learning environments. Their recommendations provide us with a profile of what a multicultural educator might look like. In chapter seven, I provide an overview of the historical, linguistic, educational and sociopolitical issues that influence present-day Montréal, as the city's cultural and racial fabric continues to change. The Francophone, Anglophone and Allophone educators in this study discuss their concerns and desires regarding Montréal's linguistic debate.

In chapter eight, the teachers describe how they breathe life into the new multicultural spaces where languages and cultures intersect and create new forms of understanding. It has been exciting to witness how the teachers' stories acknowledge, address and transcend difference in deep, meaningful ways. In chapter nine, I discuss the overarching goal of this thesis, that is, to forge a more substantial link between educational theory and classroom practice, and explore three subthemes that have emerged from the data provided in previous chapters. Finally, in chapter ten, I outline the contributions of this study and argue that: given the shifting racial and cultural demographics of Canada's population, a priority in education must be the preparation of teachers and students for life in a multicultural society. The study concludes with specific implications for multicultural education, and reflections from the participants of this study.

Chapter Two: Beginning with Myself

In order to conduct a qualitative study on multicultural issues in education within the context of teachers' stories, I first found it necessary to reflect on my life experiences. Once I realized that understanding myself was an important first step towards working with the teachers, I had a more tangible grasp of the difficulties, challenges and rewards the teachers faced in their classrooms (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Hunt (1991) believes that if I begin with myself, I validate the educational research I intend to undertake. Therefore, to successfully identify with, and understand the teachers' perspectives, I first needed to reflect on my life history (Cohen, 1991; Cole, 1991, 1994; Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995; Plummer, 1983;) and the significant role my past experiences have played in shaping my professional and pedagogical journey.

In this chapter, I will firstly outline the pillars that support the thoughts, actions and beliefs which have been fundamental to my personal and professional development. Secondly, I will attempt to provide the reader with a description of my life history, beginning with an overview of my life and leading to four critical incidents that had an impact upon the direction which I would take in my professional development. In the final section of this chapter, I will examine why I have continued to look upon the world of theory as inadequate to meet the needs of teachers in their everyday interactions with their students.

2.1 Laying the foundation

Central to each individual's life is a set of fundamental principles by which he or she lives. As each individual grows in a family and develops a critical awareness of the principles that define their perception, behaviour and values, these same principles become a means through which they interpret the world. Who I am as an individual is directly a result of my past

experiences, my interpretations of those experiences, the beliefs I have adopted, and the values that guide me. As I share the experiences that shape me as a person, and the literature I have turned to in order to gain insight into my bicultural dissonance, I understand more clearly how my multicultural awareness developed. In essence, what I know of the world is grounded in my understanding of the significant life experiences I have undergone. I am a product of my culture and thus have learned to view reality from the vantage point of the values instilled in me.

In order to illustrate the foundational principles that are central to my beliefs, desires and vision, I will describe the realities that have shaped me as a person. The vulnerable discussion that follows in this chapter adds a layer of fresh perspectives and new insights to my personal and professional development as I continue to articulate a framework of understanding around the totality of my identity. Three fundamental pillars represent who I am: my bicultural identity as a child of immigrants, my deep respect for 'other', and what it means to be a woman in a world that favours men. Posing critical questions about my life has allowed me to arrive at a more profound understanding of the origins of my thoughts. The way in which I interpret and give meaning to these fundamental pillars, is the way in which I tell my story and reveal the essence of who I am.

A "double vision"

As an individual exposed to two ways of viewing the world, I experience dissonance time and time again. Reluctant to adhere to only one culture, I travel daily between the rural, southern Italian culture I acquired inside my home, and the urban, mainstream Canadian culture I encounter in the world outside. My competing loyalties between these two cultures are constantly informing my thoughts and actions. This partial incommensurability is the starting point for my personal inquiry, as I begin to build bridges of understanding between who I am,

and what motivates my research and professional goals. Language and culture continue to shape my life as they weave their way through my multiple identities, each relative to social class, family structure, and gender. In the end, it is these very conditions that have provided me with the opportunity to develop my multicultural awareness of difference, both personally and professionally.

Creating a new culture, one that straddles the old world that my parents understand, and the new world of contemporary Canadian society, has always been an exceedingly complex process for me. As a child of immigrants, I have often attempted to reconcile the irreconcilable: the home with the school, the private with the public. As a child, I was forced to choose between family and school, and this inevitably became a choice between belonging to a community, or succeeding on one's own as an individual. The schism between these colliding realities has caused part of the pain and alienation I have known in my experience as a first-generation Canadian. However, it also has allowed me to see and experience the richness of developing a "double vision" (Hoffman, 1989). Although I am proud of my ability to function in two worlds, I have often been tempted to renounce allegiance to my first culture and language. As Frank Paci (1990) illustrates below, the internal struggle was a form of survival until I had the capacity to fully incorporate both identities.

> What I remember distinctly was this tremendous pressure to transform myself by repudiating my Italian background. It didn't occur to me that the two cultures and languages could co-exist within me. One of the effects of this pressure of assimilation - which, of course, is experienced by all immigrants in varying degrees - is that it made me very much ashamed of my parents and their ways. In my teen years the shame became contempt. I was very much influenced by school and the media to view my parents and their ways as foreign to my true sensibility. I was only disowning part of myself, of course. So, I wasn't so much struggling with others for acceptance as I was struggling within myself. (p. 229)

As Paci critically re-examines his past, he speaks of the importance of constructing an understanding of the immigrants' lived experiences.

> We should approach the past with great anticipation and with great foreboding - but approach it we must. In my novels there is a sense of homage to the sacrifices of the first-generation immigrant parents. There is very little nostalgia. There is a dark streak of doom in these works. At the same time, there is a note that the sacrifices of the parents have not been in vain, although these sacrifices may have been disproportionate to what has been gained. I reinterpret the past, I suppose, to make sense of the present, and vice versa. (p. 232)

Eva Hoffman (1989) similarly speaks of a "double vision" where children of immigrants learn to live in two worlds, their reference points varying according to the culture in which they are placed. In order to find meaning in the inevitable double vision of reality, there is a need to "assimilate the multiple perspectives and their constant shifting" (p.164). Hoffman herself, faced with having to choose whether to pursue undergraduate studies away from home, wrote about "living my own life. It is not so simple for me to accept this idea, to extricate myself from the mesh of family need and love, to believe in the merits of a separate life" (p.161). It was not grades, nor financial constraints, which kept me from attending out-of-town universities for my undergraduate studies; rather, I chose to remain in Toronto due to my unspoken commitment to my family.

As a first-generation Canadian, I do not feel fully a member of either culture. Over the years, I have learned to maintain and modify my Italian culture in order to render it valid and workable in a new society. There is some consolation in knowing that many children of immigrants share this predicament. Over time, as I learned to accommodate the Canadian culture, I silently abandoned my first culture. Such is the collective reality of many first-generation Canadians as we continually struggle to amalgamate two cultures. Immigrants implanted in a new homeland often know one way of viewing the world. Children of immigrants

always know two. Complex negotiations become an integral part of our daily decision-making process as both cultures compete for our allegiance. Indeed, the tangible tensions between two cultural systems, two frameworks of meaning, remain eternal conflicts within me. It is this very conflict that has fuelled my professional work, as I continue to search for ways in which bicultural children in our classrooms can accept and wholeheartedly believe in their "additive" contribution (Cummins, 1988) to education.

As a child of immigrants, I have made choices regarding the interface between the two cultures. Many of these choices are accompanied by feelings of anger, guilt, joy, privilege and strength. In looking at my life, these choices, which determine the evolving face of first-generation Canadians, came to assume contextual importance and interpretative power (Spezzano, 1993). My values and identity are constantly in a state of flux. From an early age, I developed coping strategies in an attempt to resolve the conflict residing within me. Ever since I was a small child, I made every attempt to be recognized as an impeccable member of Canadian society, which inevitably consisted of closing off my private life when I closed the door behind me and went to school. Richard Rodriguez (1982) acknowledges similar difficulties in reconciling the private and public aspects of his life as a Mexican-American, referring to the symbolic importance of the door as the boundary between the private and public world.

> For me there were none of the gradations between public and private society so normal to a maturing child. Outside the house was public society; inside the house was private. Just opening or closing the screen door behind me was an important experience. Walking back toward our house, I'd hear voices beyond the screen door talking in Spanish. Once more inside the house I would resume [assume] my place in the family. (p. 17)

I became adaptive and resourceful as I adjusted my behaviour to respond to the expectations of the Canadian culture. Oftentimes, I listen to my parents' voices trying to make sense of the choices they have made, and the lives they have led, dislocated from the old world, alienated in the new. Rodriguez speaks of the same concerns:

> My need to think so much and so abstractly about my parents and our relationship was in itself an indication of my long education. My mother and father did not pass their time thinking about the cultural meanings of their experience. It was I who described their daily lives with airy ideas. The ability to consider experience so abstractly allowed me to shape into desire what would otherwise have remained an indefinite, meaningless longing. (p. 72)

Learning to respond creatively to my bicultural reality has instilled in me the ability to be flexible, open-minded and resourceful. Who I am and what I believe in is directly linked to my bicultural reality. This dual vision of interpreting the world reveals my perceived position in the world, and the way I make sense of my life. Hence, my "way of knowing" (Belenky et al., 1986) gives meaning and purpose to this thesis journey.

I see YOU in ME

When I look into your eyes, I search for what is common between us as human beings. With profound respect for you, I can see no reason why I cannot treat you with utmost dignity, in every given circumstance with which I am confronted. The cornerstone of all meaningful human dialogue and interaction is to treat one's neighbour as one would want to be treated. This is perhaps even more true in a multicultural society. Although this dictum dates back to the time of Moses and Confucius, I have tried to understand why this dichotomy of *us* and *them* is pervasive in our society. Perhaps the notion of *us* and *them* is another way of examining and ultimately justifying the darker side of difference: racism, prejudice and inequity. As Miller (1988) outlines:

> One of the most prevalent forms of the fragmentation of life is our division of people into "us" and "them". At this level we ignore our basic connectedness as human beings. Here we can divide people according to color, people that believe in a particular "ism" from those that don't, and ultimately people that must be bombed in order to preserve our "way of life". It is much easier to build the bomb when you view the enemy as "them". It becomes much more difficult when we see the enemy as "us". (p. 63)

It becomes much more difficult to inflict pain on *me* when you see me as a part of *you.* Conversely, I am unlikely to inflict pain on *you* if I see you as a part of *me*. I will always treat you in the same way that I would like you to treat my family and me. According to Catherine Bateson (1989), once we view our lives as interdependent, we become intolerant of the faulty socio-economic structure we are often locked into. Bateson interprets *us* and *them* with an emphasis on interdependence, rather than conceptualizing it as racism.

> I stood in the lobby trying to understand what I was seeing and what it said about changing standards and our increasingly interdependent lives. I grew up in a New York neighbourhood where I learned to step around drunks on the sidewalk, to think of them as failures or dropouts whose predicaments were unconnected to me, rather than generated by the same social system that supported me. (p. 122)

It is only when we allow the realities of 'other' to edge itself into our consciousness that we can begin to build new bridges of understanding. Lisa Delpit (1990) states:

> To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist for a moment - and that is not easy. It is painful as well, because it means turning yourself inside out, giving up your sense of who you are, and being willing to see yourself in the unflattering light of another's angry gaze. It is not easy, but it is the only way to learn what it might feel like to be someone else, and the only way to start the dialogue. (p. 297)

An extension of this idea is Martha Nussbaum's (1997) notion of compassion, which she equates with "an accurate awareness of our common vulnerability" (p. 91). The latter requires "a highly complex set of moral abilities, including the ability to imagine what it is like to be in that person's place (p. 91)". Nussbaum adds:

> Compassion requires one thing more: a sense of one's own vulnerability to misfortune. To respond to compassion, I must be willing to entertain the thought that this suffering person might be me. And this I am unlikely to do if I am convinced that I am above the ordinary lot and no ill can befall me. ... This recognition helps explain why compassion so frequently leads to generous support for the needs of others: one thinks, 'That might have been me, and that is how I should want to be treated.' (p. 91)

To understand why there is such uneasiness towards difference, we must first begin to understand how difference is constructed in our minds, and how that construct plays itself out in

our behaviour and attitudes. An encounter with another culture can lead to openness if we can suspend the assumption of superiority (Bateson, 1989). Rarely will we have the capacity to transcend difference if we continue to view 'other' as inferior to self. Other is self.

Virginia Shabatay (1991) states that in spite of the fascination with different cultures, "individual societies have great difficulty in not seeing others as inferior or as a threat" (p. 147). A citizen of a country lives at ease with his habits, and with the ways of mainstream society, whereas the stranger must always be on alert, as he struggles to learn the different ways of language, customs, emotions and expectations. A stranger must learn how to belong and experience the awkwardness of learning how to live in a new culture. Shabatay writes:

> The great paradox of strangers is that we neither want to redeem strangers out of existence nor abandon them. If we were to decide that in an ideal world there would be no strangers, we would be left with monotony. Thus, although the condition of being a stranger poses problems both for the stranger and for the others with whom she lives, that condition is inevitable if we value differences; it is also inevitable given the complex nature of human beings. (p. 141)

Sometimes it is important that strangers become part of us, but more often, it is important that we learn to value strangers. Real understanding and "real dialogue allow for the uniqueness of the other to be brought forth" (p. 136). Shabatay contends that there is a connection between the way we perceive and treat strangers and the violence we unleash on one another. "When we read about the threat of a nuclear war, we might not connect the relationship between war and our attitude toward strangers, but as soon as the two are juxtaposed, we do" (p. 137).

> The way in which we treat strangers reveals as much about us as it does about them. Meeting the stranger requires of us that we respond in one way or another: with indifference, disdain, and suspicion, or with interest, friendship, and openness. Further, the stranger may represent that which is very different, and how we respond to his or her distinctiveness affects not only the personal realm but the social and political as well. How we respond is a reflection, also, of our ethical and religious views and commitments. (p. 138)

According to Shabatay, we will learn from 'other' only when genuine dialogue unfolds. "All we can do is respond to what the stranger shares with us, but that response can be a sharing response" (p. 149).

The dragons within us

As a woman raised in an immigrant home, I was only expected to wed and embrace motherhood. The added accomplishment of a Bachelor's degree is a nicety, and a doctorate is almost "beyond the pale"! As women, we are often under damaging pressure to conform to prevailing standards, set for the convenience of men. Carolyn Heilbrun (1988) states:

> What was the function of mothers toward daughters before the current women's movement? Whatever the drawbacks, whatever the frustrations or satisfactions of the mother's life, her mission was to prepare the daughter to take her place in the patriarchal succession, that is, to marry, to bear children (preferably sons), and to encourage her husband to succeed in the world. But for many women there moved in their imaginations dreams of another life: of personal accomplishment, of a place in a community where women were in sufficient numbers to render the accomplished woman neither lonely nor an anomaly. (p. 119)

By pursuing higher academic work I am silently protesting, tacitly and respectfully, against the expectations of my first culture. More than that, I am fighting the 'dragons' which Noble (1990) suggests women must confront when they begin to express and define their true identity, and enter the realm of ordeal, chaos, emptiness, and uncertainty. In this realm they will experience and confront dragons.

> The first dragon is her own self. She will be tempted to go back to familiar ways of relating to the world. She must persevere even when she wants to give up; she must live through the pain. The second dragon is the voice of those who tell her to stay home and be silent and good. The third dragon is the voice of any culture which tells women they are inferior because they are female. The fourth dragon is their socialized tendency to drift until someone or something rescues them. When women become heroes they confront these deadly dragons and rid themselves of them. (p. 14)

As I confront each of my dragons, ambiguity and temporary alienation set in. Heilbrun (1988) outlines that so many women have yet to change their vision of what their lives might be outside of service to males. Adrienne Rich (1986) adds that the willingness of women to share their private and painful experiences will enable them to achieve a true description of the world, and encourage other women to do the same.

I am often caught between my first culture's expectations and my own needs and aspirations as a woman. I have had to work twice as hard as my brother or male cousins only to receive half the recognition. As such, I have lived in a sea of crushing pressure to conform and limit my expectations to becoming a wife and a mother. In other words, I was expected to accommodate myself to the cyclical movement of marriage and motherhood (Heilbrun, 1988). In may ways, although I am deeply connected to my cultural environment, I have silently chosen to rebel against the same culture that devalues women, and instead opted to counter the oppression by walking away from the 'script' that others had written for me.

Josephine Mazzuca (2000) articulates that a primary factor for Italian-Canadian women to pursue graduate work is the desire to escape the traditional roles of wife and mother. Many of the women in her study clearly indicate that they did not want marriage and motherhood until they had pursued higher education and established a career. 'Rebelling' through education was seen as interfering with taking on traditional roles, which would more closely match their parents' expectations of them. Mazzuca (2000) states:

> Making educational decisions in the context of contradictory familial expectations leads to women viewing their decision to pursue a graduate education as a form of rebellion, albeit a respectable one. For these daughters of Italian immigrants, pursuing a graduate education appeared the most appropriate manner in which to gain respect, both in their immediate environment and in society at large, while allowing them to break free of some of the traditional expectations placed upon them. (p. 141)

Pursuing higher education and being a female Italian-Canadian seem to be incompatible. Given the family environments that the women come from, they are "ill prepared for graduate school where emphasis is placed on individual achievement" (p. 213). As a result, while graduate school requires the student to be independent, the women's personal lives "expect an engaged participant in the collective well-being of the family" (p. 213). Mazzuca states:

> An undergraduate degree was "fine" as a teaching one which would lead directly to employment, but an academic pursuit such as graduate school with no obvious vocational outcome was "too much" for her family to comprehend. All of these factors play into challenges the women faced in graduate school which were not necessarily there in undergraduate study... The straddling of these two very different domains, one which values independence and the other interconnectedness, is a constant challenge. (p. 214)

It seems that few of my accomplishments in life are worthy of discussion around my family kitchen table. According to my culture, I have not yet proven myself as a 'real' woman, whose success is measured not in academic terms, but in how well I tend to the hearth. In the home, I clear away the table and make coffee for my uncles. Outside of the home, I challenge people's biases and teach immigrant women about their rights. At times, the dissonance between the competing images of womanhood that I embody is difficult to shoulder. Even though I am married with a child, I have not yet been given the seal of approval by my first culture, which still holds me in psychological captivity. In attempting to resolve such a dilemma, I search for an answer that is not easily found. However, as I face my dragons one by one, my courage begins to surface.

2.2 Walk with me, side by side

In order to conduct qualitative work and identify with my participants' perspectives, I needed to first reflect upon my own experiences. By understanding the development of my personal perspectives and circumstances, I hope to improve my ability to act as an astute

observer while interacting with my participants and observing them in their multicultural classrooms. Since, as a bicultural individual, I had been exposed to different ways of approaching reality, my way of looking at the world has been widened and enriched. Maxine Greene (1993) states that by learning to examine situations from multiple perspectives, we may begin to build bridges of understanding. Diamond (1991) contends that when people understand their perspectives and those of others, they begin to predict what the alternative perspectives are likely to mean to themselves and others.

In order to convey a richer understanding of my professional and academic choices for the reader, I will firstly provide an overview of my childhood and adolescent school memories, and then explain the impact that four critical incidents had on my professional journey. These incidents include: my year at the Faculty of Education, my relationship with a young refugee girl in Toronto, my experience teaching a preservice multicultural course in Montréal, and, finally, my impressions of teaching in a mono-cultural environment in Eastern Europe.

Welcome to my world

I remember only a few vivid details of my childhood, unlike my brother who can recount his mischievous adventures with ease. While attending the Faculty of Education in the Primary-Junior division, we were often required to reminisce about our childhood: the enchanting books that we spent hours reading, the joyful songs we sang with our classmates, the doting but demanding elementary teachers that took us in their care. I drew a blank. I still do. I remember nothing. Anything I can claim to remember is a revised version of what has been passed around in family circles. I am the eldest daughter of southern Italian immigrants who came to Canada, and settled in Toronto in the early 1960's. I was a polite little girl who seldom stepped out of line. On the weekends, I meticulously scrubbed the house, even though I knew my friends were

jumping rope outside. Learning to cook was not a chore I needed to tend to, since my grandmother was available to prepare most of the daily meals. I had a select few friends. I knew better than to ask for another doll to add to my collection of one, or to ask for a pair of designer pants when more serviceable clothes could be sewn at home for less money. Apart from this string of facts, I wonder where the childhood memories have flown?

I reluctantly rummage through the dusty report cards that describe my formative development as a child. Although I was a hardworking child that demonstrated exemplary self-discipline, I experienced a great deal of discomfort in expressing myself proficiently in English in my early elementary years. Emphasis at school was placed on acquiring the basic skills in reading and arithmetic, where educational excellence depended on memory and problem-solving abilities, and where the learning activities at school included rote acquisition and the mastery of cognitive routines. I viewed the teachers as drillmasters who provided information to reluctant but dedicated students. The curriculum was teacher-centred. Beverly McElroy-John (1993) recounts an experience from her elementary school years.

> I don't remember my first-grade teacher. It seems that I should, and if someone told me her name, perhaps I would. My most vivid impression of my first school day - in fact of my first year of school - centres around a girl named Sherylanne. ...We hadn't been in the room half an hour before Sherylanne apparently had decided she couldn't stand me. All I can remember is her coming up to me and smacking me, saying, "You think you cute you yellow thing, cause you got long hair." ... I don't remember my first-grade teacher intervening at all with Sherylanne and me. She was either unaware of what was going on, or she didn't care. And it didn't matter what colour she was - we both needed her help. Sherylanne needed someone to train her how to treat other people. I needed someone to teach me how to stand up for myself. ... Both Sherylanne and I needed to speak up about what was bothering us. ... Where was the teacher? A good teacher would have "seized the day," would have talked about "good" hair versus "bad" hair, dark skin versus light skin. My school was full of pictures of African-Americans of all hues. A good teacher would have used those pictures and had us draw pictures to teach us about our heritage and to instill pride in us for who we were and where we came from - pride in our history.
>
> A good teacher creates an environment in which the child grows and develops, replacing the environment of the child's home. A child leaves the safety of the home at five years old and is completely vulnerable, spending from four to six hours a day in a foreign environment. A good teacher tries to address the needs of the student, whatever those needs may be. A bad teacher resists those needs, blaming them on someone else at best, or ignoring them at worst. A

> good teacher succeeds in assisting students to handle their needs and become successful within the school system. A bad teacher fails to help her students adapt to the school environment, ignores the children, or is too self-involved, ignorant or self-assertive to look at the individual, cultural and human needs of the student. ...
>
> Some teachers, then and now, refuse to teach to the circumstances of students. Instead, they teach to a curriculum as if it were set in stone. Many don't know anything about the backgrounds or life circumstances of their students, and maintain a distance that borders on indifference. (p. 94)

After all these years, it is of great concern to me that, much like McElroy-John, I am unable to name one teacher in my public school years that had an effect on me. Somehow, a few memories resurface from my fragmented past. I would have had to repeat grade two, had it not been for the polite intervention of my parents. In grade four, the principal harshly reprimanded me for pestering a classmate. I have never stepped out of line since. In elementary school, my only involvement with Girl Guides was limited to selling cookies in support of their fundraising activities. In grade seven, I was denied the opportunity to accompany my class on an overnight school trip because my parents felt that it would be unsafe and inappropriate for a girl not to return home at night. By grade eight, I was stamped "average" as I was ushered off to high school. "Average" is certainly what I remained throughout high school.

My undergraduate studies were partially financed by temporary teaching assignments. Upon completing my undergraduate degree, I began to work in the public sector. From there, I moved to a multinational corporation, where I travelled extensively, only to tire of clone hotels and last-minute business trips. While I moved on to other diverse and interesting work environments, teaching remained a pleasant sideline. At every opportunity, I would willingly accept contracts, to provide French lessons in the workplace, or ESL and literacy instruction in the community. For some reason, possibly a sense of ambivalence or alienation, I would repeatedly gravitate towards teaching, but never embrace it fully. Nevertheless, I continued to

teach on a part-time basis because it was a constant source of inspiration. Before long, however, it became increasingly difficult to secure employment without a Teaching Certificate.

A year of inertia at the Faculty

I attended the entered the Faculty of Education in the same year that the United Nations designated Metropolitan Toronto the most multicultural city in the world. In each of my practice teaching sessions, and in the Teacher Apprenticeship Program in which I participated prior to entering the Faculty, approximately 70 percent of the students were children of immigrants or refugees whose first language was not English. Over the course of the academic year, I was overwhelmed by the degree of complacency demonstrated by the Faculty instructors and their invited guest speakers. Such complacency did not seem to be an issue with my peers, perhaps because less than three percent of the preservice teachers were members of a visible minority group.

The books on display in the Faculty resource centre at the school-based program were the enchanting classic storybooks and fairy tales of my younger years. In the Primary-Junior division at the Faculty, our curriculum focus as preservice teachers was the area of literacy and reading. The point of departure for each session on reading was the assumption that parents read to their children each night. I suppose that assumption came from the fact that our instructors were read to by their parents. Five full-time and part-time jobs kept my parents from reading to my brother and me. Instead, they recounted stories around the kitchen table. Never having been read to when I was a little girl, I was again reminded of how differently my life inside the home had been from that of my peers.

In the mock parent-teacher interviews which were a required assignment for us as preservice teachers, each of the preservice teachers played the role of the parent. In these interviews, each parent arrived at the interview armed with probing questions about the curriculum in the classroom and the teacher's competence. Much to my frustration, none of the scenarios on the role-play cards asked us to explain the child's progress to a parent that seemed disinterested, or whose first language was not English. In such situations, the child would often need to be present to translate, creating what must have been a terrible sense of powerlessness for the parent. Such role-playing activities were also frustrating because they ignored the reality that many parents from diverse cultures believe: that it is the school's responsibility, and not that of the parents, to ensure that the child receives an adequate education. I recall how my mother used to be quite ill at ease about attending parent-teacher interviews for fear that she would not understand what would be said to her.

I believe that, as prospective teachers, we were inadequately prepared to teach in a multicultural classroom because the program curriculum did not address, in any meaningful way, the significant challenges and issues we would face in today's classrooms. It was only a matter of months before my Faculty experience brought me knocking at the door of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). I knew I wanted to remain in education, but teaching children did not seem like the answer for me. Until I began my graduate and doctoral studies, school represented a very small part of my being and thinking. It is part of human nature to leave a legacy behind - that is why we write books, build buildings, or begin a family. Feeling no reassurance that, as a teacher, I could leave a positive imprint on any child because of my own lack of connection with my teachers, entering the classroom was not a path I was prepared to follow at that point in my life.

Graduate studies

Having rarely experienced success in academic settings, I was convinced that sheer good fortune earned me my acceptance to graduate school. For the first time in my student life, required readings were completed days before class. Written assignments were no longer a chore, but a voyage of discovery. Classroom discussion, which in the past would have been intimidating, was now invigorating, as critical analysis was woven into my dialogue. For the first time academic excellence was within my grasp. In truth, my graduate studies offered me a framework within which to understand my bicultural experiences. Professor Feuerverger, in the graduate course entitled 'Language, Culture and Identity', encouraged me to find my voice and to accept my bicultural reality. The assignments in her course were designed to empower us to critically reflect on how language and culture had made an impact on our identity as Canadians. Since many of my peers in the course were children of immigrants, classroom discussions were highly engaging. I became increasingly aware of my dual identity and the dissonance that I continued to feel, and realized that I was no longer alone. At the risk of great discomfort, I proceeded to ask challenging questions of myself and my peers regarding our personal understanding of biculturalism. As the school term came to an end, I was feeling anxious about the final assignment that Professor Feuerverger had requested of us, and was having difficulty getting started. Instead, I sat at my computer one chilly winter day and wrote a story about my grandmother, my primary caregiver and the one person in my life that fully represents everything Italian. Three hours later, I completed the story and turned off the computer. Undoubtedly, 'Homage to Nonna' was a story that was ready to be told. Many years later, that very story was the basis for a book entitled, *Our Grandmothers Ourselves: Reflections of Canadian Women* (Valle, 1999) that examines cultural heritage, ethnic identity and linguistic adaptation in relation to our immigrant grandmothers. I was confident that Professor Feuerverger would accept my

story as the final assignment for the course. She did so, and has encouraged me to share my story ever since.

Through my graduate studies, I came to understand that the reluctance to revisit my past was due to the discordance I felt regarding my dual identity and culture. In essence, I realized that my unresolved tensions as a child and as a student prevented me from experiencing great heights of learning. My academic work in graduate school provided me with opportunities to merge the private and the public; the little girl inside the immigrant home, and the woman as an academic redefining boundaries. In graduate school, for the first time ever, I found female role models: women who, in spite of rigid family traditions and cultural expectations, continued to pursue higher academic studies.

While I was inspired by these role models, I was still incredulous at the fact that so few of my teachers had built bridges of understanding with their students, and that the Faculty of Education was still making little concerted effort to address the complexity and challenges of teaching in a multicultural classroom. The deficiencies I perceived provided much of the impetus for my pursuit of doctoral work, and created in me a powerful motivation to find ways in which to integrate multicultural issues into teacher education programs. My hope is that if teachers can develop such an awareness, then in due time, it would have an impact on the quality of equitable education programs for all children. Undoubtedly, I have turned to education to right some wrongs on the balance sheet of life.

Just as importantly, in keeping with the three pillars referred to earlier, there was a second, more fundamental reason for my pursuit of graduate studies: expanding the limited choices faced by young women raised in the immigrant home. Having grown up feeling that few choices were available to me outside of a traditional female lifestyle, I intended to create the space for young women to consider that they have choices. Within the traditional family setting,

my mother and grandmother served as laudable role models. Outside the home environment, however, I have had few positive role models. I was struck by this uneasy discovery when, prior to being admitted to the Faculty of Education, during a formal interview I was required to answer a number of questions pertaining to my attitudes and beliefs about education. Although many of the questions required careful thought, none caused me to pause until I was asked, **"Who has been a mentor for you?"** I mumbled some obscure answer and continued with my interview. Little did I know that this question would become central to my studies, prompting me to explore the full meaning of the *absence* of female role models outside the traditional home environment for young women. By sharing my experience in this thesis, I hope to encourage other women to redefine the boundaries of their identities, to express their freedom to live according to a more varied landscape of choice, and to face their own dragons.

An entry point into my research

The second critical incident in my professional journey, and another point of departure for this inquiry, lies in the relationship I had with Salima, then an eleven-year-old girl from Iraq. Salima's mother attended an adult ESL class that I taught in the evenings. One weekend, I was invited to my student's home to meet her family and share a meal together. When I first met little Salima, her queries and concerns were unsettling to me. Before long, I recognized in Salima the quiet child I was thirty years ago. The questions I asked myself then, mirror those Salima asks herself today. Salima's words and thoughts gave me insight into the needs of children in our multicultural schools. Her experiences moved me to reflect on how little is being done in schools to respond more effectively to diversity in the classroom and community.

Toronto is Salima's fourth home after she and her parents escaped from Iraq during the Gulf War, travelling first to Turkey, and then to Italy where they waited for the documentation

which would enable them to enter Canada. Upon arriving in Canada, Salima and her family first settled in Montréal. Two years later they were uprooted once again, this time to move to Toronto, the final destination in their quest for sanctuary. One afternoon, a few weeks before Christmas, I invited Salima and her brother to the theatre. While returning home I believe Salima knew that the drive would be longer than expected, for as soon as her brother fell asleep in the back seat, Salima began to divulge her buried thoughts. She spoke of her resentment at being left alone to care for her youngest brother when her parents were required to be out of the house to attend family functions, especially when her eldest brother was allowed to accompany her parents on such occasions. She spoke with relief that, although an Arab, she is Christian and not Muslim.

As I left Salima and her brother that day, I could not help but think of the dissonance I have felt for many years about being both a child of immigrants, and a woman. Paci (1990) states that those who undergo the immigrant experience remain sensitive to their ethnic background, and to others who are different. "This sensitivity is in our blood. It plays a central role in the lived experiences that form our characters" (p. 230). My lived experiences as a bicultural individual and as a woman attempting to redefine boundaries allowed me to walk in Salima's shoes that day. The questions that occupied her mind ran parallel to those I have often asked myself.

School experiences do not stand alone in having an impact upon Salima's identity. Media also mould our minds, as do the relationships we have with our family members and our peers. Was it possible that thirty years after I left the elementary classroom as a student, few, if any, practical initiatives were being implemented by educators and school boards to address the issues of diversity in their classrooms and schools? Incredulous that such limited pedagogical progress had been made on diversity issues, I grew determined to understand why so little was being done.

As I searched for answers, my professional work began to take a shape of its own, and direct me towards teacher education.

Listening to the preservice teacher

The third critical incident in my professional journey occurred not in Toronto, but in Montréal. In fact, the primary focus of my doctoral study grew out of a course I co-taught between September and December 1995 at the Faculty of Education, McGill University, entitled "The Multicultural/Multiracial Classroom." This compulsory course, offered for the first time at the Faculty of Education to elementary and secondary preservice teachers by Professor Christopher Milligan, was designed to address issues in the classroom that pertain to race, gender, class and sexual orientation.

The preservice teachers in this course were encouraged to develop their own curriculum. One way in which Professor Milligan accomplished this goal was to identify questions that prospective teachers had on issues of diversity, and then use those questions as building blocks to develop the course. The responsibility of the professor was to generate material which met the needs of preservice teachers, while maintaining a focus on building a competent knowledge base. Throughout the course, the preservice teachers were encouraged to engage in projects that offered them direct contact with different cultural, economic, racial and religious groups. Fieldwork sites included a native reserve, a women's shelter, a food bank, places of worship such as a mosque, cultural centres, a youth centre for young offenders, a teenage mothers' service program, and a centre for the homeless.

At the fieldwork sites and during the in-class presentations, I grew to appreciate the fact that Professor Milligan encouraged the preservice teachers to reflect on ways in which they could use their fieldwork experience in their teaching, and relate the knowledge and awareness they

had acquired. What was crucial was that they were asked to connect what they had learned about issues of diversity to actual experiences in the classroom.

The coursework also drew upon the diversity of students at the Faculty. Professor Milligan and I made arrangements to have guest speakers discuss issues of diversity with the preservice teachers. These speakers included school board officials responsible for implementing multicultural curriculum in schools, a native educator, and two preservice teachers, one who is gay, and a second who is a Muslim student who wears the *hijab*. In addition, we used National Film Board documentaries and videos to promote discussion and role-playing, with the goal of helping the preservice teachers to understand the challenging cross-cultural issues they might face in their classrooms. The videos covered issues relating to gender, multicultural children's literature, First Nations people, the ESL classroom, and responses to racial incidents. The video presentations provided preservice teachers with opportunities to respond to provocative material and, in cooperative group work, to engage in discussions which revealed to them the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments.

One of the primary reasons why I requested to observe the Faculty course was to gain insight into the concerns of prospective teachers regarding diversity and teaching. I decided to exchange reflective journals with the preservice teachers to provide them with opportunities to develop and demonstrate their critical thinking processes and to question their beliefs and knowledge with regards to teaching in a multicultural environment. The preservice teachers were also asked to conduct critical reflections on a variety of issues related to teaching and learning. Whenever possible, I challenged them to think in different, more culturally responsive ways. I believe that at this point it became apparent to the preservice teachers the extent to which their learned beliefs and values could impact on their ability to view reality from multiple perspectives. The student teachers found their voices and became more comfortable at naming

the factors that they live by, the "unconscious myths" (Feuerverger, 1991) borne out of their own family experiences. Professor Milligan and I encouraged them to look critically at themselves and reexamine their thoughts and values.

At the time when I was collecting the journals from the preservice teachers, there were lengthy debates on issues of classism, racism, violence, and power in relation to the O.J. Simpson trial, the anti-Semitism expressed by the American Muslim leader Louis Farrahkan, the "money and ethnic vote" comments made by the former Québec Premier Jacques Parizeau on the night of the 1995 Québec Referendum, and the ambiguity of the arguments presented to Quebeckers and Canadians relating to that Referendum. The preservice teachers were trying to understand the sources of their prejudices, what it means to respect difference, what the boundaries of political correctness are, whether or not multiculturalism should be more than eating and dancing together, and how these issues and perspectives impact on their responsibilities in the classroom and on their changing role as a teacher.

The student teachers were invited to reflect on their personal journey and growth in terms of knowledge and awareness, as well as their attitudes and behaviours towards diverse individuals and groups. My familiarity with the literature and research on teacher education and diversity, in addition to my past experience in teacher training, provided me with an understanding of the way in which to teach prospective teachers about diversity and difference. For example, if preservice teacher education programs wish to prepare teachers for the multicultural classroom, they must include a component that affirms the importance of self-reflection. Accordingly, I encouraged the preservice teachers to reflect critically in their journals and to document their professional growth (Calderhead & Gates, 1993; Carter & Doyle, 1996).

One important objective for Professor Milligan and myself was to impress upon the preservice teachers the importance of implementing a variety of teaching techniques when

responding to diversity in the classroom. My extensive knowledge of the preservice teacher education literature on multicultural issues informed these discussions. Professor Milligan and I therefore attempted to model a variety of teaching methods, including cooperative grouping, direct instruction, presentation-discussion, peer teaching, role playing and problem solving. Conversations about diversity were essential in emphasizing the importance of culturally responsive teaching (Banks, 1993, 1997; Bennett, 1995; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1993). Our classroom discussions were multi-layered and nuanced, as the prospective teachers articulated their position on issues, critiqued theories, challenged the status quo and elements of political correctness. There were discussions regarding visible expressions of difference, on what is considered legitimate knowledge, on how curriculum is rationalized, and on how assumptions frame stereotypes. According to Tabachnick & Zeichner (1993), such discussions provide preservice teachers with an opportunity to question embedded values and examine practices. The preservice teachers began to accept that prejudices affect the way we view the world and the way we consider issues of diversity.

One of the traditional justifications for the prescriptive nature of preservice literature and course content is that this is what new teachers want. For years, professional educators have assumed that the novice teacher is a practical, non-abstract thinker, wanting nothing more than basic survival (Cohen, 1991). Cohen contends, however, that these teachers do in fact sense the limitations of prescriptive solutions. The preservice teacher's complaint is not that they have not been taught the rules of good teaching, but rather that the program has not provided an accurate picture of what teaching is all about, owing, in large measure, to the limitations of practice teaching. As stated earlier, few prospective teachers get a chance to observe and spend time with effective teachers in action. Throughout the four month Faculty course, the experienced teacher's voice was not heard and practical "on the ground" insights from real teachers were difficult to

find. In their personal journals and their interviews with me, the preservice teachers repeatedly stated what they wanted was to hear real stories from experienced educators regarding the difficulties they encountered and the ways in which they adapted to issues of diversity in their everyday classrooms.

Having the opportunity to work so closely with preservice teachers was exhilarating as Professor Milligan and I challenged them to think differently and more critically. The genuine concerns of prospective teachers about their ability to teach effectively in a multicultural environment gave me hope that there exists a sincere pedagogical interest to address issues of diversity. The prospective teachers' enthusiasm confirmed my beliefs of how I perceived teacher education programs should be. Shortly after the completion of the course, I resolved to focus my research study on diversity and teacher education. My study, therefore, was conducted in direct response to the need expressed by the prospective teachers I met in Professor Milligan's course at McGill University.

The prospective teachers told me that they wanted to hear experienced educators speak about their teaching and the practical ways they address multicultural issues in their classrooms. Hence, due to my participation in the course, I resolved to conduct research that would be useful to teachers, and from which they could draw inspiration for their own teaching. I therefore decided to speak to experienced teachers and hear their stories, in their own voices.

But first - teaching in a mono-cultural classroom

For several years, I had the opportunity to design and deliver training programs for Canadian teachers going to Eastern Europe to teach English as a foreign language with an organization entitled Education and Training Programs for Poland. From 1994 to 1997, I also taught a methodology course in Poland for teachers at the Warsaw Board of Education. These

experiences have forever shaped me and mark the fourth critical incident in my professional journey.

Each time I returned to Poland, I was reminded of the indelible imprint left on the Polish psyche by the greatest human tragedy of this century: the Holocaust. When I was in the company of Poles, I would often probe about the Jewish question in that country. Unknowingly, I was invading their private space and sense of secrecy. I was placing a finger on a deep wound that has yet to heal. There were many who preferred not to talk about the Jews, the Warsaw Ghetto, the camps, the Holocaust. Instead they preferred to speak about art, Chopin, or the European Economic Union. It confused me. The tragic history of the Jewish people has always haunted me. With each return visit to Poland, I felt I was getting closer to the complexity of the Jewish tragedy, and the corresponding sensitivities and fears of non-Jews in having to confront the issue. I am troubled, puzzled, and inevitably distressed in witnessing the fact that few Poles show any interest in dealing with the persistent stereotypes which have depicted all Jews in the same fashion, and have thus caused such blatant and destructive anti-Semitism in that country throughout the twentieth century, and earlier.

Closed-mindedness is not difficult to find in the kind of work that I do as an educator, focusing upon issues of racism, gender inequity, and an "us-them" belief. I often remind myself that real change moves at a glacial pace. Initially, I was at a loss as to how to proceed in my interactions with the Polish teachers and their interpretative discussions of the past. In due time, my response to the Poles' startling silence was to talk about my professional work in Canada and, whenever possible, to make use of multicultural examples to illustrate a certain point in my teaching. Their response, in the end, was no response. It turned out to be virtually impossible to have a dialogue with them on issues of diversity. Post-war statistics on Poland state that over 98 percent of the population is Roman Catholic and white. Gypsies and Jews (and the Jewish

population is now minuscule) are still treated with rudeness and suspicion. Blacks, Asians, Muslims, beggars and the homeless have been present in Warsaw only since approximately 1990, so they represent a relatively new phenomenon.

Being a first-generation Canadian and coming from a country in which almost thirty cultures and languages can be represented in any urban classroom, multiculturalism is what I know, and is certainly what I live each day. As I witnessed in Poland, the very absence of a variety of cultural perspectives, and the dominance of one culture, language, skin colour and religion can certainly breed contempt. I have always argued that the need for inclusive multicultural thinking is due to the fact that Canada is a land of immigrants. However, by examining this issue after teaching in Poland, I believe that the need for expansive multicultural thinking has more to do with extinguishing destructive contempt arising out of prejudice, and learning to listen with an open spirit, than it has with ensuring that all citizens of a country feel welcome in their changing multicultural environment. While I was in Poland, I was struck by the way in which 'other' is viewed with profound suspicion. After teaching in a mono-cultural environment and witnessing the views of educators in such an environment, I became more committed to the fundamental importance of sharing and teaching about diversity in our communities and classrooms. My overseas experiences of teaching in a mono-cultural environment demonstrated for me what the antithesis may look like if we do not continue to work towards change and create spaces for critical thinking in our multicultural classrooms. It is frightening to contemplate. Such an experience pushed me further in the direction of the need for teaching awareness of, and respect for, multicultural issues in education.

2.3 Resisting the world of theory

One of the most fundamental struggles I have had with this doctoral study, however, is my resistance to embrace what I perceived as the "privileged" world of theory. Each time I became immersed in theory, I guiltily believed myself to be moving a step further away from my parents' lived reality: the humiliation they have endured by being under-paid, disregarded, or treated with little respect, simply because they are immigrants. When I walk the halls of the graduate school I attend, I look at the faces of those who clean the ashtrays and the offices. These women speak a language I know. They are at once my mother, my aunt, my working-class memories. I look at them and realize that although I may have travelled very far in a mainstream academic environment, I am in essence only one generation removed from the daily hardships of working-class survival. I recall when I taught literacy and ESL in factories, I sat close to the adult students to illustrate a particular teaching point and noticed their worn-out, laboured hands. My hands, in contrast, so close to theirs, were clean and manicured, representing the ease with which I had entered mainstream society, and all the 'luxuries' that come with such integration.

Throughout the doctoral process, I have oftentimes questioned my role in higher education for, in essence, I feared that the miles I would walk in the halls of theory would blind me and impair my ability to stay grounded and true to the principles that have driven my work from the beginning. I feared that the more hours I would spend advancing the intricate details of theory, the further I would move away from the authenticity of real life, and the more difficult it would be to *see, hear and be present in the everyday.* Also, I quietly questioned whether the construction of theory would truly impact upon the child in the classroom.

Over the years while working on my thesis, I continued to search for ways in which to reconcile my participation in the academe. I remained passionately committed to **not** distancing myself from who I am, what I believe in, and where I come from. As I progressed with the

theoretical rigour that a doctoral thesis requires, I also began to dialogue with first-generation Canadian women across the country via letters and email about their relationships with their immigrant grandmothers. My story 'Homage to Nonna' (Valle, 1999) arose as an impetus for other Canadian women to reflect on the admiration they felt for the strong, wise matriarchs in their lives: their grandmothers. As a way in which to reconcile the dilemma I was facing for having pursued a doctoral thesis, I worked closely with eighteen women to construct their immigrant stories. Rather than abandon the thesis because of my personal struggle with theory construction, I began to channel my creative energy towards compiling narratives and publishing a collection of life history texts that examines the role of the gatekeeper and preserver of language and culture: our immigrant grandmothers. When disillusionment and frustration would set in as I wrote the chapters of my thesis, I would turn to my book and revise a story or two in order to rekindle my vision, creativity and sense of purpose in the everyday. In due time, my thesis was dubbed 'the cerebral work' and my book was coined 'stories from the heart'. Simultaneously, my head and heart were working on different creative projects, in the hopes that the deficiency of one would compliment the other and render my self-reflective journey a challenging yet rewarding one on all accounts. In essence, *Our Grandmothers Ourselves: Reflections of Canadian Women* (Valle, 1999) grew out of my difficulty to fully embrace academic theory building as a constructive endeavour, and my need to remain authentic to my personal values and my vision for change.

In the end, if I would like Canada to become a model for other countries searching to integrate multicultural practices into their pedagogical and socio-political infrastructures, it is only in working towards change and reform that such progress will unfold. Despite my original reservations about entering the hierarchical pyramid of theory, I believe that it would be far more fruitful to make an earnest attempt, in my own way, to bring the relatively isolated chambers of

theoretical construction into closer proximity with practical experience. Although I have continued to struggle with my choice of having selected a theoretical approach for working towards change, I have continued to pursue my doctoral inquiry in the firm conviction that my research could bring the two hemispheres of theory and practice closer together. Throughout my dissertation, I attempt to merge these two realities as they pertain to education and diversity.

Concluding remarks

In sum, this chapter has provided a portrayal of my life experiences, beginning with a general overview of the foundational principles that are central to my values and vision: my bicultural identity, my respect for 'other', and my own sense of womanhood. As I begin to accept the many truths about who I am, I gain perspective and understanding about my weaknesses, strengths, limitations and desires. Secondly, I outlined four critical events that have had an impact upon the direction which my professional journey has taken: 1) my year at the Faculty of Education; 2) my relationship with a young refugee girl in Toronto; 3) my experience teaching in a preservice multicultural course; and finally 4) my impressions of teaching in a mono-cultural environment in Eastern Europe. Each of these incidents highlighted for me the importance of preparing future educators to teach effectively in a multicultural classroom in order to create a just and equitable global society. Lastly, I examined why I have continued to resist participation in the world of theory as it pertains to this doctoral study, and how this resistance led to the creation of my first book. Throughout the process, I recognized that if I wished to conduct successful qualitative research with my participants in multicultural environments, I first needed to reflect on my life and the experiences that have shaped me as a human being and as an educator, attempting to reconcile my multiple identities, and to face the conflict between the private and public spaces of my life.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

In this chapter, I will provide an interpretation of the literature relevant to this study, and provide a detailed overview of the theoretical framework for this doctoral thesis. The first section of this chapter focuses on the scholarship of Banks (1989, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2001), Corson (1993, 1998, 2001), Cummins (1986, 1989, 1992), Feuerverger (1989, 1991, 1994), Giroux (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994), Nieto (1992), Taylor (1992), Wong Fillmore (1982, 1983, 1985) regarding the issues of language, culture and identity, and particularly how such issues relate to multicultural education and the learning and teaching environment in schools.

In section two of this chapter, I provide an historical overview of research conducted while studying teachers' lives. I then provide a review of the literature which examines teachers' stories in multicultural environments (Casey, 1993; Feuerverger, 1997; Foster, 1991, 1992; Henry, 1992a, 1992b; Ladson-Billings & Henry, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; McLaren, 1989; Phillion, 1999; Thiessen, Bascia & Goodson, 1996). Section three of the literature review examines the complexity and the potential for personal and professional growth, which is inherent in encounters of difference. I have turned to a number of scholars to guide me in learning how to dialogue across difference. Bateson (1989, 1995), Burbules & Rice (1991), Delpit (1988, 1995), Geertz (1973, 1983), Greene (1993, 1995), Gudykunst (1986, 1988), Gudykunst & Kim (1992), Lynch (1986, 1987) have provided me with a framework within which to understand the qualities and characteristics required for successful dialogue to unfold with 'other'. I will conclude this chapter by outlining the theoretical framework of this dissertation and the way in which it brings together the work of established scholarship in three specific areas and examines scholarly contributions to the issues of language, culture, identity

and education. I then proceed to discuss the contribution this thesis will make to the field of multicultural education and teacher training.

3.1 Language, culture and identity

In the twenty-first century, many Western countries are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, more polarized along class lines, and more conscious of gender differences. As David Corson (1998) outlines,

> These population shifts highlight issues that formerly went unnoticed, even in countries that always had significantly large diverse groups. In some places, these shifts have provoked intolerance and even violence in communities that saw themselves as culturally stable or homogeneous. At the same time, a more welcome result of these great population movements is the recent development of a climate of international opinion advocating the more open and accepting treatment of people of diversity. ... In this new world, many more voices are being raised, including the voices of those who were once dispossessed; these voices are bringing a surprisingly different range of messages to policy makers and practitioners alike. These messages express human values that were once silenced by dominant ideologies and belief systems. (p. 2)

This quotation emphasizes the fact that Western countries are becoming increasingly preoccupied with the politics of identity. As part of a broader struggle over identity politics, a number of groups have attempted to re-think and assert their political and cultural identities *within*, rather than *outside*, specific racial, class, sexual and gender categories. In response to this twentieth century postmodern phenomenon, Henry Giroux (1992, 1993) proposes a 'Politics of Difference,' which relies on the development of a culture that is able to create new conceptions of the self and of collective identities, and to forge a sense of group loyalty. Deborah Britzman (1993) articulates that social differences are historically produced in academic and cultural representations.

> Is it politically viable to refuse who one is precisely at a time when so many identities are deemed undesirable and in need of containment and policing? What might it mean to destabilize

> such categories as race, sex and gender precisely at a time when the inclusion of these categories in the constitution of knowledge, authorship and positionality are at issue? (p. 125)

She states that two possibilities become available: first, there is the acknowledgement of difference within common categories, and second, categories such as class, gender and race do not reproduce one another in predictive ways. Britzman directs her attention to how 'otherness' is represented.

> First, we might consider that otherness is produced historically within social practices, school organization, curricular knowledge, and the arrangement of social relations. Second, we might attend to the fact that discourses of otherness necessarily produce narratives of self, sameness, and normalcy. Both otherness and sameness are the social effects of the same apparatus
>
> The invention of categories like race and sex is not to dismiss how these categories are tied to real pain and to histories of subordination, invisibility, and silence as well as to histories of social resistance and emancipation. (p. 134)

Modernism has defined the relationship between identity, culture, agency and community in ways that reinforce rather than challenge the social hierarchy (Taylor, 1992). As a result, modernists often ignored how individuals were constructed within complex, multi-layered social formations. At the same time, the individual came to be seen as an important component in understanding human agency, freedom and politics.

Giroux (1994) states that multiculturalism is at the centre of discourse regarding issues of national identity, the construction of historical memory, the purpose of schooling, and the meaning of democracy. Over the last two decades, multiculturalism has become a contentious issue in the debate over who gets to create public culture, particularly since groups that have been traditionally excluded from the public school curriculum and from the ranks of higher education have become more politicized and are now attending higher education institutions in increasing numbers. Dei (1993) outlines that, as a result, these previously subordinate groups have

demanded access to educational resources, advocated gender and racial equity, and sought input into curriculum content.

> In order for students to be empowered in their own learning, schools will have to address the imbalance of power in the production, distribution and dissemination of knowledge. This means promoting alternative non-hegemonic and oppositional discourses to challenge the hegemony of Eurocentricity. It means having teachers in the school system who will seek the appropriate centrality for each student in the classroom, and also rupture the established concepts, paradigms and content of the conventional school curriculum.
>
> The ultimate question is how schools and well-intentioned educators can realistically accomplish educational change, given the constraints imposed by the lack of budgetary and resource materials, as well as the dearth of teachers professionally adept in anti-racism skills. North America has historically witnessed protracted political struggles when it comes to educational change and reform. Not infrequently, the issue of allocation of resources (financial, human and material) has been hotly contested when it comes to publicly funded educational institutions. There is a social and economic cost to every form of educational equity. Therefore, measures to make schooling more inclusive must not be bogged down due to a lack of material resources. Some re-organization of priorities may be required in a climate of dwindling resources. While it is important that all stakeholders contribute to the cause of education, such involvement should be driven by a view of education as being for the public good. (p. 103)

In the struggle to affirm politics of difference, at issue is how politics can be constructed to work *with* and *through* difference to build forms of solidarity without suppressing the heterogeneity of identities. Giroux (1994) suggests the need for a pedagogical voice that encourages the recovery of identity and the way in which 'self' and 'other' are written and reworked. He contends that, by making difference and identity central to democratic learning, critical educators could take the offensive in debates on multicultural education by pointing to intolerance, and not difference, as the enemy of democracy. To follow is an elaboration of three pedagogical practices as articulated by Giroux: 1) representational pedagogy, 2) border pedagogy and 3) antiracist border pedagogy.

Giroux proposes the development of a representational pedagogy (Giroux, 1994) as one way in which to address the challenge of difference. Such a pedagogy entails a reworking of the relationship between identity and difference as part of a broader struggle over institutions and

ideologies. Representational pedagogy demands a more sophisticated understanding of how educators can address pedagogy that connects the issues of agency, ethical responsibility and the politics of difference. Students must use the knowledge, skills and values that they learn to interrogate the politics of their own location, voices, and actions.

As such, Giroux (1991, 1992) claims that multiculturalism is generally about "otherness", where the dominating aspects of white culture are not called into question. On one level, this entails giving students the opportunity to speak, and to locate themselves in history. In part, this requires an examination of the ways in which race influences relations of domination, resistance, suffering and power, and how they are taken up in multiple ways by students who occupy different ethnic, social and gender locations. Border pedagogy offers students the opportunity to become media literate in a world of changing representations. It involves offering students the knowledge and social relations to critique cultural texts in terms of how they represent different ideological interests. Such a pedagogy also promotes practices that enable students to analyze texts in terms of what is present and what is absent.

Antiracist border pedagogy points to a particular type of teacher whose authority is grounded in the respect he or she holds for democratic public life, and who therefore rejects the notion that all forms of authority are expressions of unwarranted power and oppression. Educators need to open up possibilities for students not only to learn how to resist power that is oppressive, but also to reclaim their voices as part of the process of empowerment. It is crucial to analyze how racism is endemic in structural, ideological, historical ways within society. Giroux (1991, 1992) believes that once teachers reflect on their own voices and histories, they become more attentive to "otherness" as a political and pedagogical issue and are able to engage in critical discussion of how knowledge is learned and taught, and how it relates to students' lives, and how pedagogy can lead to empowerment. At issue here is not a patronizing notion of

understanding "otherness", but a sense of how the self is implicated in the construction of 'other'. If students are going to learn how to take risks and be willing to confront critically their role as citizens in a democracy, they need to see such behaviour demonstrated in the social and pedagogical practices of the teachers.

Giroux (1994) proposes an "insurgent multiculturalism" where "white supremacy" is stripped of its legitimacy and authority.

> As part of a project of possibility, an insurgent multiculturalism is about developing a notion of radical democracy around differences that are not exclusionary and fixed, but that designate sites of struggle that are open, fluid, and that will provide the conditions for expanding the heterogeneity of public spaces and the possibility for critical dialogues across different political communities and constituencies. (p. 326)

If antiracist border pedagogy is to have any meaning as a force in creating a democratic society, teachers and students must be given the opportunity to put into effect what they learn outside of school. Teachers and students alike must engage in antiracist, anti-bias struggles in an effort to link school life with real life, and ethical discourse to political action. School curriculum should make antiracist pedagogy central to educating students and allow them to take risks when redefining oppressive social boundaries. When school curriculum and projects are linked to the wider society, schools become a major force in the struggle for social, economic and cultural justice.

Finally, according to Giroux (1994), multiculturalism is about making "whiteness" visible as a racial category. Such multiculturalism promotes a critical dialogue between different political communities. Giroux (1994) identifies insurgent multiculturalism as a critical multiculturalism that does more than acknowledge difference and analyze stereotypes. It offers a new language for students and educators to move between disciplinary borders and to travel within zones of cultural difference. Such language challenges the boundaries of racial and cultural difference which create sites of exclusion and discrimination.

As a starting point, insurgent multiculturalism questions what it means for educators to engage in daily acts of negotiations across cultural and racial borders. If multiculturalism is to develop as an overarching and **authentic** pedagogy in schools, educators need to promote practices in which teachers and students engage in critical reflection about bringing various cultures into dialogue with each other. If pedagogy remains exclusionary, the discourse of multiculturalism is undermined. Instead, educators need to demonstrate how differences can be negotiated within a context of intercultural conflict resolution. Giroux states:

> In other words, an insurgent multiculturalism should promote pedagogical practices that offer the possibility for schools to become places where students and teachers become border crossers engaged in critical and ethical reflection about what it means to bring a wider variety of cultures into dialogue with each other, to theorize about cultures in the plural, within rather than outside "antagonistic relations of domination and subordination." (p. 337)

An insurgent multicultural curriculum articulates the relationship between unity and difference. Rather than define multiculturalism against unity or for difference, it is critical that educators develop a *unity-in-difference* position in which new, hybrid forms of participation and citizenship stress that which is universal without denying the particular. In this instance, the intersections of diverse cultures become borderlands: sites of passage and dialogue where the richness of difference and the value of what is shared become the focal point.

> First, a multicultural curriculum must be informed by a new language in which cultural differences are taken up not as something to be tolerated but as essential to expanding the discourse and practice of democratic life....This suggests that educators need to develop a language, vision, and curriculum in which multiculturalism and democracy become mutually reinforcing categories....Second, as part of an attempt to develop a multicultural and multiracial society consistent with the principles of a democratic society, educators must account for the fact that men and women of colour are disproportionately underrepresented in the cultural and public institutions of this country. Pedagogically this suggests that a multicultural curriculum must provide students with the skills to analyze how various audio, visual and print texts fashion social identities over time, and how these representations serve to reinforce, challenge or rewrite dominant moral and political vocabularies that promote stereotypes that degrade people by depriving them of their history, culture, and identity ...Third, a multicultural curriculum must

address how to articulate a relationship between unity and difference that moves beyond simplistic binarisms....Fourth, an insurgent multiculturalism must challenge the task of merely re-presenting cultural differences in the curriculum; it must also educate students of the necessity for linking a justice of multiplicity to struggles over real material conditions that structure everyday life. In part, this means understanding how structural imbalances in power produce real limits on the capacity of subordinate groups to exercise a sense of agency and struggle. It also means analyzing specific class, race, gender, and other issues as social problems rooted in real material and institutional factors that produce specific forms of inequality and oppression. (p. 340)

Anzaldua's (1987) postmodern notion of border identity, employs the image of "borderlands" as a means of articulating the complex multicultural spaces where disparate cultures meet. "It is not a comfortable territory to live in, this place of contradictions," she says (p. 3). Postmodern thought resists the idea of culture as an organizing principle which creates borders around ethnicity, class, gender. Anzaldua explains,

The borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy ... Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. (p. 3)

According to Anzaldua, to live within the borderlands means that you are, at once, at home and a stranger, "caught in the crossfire between camps" (p. 194). Ultimately, to survive within the metaphorical borderlands you must, "live sin fronteras (without borders), be a crossroads" (p. 195). Critical-thinking educators need to provide opportunities for re-evaluating how the politics of difference advance the discourse of democracy. Central to such a proposition is to acknowledge the importance of creating new spaces for dialogue. These spaces need to offer diverse groups the opportunity to engage in dialogue, and work collectively towards a society in which equality and diversity co-exist with participatory democracy.

Charles Taylor (1992) posits that the discourse regarding multiculturalism is too frequently characterized by the imposition of some cultures upon others and by the assumed superiority of other cultures.

> All societies are becoming increasingly multicultural, while at the same time becoming more porous. Indeed, these two developments go together. Their porousness means that they are more open to multinational migration; more of their members live the life of diaspora, whose centre is elsewhere. In these circumstances, there is something awkward about replying simply, "This is how we do things here." This reply must be made in cases like the Rushdie controversy, where, "how we do things" covers issues such as the right to life and the freedom of speech. The awkwardness arises from the fact that there are substantial numbers of people who as citizens also belong to the culture that calls into question our philosophical boundaries. The challenge is to deal with their sense of marginalization without compromising our basic political principles. (p. 63)

Taylor believes that multicultural societies build on the established principles of the politics of equal respect. Just as all citizens must have equal civil rights and equal voting rights, regardless of race and culture, so should all citizens enjoy the presumption that their traditional culture has value. However, the act of declaring another culture to be of worth, and the act of declaring oneself a supporter of culture, are separate acts. The first act is normally understood as a genuine expression of respect; the second act as patronizing. The people who may benefit from the recognition make a crucial distinction between the two acts. They know that they want respect, not condescension.

> Our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemplative picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (p. 25)

According to Taylor, the last thing asked of Euro-centred intellectuals is to pronounce positive judgment upon cultures that they have not intensely studied. In reality, authentic judgments of

worth have been developed and transformed by the study of 'other', such that we are not simply judging by our original familiar standards.

> If all cultures have made a contribution of worth, it cannot be that the cultures are identical, or even embody the same kind of worth. To expect this would be to vastly underestimate the differences. In the end, the presumption of worth imagines a universe in which different cultures complement each other with quite different kinds of contribution. (p. 71)

When embarking on the study of 'other', there must be a presumption of equal worth between the culture under study, and the culture of those conducting the study. How can such a presumption be grounded? Arguably, a culture that has provided for a large number of human beings over a long period of time, and that has articulated a sense of the good, the admirable, and the holy, is deserving of admiration and respect, even though the culture in question may exhibit attributes that we may inevitably disapprove of or reject. Although Taylor defines identity as a person's understanding of who they are regarding their fundamental characteristics as a human being, his concept of identity must be seen more in terms of relations, as a social and relational process within which humans continually reconstruct their identities.

Race, ethnicity, class and gender have a significant influence on a person's understanding of the world and his or her identity. In essence, where we are located in society affects how we understand the world, and ultimately our racial, ethnic, class and gender location is instrumental in shaping identity and the concept of self. The main locus of the identity debate is in the world of education. Demands are therefore being made to change and broaden the mainstream curriculum which has favoured predominantly white, middle-class values.

> The reason for proposed changes is not, or not mainly, that all students may be missing something important through the exclusion of a certain gender or certain races or cultures, but rather that women or students from the excluded groups are given, either directly or by omission, a demeaning picture of themselves, as though all creativity and worth inhered in males of European provenance. Enlarging and changing the curriculum is therefore essential not so much in the name of a broader culture for everyone as in order to give due recognition to the hitherto excluded. The background premise of these demands is that recognition forges identity:

dominant groups tend to entrench their hegemony by inculcating an image of inferiority in the subjugated. The struggle for freedom and equality must therefore pass through a revision of these images. Multicultural curricula are meant to help in the process of revision. (p. 66)

Taylor points out that we cannot judge other cultures because it is difficult to discern what the valuable contribution of a culture might consist of, if the culture is sufficiently different from our own. Taylor refers to Gadamer's (1975) 'fusion of horizons' which alludes to a broader horizon in which a 'third space' is negotiated. The negotiation of a third space entails developing new ideas and vocabularies that enable us to make comparisons between our culture and someone else's, because the third space becomes not an extension of established values, but rather a renegotiation of cultural space. This space becomes the harmonization, the fusion of cultures, which represents a greater possibility for understanding, rather than encouraging a blindness to difference. Human beings are different from each other in distinct ways, and this need not translate into deficiency or deviance when there is a departure from a traditional norm. It simply means that they are different and that they have a right to be different, and such a presumption requires us to develop a willingness to be open to the point of widening our own horizons.

James Banks (1993) states that multicultural education is a process that we must all work towards in order to advance educational equity.

Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. It is necessary to conceptualize the school as a social system to implement multicultural education successfully. Each major variable in the school, such as its culture, power relationships, the curriculum and materials, and the attitudes and beliefs of the staff, must be changed in ways that allow the school to promote educational equity for students from diverse groups. (p. 1)

Banks (1989, 1992, 1993) philosophizes that multicultural education is a reform movement which attempts to change the schools and other educational institutions so that

students from all class, gender, racial, and cultural groups will have an equal opportunity to learn. Multicultural education is not only about curricular changes but encompasses the school in its entire complexity. Banks also opines that multicultural education is a process whose goals are open-ended and ongoing. Educational equality, like liberty and justice, are ideals that humans work towards but may never fully achieve in their lifetimes. For example, when prejudice and discrimination toward a particular group is reduced, these attitudes are frequently re-directed towards another group. Banks insists, therefore, that since the goals of multicultural education can never be fully attained, educational equality for all students is a goal towards which we should all work. Multicultural education must indeed be viewed as an ongoing universal process and not simply considered as an add-on to address a temporary problem.

Banks (1997) outlines the challenge that multicultural education faces as it attempts to increase equity for particular victimized groups:

> Pedagogies that merely educate students to fit into and to experience social class mobility within the existing structures of our society - which are characterized by sharp and pernicious social class divisions and by racial, ethnic, and gender stratification, are not helpful in building a democratic and just society. An education for equity teaches students to master basic skills as well as to use those skills to become effective agents who work to create a just and democratic society. (p. 79)

What Banks is saying is that perhaps an important goal of multicultural education should be to assist students who are members of certain minority groups to better understand how their destinies are tied to those of other powerless groups, and the significant benefits that can result from multicultural political coalitions. Multicultural education is a broad concept with several different and important dimensions. Banks suggests that teachers can examine three dimensions of their instruction in responding to issues of multicultural education: 1) content integration, 2) the knowledge construction process, and 3) an equity pedagogy. Content integration deals with the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to

illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline. Teachers who cannot understand how their content is related to cultural and linguistic issues in society often dismiss multicultural education by arguing that it is not relevant to their discipline.

The knowledge construction process refers to the manner in which teachers help students understand how cultural assumptions, frames of reference and biases within a given discipline influence the construction of knowledge. Students can be encouraged to analyze the knowledge construction process in science, for example, by studying how racist beliefs have been perpetuated by genetic theories of intelligence. Another example is how traditional historians have interpreted the European discovery of North America.

Banks (1997) suggests that an equity pedagogy exists when teachers modify their teaching so as to facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, gender, and social class groups.

> Equity pedagogy helps teachers to use diversity as a resource that can help them bring meaning to multicultural classroom interactions. Teachers who are skilled in equity pedagogy are able to use diversity to enrich instruction instead of fearing or ignoring it. They are able to use diversity successfully because they understand its meaning in their own lives and in the lives of their students. Equity pedagogy is not embodied in specific strategies: It is a process that locates the student at the centre of schooling. When effectively implemented, equity pedagogy enriches the lives of both teachers and students and enables them to envision and to help create a more humane and caring society. (p. 87)

Teachers can reflect their teaching style to determine the extent to which they consider multicultural issues and concerns in a variety of ways. An equity pedagogy requires teachers to use teaching styles that respond to the diverse learning approaches prevalent in different cultural and ethnic groups. Within any multicultural curriculum, there are four possible content approaches: contribution, additive, transformation, and social action.

The contribution approach is frequently used during the initial phase of ethnic revival, and is characterized by the insertion of ethnic heroes and cultural artifacts into the curriculum.

An important feature of this approach is that the mainstream curriculum remains unchanged in its basic structure and goals. This approach provides teachers with a way to integrate ethnic content relatively easily into the curriculum.

The additive approach (Banks, 1993) integrates concepts, themes and perspectives into the curriculum without changing the basic structure. This approach is often accomplished by the addition of a book, a unit, or a course to the curriculum. The additive approach allows the teacher to put ethnic content into the curriculum without restructuring it, a process that would take substantial time, effort and a rethinking of the purpose and goals of the curriculum. Frequently, however, the ethnic content that is added is selected and interpreted within a mainstream perspective.

The transformation approach, on the other hand, alters the basic assumptions of the curriculum and enables students to view concepts, issues, themes and problems from diverse ethnic and cultural groups. This approach encourages a perspective that views different ethnic and cultural literature, music, science, mathematics and art as integral parts of the common, mainstream culture.

The social action approach includes all the elements of the transformation approach but adds components that require students to make decisions and take action relative to the issue or problem studied in the unit. The primary goal of this approach is to educate students to initiate social change, and to equip them with decision-making skills, ensuring that they acquire the knowledge, skills and values they need to participate fully in society. In order to become active participants in a democratic society, Banks (2001) states,

> Students must be taught social criticism and must be helped to understand the inconsistency between ideals and social reality, and the role which these individuals can fulfill in closing that gap, and how students can, as individuals and groups, influence the social and political systems in society. (p. 236)

James Cummins' (1989) aim is to encourage educators to reflect on ways in which power is negotiated in the education of culturally-diverse students.

> The kind of education that minority students experience is very much a consequence of the ways in which teachers and other educators have defined their own roles both within the school and in relation to minority communities. In other words, although there are many aspects of children's schooling that are beyond the control of educators in particular settings, there are many aspects that are within their control. For example, classroom teachers convey crucial messages in subtle ways to minority students about the validity (or lack of validity) of their language and cultural identity. (p. 2)

Cummins (1992) proposes the framework of coercive and collaborative relations of power. Coercive relations of power refer to the exercise of power by a dominant group to the detriment of a subordinated group. Coercive relations of power involve a process that legitimates the inferior status accorded the subordinated group. Collaborative relations of power operate on the assumption that power is not fixed and can be generated in interpersonal and intergroup relations, therefore becoming additive rather than subtractive. Therefore, participants in collaborative relationships are empowered through their collaboration and will share power among the participants. The underlying assumption, thus, is that real change in the education of culturally-diverse students requires a fundamental shift from coercive to collaborative relations of power. The challenge is to change the structure of power relations such that it becomes additive through collaboration, rather than subtractive through coercion.

> In short, a shift from coercive to collaborative relations of power between dominant and subordinated groups has the potential to empower both groups whereas coercive relations of power will, in the long term, result in disempowerment of both. This implies that continuation of structures that create educational failure and impoverishment among subordinated groups will disempower not only the subordinated group but also the dominant group. (p. 2)

Cummins (1989) argues that the very tools that would empower the students and encourage academic growth, would promote cultural plurality rather than cultural uniformity. Collaborative programs develop the students' first language skills, foster a sense of personal and cultural

identity, and promote confidence in the student's ability to learn. Cummins refutes the hypothesis that minority students' academic failures are primarily caused by language differences or lack of English. Instead, Cummins argues that disempowerment of minority students is the result of discrimination against them because of their differences.

Although bilingual education programs provide an opportunity for minority student empowerment, they are only one aspect of broader change which is required to reverse the educational failure of minority students. Students are disempowered as a result of institutionalized racism that permeates the structure of schools and mediates the interactions between educators and students.

> It is in the interactions with individual educators that minority students are either empowered, or alternatively, disabled, personally and academically. Individual and well-intentioned educators empower or disable minority students in school by promoting or inhibiting (1) the incorporation of the minority students' language and culture in the school program, (2) the minority community's participation in the school as an integral component of the student's education, (3) a pedagogy that motivates students to use language actively to generate their own language, (4) advocacy for minority students in issues of assessment by focusing on the ways in which students' academic difficulty is a function of interactions within the school context rather than by legitimizing the location of the problem within students. (p. 58)

According to Cummins (1992), educators who strive to create educational contexts where culturally diverse students can develop a sense of empowerment will inevitably challenge societal power structures. Programs attempting to develop bi-literacy through sustained first language instruction throughout elementary school have better prospects for reversing the pattern of school failure for culturally diverse students, than programs that focus only on the development of English literacy. Cummins (1989, 1992) states that when such programs are an integral part of the school and the curriculum, the school conveys a powerful message about the value of the students' cultural identity.

Within a collaborative critical inquiry orientation, educators encourage the development of student voices through critical reflection on experiential and social issues. Language and

meaning are viewed as inseparable and knowledge is seen as a catalyst for further inquiry and action. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) view of learning that emphasizes the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD), where knowledge is generated through collaborative interaction and critical inquiry. The ZPD is the space where minds meet and new understandings can arise.

> I have argued that not only are knowledge and thinking abilities generated within the ZPD, but student and teacher identities are also actively negotiated in interpersonal space that the ZPD forms. ... What this implies is that the micro-interactions within the ZPD script an image of the envisaged relations of culture and power in the society. These micro-interactions either reinforce or challenge particular educational structures within the school or school system and, by implication, the power structure in the wider society. (Cummins, 1992: 4)

Educators who challenge institutional structures that reinforce social injustice will create conditions that promote student identity formation and critical inquiry. Rather than constricting the ZPD so that students' voices are silenced, educators will foster an environment where students' voices can be expressed, shared and amplified. In such a learning environment, the ZPD will be co-created by both students and educators.

How educators define their roles with respect to culturally diverse students and communities determines the extent to which they contract or expand the ZPD, and ground the curriculum in students' experiences that offer broader possibilities for identity formation and knowledge generation. It is within this context that the debate on bilingual education must be understood. The history of the education of culturally diverse students in Canada and the United States is a history of thinly disguised coercive relations of power. Culturally diverse students are defined as deficient and confined to remedial programs that serve to produce the deficits they were intended to reverse. Cummins (1986) states that minority students and educators are subjected to this myth of inequity that shapes their interactions and defines their roles. How schools define their role with respect to ethnic communities will impact the degree to which minority students are academically successful and confident within two socio-cultural worlds.

Educators who aspire to challenge coercive relations of power in the school system must attempt to create conditions of collaborative empowerment. This involves becoming aware of, and actively working towards, changing the educational structures that limit the opportunities and advancement of culturally diverse students.

David Corson (1993) examines the links between language and power and how educational institutions often allocate power to certain forms of discourse. Such practices create discrimination and injustice within the system.

> Education's legitimate influence on language use is clear: it seeks to capitalize on the central role of language in learning, in understanding and in knowing. While language development is a major aim of schooling, language is also the most accessible pedagogy and form of evaluation available in schools. But a more subtle and greater influence that education has on language is the power to promote and disseminate certain ideas about the appropriateness of language, whether relating to standard or non-standard codes, majority and minority languages, gender speech styles and functions, high status forms and structures. (p. 7)

Corson (1998) argues that instead of a language discourse that disempowers them, minority students require a form of schooling that recognizes and responds to their cultural expressions, which are an integral part of the students' identity and history.

> Members of a culture share an understanding of the culture's own norms for participant interaction and these norms are expressions of the culture's values. They provide informal rules that may not be explicitly known by the members of a culture but which govern speaking, listening and turn-taking behaviours... When a classroom's participant structures are congruent with the rights recognized in the children's home culture, then a balance of rights obtains. When there is little sharing of control over significant areas of interaction because the teacher sets rules for turn-taking or other aspects of participation which makes the children feel that they have little control over the interaction, there is an imbalance of rights. On justice grounds alone, this is an unwanted exercise of power. (p. 69)

Corson admits that, although there needs to be a measure of compatibility between the child's home cultural values and the pedagogical practices adopted at school, such a challenge is beyond the present resources of schools without significant policy changes regarding pedagogy, school organization, professional engagement and teacher education.

Corson (2001) proposes a social justice framework for making decisions in education about language policies and practices. A real approach to social justice recognizes that diversity is part of the human condition. Since different groups of people have distinct language interests, those differences need to be addressed in alternative ways if social justice is to be served. Corson states that social justice has to do with fairness, mutual advantage, resource distribution and political and social consensus. Therefore, if the aim is to provide language arrangements in education that are just, while also considering the needs of individuals, then the needs of the group must also be considered at the same time. Language is not only an instrument for the individual who acquires it, but the means by which "human beings are socialized and from which they develop a consciousness of themselves and their world. This consciousness is a direct and unique reflection of the culture that comprises the many social, ethnic, class or gender groups who share the language" (p. 28).

Corson (2001) suggests that decision-making power should come closer to local settings. For example, he recommends that firstly there be a system-wide consultation to discuss the increased use of minority languages alongside English. Secondly, a more local consultation to establish norms for allotting status to minority languages, with the starting point being the norms that were set at the system-wide level. Thirdly, within an increasingly devolved local setting, establish sub-norms to determine compatibility. In order to meet the diversity needs found in multilingual settings, certain policy principles are necessary.

- The first policy principle guarantees the right of children to be educated wherever possible in the same variety of language that is learned at home or is valued most by them. For example, young speakers of Spanish or French as first languages would be taught using their first language as the vehicle of instruction for most of the school day.
- The second principle guarantees the right of children to attend a school that shows full respect for the language variety that is learned at home or valued most by them, including respect for its role in preserving important ethnic, traditional, social, gender, or religious values and interests...

- The third policy principle guarantees the right of children to learn, to the highest level of proficiency possible, the standard language variety of wider communication used by the society as a whole. In other words, complete mastery of some regionally 'standardized' variety of English would be a key goal of children's education. (p. 32)

Corson (2001) concludes that such ideas are encountering resistance from the assimilationists who believe in the hegemonic nature of schools. Nevertheless, people are calling for change in language 'status'.

Wong Fillmore (1982, 1983, 1985) argues that academic development in the student's first language strengthens the student's cognitive capacity to learn and function intellectually in English. Oftentimes for minority students, the language used by teachers and peers in the classroom constitutes their main exposure to English, the language they must learn in school. Children maintain comprehension skills in their heritage language, but their speaking skills decline rapidly after the start of formal schooling, and literacy skills in their heritage language develop minimally thereafter.

Grace Feuerverger (1989, 1991, 1994) states that the languages and cultures of minority students need to be recognized and promoted in the schools and in the curriculum literature. Feuerverger's (1989) findings regarding Italo-Canadian students in integrated heritage language programs demonstrate that students in such programs had significantly more positive perceptions of their Italian language-learning than did their peers in non-integrated heritage language programs. Feuerverger (1991) also studied university students' attitudes towards maintenance of ethnic identity and heritage language education.

> The university students shared the view that in order for children of immigrants to appreciate their ethnic culture, they must realize its vitality and its modernity. In other words, they must be taught to see beyond the immigrant experience of their parents and to create an understanding of their ethnic homeland for themselves. The students also spoke of the literacy gap between parents and children that may be affecting family relations and identity maintenance. (1997; 20)

Feuerverger (1994) recommends an academically motivating and challenging program that takes into account students' first language and culture. The school-based initiative provided an instructional orientation that allowed students to explore and expand their first- and second-language literacy experiences. The objective of the project was to provide a selection of books in the school library in the children's home language. "For recently arrived immigrant children who already have reading skills in the home language the purpose is obvious: to stimulate their continued literacy development while they are acquiring English language skills" (p. 125).

Children are encouraged to develop reading skills in their first language because reading abilities form the foundation of cognitive competence in both languages. Cummins (1988) suggests that bilingual students who develop high levels of reading ability in their heritage language also tend to develop high levels of reading ability in English. "By promoting pride in cultural identity through encouraging first language proficiency, as in this specific intervention, the children's ambivalence about their culture can be overcome" (p. 135). Furthermore, Feuerverger speaks about how the maintenance of the first language and culture impacts on the child's self-esteem and the role that the school can undertake in such an endeavour.

> In terms of the school curriculum, I realized from the school board planning meetings and from the interviews with the children in the school that a primary story can be told about the need for minority language students to feel a sense of belonging in a new culture. The point of the intervention was to provide an opportunity to bring about the sense of home in the classroom. I discovered from my observations how powerful the impact of this intervention was on the children's self-esteem and sense of pride in their first language and ethnic identity. (p. 130)
>
> It is important to recognize the fact that schools can play a major role in encouraging children's home language and culture development even where intensive first language instruction is not available. It is a question of encouraging schools to welcome parents to participate in their activities and to promote children's pride in their ethnicity through informal and formal classroom and library-related linguistic programmes. (p. 126)
>
> The message that the literacy project offers to the students is that their cultural backgrounds do count and that the children have a place in the school and moreover in mainstream society. (p. 132)

Sonia Nieto (1992) believes that any examination or discussion of multiculturalism must be holistic and reflective of the diversity of citizens that live in our society.

> Multicultural education cannot be understood in a vacuum. Yet it is often presented as somehow divorced from the policies and practices of schools and from the society in which we live. The result is a fairyland kind of multicultural education disassociated from the lives of teachers, students, and their communities. ... No educational philosophy or program is worthwhile unless it focuses on two primary concerns: raising the achievement of all students and thus providing them with an equal and equitable education, and giving students the opportunity to become critical and productive members of a democratic society. (p. 1)

Nieto adds that multicultural education is a broadly-based school reform that can offer hope for change. By focusing on certain factors that contribute to school failure and underachievement, multicultural education permits educators to explore alternatives to a system that leads to failure for many students. A comprehensively conceptualized multicultural education program has the following characteristics: it is antiracist, basic, important for all students, pervasive, supportive of social justice, ongoing and dynamic, and critical.

Multicultural education is antiracist, anti-bias education. For multicultural education to be more inclusive and balanced in schools, there is a need for the multicultural curriculum to combat racism in an affirmative manner. Students must not be isolated, alienated or punished for naming racism when they see it or experience it for themselves. When antiracism and anti-discrimination become explicit parts of the curriculum, students develop the skills to confront racism. Part of the school's mission becomes creating the space and encouragement that legitimizes talk about racism and discrimination, making it a subject for dialogue in schools.

Nieto states that multicultural education which is examined in a sociopolitical context would best be defined as follows:

> Multicultural education is a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and

gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers represent. Multicultural education permeates the curriculum and instructional strategies used in schools, as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and parents, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning. Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change, multicultural education furthers the democratic principles of social justice. (p. 208)

Multicultural education is basic education in which multicultural literacy is as indispensable for living in today's world as are reading, writing, mathematics, and technology. One of the obstacles to implementing such a broadly conceptualized education is the unquestioned presence of the preconceived 'canon' in schools, where knowledge is European, male, and upper class. The canon is unrealistic and incomplete because history is never as one-sided as it appears in the school curriculum. What is needed is the expansion of the curriculum to allow for a variety of perspectives and experiences, since many groups have, in effect, been denied a voice in the construction of history.

Furthermore, multicultural education is important for all students. There is a widespread perception that such education is only for visible minorities, urban or inner city students. It can be argued that students from the dominant culture need multicultural education perhaps more than others, for they are often the most miseducated about diversity in our society. Sometimes these students develop an unrealistic view of the world and their place in it. They learn to think of themselves as representing the norm and to think of all others as a deviation, ethnic or exotic. According to Nieto, *all* students can benefit from a broadly conceptualized multicultural education.

In addition, such education should be all-encompassing because it permeates the physical environment in the classroom, the curriculum, and the relationships between teachers, students and the community. It should be visible in lesson plans, curriculum guides, bulletin boards, games at recess, correspondence to parents, books in the library, audio-visual aids, and cafeteria

lunches. Perceived in this way, multicultural education is a philosophy, a way of looking at the world in general. It is an education for the development of social justice that is inclusive, expansive, and reflects on what has been learned about other cultures. Schools are institutions fundamentally concerned with maintaining the *status quo* and not with exposing contradictions that are incongruent with democratic ideals. Students' rights and responsibilities in a democracy should be discussed within the context of issues that concern their community, such as poverty, discrimination or drugs.

Multicultural education is an ongoing and dynamic process. In the classroom, process is often relegated to a secondary position because content is easier to handle and has more immediate results. For example, changing a reading program in a school is far easier than developing guidelines to raise reading expectations for all students. The process of integrating multicultural education is complex. It may be politically sensitive for some and threatening for others. Critically minded pedagogy is essential. A multicultural perspective does not operate on the principle of substituting one truth or perspective for another. Education becomes truly multicultural when students critically analyze a variety of perspectives and use them to understand and act on any inconsistencies they may uncover. Reality can only be fully grasped if multiple and contradictory viewpoints are understood and acknowledged. Nieto states that multicultural education requires a shift in the way in which we conceptualize difference and integrate it into the school and classroom:

> Multicultural education represents a way of rethinking school reform because it responds to many of the problematic factors leading to school achievement and failure. When implemented comprehensively, multicultural education can provide an alternative that is equitable and capable of transforming the schooling of young people so that it is meaningful and responsive to their needs. (p. 222)

Schools can manifest a multicultural perspective to varying degrees. Nieto states that multicultural education can be visible on four levels: tolerance, acceptance, respect, and the fourth and final level of affirmation, solidarity and critique.

Nieto examines these levels *vis-à-vis* the seven characteristics of multicultural education outlined above. She suggests that to tolerate difference signifies that it is endured, but not necessarily embraced - what is tolerated today may be rejected tomorrow. Acceptance, the second level of multicultural education, means that diversity is acknowledged and its importance is accepted. Respect for diversity, the third level of multicultural education, signifies that other cultures are admired and held in high esteem. When diversity is respected, additive multiculturalism is the ultimate goal. Much of the multicultural education currently offered is based on respect for difference. Affirmation, solidarity and critique together represent the highest level of multicultural education. Because multicultural education is concerned with equity and social justice for all people, it needs to be more active as it negotiates a sense of community between different groups. In the school, affirmation, solidarity and critique mean using the culture and language of all students in a consistent, critical, comprehensive and inclusive way. This fourth level is the most difficult to achieve, for it is here that we are challenged by values and life-styles different from our own. Although any of the four levels of multicultural education is preferable to a mono-cultural learning and teaching environment, each level challenges an ethnocentric view of society and education

> In the final analysis, multicultural education ...is simply good pedagogy. That is, all good education takes students seriously, uses their experiences as a basis for further learning, and helps them develop into critical and empowered citizens. (p. 222)

In general, Banks (1989, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2001), Corson (1993,1998, 2001), Cummins (1986, 1989, 1992), Feuerverger (1989, 1991, 1994), Giroux (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994), Nieto

(1992), Taylor (1992), Wong Fillmore (1982, 1983, 1985) assume that schools must be seen not simply as instructional institutions, but as places where dominant and subordinate cultures intersect. These scholars also believe that schools have the potential to be sites for social transformation - places where students receive forms of knowledge and develop social skills and values to enable them to take their place within society from a position of social empowerment.

As mentioned earlier, Taylor's (1992) fusion of cultures is similar to Gadamer's (1975) 'third space'. I refer to this space in chapter eight of my study to describe how experienced educators develop and affirm the harmony of cultures in their classrooms and schools. The teachers in this study are "bordercrossers" (Giroux, 1992), breathing life into the multicultural spaces where cultures intersect and new forms of understanding are created. The practical wisdom of the teachers is shared through their stories and it is these very stories that are sites of negotiation, where difference in the school and community, and among teachers and students, collides and transcends. These sites of dialogue create a new space of understanding that acknowledges the richness of difference and addresses issues of agency, ethical responsibility and the politics of difference. In the examples provided in chapter eight, the reader will note that the teachers are encouraged to speak and provide their perspective on, and their understanding of, history, resistance and power.

The educators in this study challenge the structures that reinforce social inequality and create environments where students' voices are expressed and critical inquiry is encouraged. In such sites of negotiation, the ZPD (Cummins 1989, 1992) is co-created by collaborative interaction between teachers and students as they foster an environment where new understandings can arise. These spaces of dialogue and negotiation respond to Banks' (1993) notion of social action and elaborate on Nieto's (1992) fourth level of multicultural education: affirmation, solidarity and critique. The teachers' practical stories and insights inform the

educational theory regarding the teachers' changing roles in multicultural learning environments, and furnish contextual examples of ways in which to provide equitable education to all students.

3.2 Studying teachers' lives

Research into teaching and teachers' lives over the last three decades can be seen to have moved through several distinct phases which reflect various social, political and economic changes (Ball & Goodson, 1985). In the early 1960s, the relationship between the teacher and student was rarely explored. Teachers were viewed as individuals responding mechanistically to the expectations of their role (Wilson, 1962). In the late 1960s, case study researchers began to examine the ways in which the school processed pupils (Lacey, 1970; Hargreaves, 1967). Researchers' sympathies rested primarily with the pupils who were the 'underdogs' in the classroom.

In the 1970s, the research terrain shifted. Attention was directed to the constraints under which teachers work, transforming teachers from villains to victims (Denscombe, 1980). The limitations imposed by class size, student composition, and pupil expectations were raised as potentially serious challenges to the survival of teachers in the classroom (Ball, 1981; Evans, 1982). By the early 1980s, following a recognition of the complexity of teachers' work, greater attention was directed to teachers as human beings with their own problems and perspectives, struggling to survive. Researchers began to focus on the careers of teachers, and to examine more closely their motivations, experiences and strategies as workers in the educational system (Cole, 1990b, 1992; Knowles, 1993; Knowles *et al.*, 1994; Lyons, 1981; Woods, 1981).

Goodson (1991), Lortie (1975) and Smyth (1987) argue that since teachers are key players in education, their voices should be heard and their insights into the teaching-learning experience documented. Furthermore, they contend that studying the teacher's life and work

provides a valuable range of insights into directions for school reform and policy initiatives. As a result, the examination of teachers' lives and their stories of experience was viewed as essential to the study of teaching. According to Smyth (1987), scientific forms of knowledge and teaching are limiting and incomplete, given that they ignore the degree to which practitioner-derived knowledge is trustworthy and relevant. Teachers often display skills for which they cannot always describe the underlying rules and procedures. Increasingly, knowledge that was generated from practitioners was being considered as the basis for a new paradigm in teacher education (Fenstermacher, 1994).

Smyth (1995) contends that studying teachers' lives is an important way in which to improve the quality of teacher education. Prior to the shift towards studying teachers' lives, much of the research in teacher education was developed from philosophical, psychological, or historical discourses that were far removed from the practicalities of teaching and did not take into account the life stories of teachers (Woods, 1987). Furthermore, Calderhead (1988) states that theory and practice are frequently regarded as separate entities in teacher education. Generally, theory is viewed as the responsibility of the teacher training college, and practice as the responsibility of the school. However, Smyth (1987) argues that this dichotomy is a false one, that theory is implicit in practice and the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education is a continuously interactive one. Nevertheless, as Smyth (1987) indicates, knowledge generated from teaching practice has become the basis for teacher education.

Teachers' practical knowledge base is complex and often sophisticated. Smyth attempts to describe how teachers learn to teach, what the nature of that learning is, and how that learning is developed and influenced by the context in which teachers work. Personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1986; Connelly and Clandinin, 1985, 1988; Elbaz, 1983) acknowledges the teacher as a knowing, experienced professional. Elbaz (1983, 1991), one of the earliest

contributors to this form of teacher research, sought to grasp a teacher's knowledge of her working world. The purpose of her study was to reveal what teachers know and understand as a result of training, experience and reflection. In the end, Elbaz contends that the knowledge the teacher demonstrates is 'practical knowledge.'

The notion of practical knowledge figures prominently in the work of Connelly and Clandinin (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987, 1991; Connelly & Clandinin, 1985, 1988, 1990). The critical element in their theory is referred to as 'personal practical knowledge,' which consists of: a person's past experience, their present mind and body, and their future plans and actions. This knowledge reflects the teacher's prior knowledge and recognizes the contextual nature of that knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge that is carved out and shaped by situations, that is constructed and reconstructed as the teachers live out their stories and retell them through the process of reflection (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

Personal practical knowledge emphasizes the teacher's knowledge of a classroom and is designed to capture experience in a way that allows an understanding of teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons. As such, personal practical knowledge is a means of reconstructing the past and of formulating intentions for the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Smyth (1995) indicates that the shift in educational research towards a greater examination of teachers' voices and stories comes at a time of dramatic restructuring in education, and as a result, researchers are more actively pursuing teachers' knowledge. One such example is Conle (1996), who outlines the importance of resonance when examining teachers' personal practical knowledge, whereby the "telling and sharing of experiential stories can provide data for later deliberation, and influence tacit knowledge through the very telling of the story" (p. 316). Conle, in working closely with preservice teachers, observes how these teachers reconstruct their practical knowledge. For

example, through experiential storytelling the teachers connect particular ideas or recollections from their present or past experiences to different narrative experience. In the resonance process, the teachers create connections between an array of narrative experiences.

> For me and my students, when experiential stories were told, often around emotional issues, they became educationally useful because of their connection to practical knowledge. What teachers know is, to a considerable extent, of a practical, often nonpropositional nature. Constant manifestations of tacit, practical knowledge in curriculum delivery are very likely... Experiential stories implicitly contain tacit knowledge, and working with such stories may modify this knowledge. (p. 316)

Schlechty (1990) and Shulman (1987) believe that research must begin to document the successes of teachers and schools in multicultural settings, and as such, by gaining insight into the richness of educators' personal practical knowledge, we can begin to have a deeper understanding of the complex demands of teaching in a multicultural environment.

Teachers' stories

Recent educational research has increasingly placed biography at the centre of the study of teachers and the teacher education process (Ayers, 1989, 1991; Casey, 1993; Goodson, 1992; Huberman, 1989; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1994). Carter and Doyle (1996) indicate that research that is grounded in biography involves intense and extended conversations with teachers and is based on the premise that the act of teaching, teachers' experiences, and the process of learning to teach, are personal and inextricably linked to a teacher's life story. Cole and Knowles (2000) add,

> Teaching is an autobiographical act. To teach is to construct an autobiographical account to develop a living text. The autobiographical nature of teaching is an acknowledgement of the power of lives lived, the primacy of experience, and the potential for ongoing self and other generated examinations of practice ... Teaching is autobiography. To be a teacher is to commit to ongoing autobiographical acts (which are viewed and experienced by others). Teaching acts represent articulations of a life work in progress. Strung together, like beads on a string, the day-to-day teaching events become episodic evidence of changing perspectives and a growing life in

relation to society and the world at large. To teach is to be involved in lifelong reflective inquiry. (p. 22)

There has been an expanding interest within the teaching community in narrative and story. This interest has been directed especially to questions of how teachers understand and know their work (Carter, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 1991, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Elbaz, 1991; Gudmundsdottir, 1991). A central assumption underlies the use of story in the study of teaching and teacher education, because story represents a way of knowing and thinking that is suited to explaining the knowledge that arises from action, and because "by nature people live storied lives and tell stories of those lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2)". Thus, story is an especially relevant form for expressing teachers' practical understandings (Carter & Doyle, 1996). Carter (1993) states that stories capture the richness and complexity of the teaching experience.

> More than a rhetorical device for expressing sentiments about teachers, story is a mode of knowing that provides us with specificity and meaning. The special attractiveness of story in contemporary research on teaching and teacher education is grounded in the notion that story represents a way of knowing and thinking that is particularly suited to explicating the issues with which we deal. (p. 6)

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state that "It is in the living and telling of experience that we locate what represents our sense of our experience as educators" (p. 189). Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) articulate,

> Experience is the stories people live. People live stories, and in the telling of these stories, create new ones. Stories lived and told educate the self and others, including the young and those such as researchers who are new to their communities. (p. xxvi)

Carter (1993) outlines that story can play an important role in educational change.

> The analysis of story is of central importance to our field as a framework for reorienting our conventional analytical practices and for attacking many of the basic issues of interpretation, meaning and power ... We will be able at some point to ask of our story: Have we authored our

work in such a way that lives have changed for the better, most importantly the lives of children who are crowded in school and classroom corridors, and together with their teachers, are hard at work creating their own important educational stories. (p. 11)

Studying teachers in multicultural settings

For the purpose of analysis within my study, I will focus primarily on the literature that has examined teachers' stories in multicultural environments. McLaren (1989) examines his lived experiences as an inner-city elementary school teacher in Toronto's Jane-Finch corridor. His autobiographical classroom journal addressed the immediate needs of inner-city teachers. McLaren illustrates the contradictions embodied in teaching, and charts out the tension between the beginning teacher, who tries to make meaning of day-to-day teaching, and the theorist, who has a theoretical grasp of what should be done and calls upon practitioners to integrate appropriate critical theory into their work.

According to McLaren, the present failure of inner-city education is not to be found in the genes or the attitude of the poor, but in the failure of society to change the economic and social structures which regulate their lives. Rather than blame students and parents for problems in inner-city schools, McLaren argues that it is more important to consider our ambivalence towards poverty, tolerance of irrelevant curriculum, lack of participation in the community by educators and administrators, and reluctance to meet the special needs of inner-city students.

The school system is mostly geared to the interests, skills and attitudes of middle-class students. The 'Corridor Kids' McLaren worked with had enormous potential to learn and to enjoy learning; however, in order for him to build a more positive view of the abilities of his students, McLaren had to struggle to unlearn many of his middle-class prejudices.

In my own situation as an inner-city teacher, I was unequipped to examine many of the ideological assumptions that informed my own pedagogy. My "authoritative discourse" was immune to its own hidden biases and prejudices. When I was too caught up with my role as

> teacher, I failed to learn more from my students. There is often a defensiveness surrounding the practice of letting students tell their stories. Teachers must be careful not to silence students unwittingly through hidden biases lodged in their pedagogical practices. (p. 228)

Certainly, the students that McLaren taught did not have easy lives, but he believed that they possessed the intelligence and the will to adapt and learn despite their difficult surroundings. McLaren became an effective teacher with his students when he dignified the students' experiences as being worthy of inquiry.

> My teaching would have been more effective if I had been able to engage in a critical analysis of those aspects of everyday life that resonated with and affirmed the dreams, desires, and histories of the students. I suggest, with Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire, that we must take *the experiences and voices of students themselves as a starting point.* We must confirm and legitimate the knowledges and experiences through which students give meaning to their everyday lives. (p. 235)

McLaren finally accepted the fact that his students needed to be taught on their own terms first, and then taught to transcend those conditions in the interest of empowering themselves and others.

Through interviews, Casey (1993) collected the oral histories of women teachers to illustrate the social role of the teacher. Her study describes the experience of Catholic nuns, secular Jewish teachers in inner-city school environments, and Black women, all of whom shared in a feminist ethos of care and connectedness. These teachers are presented as authors of their own narratives of social change. Casey illustrates how progressive teachers talk about education, particularly in a time of social conservatism, and offers a model with which to understand the multiplicity of discourses on education. Autobiographical statements included throughout Casey's study illustrate the ways in which these teachers work for social change. Speaking as both teachers and activists, the women profiled in this study demonstrate new ways of being political in a world that is becoming increasingly diverse. Casey points out that women teachers'

own understanding and interpretation of their experiences have been systematically edited out of educational literature. These teachers ask us to consider why these critical dimensions have been disregarded by most educational research.

Foster (1991, 1992), Henry (1992a, 1992b), Ladson-Billings & Henry (1990), and Ladson-Billings (1994) document the first-person narratives of African-American and African-Canadian teachers, with respect to the education of Black children. Their stories describe how their experiences have shaped and influenced their teaching practices and pedagogy. Ladson-Billings (1994) conducted a study of eight African-American elementary teachers in low-income, predominantly African-American school districts in California. These teachers engage their students in discussions about why certain conditions exist in their community, how tragedies of drug and violence can be avoided, and what responsibilities the students have to make life better for themselves. The study, which illustrates how these teachers use methods that draw on the students' African cultural roots, offers a model for improving practice and developing grounded theory.

Ladson-Billings relies heavily on story to convey the pedagogical practices of the African-American teachers. Through the use of vignettes and interview data, Ladson-Billings discusses the benefits of 'culturally relevant teaching,' which stresses the importance of critically examining knowledge; helps students to develop basic skills in literacy; interprets excellence as a complex standard that takes diversity into account; and strives to ensure that the students' real life experiences are legitimized and become part of the curriculum.

Henry (1992a, 1992b) explores the relationship between family, community and classroom teaching as it informs five African-Canadian women teachers' perspectives about educating Black students. Henry explores the significance of the knowledge and experience Black women teachers bring to their pedagogical practice. Data for this study was drawn from

interviews and classroom observations from an urban multiracial elementary school in Toronto where over 80% of the students are Black.

Henry suggests that an 'Afrocentric womanist pedagogy' encourages learning strategies that are shaped by Black women's experiences of race, class, gender bias, marginality and isolation. Henry's findings demonstrate that African-Canadian teachers' activism takes place in a number of sites, often outside the mainstream classroom. For example, the family is cited as one place where Black women teachers can undo the sometimes harmful effects of mainstream schooling on children's self esteem and school success. Henry speaks of the 'community' and 'classroom othermothers' as a practice which enables the Black women teachers to continue the tradition of mothering other people's children as an emancipatory practice.

Foster (1991, 1992) examined the lives of exemplary Black teachers in American schools. The study explores the lives and practices of five urban high school teachers teaching in environments where over three-fourths of the student body are members of an ethnic minority. Foster describes the teachers' beliefs about themselves as educators and members of their communities. The teachers discuss the changes they have observed in the Black community and the effects of these changes on their Black students. Themes emerge from the data, such as the connectedness and solidarity the teachers feel towards their families and communities, which they have transferred to the students they teach. Since the teachers understand the present condition of the Black community, as well as the changes that have occurred, they are able to act as social agents in the lives of their students. The teachers' personal experiences of family and community have shaped their pedagogy and serve as the primary basis for their interactions with students and their respective families. Regardless of the changes that may have occurred in the community at large, the teachers assume the responsibility for transmitting to their students a certain knowledge base that enabled Blacks to persevere and confront racism. These teachers

understand the structural conditions of the educational system, but are not overwhelmed by them. The teachers in Foster's study share the belief that successfully teaching African-American students requires more than mastery of subject matter and pedagogical skills; rather, it requires engaging the students in a dialogue that continually questions and seeks to change the status quo.

Thiessen, Bascia and Goodson (1996) examine the lives of six racial minority teachers and their struggle to negotiate their racial, cultural and linguistic differences in the workplace. The study presents the life histories of teachers who are immigrants to Canada and describes the challenges they face in preparing their students for a multicultural world, while examining how race and culture have framed teaching ideologies and their professional roles and identities. Thiessen, Bascia and Goodson found that the teachers they studied articulated differences in terms of race, culture, and language with regards to their transition from their native country to Canada. The teachers articulated their own race and ethnicity as 'otherness,' a consequence of appearing, speaking or acting differently from what Canadians expect of a teacher in a Canadian school. Most of the teachers believed it best to keep their two cultures as separate frames of reference. Many also believed that their differences had to be diluted in order for them to survive and advance in the school, and in Canadian society as a whole. The teachers' personal experience with cultural dissonance and transition contributed to their sensitivity to the difficulties faced by many immigrant students. These bicultural teachers made attempts, with their students, to build bridges from one culture to another.

Feuerverger (1997) documented the educational stories of 20 heritage language teachers in Toronto. Feuerverger's intent in telling these stories was to give voice to these marginalized teachers. "Heritage language teachers are caught in the cultural trenches, mired in vulnerable and precarious circumstances" (p. 3). The majority of these teachers were immigrants or children of immigrants, working in non-mainstream educational programs in Toronto schools. As heritage

language teachers, they were rarely regarded as integral to the teaching staff, which frequently engendered a sense of displacement. In Ontario, not only are heritage language programs marginalized, but so are the people who teach in those programs. "This double marginality means that we cannot hear the voices of these individuals and their stories as teachers" (p. 3). As a result, their stories as teachers are rarely included in educational rhetoric.

> This sense of displacement is almost every heritage language teacher's condition. They are wanderers within the educational landscape and this nomadic existence reflects the reluctance of mainstream society in allowing the minority experience to stand for universality. (p. 4)

Feuerverger elaborates on four themes: the teachers' marginal existence in the school system, the teachers' professional work with their colleagues and students, the importance of creating bridges between the inevitable gap that exists between the home and school for many immigrant and refugee children, and the barriers towards professionalization, certification and integration into the mainstream educational system.

> The voices of these heritage language teachers speak to the need for rethinking and reshaping an understanding of teaching and learning as a social phenomenon that is fundamentally linked to a sense of identity and self-worth within culturally diverse school populations. (p. 27)

JoAnn Phillion (1999) conducted a school based narrative inquiry into the teaching practices of a Black teacher in an elementary school in Toronto. The purpose of Phillion's study was to develop a narrative understanding of multicultural education by examining the teacher's experiences in the context of the school and community. The school is located in a highly multicultural area of the city, where many of the children are considered to be disadvantaged, from a low socio-economic background. The teacher had been teaching for over 25 years, 15 of which were at the same elementary school. The teacher was clearly familiar with the community and knew many of the students' family members, and community leaders. Phillion's participant

always maintained that learning means hard work, and she placed a great deal of emphasis on the fact that every child can learn, regardless of his or her class, race or gender. She had little time for discrimination, 'blaming the victim', or class discrepancy ideologies in her classroom. Academic success is available to any child if he or she so chooses.

One of my goals in dialoguing with eight Montréal educators from various linguistic and racial backgrounds was to determine how they negotiated the politics of difference and identity in their classrooms and schools, with their students and the community at large. These Francophone, Anglophone, and Allophone educators were selected not on the basis of racial group, class, gender, or school grade, but rather, based on the degree to which they were immersed in diversity in their schools, and the extent to which they have adapted over time to the changing teaching environment.

The city of Montréal is one of the most unique venues for teaching in North America. Immigrants and refugees are continually refashioning this bilingual city into a vibrant multicultural mosaic. In chapter seven of this study, I will elaborate on the way in which the two cultures and official languages in Montréal have shaped educators' interpretations and negotiations of diversity in their schools and classrooms. The teachers' narratives I have profiled in this study are documented in French and English not simply to reflect the bilingual socio-political context of Montréal in North America, but just as importantly to highlight the linguistic 'border-crossing' (Anzaldua, 1987) that teachers are often required to carry out, as well as to address the challenges of diversity in a province engaged in linguistic and socio-political tug-of-wars. Where necessary, both languages in this study are represented on the page, to highlight the multiple layers of interpretations that are taking place when negotiating and re-negotiating new multicultural spaces in a unique bilingual context.

3.3 Encounters of difference

Socialization is such a powerful process that people are rarely aware that other realities could and do exist. Gudykunst (1986) indicates that as a consequence, people tend to view the world solely from their own viewpoint and think their way of proceeding is best. Such behaviour suggests that people have a tendency to view the world from their own perspective, and although a certain degree of ethnocentrism is necessary to bind a group of people together in a given culture, society or religion, it also constitutes an obstacle when it becomes necessary to interact and work with others.

Gudykunst and Kim (1992) maintain that successful outcomes between people of a dominant cultural group and people not of that group depend on the extent to which functional perspectives of those different backgrounds emerge. The subjective components of culture are much more difficult to study, inspect and analyze. It is at the level of a person's subjective culture that most intercultural misunderstandings and communication problems arise. In intercultural dialogue, an ethnorelative perspective entails the ability to understand differing points of view as being equally valid in interpreting the world. Gudykunst (1988) and Gudykunst and Kim (1992) conclude that it is upon meeting someone from a different cultural or racial background that we recognize we have our own way of doing things. Frustrations and misunderstandings arise when assumptions go unfulfilled. In the end, effective intercultural dialogue occurs only when both parties suspend judgment and seek to understand the reasons behind another's actions, with the intention of understanding and accepting the other person's behaviour.

Lynch (1986, 1987) contends that positive intergroup relations hinge on the realisation of certain conditions, where the groups entering into contact have equal status (e.g., class,

education, profession), function together on a collaborative basis, come together voluntarily and have the support of external authority. Further considerations that have an impact on intergroup relations are: prior intergroup contact and the conditions under which it took place; information group members possess concerning each other's culture (including stereotypes); pre-existing relationships, and frequency of previous exposure to members of other ethnic groups.

Delpit (1988) insists that minority students be told that their language and cultural style is unique, but that they must play a political game. In essence, Delpit argues that acting as if power does not exist is to ensure the stability of the status quo, and that in order to function and prosper, students must be taught communicative codes necessary to participate fully in North American society. The challenge is in communicating across cultures and in addressing the fundamental issue of power. Will minority teachers and parents continue to be silenced by the very forces that claim to give voice to minority children? As researchers and educators, we must acknowledge that those with power and those who are silenced have something to say to one another. Indeed, both sides need to be able to listen, but it is those with the most power, those in the majority, which must take greater responsibility for initiating this dialogue. Delpit articulates that in order to communicate across difference, certain criteria need to be developed.

> To do so takes a very special kind of listening, listening that requires not only open eyes and ears, but open hearts and minds. We do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment - and that is not easy. It is painful as well, because it means turning yourself inside out, giving up your own sense of who you are, and being willing to see yourself in the unflattering light of another's angry gaze. It is not easy, but it is the only way to learn what it might feel like to be someone else and the only way to start the dialogue. (p. 297)

Delpit provides several guidelines to initiate such a dialogue. The first of these is to acknowledge each person as the authentic chronicler of his or her own experience. Delpit asserts that, as a result, we must not be hasty in denying an individual's interpretations or accuse them of

false consciousness, for her underlying belief is that people are rational beings, and therefore act rationally. Although we may not always understand their rationales, we must learn to be vulnerable, even to the point of seeing our own world turned upside down, in order to permit the realities of others to edge themselves into our consciousness.

> Teachers are in an ideal position to play this role, to attempt to get all of the issues on the table in order to initiate true dialogue. This can only be done, however, by seeking out those whose perspectives may differ most, by learning to give their words complete attention, by understanding one's own power, even if that power stems merely from being in the majority, by being unafraid to raise questions about discrimination and voicelessness with people of color, and to listen, not to hear what they say. I suggest that the results of such interactions may be the most powerful and empowering coalescence yet seen in the educational realm - for all teachers and for all the students they teach. (p. 297)

Delpit (1995) reminds us that each one of us carries "worlds in our heads, and those worlds are decidedly different" (p. 50). She asks us to consider the limitations which we, as educators, bring to the classroom and to our interaction with our students.

> We educators set out to teach, but how can we reach the worlds of others when we don't even know they exist? Indeed, many of us don't even realize that our own worlds exist only in our heads and in the cultural institutions we have built to support them. (p. 50)

It is only in striving to understand ourselves as individuals that we can begin to connect our worldviews with others.

> What should we be doing? The answers, I believe, lie not in a proliferation of new reform programs but in some basic understandings of who we are and how we are connected to, and disconnected from one another. I have come to some of those understandings through my attempts to understand my place in this country as an African-American woman. (p. xv)

Delpit (1995) concludes that it is only once we arrive at an understanding of ourselves that we are able to "see through the haze of [our] own cultural lenses" (p. xv), and enhance our journeys of interaction with other worlds.

It is clear to Maxine Greene (1993) that the more we continue to have authentic personal encounters of difference, the less likely we will categorize and distance ourselves from 'other'.

"To open up our experiences (and, yes, our curricula) to existential possibilities of multiple kinds is to extend and deepen what we think of when we speak of community" (p.15). Greene's theoretical and practical assertions encourage the creation of a vision that offers alternative vantage points in which to view and experience the world. Greene stresses the importance of openness, inclusion and the avoidance of stereotypes at all costs. To view a person as 'representative' of Asian or Hispanic culture is to presume a homogeneous and fixed reality called 'culture.' Cultural background certainly plays a part in shaping identity, but it does not determine identity. In fact, it creates differences that must be honoured.

> Learning to look through multiple perspectives, young people may be helped to build bridges among themselves; attending to a range of human stories, they may be provoked to heal and to transform. Of course there will be difficulties in affirming plurality and difference and, at once, working to create community. Since the days of De Tocqueville, Americans have wondered how to deal with the conflicts between individualism and the drive to conform. They have wondered how to reconcile the impassioned voices of cultures not yet part of the whole with the requirements of conformity, how not to lose the integrity of those voices in the process, how not to allow the drive to conformity determine what happens at the end. But the community many of us hope for now is not to be identified with conformity. As in Whitman's way of saying, it is a community attentive to difference, open to the idea of plurality. (p. 17)

Greene speaks of the need to discover and rediscover that which is life-affirming in diversity. We need to reconceive one another's reality. In the end, that which is held in common becomes open and inclusive and provides an unlimited possibility for dialogue. No one can predict the common world of possibility, nor can one kind of community be justified over another, but we need to extend the voice and speak with new meaning. Greene states that there is unexplored power in pluralism. With this power comes the wonder of an expanding community. Greene (1995) believes that imagination is what makes empathy possible. Imagination is the cognitive capacity that allows us to give credence to alternative realities, so that when we use our imagination, new possibilities are opened and barriers are dismantled. Greene reminds us of the

importance of cultivating multiple ways of seeing and dialoguing in a world where nothing stays the same.

The cultural anthropologist Geertz (1973, 1983) argues that culture is not something locked inside a person's mind, but rather is embodied in public symbols through which the members of a society communicate their world-view, value orientations, and ethos, to one another and to future generations. With this formulation, Geertz gave the concept of culture a relatively fixed locus of control, within which symbols operate as vehicles of culture to shape the way the individual sees, feels, and thinks about the world. Geertz believes that "understanding a people's culture exposes their normalness without reducing their particularity" (p. 14). Culture is a product of social beings trying to make sense of the world in which they find themselves. If we are to make sense of a culture, we must situate ourselves in the position from which it was constructed. To this end, Geertz (1973) emphasizes that culture requires study from a number of perspectives, where such an analysis is "not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning" (p. 5). Distinct cultural systems determine divergent ways of understanding human relations, and it is "the power of imagination that brings us into touch with the lives of strangers" (p. 16). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997) highlight how Geertz views the place of imagination in the study of cultures.

> The anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) also speaks about imagination as being a crucial ingredient in the drawing of cultures. He links imagination and interpretation in his depiction of what he calls "thick description" (p. 6), "the researcher's constructions of other people's constructions of what they are up to" (p. 9). But in addition to his emphasis on the interpretation at the heart of thick description, Geertz underscores the "creative", the imaginative "tableau." ... We must then, Geertz says, admit (maybe even celebrate) the fact that the "researcher's imagination" is a fundamental aspect of cultural depiction. (p. 8)

Geertz (1983) also reminds us of the importance of making a "serious effort to define ourselves by locating ourselves among different others" where such an effort involves "quite genuine perils, not the least of which are intellectual entropy and moral paralysis" (p. 234).

> We are learning - more I think in anthropology than in law, and within anthropology more in connection with exchange, ritual, or political symbology than with law - something about bringing incommensurable perspectives on things, dissimilar ways of registering experiences and phrasing lives, into conceptual proximity such that, though our sense of their distinctiveness is not reduced (normally, it is deepened), they seem somehow less enigmatical than they do when they are looked at apart. Santayana's famous dictum that one compares only when one is unable to get to the heart of the matter seems to me, here at least, the precise reverse of the truth: it is through comparison, and of incomparables, that whatever heart we can actually get to is to be reached. (p. 233)

Mary Catherine Bateson (1989) recommends that we need to sustain creativity with a new and richer sense of interdependence, embrace multiplicity and accept ambiguity. Bateson (1994) also helps us imagine a new vision of learning by participating in unfamiliar experiences, where seeking new experiences helps us open our minds and hearts to multiple interpretations. Often these interpretations are at the edge of our awareness, seen through peripheral vision. Bateson (1994) believes that openness to peripheral vision depends on rejecting the belief that questions of meaning have unitary answers.

> Because we live in a world of change and diversity, we are privileged to enter, if only peripherally, into a diversity of visions, and beyond that to include them in the range of responsible caring. We live not only in the presence of different cultural visions but with different individual modes of perception, with access to the memories of childhood and alternative states of consciousness. These resonate with the many layers of vision within any single cultural tradition, the mythic and the metaphorical, the sacred and the invisibly empirical, the insights of the laboratory, and those of poetry and sleep. To become open to multiple layers of vision is to be both practical and empathetic, to practice the presence of God or gods and to practice wilderness. (p. 12)

Bateson suggests that rather than view difference as a weakness or a problem, we need to recognize it as a source of strength. It is in a space of contrast and difference where learning is possible. Furthermore, if we express a willingness to be receptive, we become insightful and

open to seeing the world in new ways. Insight refers to the depth of understanding that comes from setting individual experiences side by side, enabling individuals to learn from one another. What we call familiar is known so deeply that it is taken for granted and relatively impossible to observe without the help of contrast. Encountering familiar issues through the eyes of an outsider is like coming back to the experience from the opposite side. With yet another turn, what initially seemed radically different begins to be viewed as part of a common space.

According to Burbules and Rice (1991), dialogue aims to reconcile differences and form new common meanings in pursuit of intersubjective understanding. Certain benefits can be derived from dialogue across differences.

> Three prospective kinds of benefit can be derived from dialogue across differences: those related to the construction of identity along the lines that are more flexible without becoming arbitrary; those related to broadening our understanding of others and, through this, our understanding of ourselves; and those related to fostering more reasonable and sustainable communicative practices. (p. 404)

Dialogue requires us to re-examine our presuppositions and to compare them against different ones; to make us less dogmatic about the belief that the way the world appears to us is necessarily the way the world is. Dialogue offers the possibility of establishing intersubjectivity and creating partial understandings across difference.

> Specifically, the celebration of difference becomes a presumption of incommensurability, a denial of the possibility of intersubjective understanding, and an exaggerated critique that any attempt to establish reasonable and consensual discourse across difference inevitably involves the imposition of dominant groups' values, beliefs, and modes of discourse upon others. (p. 401)

No intersubjective communication process is perfect, even among members that occupy the same category of difference. It is by the very process of misunderstanding others, by interpreting their claims and beliefs in slightly different terms, that the process of communication moves forward to new understandings.

Any concrete discussion of difference also implies sameness: two objects, two points of view, can be contrasted only when there are at least some aspects in which they are similar. Difference and sameness are regarded as being in constant interaction with one another and, if dialogue across difference is to succeed, sensitivity is required for the various kinds of diversity one may encounter. Differences that may not be apparent to some, may be important to others. We should try to consider the elements of difference that might affect the intergroup communication from the point of view of the parties involved. We also need to admit to ourselves the limits of our ability to identify with the subjectivity of others.

The success of dialogue across differences also depends on what Burbules and Rice call 'communicative virtues' that help make dialogue possible and sustained over time.

> These virtues include tolerance, patience, respect for differences, a willingness to listen, the inclination to admit that one may be mistaken, the ability to reinterpret or translate one's own concerns in a way that makes them comprehensible to others, the self-imposition of restraint in order that others may "have a turn" to speak, and the disposition to express one's self honestly and sincerely. The possession of these virtues influences one's capacities both to express one's own beliefs, values, and feelings accurately, and to listen to and hear those of others. (p. 411)

These virtues offer an approach that is affective, as well as intellectual, and promote a generous and sympathetic regard for the perspectives and self-expression of others. Burbules and Rice suggest these virtues are necessary to promote equitable dialogue about difference. Dialoguing across differences is worthwhile, even when it is difficult, because it develops and sustains the communicative virtues in ourselves, and others. Burbules and Rice state that it is the inherent difficulty of such situations that disposes us to learn from them. Benefits can be derived from participating in conversations with those like us, but there are also benefits to be gained from engaging in discussions with those unlike us. In a pluralistic society, there must be a willingness to continue the conversation without certainty of success.

The literature on encounters of difference provides an overview of the qualities and characteristics which should exist in order to engage in dialogue with 'other'. Within the discussion of diversity and difference, I have presented the work of scholars who have articulated how to communicate effectively in intercultural dialogue. When it comes to such dialogue, we often misunderstand or misinterpret 'other's' meanings because we are psychologically, socially and educationally situated in our contexts, and limited in our understanding of the world because of our own experiences and interpretations of these experiences. As we interact with 'other', we learn more about ourselves. We are often reminded that we are socially constructed beings who need to reflect continuously about how we understand the world, so as to become more aware of our own contextuality.

In the context of my research for this thesis study, I am concerned with the following key questions:

- If an educator or citizen attempts to be a bordercrosser (Giroux, 1992), what skills do they need to possess?
- Are there certain foundational attitudes or values that would render the communicative challenge a more successful one?
- As constructive thinkers and educators, what awareness do we need in order to expand our possibilities of accomplishment when working and interacting with people different than ourselves?
- What makes further communication possible, and what type of individual strives to ensure that meaning and understanding are achieved in intercultural dialogue?

In chapter six, the teachers profiled in this study will provide their insights on the awareness, attitudes, skills and values that facilitate dialogue with 'other'. In this thesis, I

explore how the teachers offer a framework that has the potential to improve the ability to communicate and relate in pluralistic learning and teaching environments. The teachers' powerful perceptions, shared in the form of stories, stimulate reflection and contribute to educational theory on the discussion of difference. The teachers' ideas, thinking processes, and recommendations are each unique in that they provide us with distinct models of what an effective multicultural educator might look like. Not everyone may agree with these models, but it is a beginning, and it puts a human face on the individuals that seek the challenges, ambivalence and rewards inherent in encounters of difference.

Concluding remarks

In sum, my theoretical framework examines the established scholarship of Banks (1989, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2001), Corson (1993, 1998, 2001), Cummins (1986, 1989, 1992), Feuerverger (1989, 1991, 1994), Giroux (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994), Nieto (1992), Taylor (1992), Wong Fillmore (1982, 1983, 1985) on the issues of language, culture and identity as they have had a fundamental impact upon the development of the individual in Western cultures, and more specifically on multicultural education and the learning and teaching environment in schools. In an attempt to understand the personal and professional awareness, attitudes, skills and values inherent in successful encounters of difference, I have turned to a number of scholars to guide me in the discovery of learning how to dialogue across difference. Bateson (1989, 1995), Burbules & Rice (1991), Delpit (1988, 1995), Geertz (1973, 1983), Greene (1993, 1995), Gudykunst (1986, 1988), Gudykunst & Kim (1992), Lynch (1986, 1987) have provided me with a framework within which to understand the qualities and characteristics required for successful dialogue with 'other'. I then conducted a review of the literature that examines teachers' stories in multicultural environments (Casey, 1993; Feuerverger, 1997; Foster, 1991, 1992; Henry,

1992a, 1992b; Ladson-Billings & Henry, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; McLaren, 1989; Phillion, 1999; Thiessen, Bascia & Goodson, 1996) and indicated that the selection of participants for this study was based primarily on the degree to which the various teachers were immersed in diversity in their classrooms and schools.

In this chapter, I have also attempted to provide my interpretation of the scholarly literature on language, on culture and identity, on teachers' stories as they relate to teaching and learning in multicultural environments, and on encounters of difference. In attempting to address the educational challenges facing teacher education and issues of diversity in relation to language, culture and identity, my contribution to the discussion on multicultural teacher education is to provide contextual examples of "sites of negotiations" (Giroux, 1994) where a "third space" (Taylor, 1992) is created between teacher and learner; to examine these narratives of experience from a bilingual perspective in the unique sociopolitical venue of Montréal; to create a profile of what a multicultural educator may look like; and to outline the criteria regarding good multicultural teaching. Furthermore, in addition to making a contribution to the scholarly literature discussed in this chapter, I hope that this study will help to reduce the gap between multicultural educational theory and classroom practice. Elaborations of the above contributions are fully outlined in chapter ten of this thesis study. In the following chapter, I will outline the thesis design, by highlighting the fundamental characteristics of qualitative research and case study methodology, and end with my personal reflections on the process.

Chapter Four: Study Design

In this chapter, I will firstly provide an overview of the reasons why I have selected qualitative research to conduct this study. I will then proceed to examine how case study methodology contributes to our knowledge of complex, social phenomena. This chapter will also outline the study design of this inquiry. The final comments will be a reflection of the process I underwent in conducting the study.

I began my study with an account of my life (Cole, 1991, 1994; Hatch & Wisnieski, 1995; Plummer, 1983) and through the process of my personal inquiry, I became increasingly aware of the ways in which my understandings of education and teacher education were constructed. Who I am as an educator, researcher, and individual is critical to the way in which I listen and interpret the teachers' reflections. As such, in order to successfully identify with another person's perspective, the researcher must be able to reflect on his or her own life (Cohen, 1991). Chapter two of this study highlights how my story is embedded in language, culture and diversity. As an educator and researcher, prior to beginning the study, I, therefore, needed to question my assumptions, the biases I held, and the privileges and conditions which frame the lens through which I would observe and conduct research.

In the search for a suitable methodology for my study, I have chosen case study methodology (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1988, 1994; Yin, 1984, 1989) as a form of qualitative research inquiry. This thesis will be a case study, which is situated in the specific location of stories (Carter, 1992; Coles & Knowles, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1992, 1995; Elbaz, 1991) that I have collected as an educational researcher from experienced teachers of various cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds in Montréal.

4.1 Why qualitative research?

According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992), quantitative and qualitative researchers use similar elements in their work. They state a purpose, pose a problem or raise a question, define a research population, develop a time frame, collect and analyze data, and present outcomes. They rely on a theoretical framework and are concerned with rigour. Nonetheless, the ways in which researchers combine and use these elements create distinctive differences between the process and the final product of quantitative and qualitative research. Each research method says something about the researcher's views on what qualifies as valuable knowledge and their perspective on the nature of reality.

Quantitative methods are supported by the scientific paradigm, which leads us to view the world as made up of observable, measurable facts. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) indicate that qualitative methods are generally supported by the interpretivist paradigm, portraying a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever-changing.

> In qualitative research, face-to-face interactions are the predominant distinctive feature and also the basis for its most common problems. Through researchers' involvement with the people they study, lives become entwined, with all the hazards, challenges, and opportunities that such closeness brings. (p. 3)

Sherman and Webb (1988) outline that the aim of qualitative research is not verification of a predetermined idea, but discovery that leads to new insights, where experience is to be listened to and examined as a whole. Eisner (1991) writes:

> Qualitative inquiry penetrates the surface. Qualitative inquirers seek what Geertz (1973) has called “thick description”. They aim beneath manifest behaviours to the meaning events have for those who experience them. (p. 35)

In addition, Glesne and Peshkin write:

> The openness of qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to approach the inherent complexity of social interaction and to do justice to that complexity, to respect it in its own right. Qualitative researchers avoid simplifying social phenomena and instead explore the range of behaviour and expand their understanding of the resulting interactions. Throughout the research process, they assume that social interaction is complex and that they will uncover some of that complexity.
>
> To do justice to complexity, qualitative researchers immerse themselves in the setting or lives of others, and they use multiple means to gather data. They thereby give credence to the contextual nature within which both researchers and their research phenomena abide, and also to the fact that both are shaped by and embody passions and values that are expressed variably in time and place. Thereby, they come to understand and are able to show the complexity, the contradictions, and the sensibility of social interactions. (p. 7)

As a researcher, I am drawn to the openness of qualitative inquiry where the complexity of social interaction is uncovered. Social phenomena are explored to expand our understanding of human behaviour and the resulting interactions within specific contexts. As Eisner (1991) so aptly puts:

> If qualitative inquiry in education is about anything, it is about trying to understand what teachers and children do in the settings in which they work. To achieve this aim it is necessary to "get in touch" with the schools and classrooms we care about, to see them, and to use what we see as sources for interpretation and appraisal. (p. 3)

The nature of the qualitative approach is evolutionary, with design and interpretations developing and changing along the way. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) state that qualitative researchers seek to make sense of personal phenomena and the ways in which they intersect with the construction of meaning in our lives and in our classrooms.

> Qualitative research explores the poorly understood territories of human interactions. Like explorers who seek to identify and understand the biological and geological processes that create the patterns of a physical landscape, qualitative adventures seek to describe and understand the processes that create the patterns of the human terrain. (p. 173)

Qualitative research is concerned with human beings and their relationships with themselves and their environments, and as a result, is founded on the study of experience. Eisner (1991) states

that such inquiry is not only "directed towards those aspects of the world 'out there', but is also directed to objects and events that we are able to create" (p. 21).

Qualitative researchers may depend on a variety of methods and sources for gathering data. Denzin (1978) outlines four types of triangulation: data, investigator, theory and methodological. In this study, I will use multiple methods and sources of data triangulation. Data triangulation requires the use of different data sources, and in this inquiry, I have employed interviews, classroom observations, reflective journals, and letters to gather data. Method triangulation requires the use of multiple methods to examine a social phenomenon, and in this inquiry, I have employed interview case study (Mishler, 1986) which is situated in the specific location of stories (Carter, 1992; Coles & Knowles, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1992, 1995; Elbaz, 1991) that I have collected from teachers. Denzin (1978) believes that by "combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each while overcoming their unique deficiencies" (p. 302). Matheson (1988) states the value of triangulation:

> A technique which provides more and better evidence from which researchers can construct meaningful propositions about the social world. The value of triangulation lies in providing evidence such that the researcher can construct explanations of the social phenomena from which they arise. (p. 15)

Although I have employed data and methodological triangulation in order to examine social phenomena, I am aware that inconsistency and contradictions may exist in the data. As Matheson (1988) states:

> When multiple sources, methods, and so on are employed we frequently are faced with a range of perspectives or data that do not confirm a single proposition about a social phenomenon. Rather, the evidence presents alternative propositions containing inconsistencies and ambiguities. It is possible not only for data to be inconsistent but to actually be contradictory. ... With this outcome it is not clear what the valid claim or proposition about something is. (p. 15)

Eisner (1991) outlines why data should be considered from multiple sources.

> Qualitative inquiry, like conventional quantitative approaches to research, is ultimately a matter of persuasion, of seeing things in a way that satisfies, or is useful for the purposes we embrace. The evidence employed in qualitative studies comes from multiple sources. We are persuaded by its "weight", by the coherence of the case, by the cogency of the interpretation. We try out our perspective and attempt to see if it seems "right". In qualitative research there is no statistical test of significance to determine if results "count"; in the end, what counts is a matter of judgement. (p. 35)

Regardless of the inevitable inconsistencies and contradictions that may arise while conducting qualitative research and employing triangulation, there is still a need to make sense of the data which has been collected, and according to Matheson (1988), "that often requires embedding the empirical data at hand with an holistic understanding of the specific situation and general background knowledge about this class of social phenomena" (p. 17).

4.2 Case study methodology

Yin (1984) states that case study methodology is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. Stake (1978) outlines that case studies can be used to test single hypotheses, particularly to examine exceptions to the hypotheses. In social science literature, most case studies feature descriptions that are complex and holistic, their data likely being gathered by observation and interviewing (Mishler, 1986). Through the use of description, direct quotations and narrative accounts, the case study method, according to Stake (1994) "has been tried and found to be a direct and satisfying way of adding to experience and improving understanding" (p. 7).

> As a research endeavor, the case study contributes uniquely to our knowledge of individual, organizational, social, and political phenomena. ... The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, the case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. (Yin, 1984; 14)

As an educational researcher, I was drawn to the case study approach for the reasons that Stake (1994) mentions below:

> The bulk of case study work is done by people who have intrinsic interests in the cases. Their intrinsic case study designs draw the researcher toward an understanding of what is important about that case within its own world, not so much the world of researchers and theorists, but developing its issues, contexts and interpretations. (p. 242)
>
> Intentionality and empathy are central to the comprehension of social problems, but so also is information that is holistic and episodic. The discourse of persons struggling to increase their understanding of social matters features and solicits these qualities. And these qualities match nicely the characteristics of the case study. (Stake, 1988; 7)

Merriam (1988) defines the case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit" (p. 12). The purpose of using case study methodology is to gain a deeper understanding of specific issues and problems related to educational practice. Furthermore, a case study allows for a careful examination of particular situations so as to develop an hypothesis and arrive at an explanation. Practitioners can learn from a case study "even if the circumstances of the case do not match those of their own situation" (p.14). The particularity of such a methodology can help illuminate general issues in education. Eisner (1991) states:

> Revelation of the particular situation requires, first, awareness of its distinctiveness. Perception is still central, but beyond that, the ability to render those distinctive features through text is required. When reading a finely honed case study using educational criticism, readers gain a feeling for the distinctive characteristics of the case. The classroom, the school, the teacher are not lost to abstraction. ... At the same time, particulars exemplify more than they describe directly. In the particular is located a general theme. (p. 39)

Stake (1994) believes that a case study "proliferates rather than narrows. One is left with more to pay attention to rather than less" (p. 236). Stake (1988) outlines:

> Of course a case study doesn't tell the whole story. But it does deal with the unity of the case, the unity of the experience, in ways that other research methods do not. ... The case study is a study of a 'bounded system', emphasizing the unity and wholeness of that system, by confining attention to those aspects that are relevant to the research problem at the time. (p. 7)

As Yin (1989) has commented, "in general, case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" and "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (p. 14).

As a researcher and educator conducting a study on multiculturalism, I have attempted to explore and define new conceptual understandings located in the richness of diversity. This relatively new concern for diversity in education has brought with it a measure of uncertainty in terms of procedure and protocol within educational settings. Certain aesthetic qualities of portraiture, (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman-Davis, 1997) which is located within case study methodology, address the complexity of social phenomenon by recording the evidence of goodness and by broadening the audience beyond academia.

My personal and professional experiences have provided me with an understanding of the complexity that is inherent in engaging in dialogue across difference. Selecting a methodology that captures the *goodness* of the experienced teachers' practices supports my belief of the characteristics that educational research should embrace. The challenges that face these inner-city teachers, and teachers in general, as they grapple with the changing learning and teaching environment, need to be recognized. The genuine efforts made by the teachers to embrace difference (blemishes and all) need to be rewarded. Hence, Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis' notion of *goodness* spoke to my conviction that research paradigms need to shift the emphasis from a focus on insufficiency, to one that documents success.

> The general propensity is magnified in the research on education and schooling, where investigators have been much more vigilant in documenting failure than they have been in describing examples of success.
>
> To some extent the focus on pathology is understandable, maybe even laudable. Certainly some investigators have identified things that do work, or work poorly, as a prelude to trying to figure out ways of fixing what is broken. In this case, social scientists have regarded their investigations as providing the evidence for better-informed and strategic social action. But the relentless scrutiny of failure has many unfortunate and distorting results. First, we begin to get a view of our social world that magnifies what is wrong and neglects evidence of promise and potential. Second, this focus on failure can often lead to a kind of cynicism and inaction. If things are really this bad and there is no hope for change, then why try to do anything about it?

Third, the documentation of pathology often bleeds into a blaming of the victim. Rather than a complicated analysis of the coexistence of strengths and vulnerabilities (usually evident in any person, institution or society), the locus of blame tends to rest on the shoulders most victimized and least powerful in defining their identity or shaping their fate. Fourth, the focus on pathology seems to encourage facile inquiry. It is, after all, much easier to identify a disease and count its victims than it is to characterize and document health. The former requires focused methodologies that have been well used and developed, the latter invites a more complicated and eclectic set of research tools and some pathbreaking paradigms.

The researcher who asks first "what is good here?" is likely to absorb a very different reality than the one who is on a mission to discover the sources of failure. But it is also important to say that portraits are not designed to be documents of idealization or celebration. In examining the dimensionality and complexity of goodness there will, of course, be ample evidence of vulnerability and weakness. In fact, the counterpoint and contradictions of strength and vulnerability, virtue and evil (and how people, cultures and organizations negotiate those extremes in an effort to establish the precarious balance between them) are central to the expression of goodness. (p. 9)

Secondly, Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis speak about "broadening the audience" and "communicating beyond the walls of the academy" (p. 9). As mentioned earlier, my personal and professional experiences have given me an appreciation for the challenges facing the educational system which inevitably have an impact on students and teachers, schools and communities. Therefore, a study that focuses on issues of multiculturalism needs to be pursued in such a way that those individuals most directly involved in the process connect most intimately with the findings and conclusions of the study, so as to establish a dialogue that works towards change.

Academicians tend to speak to one another in a language that is often opaque and esoteric. Rarely do the analyses and texts we produce invite dialogue with people in the "real world". Instead, academic documents - even those that focus on issues of broad public concern - are read by a small audience of people in the same disciplinary field, who often share similar conceptual frameworks and rhetoric. The formulaic structure of the written pieces - research question, data collection and analysis, interpretation, policy implications - is meant to inform, not inspire. The attempt is to move beyond academy's inner circle, to speak in a language that is not coded or exclusive, and to develop texts that will seduce the readers into thinking more deeply about issues that concern them. (p. 10)

4.3 Listening to teachers' stories and gaining insight into their personal practical knowledge

My inquiry led me to search for a methodology where the re-creation of knowledge and experience would serve as the point of departure for understanding issues of race, culture, gender and language within a specific educational context. As a result, my search led me to undertake research that acknowledges the teacher as a knowing, experienced professional in educational reform. Teacher development and curriculum inquiry need to be reframed in a way that gives central importance to teachers and their way of knowing, where means and ends, thinking and doing, are not separated (Schon, 1987). Hence, the concept of story and narrative is central to my study of the teachers' experiences. It is important to note that in this thesis I use the terminology 'story' and 'narrative' in a general, more literary manner, and not in the theoretical sense of the words. Within the context of the interview process I collected stories, or narrative accounts, from my participants, and it is in this perspective that I use these terms, and not in the narrative inquiry sense.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state that the main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that "humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (p. 2). In other words, narrative is a way of characterizing human experience. "Narrative and life go together and so the principal attraction of narrative is its capacity to render life experiences, both personal and social, in relevant meaningful ways" (p. 10). Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state that education and educational studies are a form of experience, and narrative is an authentic way in which to represent and study the educator's experience.

> Life, as we come to it and as it comes to others, is filled with narrative fragments, enacted in storied moments of time and space, and reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities. ... Experience is what we study, and we study it narratively because narrative thinking is a key form of experience and a key way of writing and thinking about it. (p. 18)

Elbaz (1983) and Clandinin (1986) made a contribution to the understanding of teaching and teacher learning by adopting a teacher's perspective. Elbaz was one of the earliest contributors to this form of research. Prior to Elbaz, research on teacher cognition viewed knowledge as cognitive knowledge. Elbaz, however, developed the idea that practical knowledge is more than content or structural knowledge. She contended that the teacher's practical knowledge ranged over five areas: knowledge of self, milieu, subject matter, curriculum development and instruction. Elbaz was interested in what the teacher knows and her understanding of her teaching.

Clandinin (1986) describes her dissatisfaction as an elementary school counsellor, in part because of how theory and research were imposed on teachers. Clandinin began to question academic theory and research on teachers, trying to understand how teachers think about their work and what knowledge they use as a basis for their actions. In studying teachers as holders of practical knowledge, Connelly and Clandinin found ways of learning what teachers know. They adopted the techniques of narrative and story as ways of avoiding excessive external theories and constructs on teachers' personal, practical knowledge. The notions of story, narrative, image and embodied knowledge are central to their work (Connelly & Clandinin 1985, 1988, 1990). In addition, Fenstermacher (1994) states that teacher knowledge is inferred from narratives and stories. The teachers' statements, stories and images are accepted as knowledge, which arises out of action and experience. Schon (1987) articulates that experienced practitioners are characterized as personifying knowledge in action, since they develop organizing frameworks which help them make sense of classroom events and guide their behaviour. Cole and Knowles (2000) indicate the importance of connecting the knowledge to the knower.

How much can be known when knowledge is defined apart from the knower? The autobiographical nature of teaching means that it is impossible to understand the practice without

understanding the teacher; that it is impossible to understand the practice apart from the practitioner; that it is impossible to understand the knowledge apart from the knower. (p. 9)

Clandinin and Connelly (1992, 1995), Cole and Knowles (1992) and Elbaz (1991) have made story a central element in their analysis of teachers' knowledge. Connelly and Clandinin (1988) believe that humans make meaning from their experience by telling and retelling stories about themselves that refigure the past and create purpose in the future. Carter (1992) states that stories are the closest we can come to an experience, as the retelling of the experience unfolds and reveals the knowledge teachers' possess. Furthermore, Carter acknowledges that the teacher is the holder of personal practical knowledge, and that knowledge gives meaning and direction to classroom practices. Cole and Knowles (2000) and Lightfoot and Martin (1988) state that life narratives provide the context for making meaning of school situations. In the citation below, Cole and Knowles (2000) articulate the relevance of understanding how our past experiences can impact on our professional development.

> Who we are and come to be as teachers and teacher educators is a reflection of a complex, ongoing process of interaction and interpretation of elements, conditions, opportunities, and events that take place throughout our lives in all realms of our existence - the intellectual, physical, psychological, spiritual, political, and social. Making sense of prior and current life experiences in the context of the personal as it influences the "professional" is the essence of professional development. The better we understand ourselves as teachers, the better we understand ourselves as persons, and vice versa. (p. 15)

Learning to listen to teachers' stories of their practice is an important step towards creating an understanding of teaching (Coles, 1989; Lampert, 1985; Paley 1986, 1988; Pinar, 1981). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Knowles and Cole (1995) believe that narrative is the medium for presenting others' experiences and a vehicle for recording and exploring the teachers' thinking and practice. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) articulate:

> With narrative as our vantage point, we have a point of reference, a life and a ground to stand on for imagining what experience is and for imagining how it might be studied and

represented in researchers' texts. In this view, experience is the stories people live. People live stories, and in the telling of these stories, reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones. (p. xvii)

For the purposes of this study, the mode of inquiry within which to elaborate issues of diversity is best operationalized through the power of story. My story is embedded within my culture, language and beliefs as it relates to my life. By telling my story and putting a framework of understanding around my narrative of experience, I learned to recognize different kinds of knowledge and name different ways of representing experience.

In this study, I attempt to articulate, in a realistic manner, the challenges and rewards of teaching. The focus and quality of each story may be attributed to the different contexts out of which each has emerged. The educators' stories, in their own way, can extend our understanding of the complexity of teaching in a multicultural classroom. Each story "is located somewhere along the dimensions of time, place, the personal, and the social" and each story can be viewed "in the middle of a nested set of stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; 63). Mishler (1986) articulates that "telling stories is a significant way for individuals to give meaning to and express their understandings of their experiences" (p. 75).

4.4 The research process

As mentioned, I observed and co-taught a preservice teacher education class on the Multicultural/Multiracial classroom from September to December 1995. In order to gain insight into the concerns of prospective teachers and faculty, I exchanged reflective journals with preservice teachers and had the opportunity to develop curriculum on multicultural issues such as ESL children, multicultural children's literature, human rights, and responses to racial incidents (see chapter two). Interviews with preservice teachers provided insight into issues and concerns

relevant to their teaching in a multicultural environment. Breault (1995) suggests that in order to better prepare teachers for diverse settings, teacher educators must first understand how preservice teachers think in general, and then address multicultural issues in ways that are compatible with their thinking.

In October 1995, I met with two members of the Faculty Intercultural Teacher Education Committee (FITEC) of McGill University to select the list of schools to be approached for this qualitative study. A letter, signed by the Chair and a Committee member, was sent to principals requesting their support for this research initiative. An ethical review was submitted to the Protestant School Board of Greater Montréal (PSBGM) requesting permission to conduct qualitative research in PSBGM schools. Thereafter, I was granted permission to contact the principals and teachers directly.

In my research, I worked with eight participants in a collaborative mode. I used their words, our reflective correspondence, and my observations of their classroom dynamic to attempt to understand the ways in which they have adapted their teaching to accommodate the diversity in their classrooms and schools. I began my search for research participants with certain criteria in mind. The first was to canvass the experiences of educators with a long-term commitment to teaching. Accordingly, the teachers profiled in this study have taught anywhere from ten to forty years.

In searching for appropriate research participants, I also asked for recommendations from the McGill Faculty of Education in Montréal. The participants needed to be available to participate in the study and be willing to talk extensively about their experiences of adapting to diversity in the classroom. In January 1996, I met with the school principals and discussed their teachers' participation in the research, and later in March 1996 I met the teachers who would be

participating in the project. The study was conducted in French and English schools in Montréal from September 1996 to June 1997.

Collection of field notes

In the collection of my field notes I employed data triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Mathison, 1988), using a variety of different data sources: interviews, classroom observations, reflective journals, and letters in order to examine the social phenomena at work. Each of these data sources are accepted features of case study methodology.

Interviews

Qualitative interviewing provided the framework within which respondents could express an understanding of their experiences in their own voices. According to Mishler (1986), the purpose of interviewing is to gain insight into the other person's perspective. Interviewing provides a "theoretical understanding of human action and experience" (p. 53). One way in which to arrive at such insight is to use a method which allows for the complexity of the experience to be expressed and revisited on several occasions. Accordingly, I conducted two semi-structured in-depth interviews with each educator in either French or English, the first in January 1997, and the second in May 1997. Interviews were conducted individually and lasted approximately 90 to 120 minutes in length. The teachers were interviewed on-site in their schools; however, when circumstances or limited space dictated, we met at their homes. Interviews were audio-taped, with the approval of the participants. The transcripts were submitted to the participants for them to review, correct, or verify their original responses.

An interview guideline formed the basis of the thesis interviews. The semi-structured interviews were informed by ideas expressed in the literature, my own experiences as an

educator, and insights brought forth in the reflective journals. My approach to interviewing was to find "meaning as expressed in and through discourse" (Mishler, 1986; 66). Furthermore, Mishler states:

> The interview should help interviewees to describe the affective, cognitive and evaluative meanings of the situation and the degree of their involvement in it. The interview should bring out the attributes and prior experience of interviewees which endow the situation with these distinctive meanings. (p. 99)

The research questions provide an overview of the two interviews conducted for this study (see Appendix A and B). The nature and length of the second interview was determined by the content of the first interview. The interviews focused on thoughts about their work in a multicultural classroom: the values, approaches, and attitudes they brought to their work. I was interested in identifying the theories, assumptions, and values that underlie their practice. In essence, I searched for stories. Mishler (1986) articulates:

> That stories appear so often supports the view of some theorists that narratives are one of the natural cognitive and linguistic forms through which individuals attempt to order, organize, and express meaning. ... Narratives convey the ways that individuals attempt to arrive at a meaningful understanding of significant events in their lives. (p. 106)

Classroom Observations

The overarching purpose of classroom observation was to see teachers at work and understand how they became the teachers they are. When observing the teachers, I asked them to help me understand some of the details of their work. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997) outline the importance of subtle detail when conducting research.

> Not only is the portraitist interested in developing a narrative that is both convincing and authentic, she is also interested in recording the subtle details of human experience. She wants to capture the specifics, the nuance, the detailed description of a thing, a gesture, a voice, an attitude as a way of illuminating more universal patterns. A persistent irony - is that as one moves closer to the unique characteristics of a person or a place, one discovers the universal. (p. 14)

I had the opportunity to visit the teachers' classrooms every two weeks. The classroom visits allowed me to understand the instructional style of the educator, with a particular focus on the problems they encounter in their multicultural classrooms. During the observations, I paid careful attention in order to identify factors that influenced the teacher's actions, behaviours or reactions to any given situation. It was important for me to be a part of the classroom, to be working with the students, and understanding the realities of the classroom, as a participant and observer. Undoubtedly, my cultural knowing and my personal, practical knowledge of multicultural classrooms were of great value to my discussions with the teachers, and had an impact upon the way in which we dialogued around issues of diversity. They shared stories of experiences in education, which are outlined in detail in chapters six, seven and eight of this study. Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman-Davis discuss the role of the researcher vis-à-vis the participants' insights.

> Deep understanding and intimacy, of course, require that the researcher not only see the actor's reality and respect the actor's frameworks and perspectives, but also that she herself be self-reflective and self-analytic. That is, when the actor calls up haunting memories and vivid experiences, the portraitist must also be able to identify resonant experiences and similar feelings in herself. This does not mean that the experiences must be identical, or that the two must share parallel histories or like identities. But it does mean that there must be something in the researcher's personal experience or intellectual background that connects with what the actor is saying. (p. 148)

Reflective journals and letter writing

Journal writing offered a place for the participants to explore with me the planning and outcomes of curriculum, classroom management and instructional strategies. The journals provided us with a forum to discuss the context of teaching, and the central issues pervasive in teaching in a multicultural school. I believe that journals and letter writing did indeed encourage reflection and increase the teachers' awareness of their own practice. Calderhead and Gates (1993) suggest that reflective writing is a means of making explicit one's own personal theories,

which in turn makes them more accessible to critical analysis and evaluation. Knowles and Holt-Reynolds (1991) state that reflective writing enables teachers to become aware of their own values, beliefs and ways of thinking about teaching and learning, and the impact of their life histories in shaping their perspectives on teaching.

Research questions guiding the study

In order to determine the questions that were most significant for my study, and to gain some precision in formulating the interview questions, I prepared myself by reviewing the literature surveyed in chapter three, and used the following guidelines as a basis for the thesis interviews:

1. To create a profile of the teachers, I asked questions regarding their background, history, teaching style, and philosophy of education.
2. To understand their values and challenges, I asked about the skills and values they felt were necessary for teaching in a multicultural environment, and the attitudes and critical awareness that were needed to be an effective teacher in a multicultural classroom.
3. To understand the strategies they used to transcend, rise above, and move beyond difference in the classroom, I asked how they responded as teachers to difference in:
    - race
    - class
    - gender
    - culture
    - religion
    - language

For the purposes of clarification regarding the social variables highlighted above, I would like to provide the reader with a working definition of race, class and culture. Miles (1989) states,

> Race is one way by which a boundary is constructed between those who can and those who cannot belong to a particular construction of a collectivity or population. In the case of race, this is the basis of an immutable biological or physiological difference which may or may not be seen to be expressed mainly in culture, but is always grounded on the separation of human populations by some notion of a collective heredity of traits. Race is primarily associated with physical differences. (p. 2)
>
> Class relates to the sphere of production processes, but is not reduced to the economy. Class provides the material conditions for different groups, who often have unequal access to economic and political resources. Exclusions and subordination characterize class, but the prime relation is that of economic exploitation. Class exclusion and subordination are legitimized through seeing the human subjects as unable to seize the opportunities available through moral lassitude, incompetence or deprivation, to name but a few of the explanations offered. (p. 18)
>
> Culture expresses a community of history, beliefs, value orientations of any given group of people, that is bound by a collectivity. There exists a standard of belonging to certain principles that define such people and may lead to a form of patriotism. The norm of belonging may be religious, economic, linguistic, regional or ideological. (p. 22)

As a researcher, my intention was to be an active observer, employing classroom observation and qualitative interviewing (Mishler, 1986) and place myself in an engaged position in which one "searches for the story, seeks it out and is central to its creation" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman-Davis, 1997; 12). I gave "serious attention to stories" because I believe that "storytelling and story comprehension are natural and pervasive modes of communicating meaning" (Mishler, 1986; 68). Each response to the interview questions provided an opportunity for the educator to share a memory, insight, regret, or wish. While working with my participants, "I listened for a story" (Mishler; 13) as I engaged in dialogue with each practitioner.

The interview questions, formulated for the purpose of gaining insight into the practices of the experienced educators, are outlined in Appendix A.

Although each teacher was asked all the interview questions, individual teachers emphasized different questions, according to their personal experiences or circumstances. Some spoke extensively about what it means to teach in Montréal, while others compared teaching in Québec with teaching in their native country. Others talked more about immediate concerns, such as provincial cutbacks and the growing challenges of teaching in such environments. Different follow-up questions were asked of all the teachers, depending on the kinds of answers the teachers had given in the initial interview.

Analysis of field notes

Analysis of the data was ongoing throughout the research process as I worked with the participants. The interviews were transcribed and returned to the participants in order to provide them with the opportunity to edit and revise the material and reflect on their experiences and circumstances more accurately. Additional analysis arose from issues raised by the participants in our discussions together. I relied on the interdependence of the different sources of information in my analysis of field notes. I anticipated that collecting data from eight educators would bring rigour to the research, and that any work with one participant, would complement my work with the others.

When I began my analysis, I read my field notes, interview transcripts, journal entries and letters in their entirety for familiarity. Applying "story-analysis methods and displaying the findings" moves the discussion of interviewing "beyond the boundaries set by traditional approaches" (Mishler, 1986; 67). Everything was reread over the span of a few weeks for critical content. Once the field notes and transcripts were highlighted, I organized the segments onto a summary sheet, which enabled me to have a complete overview of the major responses by question and theme. Mishler states that "content, expressed through themes, and their relations

to each other is fundamental to analysis and interpretation" (p. 87). I then began my analytical coding according to the coding scheme I had developed. I proceeded to co-ordinate, refine, and compare the themes for the purpose of analysis, identifying the recurring codes in the participants' insights. The code categories and subcategories identified for the purpose of analysis are outlined in Appendix B.

According to Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997), the researcher is not only interested in producing a complex description of context, but also searches for the authentic central story.

> This requires careful, systematic, and detailed description developed through watching, listening to, and interacting with the actors over a sustained period of time, the tracing and interpretation of emergent themes, and the piecing together of these themes into an aesthetic whole. The portraitist's standard, then, is one of authenticity, capturing the essence and resonance of the actors' experience and perspective through the details of action and thought revealed in context. (p. 12)

I searched for stories, particularly in response to interview question 6 and questions 10 through 15 as stated above. I believed it would be in the teacher's response to these questions that they would provide "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of their teaching practices. I searched for stories which conveyed their wisdom and their personal practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985, 1988, 1990) regarding teaching in a multicultural environment.

Patterns of meaning began to emerge as I continued to alternate between data collection and analysis. In due course, I was able to identify converging themes, which I later came to refer to as "sites of negotiation" and which are discussed at length in chapter eight of this study. I often returned to the field to ask more questions for the purpose of clarification and to enhance my field notes (Gluck & Patai, 1991). I continued to explore the nature of the teachers' experiences - the problems, the planning, the challenges, the setbacks, the disappointments, and the satisfaction of teaching in a multicultural environment. As I searched for stories in the data,

patterns emerged that demonstrated a relatively high degree of agreement among the participants when they identified factors that are significant for effective teaching within such an environment. Further clarification and follow-up discussions with the teachers enabled me to modify and expand my data, as patterns or similarities surfaced.

Reflections on the process

As mentioned earlier, an exploration of my narrative was central to the kind of study I intended to carry out. I interpreted the data with four voices: that of a doctoral researcher; an educator; a teacher educator committed to understanding what changes need to take place in order to render teacher education curriculum more effective; and that of a child of immigrants who maintains that not enough constructive and sound-thinking initiatives have been implemented in our schools and communities since the multicultural debate in Canada officially began over 25 years ago. The analysis I undertook is a mixture of scholarship and story as a means of conveying the pedagogical practices of the teachers studied.

Qualitative research of this kind can rarely be free of bias. In fact, it seems inherent in the nature of this methodology that my voice and vision manifest themselves to some extent. As an educational researcher, I was an active participant in the process as I attempted to understand the experienced teachers' stories from their vantage point (Gluck & Patai, 1991). I approached each situation or problem conscious of my assumptions and philosophical outlook. My familiarity with teaching in a multicultural environment created a context in which the participants felt comfortable exploring with me the meaning of their experiences, actions and guiding principles. While gathering information from the classrooms, schools, and participants, focus was placed on the process, the interaction, and on deriving meaning from the educator's viewpoint and their lived experiences. This interactive manner of data collection allowed me to

probe for clarification time and time again, to recognize the questions and dilemmas which the participants expressed, and to go beyond the expected answers that would have been easier to accept.

Throughout the study, I questioned whether I was accurately capturing the complexity of teaching and the wisdom of the teachers' practice (Pendlebury, 1995; Shulman, 1987). I appreciated how carefully the teachers reflected upon their practices and how committed they were to teaching and to their students. Often, when I asked the teachers for clarification, the responses were not immediate. Rather, clarification was given after a certain amount of reflection, questioning, critical thinking, and dialogue. I admired the way in which they responded attentively to many of my questions.

The process of data collection required perseverance and a reluctance on my part to accept the participants' insights without repeatedly reflecting upon them myself. Admittedly, I was troubled by the dilemma of authentically telling another person's story. Much like Beattie (1995), I had reservations about faithfully representing the participants in my research study. I was concerned about my ability to describe the teachers' world accurately, and ascribe meaning to their values and beliefs about teaching and learning. To date, I remain uneasy with the role of interpreting another person's vision, successes, and setbacks. In essence, it is due to such a predicament that I searched with such passion for the teachers' stories of experience. It had always been of utmost importance to me that **the practitioners' voices have significant meaning in this thesis**. Throughout my doctoral thesis journey, I felt uneasy with the limited role the eight participants had in my study. After spending months with my participants in their classrooms, I would walk away and be required to reconstruct their knowledge and lived experiences *in my own words*. Where did such a methodology leave the participants who had so passionately disclosed their dreams and their disappointments about teaching and students? Quite

frankly, with the teachers' permission, I had been given the right to advance arguments on education with the wisdom and experience *they* had undergone.

As mentioned earlier, this uneasiness led me to search for an alternative way in which to collect stories and share human experiences. With my book, *Our Grandmothers Ourselves: Reflections of Canadian Women* (Valle, 1999), I worked closely with eighteen women across Canada and asked them to write their stories about the gatekeepers of their first language and culture, their immigrant grandmothers. In essence, I was interested in speaking to women who had a story to tell. It was of little concern to me if these Canadian women were writers, had a profession, or had attained a certain level of education. There was only one criterion I was looking for: a genuine willingness expressed by these women to share their stories. I encouraged the women to best describe their own life experiences, in their own words. A priority for me was to ensure that the women had maximum control over their stories. I worked very closely with each of the women as they wrote their stories, asking them to loosely respect the writing guidelines I had outlined, so that there would be a thread of continuity throughout the book. Each story went through two, three, or maybe five drafts, depending on the story. When that process was complete, I turned to the women again for their input on the themes, introduction, and citations. It was then time for me to review the manuscript and prepare it for submission to potential publishers. From the outset, my publisher was fully respectful of my vision for the collection, and upon my request, continued to encourage the contributors to provide their input regarding the book cover, the advance praise, the pictures, everything. Ultimately, I believe that the approach I selected was a collaborative one, which brings the everyday Canadian experience to the forefront.

In the end, as I worked with the teachers, I relied on the relationship I had built with them to guide me through the reconstruction of their experiences, and the telling and retelling of their

narratives. Our collaborative conversations helped me gain insight into their practices as I continued to search for meaning regarding teaching in a multicultural environment. The collection of data was a lengthy, enriching process, providing challenges at every turn. However, despite the intricate process and the challenges inherent in this research inquiry, it became evident to me that the stories in this study were ready to be told. The richness found in these compelling narrative accounts provided me with the impetus to complete my doctoral studies. In many ways, the teachers' voices of experience I was collecting in my research also needed to access a wider audience, and their wisdom needed to guide the often dismal discussion on multiculturalism. The daily attempts my research participants made to understand difference and work within it, are highly commendable. Furthermore, their insights are positioned to advance the dialogue on multiculturalism, and provide us with hope to continue working towards pragmatic solutions.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have outlined that the primary reason I was drawn to qualitative inquiry was due to the openness of the approach, and the way in which it allowed me as a researcher to examine the complexity of social phenomena, and do justice to that complexity. I selected the methodology of interview case study, situated within the specific location of stories, due in part to the case studies approach, and how it closely examines the way in which particular situations can provide insight on general issues in education. It is my hope that the eight educators and their teaching and learning environments will provide insights on educational issues in general. By listening to stories of their practice, we can begin to create a more comprehensive understanding of teaching in diversity. Lastly, I outlined the specific procedures I used to carry out my research with my participants, which consisted of collecting data through field notes,

interviews, classroom observations, reflective journals, and letters. I then identified the code categories I created for the purpose of analyzing the data. In conclusion, I examined the challenges I encountered while conducting the research, primarily the uneasiness I felt in telling another person's story. Despite this reservation, I was committed to faithfully capturing the complexity of teaching and the authenticity of the educators' lived experiences.

Chapter Five: The Teachers and their Teaching Environment

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the teachers who participated in this study. However, before doing so, I will first provide an overview of the sociopolitical realities of the educational landscape within which teachers work. Subsequently, I will proceed to feature the eight educators who are at the centre of this inquiry, as they explore within their oral texts the essence of their values and families, and the meaning of their dreams and vision. Goodson (1991) states that teachers are a rich source of knowledge about teaching, therefore, if we want to understand teaching, it is critical to gain insight into who the teacher is.

Teaching is often presented as being grounded in particular behaviours or accepted practices. To understand the principles and practice of teaching demands dialogue, and it is only by dialoguing with teachers - inventors of their own practice - that we can begin to understand the essence of such a complex practice. Van Manen (1990) explains that understanding other people's experiences allows us to become more experienced ourselves. As such, by encouraging teachers to tell their stories, we can begin to make meaning of the art of teaching. Connelly and Clandinin (1994) articulate that the way in which teachers construct their professional realities is an ongoing process of personal and contextual interpretation. In the final analysis, learning to teach and learning to be a teacher is a life-long process in which personal meaning is influenced by a myriad of experiences.

Any attempt to portray the life and work of today's teachers must begin by recognizing the continually changing context within which teaching is conducted. Such acknowledgement requires that researchers more closely examine the relationship between life histories and the broader sociopolitical environment in which the teachers find themselves (Pare, 1994). As Feuerverger (1997) explains "teachers' perceptions of themselves in terms of their role in the

educational enterprise, and their attitudes towards their students, may have the greatest impact on the success of the teaching and learning that takes place within their classrooms" (p. 8). Change is occurring in our society with increasing rapidity. Technological innovations, economic restructuring, sociopolitical forces, and the acceptance of new forms of electronic media, are but a few examples that have brought about change in Canadian society, and consequently, in Canadian schools. In the first section I will briefly examine the phenomenon of changing family roles, television, violence, technology, and the difference between today's students and those of 20 years ago, in order to describe the environment within which the teachers work and teach.

In section two of this chapter I will outline Canada's multiculturalism policy and Québec's intercultural policy, and describe Montréal's school system, in order to provide an overview of the specific political, linguistic, and social climate within which the educators find themselves. As stated earlier in this study, the terms 'multicultural' and 'multiculturalism' define the cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity that exists within our classrooms and our society at large, and does not suggest my partiality towards either the federal government's policy on Canada's growing diversity, or Québec's intercultural policy that was developed in response to the province's increasing diversity (see chapter seven). Finally, in section three of this chapter I will introduce the eight educators of this study.

5.1 Our schools today

It is inevitable that teachers are shaped by powerful social and economic forces, which have an impact on the classroom and the teaching and learning environment. Although each of these factors is tied to wider political and social events, it would, however, be misleading to assume that all teachers share the same subjective experience of these factors. Indeed, the

purpose of the following two sections is briefly to explore external factors which have an impact on teaching and learning in contemporary classrooms.

The family

Today, there are certainly fewer families than ever which fit the traditional mold portrayed on television shows such as *Leave it to Beaver* consisting of a working father and a homemaker mother. In 1996, slightly over 25% of Canadian children were living in a two-parent family with one breadwinner and a parent at home (Statistics Canada, 1996). Furthermore, the divorce rate has been growing dramatically since the 1960s, with the result that, today, approximately one-third of all Canadian marriages end in divorce. More than 70% of preschool children are regularly cared for by someone other than their parents. Increasingly, Canadian households are composed of alternative family styles such as remarriage, blended families, and single-parent families.

The Canadian Committee for the International Year of the Family (1994) stipulates that a child's achievement and behaviour at school seems to be partly attributable to whether a student is from a single or a two-parent family. Brown (1980) reports that a substantially greater proportion of high academic achievers come from two-parent families. Children living in single-parent families have fewer resources and are exposed to a greater risk of demonstrating behavioural problems and lower school achievement. Furthermore, these children are less likely to complete high school than children from two-parent families. More than 1.2 million of Canada's children live in families with incomes below the poverty line, and over one million families depend on social assistance. In 1992, 900,000 children had to rely on food banks on at least one occasion during that year. Single-parent families are particularly vulnerable. Children

living with a single parent are five times more likely to live in poverty than those living with two parents (Eisner, 1994).

As women continue to enter the workforce in growing numbers and delay marriage, more children have older parents who have less time and energy to devote to child rearing. As a result, a growing responsibility to care for children is placed on the shoulders of teachers. Since the family no longer fulfills all the functions that it did in the past, the school is required to educate on social topics and values which once were the domain of the family.

Television

According to Worzel (1994), television colonizes the minds of children, causing them to be passive observers, and less imaginative and spontaneous than they might be without such exposure. When children talk among themselves, they talk about the programs they have seen rather than about what they think, or feel, or have done themselves. According to Weil (1992), much of what we learn to believe uncritically is oftentimes derived from messages conveyed by television and popular culture. This associational or borrowed thinking is often accepted uncritically and influences our beliefs and actions. Postman (1985) states that as children accommodate themselves to television, substance and logic no longer form the basis for their decision-making. Instead, substance and logic are replaced by gestures, images and formats drawn from the world of television.

The meanings secured from television are more likely to be segmented, concrete and less inferential, and those secured from reading have a higher likelihood of being better tied to one's stored knowledge, and thus are more likely to be inferential. In other words, so far as many reputable studies are concerned, television viewing does not significantly increase learning, is inferior to and less likely than print to cultivate higher-order, inferential thinking.

Books, it would appear, have now become an audio-visual aid; the principal carrier of the content of education is the television show, and its principal claim for a preeminent place in the curriculum is that it is entertaining. Of course, a television production can be used to stimulate interest in lessons, or even as the focal point of a lesson. But what is happening here is that the

> content of the school curriculum is being determined by the character of television, and even worse, that character is apparently not included as part of what is studied. Since our students will have watched approximately sixteen thousand hours of television by high school's end, questions should have arisen, about who will teach our students how to look at television, and when not to, and with what critical equipment. (p. 153)

Postman believes that television's principal contribution to education is the idea that teaching and entertainment are inseparable. As a result, there has been a refashioning of the classroom where teaching and learning are intended to be amusing activities.

Violence

Oftentimes, the type of violence that exists in schools is a reflection of the violence found in society every day (Québec Ministry of Education, 1989). Canadian society, which has traditionally been viewed as a nonviolent culture, is nevertheless submerged in a global community that often uses violence to resolve problems, and depicts violence as entertainment. Gabor (1995) states,

> Now that this violent culture is permeating Canadian popular experience, the response is becoming defensive and negative. Extensive media coverage of family violence, abuse of women and children, and a rising wave of seemingly random crime has forced Canadians to rethink the nature of their society. Solutions to its threat are wide-ranging. (p. 12)

Family violence represents one of the most frequent and most serious offences committed against the individual (Québec Ministry of Education, 1989). Although the effect upon viewers of violence in news reports, films and videos has been a subject of heated debate, there is considerable agreement over the fact that violence in the media, sports and toys may contribute to a higher incidence of violence in everyday life. Gabor (1995) states,

> Clearly, there is a tremendous amount of activity within the education community to understand and come to terms with the issue of school-based violence and to identify and implement effective solutions. Although heavy weaponry such as guns was not a common finding in Canadian schools, increasing violence among youth was a recurring concern. This is

> reflected by the emergence of group attacks or swarming, and increased discovery of weapons such as knives in schools. Most school misconduct is verbal abuse, bullying and disorderly behaviour, but it also extends to vandalism, ethnic-based gang activity and stealing. Once seen as the domain of teenage boys, violence is now more generalized among children and teens of both sexes, especially in larger cities.
>
> Participants saw school violence as a societal problem that extends outside the bounds of the school yard. They agreed that family issues (breakdown, neglect, abuse, poor parenting, failure to set limits), peer pressure, media glorification of violence and community breakdown were at the root of school violence. The incidence of youth violence has increased despite recent decreases in overall violent crime statistics. (p. 14)

Violence in schools and in society wears many faces. Whether it appears as youth or gang violence, bullying, sexual harassment, or physical assault, there are no short-term solutions.

Technology

In an electronic age and a knowledge-saturated society, the school has lost its monopoly on access to information. As a result, the educational system has changed focus from disseminating information to providing the skills required for working with information, such as accessing information systems and using technology creatively (Postman, 1995). Hence, the focus of education is shifting from developing critical judgment, to relying increasingly on technological solutions. Postman (1995) believes that when students use technology, they should be more interested in asking questions about the computer, rather than getting answers from it.

> In introducing the personal computer to the classroom, we shall be breaking a four-hundred year-old truce between the gregariousness and openness fostered by orality and the introspection and isolation fostered by the printed word. Orality stresses group learning, cooperation, and a sense of social responsibility.... Print stresses individualized learning, competition, and personal autonomy. Over four centuries, teachers, while emphasizing print, have allowed orality its place in the classroom, and have therefore achieved a kind of pedagogical peace between these two forms of learning, so that what is valuable in each can be maximized. Now comes the computer, carrying anew the banner of private learning and individual problem-solving. Will the widespread use of computers in the classroom defeat once and for all the claims of communal speech? Will the computer raise egocentrism to the status of a virtue?

> What we need to consider about the computer has nothing to do with its efficiency as a teaching tool. We need to know in what ways it is altering our conception of learning, and how, in conjunction with television, it undermines school. (p. 61)

It is often asserted that new technologies will equalize learning opportunities for the rich and the poor. However, it is also generally understood that technological change produces winners and losers. Since not all members of society have the resources, knowledge and awareness to access computer technology, the benefits continue to be distributed unequally among the population (Postman, 1995).

Students today and yesterday

In a study by Zimiles (1986), teachers and principals with over 20 years of teaching experience in elementary and secondary schools were interviewed and asked to discuss and compare today's students with the students they taught when they first entered teaching. The experienced teachers and principals commented that today's children are growing up more rapidly, are more familiar with their rights, enjoy greater freedom and have a greater knowledge base. According to Zimiles' participants, children know more because of increased mobility, travel, television, educational toys and interactive games. Unfortunately, however, that knowledge is often fragmented, random and not organized or integrated. Youth are reported to be less ready to acquire new knowledge and less responsive to school instruction. The educators believe that this is partly due to television which is entertaining but not necessarily thoughtful, has rapid image changes, and can be turned on and off at will.

The respondents also reported that today's children are more open, assertive and independent. They view school with less respect and, in fact, openly express displeasure and disdain towards it. They show less respect for authority, are belligerent, and more aware of their

rights as individuals. Moreover, today's children are perceived as more interested in immediate gratification, rather than in long-term results. Overall, today's youth are exposed to more family discord, violence, drugs and crime, and become sexually active at a younger age than has traditionally been the case. It is a complex and difficult new reality.

5.2 Montréal: A bilingual, multicultural city

I would first like to outline Canada's multiculturalism policy and Québec's intercultural policy, with the intent of providing an overview of the socio-political reality within which the bilingual, multicultural city of Montréal is embedded.

Canada's Multiculturalism Policy

Multiculturalism is not a new concept, but is nevertheless still hotly debated, highly controversial and most recently touted as 'politically correct', and is certainly affected by the discourse and rhetoric for and against multiculturalism in the United States. The meaning of multiculturalism is an ongoing process. Multiculturalism in the Canadian context is often discussed within a pluralistic society in relation to three major groups: 1) the First Nations, 2) the founding English and French peoples, and 3) ethnic and cultural minorities. The history of multiculturalism policy in Canada can be seen as a chronicle of prolonged and repeated attempts to reconcile the different perspectives on nationhood espoused by these three groupings.

In 1965, John Porter depicted Canadian society as one of hierarchy based principally on ethnicity, class and gender. The term 'vertical mosaic' was meant to convey a social hierarchy within which certain groups are valued, while others are devalued. In the early 1960s, many Canadians grew increasingly dissatisfied with the predominantly Anglo-centric character of their political, economic and social institutions. Although much of the discontent emanated from

Québec, the First Nations and various ethnic groups were also requesting to see some changes. In response, the Federal government, in 1963, appointed the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, whose mandate was to recommend steps to develop the Canadian federation based on an equal partnership between the two founding nations, taking into account the contribution made by other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada. Fleras and Elliott (1992) state:

> To the initial disappointment of ethnic leaders, the report's conclusions reaffirmed the priority status of Canada's bilingual and bicultural framework. Ethnic leaders had argued that earlier policies had ignored the contributions of non-French and non-British traditions to Canadian prosperity and nation-building. ...
>
> In response to the concerns of the "third force," the report did not entirely rule out "the contribution made by other cultures" to Canada's cultural enrichment. The report recommended the integration, and not assimilation, of non-charter ethnic groups into Canadian society with full citizenship rights and equal participation in Canada's institutional structure. (p. 72)

The Commission's report reaffirmed Canada's bilingual and bicultural reality. Later, in 1971, the Federal government, under the leadership of then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, tabled a new policy of "multiculturalism within a bilingual framework." Hence, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt a national multiculturalism policy. Fleras and Elliott (1992) outline:

> The subsequent institutionalization of multiculturalism as policy sought to redefine the interplay of Canada's three major forces along pluralist lines. ... The popularity of and support for multiculturalism are often viewed as distinct components of our national identity. Our commitment to a multicultural mosaic distinguishes us from the Americans in the astute management of race and ethnic relations. ... Central authorities in Canada have relied increasingly on multiculturalism (within a bilingual framework) as a key plank in advancing national and regional interests. With few exceptions, multiculturalism is widely endorsed as indispensable for redefining, mediating and advancing government-minority relations along acceptable channels. This popularity has simplified the task of legitimizing multiculturalism as an ideological construct for managing diversity. (p. 108)

The policy was an attempt to reconcile two competing visions of Canada: the dualistic view, that Canada is comprised of two principal cultural groups; and the pluralistic view, which conceives

of Canada as comprised of a wide variety of cultural groups. The policy encouraged all Canadians to accept cultural pluralism and to participate fully and equally in Canadian society. In 1988, Bill C-93, the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, was passed and became the first formal legislative vehicle for Canada's multicultural policy.

While Canada's multiculturalism policy had as a stated objective to foster a more just society, early multicultural education programs instead emphasized cultural pluralism. Such programs were concerned with superficial expression of culture, and focused on "sarees, samosas and the steel band" (Ghosh, 1994; 63). Over time, the shift in focus to equity and anti-discrimination measures widened the meaning of multicultural education to include antiracist education. These programs, strengthened by policy initiatives, have been effective in bringing about certain changes in opportunity for minority groups (Dei, 1993; Ghosh, 1994; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1992, 1993).

Québec's Intercultural Policy

Québec's policy on multiculturalism was developed in reaction to the federal multicultural policy. Briefly stated, Québec rejected multiculturalism as official government policy, and in its place, the province developed a policy of "interculturalism." The Government of Québec rejected the federal policy principally on the grounds that it was an affront to the special status of Québec within Canada and to the delicate political balance between the two charter groups (Ouellet, 1991). Hence, multiculturalism was seen as an attempt to downgrade Québec's status from that of a founding nation to one of many ethnic groups, within the context of the dominant Anglo-centric majority (Ouellet, 1992). Québec's policy of interculturalism recognizes the reality of the province's identity as a distinct Francophone community, where the French language and culture holds paramount importance. Ouellet outlines:

> During the last 10 years or so, there have been more and more insistent demands that the Québec education system give serious consideration to the question of pluralism. It is around the catchword of "intercultural education" that pedagogical initiatives have tried to take into account the growing pluralism of the school population, especially in the Montréal area. With the decline of the birth rate and the promulgation of Bill 101 making French compulsory in school for the children of immigrants, the question of integration of immigrants to Québec society has become a major political issue in Québec, and intercultural education is now one of the priorities of the Québec government. (p. 121)

Since the Quiet Revolution in Québec, language and French Canadian nationalism have replaced religion as the dominant metaphor of culture (D'Anglejan & De Koninck, 1990). As a result, Québec policy regarding ethnic and cultural minorities continues to be articulated in relation to the preservation and enhancement of Quebecois culture by means of the dominance of the French language. In 1974, French was made the official language of Québec, and later in 1977, Bill 101 gave further prominence to French in everyday life, work and education. According to Bill 101, all children, with the exception of those whose parents had attended English primary and secondary school in Québec, were required to attend public school in French. McAndrew (1991) states:

> While rejecting the Canadian policy of multiculturalism, in 1978 the Québec government adopted a modified version of multiculturalism that stressed both the value of cultural diversity and the necessity of sharing cultural differences in a common society through a common medium: the French language. More recently, the province's policy statement on immigration and integration, Let's Build Quebec Together (1990), clearly defined Québec as a "pluralistic society open to diverse influences, within the limits set by the respect for democratic values and the need for inter-group exchange." (p. 72)

In 1981, le Ministère des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration (MCCI) published a plan of action respecting cultural communities entitled *Autant de façons d'être Québécois*. While rejecting both the American melting pot and the Canadian multicultural mosaic, the Québec Government coined a new phrase to describe the vision of the province in respect of multiculturalism: 'cultural convergence', a convergence of efforts from all cultural communities

toward the realization of a collective project (MCCI, 1981). In 1984, the Ministry of Education struck a committee to specifically examine education and its cultural communities. The Chancy Report (1985) envisioned the school as the place for the integration of new Quebeckers and the sensitization of children to the contributions of diversity and inter-ethnic collaboration, all the while establishing the dominance of the French language and culture. Zinman (1991) outlines the existence of competing tensions within Québec's intercultural policy, notably the desire to value cultural communities and accord them equal status and respect, while at the same time subordinating these efforts to the central cause of promoting the French language. McAndrew (1991) adds:

> The Québec government set forward three main orientations: increasing the accessibility and quality of French language instruction services and developing the use of French among immigrants and Quebeckers from the cultural communities; supporting the reception of newcomers and promoting full participation of immigrants and Quebeckers from cultural communities in all aspects of social, economic, cultural and political life; developing harmonious intergroup relations among Quebeckers of all origins. (p. 74)

In many respects, Québec's education system responded to the challenge of cultural pluralism in schools much like school systems in other parts of North America. Like other jurisdictions, Québec's initial response involved offering special services to promote the teaching and learning of French (Bourhis, 1984). Ultimately, Québec's demographic and linguistic future was seen to depend on the province's ability to provide an environment in which cultural groups share responsibility for the protection and promotion of French. Government policies, which advocate cultural pluralism and intercultural education, stressed the predominance of the Francophone majority group in Québec's socially and culturally changing society.

Ouellet (1988b) outlines that if intercultural education exists more in theory than in practice, one can only speculate as to the viability of schools in being able to implement pluralistic policies while maintaining the goal of promoting the primacy of French. Ouellet asks

whether, in the end, interculturalism takes on real meaning at the level of the school, where students from various cultural communities converge? Dupuis (1991) identifies some of the challenges schools face in integrating diverse cultural communities into Québec society: the burgeoning number of culturally diverse students in Montréal schools, the affective and social difficulties encountered by these students as immigrants and refugees, and these students' preference for English over French as the language of communication both outside of the classroom, and in the wider context of becoming residents of Canada and North America.

Juteau, McAndrew and Pietrantonio (1998) state that, in spite of the rhetoric, multiculturalism and interculturalism share many similarities.

> Both policies celebrate pluralism and reject old-fashioned assimilationism as a mode of managing relations between majorities and minorities. They entertain similar relationships to linguistic pluralism to the extent that the latter is more and more presented as offering economic and political advantages in light of globalization. In both cases, language and culture are subsidized with a view to integration or to national interest. Both give priority to social and cultural issues, and focus on racism, participation, rapprochement and the reduction of cultural maintenance programs. Both recognize that the actualization of equality requires more than formal equality; that is, they recognize that there are differentiations in the practice of equality.
>
> However, these similarities should not mask their differences. The Québec Policy Statement pays less attention to anti-racism than does multiculturalism policy, in spite of promises that such issues will be addressed... A second difference concerns the fact that the Policy Statement in Québec is seen as more clearly liberal, in the philosophical sense of the term, in its relationship to the individual and the community than the wording of the Law on Multiculturalism adopted by the federal government in 1988. ... Finally, the Canadian policy on Multiculturalism emphasizes there is no official culture in the country while the Québec statement reaffirms the pluralism of *la culture québécoise.* This is more than a simple nuance. The difference is crucial, since the existence of a *culture québécoise* is here posited. (p. 101)

Montréal's school system

From its passage in 1867, the *British North America Act* guaranteed separate systems of education for Catholic and Protestant populations in Upper and Lower Canada. Recently in 1998, Québec school boards were reorganized along linguistic lines, although the separate system still exists in most provinces in the rest of Canada. The collection of data for this study

predated this restructuring and thus was conducted within a Protestant school system which was largely English with a growing French sector. In the city of Montréal, *La Commission des Ecoles Catholiques de Montréal* (CECM) and *The Protestant School Board of Greater Montréal* (PSBGM) represented the two school systems. Traditionally, immigrants to Québec sent their children to English Protestant schools, however, for example, Irish, Polish, Italian communities etc. had access to an English Catholic system. For the most part, Catholic schools restricted their admission to Catholic students, whereas the Protestant system admitted all religious groups.

Ouellet (1992) articulates that in a span of a few decades, Québec society has evolved from a mainly rural, mono-cultural, agricultural society to an increasingly pluralistic, urban and post-industrial society.

> The relevance of the question of pluralism for education in Québec does not depend only on the sociological reality of cultural pluralism in the Montréal area. Its main source is the general evolution of Québec society which in a few decades has gone from the ideological monolithism of a traditional rural society to the scattered pluralism of a post-industrial society. (p. 121)

With this revolution, schools and teachers faced new educational challenges. However, it was not until the 1980s that the Québec government paid serious attention to the education of cultural communities in the province (Ouellet, 1992). The school boards PSBGM and CECM began to respond to the multi-ethnic nature of Québec society in the early 1980s. The English Protestant system already had a culturally diverse student population, but with the introduction of Bill 101 in 1977, the French Catholic system, which until then had a relatively homogeneous student population, began to face a tremendous diversity of cultural communities for the first time in its history.

Montréal is the most heterogeneous urban area in the province of Québec. Persons of French origin constitute 63% of the Montréal population, while the remaining 37% consist of

approximately 7.5% English, 14% other Europeans, and 15% Asian, African, South American and other origins (Statistics Canada, 1996). Since nearly 90% of children from immigrant families attend schools in the Greater Montréal area, Montréal schools began to assume a more significant responsibility for the integration of new immigrants into Québec society (McAndrew, 1993b). When access to English language instruction was restricted based on the parent's language of instruction, a dramatic shift in the enrolment of the Allophone student population resulted. According to the Ministry of Education in Québec (MEQ) (1992), only 27% of the Allophone student population in public schools in 1978 attended French schools. By 1989, this figure had risen to 71%.

Acting upon the recommendations of the *Chancy Report*, the MEQ and MCCI introduced a number of language policy initiatives. The first set of initiatives was concerned with French language acquisition by immigrant children and included the introduction of '*classes d'accueil*' or welcoming classes at the kindergarten, elementary and secondary levels. Set up as an incentive to attract students to the French school system, the '*classes d'accueil*' were intended to help students acquire a degree of fluency in French, while providing an introduction to other subjects that would be useful to their integration into regular classes, and to developing positive attitudes toward Québec society. In general, students remain in the '*classes d'acceuil*' for approximately ten months, but there are certain provisions for additional time or for follow-up services as the need arises. These classes, which allow for a more gradual entry into the mainstream school system, appear to be successful, and are generally appreciated by the students (D'Anglejan & De Koninck, 1990).

In addition, there are '*classes de francisation*' which are available to children of immigrants and Anglophones who choose to attend French schools. These classes provide intensive French language support, as well as other special measures to assist in integrating non-

Francophones into French schools. The MEQ also supports heritage language programs, or '*Programmes d'enseignement des langues d'origines*' (PELO) in public schools at the elementary level, and MCCI supports heritage language acquisition and maintenance programs or, '*Programmes des langues ethniques*' (PLE), through subsidies to cultural community-based organizations. McAndrew (1991) notes that because of the language debate in Québec, many Allophones have been more concerned with access to English instruction than to heritage language programs. PELO is often promoted as a means of encouraging students' acquisition of French and their integration into the school community.

Intercultural education in Québec must be seen in several contexts, including Québec's nationalist movement, the perceived threat of English to the French language and culture, the decline in the province's birth rate, and the influx of immigrant populations. Ghosh, Zinman and Talbani, (1995) state:

> To date, responses to the educational needs of cultural communities have focused mainly on issues of culture and language, and less on issues of equity and discrimination. The focus has primarily been uni-dimensional, with language being the greatest consideration. Although the school boards in Montréal have formal school policies on the promotion of interculturalism, there is little encouragement or support offered to the schools. For the most part, schools continue to limit intercultural education to one school week each year within which students are exposed to multicultural customs and ethnic foods. (p. 35)

Government response to diversity has primarily taken the form of 'classes d'accueil' and language training that provides intensive French instruction to non-French speaking students. Ghosh *et al.* (1995) believe that a more articulate policy for the education of cultural communities is required. Even though policies emphasizing the importance of intercultural education have been endorsed at both the government and school board level, the debate still must be brought beyond its current focus on language, and be translated into practical initiatives.

5.3 The teachers

In this study, I have chosen to work extensively with a few teachers, rather than work with a larger number of teachers in a more superficial way. For example, instead of compiling data representative of a large body of teachers in the hope of constructing an unrealizable model of the 'common' teacher, my objective in this study was to provide a case study of actual teachers who have demonstrated their commitment to the educational system. This choice was based on the belief that it is in the daily, lived experiences of practitioners, rather than in educational commissions, policy initiatives or research institutions, that teaching can best be understood. Eisner (1991) states:

> The qualitative study of *particular* classrooms and *particular* teachers in *particular* schools makes it possible to provide feedback to teachers that is fundamentally different from the kind of information that they are given in in-service education programs or through journal publications. (p. 11)

In the following pages, I introduce the teachers who represent different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and class groups. In many ways, they provide important exemplars of diversity in our society. The women and men in this study are experienced educators with anywhere from ten to forty years of teaching. They share their past and present experiences to demonstrate how they have adapted to their changing teaching environment. In essence, their knowledge is practical and concrete and has developed over years as "wisdom of practice" (Shulman, 1987).

Great teachers come in all sizes, shapes, temperaments and personalities. Each teacher is at the centre of the construction of meaning in his or her classroom, where meaning is arrived at and ascribed within context and through interaction with the students (Mishler, 1979). Gaining insight into the way that teachers achieve, maintain and develop their identity throughout their careers is vitally important in understanding how they work towards making their classroom and school a good place in which to learn. As I introduce each of these teachers, it is my hope that

their strength, compassion and success at adapting to a changing teaching environment over the years, will become apparent, and will shed light on the issue of better serving the multicultural needs of their students.

Marie

It was only by chance that Marie came to Canada. After studying to be an English teacher in France, she accepted a one-year teaching position in England. However, prior to taking up her position, she one day overheard a woman mention that teaching opportunities were also available in Canada. She decided to apply, even though Canada was so much more distant from her homeland, reasoning that the position would, after all, be only for one year.

After receiving her acceptance, Marie arrived in Winnipeg in 1973, ready to begin teaching. In Manitoba, there were far more opportunities to teach French than English, so she taught French as a Second Language (FSL) at the University of Manitoba, and in high school to students who were not, as she says, particularly interested in learning French. After two years, she moved on to language training at Via Rail in Winnipeg, which was her first experience with teaching in a multicultural setting, since many of Via Rail's employees came from Trinidad, Tobago, Pakistan and India. In 1987, her husband's work brought them to Montréal. Given her previous experience in Manitoba, she was able to begin teaching in Québec shortly after their arrival. She has been teaching in a *classe d'accueil* since then.

J'adore l'enseignement. Il semble qu'il s'agit là d'une condition essentielle pour quiconque songe à l'enseignement mais ce n'est pas toujours le cas. L'enseignement du français comme langue seconde dans une classe d'accueil est ce que je préfère. J'aime tout particulièrement la dimension sociale de mon

I love teaching. It seems like it should be a given if one wants to teach, but that is not always the case. Teaching FSL in a 'classe d'accueil' is what I prefer. I especially like the social aspect of my work. I am not only a teacher. I am also a social worker, a nurse, a psychologist, a mother, and a father to these

travail. Je ne suis pas simplement une enseignante. Je suis également pour ces enfants une travailleuse sociale, une infirmière, une psychologue, une mère et un père. Si je n'étais pas devenue enseignante, je serais devenue une travailleuse sociale. J'ai toujours été consciente de cela.

children. If I hadn't been a teacher I would have been a social worker. I always knew that.

Lorsque nous travaillons avec ces élèves, nous obtenons beaucoup en retour. Même si c'est difficile, je ne changerais jamais de travail. Je suis sensible aux questions ayant trait à la séparation - mes parents se sont divorcés et j'ai quitté ma famille pour venir au Canada, ce qui veut dire que j'ai dû quitter tous mes proches.

When we work with these students we get a lot in return. Even if it is difficult, I would never change my work. I am sensitive when it comes to issues of separation - I come from a family where my parents were divorced and I left my family to come to Canada, which meant leaving everyone behind.

In 1989, Marie was asked by the Protestant Board of Education and the Québec Ministry of Education to participate in a project in which she would write a handbook and textbook for children in *classes d'accueil*. At the time, there was no such curriculum in place in Québec, and to date, there is still little material for children in *classes d'accueil*.

C'était une méthode que j'utilisais en classe avec les enfants. Nous ne pouvons demander aux gens qui arrivent ici d'être des Québécois, juste comme ça, ou d'être des Canadiens, juste comme ça. Ma responsabilité, en tant qu'enseignante, est d'établir un pont entre leur pays et le Québec. De plus, pour que les élèves soient bien préparés pour les cours, ils doivent posséder une bonne maîtrise de la langue française. C'est la raison pour laquelle la série avait pour objectif de fournir aux élèves une solide compréhension du français, de les encourager à parler de leur pays, et de les inviter à apprendre ce que cela signifie de vivre au Québec.

It was a method that I was using in class with the kids. We cannot ask people that arrive here to be Quebecois, just like that, or to be Canadian, just like that. My responsibility as a teacher is to build a bridge between their country and Quebec. Also, in order for the students to be well prepared for the regular classroom, they have to have a good command of the French language. So the objective of the series was to provide the students with a solid understanding of French, encourage them to speak about their countries, and invite them to learn about what it means to live in Quebec.

John

When I sat down in John's home to discuss his participation in this study, one of the first questions he asked me was to guess where he was born. Before I could respond, he informed me that he was born on an island.

When I say island, people make assumptions that I was born elsewhere. Considering how I look, I must be Jamaican or Barbadian, not a Montréaler or a Canadian.

John was raised, along with his two brothers and two sisters, in an inner-city environment in Montréal, in an extremely poor home. His father worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway as a porter. According to John, his father was a brilliant man. He came from Guyana with many skills. He had been a printer in Guyana, but in Canada he was unable to practice his profession, because the newspapers denied him the chance to work in his field, so he worked as a porter.

My father called his job a 20th century slave job. His job was to make beds, to clean peoples' shoes. That troubled him all his life, because he knew he was worth more than that. He would always tell us that he never wanted any of his children to work in that kind of environment. He considered his work legalized slavery.

John's mother worked as a maid. She was an intelligent, but under-educated woman. Nevertheless, she could read anything, be analytical, and could 'cut to the chase', according to John. His mother taught him respect and introduced him to Black heroes and ethics. She had one golden rule by which all of her children were to abide: "Do as you would be did by." John remembers as a young boy playing street hockey when one of the neighbours passed by and he was rude to her. Upon returning home, this same neighbour called John's mother and told her how John had spoken to her. His mother wasted no time in coming outside and giving him a beating for his rudeness. "Do as you would be did by."

After working in industry for a while, John decided to attend McGill University to pursue a teaching career. While a university student, he worked in a street program in the Montréal neighbourhood known as Little Burgundy, where he would spend time with inner city kids until they were required to go home at 7:30 p.m. Approached by the PSBGM even before he had graduated from McGill, John accepted a position which he has now held for over 20 years, teaching English to students in grades seven to ten.

I went into teaching because I think I'm pretty good with kids. I think I have always been good with kids. I remember when I was a bachelor living in St. Laurent. A lot of the kids knew me and sometimes on Saturday morning they would knock on my door. My roommate would answer and the kids would ask, "Can Johnny come out and play?" Kids tell me everything. They tell me before they tell the VP. At my last school, they used to put that to their advantage. If something would happen, they used to put me with the kids. I could get to a situation sooner than anyone else.

I come from the inner city. I understand the workings. When I began teaching, I asked to be put in an inner city school because I knew I could do it. I was born a few minutes from where I work and live.

Diane

Diane's parents were born in Greece, but she was born in the Maritimes. At an early age, Diane lost both her father and her only brother. Her mother worked as a seamstress to support the family. She grew up in a town with a population of 100,000. There were not many immigrants settling in the Maritimes in those days. There were a few Greek families, but not many. For a long time, she never thought that her childhood was different from that of other children, until she began working with children from culturally diverse backgrounds, which helped her to better understand them.

In my school, I was the only non-Anglophone child and it was the same in high school. I felt comfortable in the sense that no one would point me out because I looked different, but I had a hard time because of my name, because people would mispronounce my name. Also, I celebrated holidays differently and I would have to explain that I wasn't Catholic or Protestant. Then there was the food which was common in my diet and uncommon to the other kids. The language I spoke at home was so different. I didn't want people to hear me speak Greek. This started to affect my vocabulary and ability to speak Greek.

Diane applied to McGill University to pursue a degree in the sciences. When she was accepted, she left the Maritimes for good. Once she completed her undergraduate studies, she became a supply teacher for a year, and then was asked to teach a class on a full-time basis when the regular teacher left. The following summer, she enrolled in an emergency teacher training course which lasted for three consecutive summers. Early in her career, she married a man of Greek origin and had one child. Diane has spent her entire career at the same inner-city elementary school, as a teacher for her first six years, then as vice principal for six years, and finally as principal for the past 18 years.

What I found when I first came to this school is that kids didn't want to be heard speaking another language because they don't want to be made fun of. I've been at this school for a long time, as a teacher and as an administrator. When I was a teacher here in the 1970s, the population was primarily Chinese and Greek and they complimented each other nicely. The quiet and boisterous, so to speak. The Chinese spoke Chinese, but they would whisper so they wouldn't be heard and be embarrassed because the kids would make fun of them. I identified with that right away.

When I was younger, I wouldn't tell my mom about meetings at school because I didn't want her to come. So my mom hardly stepped foot in the school I attended. For some reason, I felt close to the Chinese students and it became a goal for me to get these kids to be proud of their language and heritage. After I returned here as a principal, we had more or less the same population, Chinese and Greek, with other ethnic groups, and I thought "How was I going to work on this?" We started having celebrations and doing Chinese art and storytelling, and making Chinese important by learning about China. We started very slowly, 18 years ago. It didn't happen overnight.

Nadine

Nadine was 21 years of age when she came to Canada to pursue her studies in music at McGill University. She was the youngest of seven children. In those days, Canada was regarded as a good place to pursue studies, and furthermore the Canadian university system was similar to the British system with which her family was familiar in Jamaica. Nadine was quite young when her father died. She lived with her mother and siblings in a remote Jamaican village in the hills that was quite isolated, so they learned to be self-sufficient. They had everything they needed on

the farm, but when it came time to go to school they had to travel to the nearest town. Her father had always told the children to pursue a profession that would serve humanity, while her mother told them to do what would make them happy. Nadine chose music, but teaching chose her.

In those days, it was difficult to obtain a professional degree in Jamaica. We didn't have any faculties of law or medicine, so I decided to come to Canada. Several of my brothers and sisters left for England to pursue their studies. I always wanted to be a musician. I started to do some teaching in order to support my music, and before long I was teaching full time. I guess you could say that teaching found me.

Nadine has been teaching kindergarten for over 40 years. When she first came to Canada to attend university, many people assumed that she did not have much of an education. That attitude did not seem to be as much of a challenge to her as the weather.

I arrived in September and it was already cold. I wasn't afraid of coming alone, I suppose because we were always encouraged to be self-sufficient living in the remote village where I grew up. I thought I was ready for the Canadian cold, with my wool skirt, jacket, coat and new stockings, but it was still a shock to my system. I lived at the McGill residences and every night I would stay up thinking about how I would make it across a 10-metre passage from the residence to the building where my classes were held.

Sometimes I see young children with gloves awkwardly put on their hands. I help them put them on because they come from a country where you can't imagine that you have to cover your fingers. I can sympathize with them because I really didn't know how to deal with the cold. I still don't some days.

Nadine enjoys playing a number of instruments, as do her husband and three children. She has encouraged her children to speak French, in part because she recognized that being unable to speak French in Montréal is a drawback. Her husband, who came to Montréal from Montserrat, the British West Indies, at an early age, was able to learn French and eventually became a teacher in a French school.

Pierre

Pierre is a Quebecker from Montréal. French is the only language he spoke at home. In CEGEP, his studies were in special education. After school, he would work in a centre for disadvantaged orphans. He was not required to do any teaching while at the centre, only to organize activities and spend time with the children, until circumstances changed and Pierre began to do some teaching.

Après les coupures effectuées en 1982-83, mes heures au Centre ont été réduites de 36 à 18 heures. Si je voulais continuer à travailler, je savais que j'aurais à enseigner et c'est pourquoi j'ai décidé d'oeuvrer dans l'enseignement. J'ai ainsi été en mesure d'obtenir un plus grand nombre d'heures, ce qui m'a plu. Ils m'ont permis d'enseigner même si je n'avais pas de diplôme en éducation. J'ai enseigné parce que personne d'autre ne voulait enseigner à ces enfants.

After the cuts in 1982-83, my hours at the Center went from 36 to 18 hours. If I wanted to continue working, I knew I would have to teach, so I decided to go into education. As a result, I was able to get more hours, which I liked. They allowed me to teach, even though I didn't have a teaching degree. I taught because no one else wanted to teach these kids.

In the meantime, Pierre was able to complete his Bachelor of Arts degree at the Université du Québec à Montréal, and has been teaching for the last 14 years.

Lorsque j'ai commencé à enseigner, j'ai enseigné en classe d'accueil, ce que j'ai trouvé très enrichissant. Au moment où ces enfants entrent dans votre classe, ils ne parlent pas un mot de français et lorsqu'ils quittent votre classe, ils parlent et lisent le français. Lorsque vous enseignez en classe d'accueil, il est possible de constater les progrès accomplis. De plus, ces enfants n'ont pas de grandes attentes à votre égard. Ils n'ont jamais eu grand chose dans la vie. Leurs parents n'ont pas beaucoup d'argent. J'ai toujours été intéressé à travailler avec des enfants qui ont besoin d'aide.

When I began teaching, I taught in a 'classe d'accueil' and I found it very rewarding. From the moment these kids enter your class, they don't speak a word of French, and then they leave your class speaking and reading French. When you teach in a 'classe d'accueil', you see the progress. Furthermore, these kids don't demand much from you. They haven't had much in life. Their parents don't have a lot of money. I have always been interested in working with kids that need help.

During the summer months, Pierre does not take a break from working with kids. Even though he has two young children of his own, he enjoys working in summer camps as a facilitator or *animateur.*

La chose qui importe le plus pour moi est de rendre l'école suffisamment agréable pour que les enfants veuillent y venir. Les enfants peuvent inventer toutes sortes de raisons de ne pas aller à l'école. Lorsque je dis à mes élèves qu'il n'y aura pas d'école le lendemain, ils semblent déçus. Ce genre de réaction m'enchante. S'ils éprouvent du plaisir à venir à l'école, tout le reste va s'arranger. L'école doit être un endroit où les enfants aiment aller.

Je ris beaucoup avec les enfants. Il est nécessaire d'avoir un bon sens de l'humour. Les enfants doivent se sentir à l'aise, sinon ils ne voudront pas contribuer à la classe et parler le français. Il m'importe de les aider à s'intégrer à la culture québécoise. Je les encourage à parler le français le plus possible. Cette année, je compte 11 nationalités et 8 langues différentes parmi les élèves de ma classe, de telle sorte que le français devient le point commun.

Nous effectuons des sorties de groupe. Je les amène au théâtre français au centre-ville et au mois d'octobre, nous allons cueillir des pommes. Je leur parle du Québec et puisqu'ils vivent maintenant ici, il est dans leur intérêt d'apprendre à connaître le Québec et de parler le français.

The most important thing for me is to make school pleasant enough for the children that they'll want to come to school. Kids can come up with a lot of reasons why they don't want to go to school. When I tell my kids there won't be any school tomorrow, they seem disappointed. I'm pleased to see that kind of reaction. If they enjoy coming to school, everything else will fall into place. School has to be a place they enjoy coming to.

I laugh a lot with the kids. You have to have a good sense of humour. The kids need to be at ease, otherwise they won't feel comfortable contributing in class and speaking French. It's important for me to integrate them into Quebec and the Quebecois culture. I encourage them to speak French as much as possible. This year, I have 11 different nationalities and 8 different languages in my class, so French becomes the point in common.

We have class outings. I take them to the French theatre downtown and in October we go apple picking. I speak about Quebec and since they are now here, it is more advantageous for them to learn about Quebec and speak French.

Queenie

Queenie was born in Kingston, Jamaica. Her father, a Methodist, was a very strong person. He converted to Catholicism in order to marry Queenie's mother, also an exceptionally strong woman. There were six children in the family, and for as long as she can remember,

Queenie's parents always worked in the family business, a general store, located in an underprivileged part of Kingston. It was a given that all the children would spend time at the store to help their parents. Queenie didn't seem to mind, she enjoyed being there, meeting and talking to all the people in the community.

From an early age, Queenie witnessed certain values being demonstrated at home: respect for others, the importance of not speaking ill of others, and helping out in the community.

I remember at times if I would begin speaking ill of someone's character, my father would remind me, 'Let life take care of it.' That's all I needed to hear, even though it was hard to follow that advice sometimes. My father was very given to the community. As a child, I remember him always going to meetings. He sat on so many committees, helping people out.

During high school, Queenie would go to the local YMCA which was located near her parents' business to do volunteer work with special children. After high school, Queenie wanted to pursue her studies in commerce. At that time, Sir George Williams University in Montréal, now part of Concordia University, was generally considered the best school for those interested in studying commerce. Admitted to Sir George Williams' program in business and applied sciences, she intended to pursue her studies, travel, and then return to Jamaica. But, as fate would have it, she met her husband at university and Canada became her home.

Going into education was an interesting curve for me. It wasn't what I wanted to do when I was young because I thought I wanted to be an accountant. That's why I was in business studies. I then switched to the social sciences which led me to think that I wanted to do social work, but I found it very sterile and so decided to go into teaching. So I ended up doing my social work as a teacher. That was by choice.

In 1970, the CECM offered Queenie a teaching position, which she turned down because her heart was set on social work. But in 1976, she began teaching with the PSBGM and has been teaching there ever since. She taught business, law, math, and later computer science to special education children for over 13 years, until 1989, when she became vice-principal.

Teaching special education children was very rewarding for me. I learned to become patient and accepting. You need to be not only a teacher, but also a friend. You need to be honest, because these kids read you like a flash. I really found my niche working with these kids.

In 1992, Queenie became principal at the school where she currently works, which is a category one, high-needs school.

I was aware of the milieu when I accepted the position, because in the 70s I had started a daycare for single parent families with a Local Initiative Grant from the Trudeau government. I've often thought there must be children in this school whose parents went to that daycare I started up.

Sarah

Sarah was born in northern Québec, as were both her parents. She considers herself an Anglophone, even though her mother is French Canadian. Since her mother was quite bilingual and married an Allophone, English was the language spoken at home. Sarah completed an undergraduate degree at Concordia University in religious and feminist studies. After receiving her Bachelor of Arts, she worked as a restaurant manager for eight years. She came to realize that this line of work was not of particular interest to her, and with a small child at home, her working hours were unsuitable. Sarah decided to change professions.

J'ai réfléchi à ce que je voulais faire, à mes rêves. On m'a fait pensé à un excellent professeur qui m'avais enseigné au Collège Dawson lorsque j'étais au CEGEP. Il m'avait initiée à la théologie de la libération. Je voulais faire ce qu'il faisait et ce qu'il avait fait pour moi. J'en suis venue à comprendre que ce professeur et son cours m'avaient beaucoup apporté, de telle sorte que je voulais faire la même chose dans la vie. Je voulais parler aux adolescents au sujet de Dieu, de la liberté, de la justice.

I thought about what I wanted to do, about my dreams. I was reminded of an excellent instructor I had had in CEGEP at Dawson College. He introduced me to liberation theology. I wanted to do what he was doing and what he had done for me. I came to understand that this professor and his course had been very meaningful for me, so I wanted to do the same in my life. I wanted to talk to teenagers about God, freedom, justice.

After completing her education degree at McGill University, Sarah was offered a teaching position with the French sector of the PSBGM where, over the past 10 years, she has been teaching Moral and Religious Education (MRE) to adolescents.

Le fait d'être dans le système français ne m'a rien appris que je ne connaissais pas déjà. Cela est simplement venu confirmer ce que je sais déjà en qualité de québécoise anglophone qui décide de rester et qui a un pied dans les deux mondes. Je ne veux pas quitter mais lorsque j'entends Parizeau faire des commentaires du genre de ceux qu'il a fait lors du soir du référendum, je me sens comme une étrangère dans ma propre demeure.

Being in the French system has not taught me anything I didn't already know. It has only confirmed what I already know as an Anglo Quebecker who chooses to stay and has a foot in both worlds. I don't want to leave, but when I hear Parizeau make the comments that he did the night of the last Referendum, it makes me feel alienated from my own home.

Je suis la seule personne anglophone qui travaille en français à l'école. Certains des enseignants sont allophones mais la plupart sont francophones, "des Québécois pure laine". Nous nous entendons bien. Ils sont venus chez moi pour un barbecue mais je demeure l'anglophone du groupe. Ils me disent "Tu es correcte parce que tu n'es pas comme les autres". Les autres sont les anglophones. Ils sont l'ennemi. On m'accepte parce que ma mère est canadienne-française et que je suis originaire de Val d'Or. Étant originaire du nord du Québec, la culture française fait partie de mon identité, de telle sorte qu'ils me voient comme étant différente des autres anglophones alors qu'en fait je ne suis pas différente parce que j'ai un pied dans une culture et l'autre pied dans l'autre.

I am the only Anglophone that works in French at the school. We have a few Allophone teachers, but most are Francophones, "dyed-in-the-wool Quebeckers". We get along well. They've come to my home for a barbecue, but I am still the Anglophone in the group. They say to me, "You're okay because you're not like the others." The others are the Anglophones. They're the enemy. I am accepted because my mother is French-Canadian and I come from Val d'Or. Coming from northern Quebec, the French culture is part of who I am, so they see me as different from other Anglophones, even though I'm actually not that different because I have a foot in one culture, and a foot in the other.

Sarah considers herself a Canadian when she travels outside of Canada and a Quebecker when she is in Toronto. When she is in front of her students, she is a Canadian, but there is nowhere else in Canada she would rather live than in Québec. She lives in both languages and loves both cultures.

Je suppose que c'est la raison pour laquelle les discussions au sujet de la tolérance sont si

I suppose that is why discussions on tolerance and acceptance are so important to me,

importantes pour moi, parce que je vis dans les deux cultures et que je vois les deux côtés du même argument. Je parle à mes étudiants et étudiantes à l'école de ce que signifie le fait de vivre dans une société où règne la tolérance et que le fait d'être tolérant n'est pas suffisant et que nous ne devrions pas faire de la tolérance la valeur suprême des Canadiens.

because I live in both cultures and see both sides of the same argument. I talk to my kids at school about what it means to live in a tolerant society, and that we should be more than just tolerant, and not hold tolerance up as the supreme Canadian value.

Je suppose que si j'avais une philosophie de l'éducation, je voudrais lever le miroir, amener les jeunes à s'y regarder et à se poser de questions difficiles.

I suppose if I had a philosophy of education, I would want to hold up the mirror, and have the kids look at themselves and ask themselves difficult questions.

Sorin

Sorin was born in a town in the former Yugoslavia which used to be home to over 16 ethnic groups. Diversity was a fact of life for him in his homeland.

Je suis originaire de Roumanie. Là où je vivais, il n'y avait pas beaucoup de groupes ethniques qui savaient parler le yougoslave, si ce n'est deux ou trois mots permettant de se débrouiller. J'ai cependant appris le serbo-croate parce que je suis allé à l'école en Yougoslavie. Il y a toujours eu une telle variété de personnes dans mon village, des personnes d'origine turque, hongroise, allemande. Nous avons réussi à vivre ensemble.

I am of Romanian origin. Where I lived, not many ethnic groups knew how to speak Yugoslavian, except for two or three words to get by. I learned Serbo-Croatian, however, because I attended school in Yugoslavia. There was always such a mixture of people in my village: Turks, Hungarians, Germans. We managed to get along.

Sorin's desire to become a teacher stemmed from the fact that many members of his family, spanning across four generations, had been either teachers or Orthodox priests. To this day, Sorin considers teaching to be one of the more noble vocations. During his university studies in Yugoslavia, he studied French, but was unable to fulfill his dream of teaching the language in Yugoslavia because it was removed from the national curriculum.

Je n'avais pas d'autre choix que de chercher un autre emploi. J'ai commencé à travailler comme journaliste, ce que je n'ai pas vraiment

I had no choice but to look for other employment. I began working as a journalist, which I did not particularly enjoy, even though

aimé, même si c'était bien rémunéré. Un jour, quelqu'un du journal pour lequel je travaillais est venu me voir. On m'a avisé du fait qu'on me donnait un an pour devenir communiste. Je savais que le moment de quitter était venu.

it paid well. One day, someone from the newspaper where I was working approached me. They informed me that I had one year to become a communist. I knew it was time to leave.

Je désirais aller en Europe pour y enseigner le français mais mon diplôme n'y était pas reconnu, de telle sorte que j'ai présenté une demande pour venir au Canada. J'avais entendu parler du Canada depuis l'âge de onze ans et j'avais de la parenté au Canada, qui demeure maintenant en Ontario.

I was interested in going to Europe to teach French, but my diploma was not recognized there, so I applied to come to Canada. I had heard about Canada since I was 11 because I had relatives in Canada, who now live in Ontario.

When he first came to Canada in 1974, Sorin had no guarantees that he would be able to teach, but was prepared to wait. After one year, he began teaching French as a Second Language in an English school in Montréal. After eight years, he switched to a 'classe d'accueil' where he still works.

Ayant appris deux langues, le français et le serbo-croate, je suis conscient des difficultés auxquelles mes élèves sont confrontés. Je pense que c'est un grand atout pour moi. De plus, en tant qu'immigrant, j'ai eu à surmonter des problèmes semblables à ceux auxquels ces enfants sont confrontés dans leur nouvelle vie au Canada. Je pense que je les comprends mieux que d'autres enseignants qui n'ont jamais eu à surmonter les défis d'un "nouveau commencement", dans un lieu où vous ne connaissez personne et où vous n'avez pas la sécurité offerte par la présence des personnes que vous aimez.

Having learned two languages, French and Serbo-Croatian, I am aware of the difficulties my students face. I think that is a big asset I have. Also, as an immigrant, I have had to overcome similar problems that these children face in their new life in Canada. I think I understand them better than other teachers that have never had to endure the challenges of a 'new beginning,' in a place where you know nobody and do not have the security of loved ones around you.

This study focuses on the intensely human aspect of teaching and the practitioners' narratives about their experiences. As such, the biographical vignettes presented in this chapter provide an understanding of who these veteran teachers are, both personally, and within an educational context. These teachers bring with them many perspectives representing long-held

beliefs about teachers' roles and practices, about classrooms and schools, and about students and learning.

Each of the teachers is at once Canadian, and a linguistic, cultural or racial "bordercrosser" (Andalzua, 1987). When examining the way in which they speak about their lives, families, and roles as educators, it is evident that they have developed a "double vision" (Hoffman, 1989) in terms of how they view the world. For example: Diane, Nadine, Sorin, and Queenie are bicultural individuals. John, Nadine, and Queenie are Black, and along with Diane come from poor and working class environments. Marie, Sarah, and Sorin are bilingual, and John and Pierre speak French and English reasonably well. In essence, each of these educators travels daily from one culture to another, and from one language to another, as they build bridges of understanding for their students in a multicultural society.

The teacher Marie is sensitive to how her students cope with living in a new country, and feels that it is her responsibility to build bridges between her students' country of origin and Québec. The teacher John grew up in a poor inner-city environment and lives his life according to his family's golden rule: "Do as you would be did by" - treat people the way you wish to be treated. The teacher Diane recalls being the only non-Anglophone in her primary and secondary schools, and as a result, when she became principal of her inner-city school, a goal for her was to ensure that her students were proud of their language and culture. Pierre teaches with one objective each day: that his students enjoy being in school. The teacher Nadine is a bicultural individual who was born in Jamaica and certainly remembers her feelings of displacement when she first arrived in Canada. The teacher Queenie is also bicultural and from Jamaica. She believes that by teaching she is doing the social work she had first set out to do. The teacher Sarah is a bilingual Anglophone that has a foot in both cultures in Québec. She maintains that tolerance and acceptance are of utmost importance to her, and accordingly discusses these issues

with her students in order to promote critical thinking. And finally, the teacher Sorin was immersed in linguistic and cultural diversity while growing up in the former Yugoslavia. As an immigrant, Sorin is sensitive to the problems his students face in their new life in Canada. After having observed these educators' pedagogical practices, I have come to understand that it is due to their personal and professional experiences that they have developed a strong sense of compassion, and an ability to accept the totality of their students' lived reality.

Concluding remarks

As mentioned in chapter two, my personal understanding of the complexity inherent in working in a multicultural environment is a result of my own lived experiences as a bicultural individual who was raised in the immigrant home, who speaks more than one language, and who has worked extensively with diversity. It was a privilege to work with these teachers, to watch them with their students, and to dialogue with them in their classrooms and in their homes as they provided enriching insights into their teaching. It is my hope that the narrative accounts in subsequent chapters will be reflective of the care and compassion they bring to their work each day.

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the social and economic forces that have played a significant role in teaching and learning in our classrooms by examining the changing Canadian family, the impact of television, violence, and technology, and the differences between today's students and those of twenty years ago. I then provided an historical overview of Canada's multiculturalism policy, Québec's intercultural policy and Montréal's school system in order to delineate the social, political and linguistic reality within which the Montréal educators find themselves. In the final section, I introduced the eight participants of this study as they discussed

their past experiences, values, families, dreams and desires as educators working in challenging teaching environments.

Chapter Six: The Voices of Experience Speak to Us

In chapter five of this study, I introduced the eight educators that are profiled in this inquiry. In this chapter, the teachers provide their insights into the awareness, attitudes, skills and values that are useful in contributing to dialogue with 'other'. In so doing, the teachers provide a profile of what a multicultural educator may look like. Their stories and practical reflections construct a portrait of the "bordercrosser" (Giroux, 1992): the multicultural individual who attempts to dialogue with 'other' in a pluralistic setting. Noddings (1991) states that by listening to the voices of experienced practitioners, one is better able to grasp the details of everyday practice, the essence of which is often lost in generalizations about teaching.

Today, educators face expectations in the classroom which differ from those they have experienced in the past. According to Dilworth (1992) and Hilliard (1989), although traditional approaches to teaching are still useful, teachers in today's multicultural classrooms must prepare to teach with a new set of skills, deeper knowledge and awareness, and with greater proficiency than was demanded of teachers in the past. Therefore, my objective in this inquiry is to enhance our understanding of the complexity of the multicultural classroom by listening to the teachers' voices as they attempt to capture the processes of their teaching. As such, the teachers' stories will illustrate that there is no 'right' way to teach a diverse group of learners. Each of the teachers has nonetheless sought to find meaningful ways to link their experiences with the changing environment and their students' lived experiences.

In this chapter, I begin by outlining the necessary knowledge base for effective pedagogy within a multicultural context. I then turn to the teachers themselves for their practical and personal insights into the awareness, attitudes, skills, and values necessary to teach in a pluralistic classroom. If a goal for education in a multicultural global society is to help students

and teachers acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to participate in national societies (Banks, 1997; Garcia & Pugh, 1992; Larkin, 1995; Zimpher & Ashburn, 1992), we must first ensure that educators have acquired the requisite qualities and characteristics to teach their students to live equitably and democratically in a multicultural society. As a result, if teachers perceive themselves to be multicultural citizens and multicultural educators, they will have the sensitivity, conviction, and courage to teach their students to become multicultural citizens in a local and global context.

6.1 Knowledge

In recent years, academic literature has devoted considerable attention to examining and delineating the knowledge which teachers require to teach effectively in a multi-ethnic setting (Banks, 1988, 1989, 1992, 1997, 2001; Bennett, 1995; Grant, 1995; Larkin & Sleeter, 1995; McDiarmid, 1991). Educators have always realized that good teaching requires knowledge of both the subject matter and the students (Kennedy, 1991). More recently, however, this framework of teaching has been extended to recognize that teachers, students and subject matter interact within multiple, layered contexts. It follows, therefore, that effective teaching now requires knowledge not only of the subject matter and the student, but also of the context where the two meet (Cazden & Mehan, 1989).

Subject matter knowledge, as well as knowledge of the learners' abilities and needs, allow the teacher to select, plan and implement effective instruction (Porter & Brophy, 1988). However, teaching in a multicultural environment requires not only knowledge of the subject, but also a reconceptualization of what constitutes knowledge, which is culturally influenced and has been constructed and re-constructed through time. Often, knowledge is presented as a body of unchanging facts that is rarely questioned. A closer reality is that knowledge is a changing

and contextual phenomenon. Teachers, along with their students, must be able to interrogate and reconstruct knowledge and understand that it reflects both subjectivity and objectivity (Banks, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 1992) in an ever-changing social landscape.

Banks (1991a) states that in present-day multicultural classrooms, research focuses on a wide range of ethnic groups using a comparative approach. Studying ethnic groups in this manner is an open-ended and humbling process, since no individual can acquire knowledge and remain knowledgeable about all cultures and races. Therefore, as a starting point, one must first learn about one's own culture and become 'comfortable in one's own skin'. Then, research indicates that it is more possible to acquire knowledge of various racial and cultural variables - racial identity, ethnicity, world-views, socio-cultural differences, and value orientations - and of how these variables may influence the individual (Baruth & Manning, 1992; Cazden & Mehan, 1989; Garcia, 1988;).

Erickson (1997) contends that learning about the <u>fundamentals</u> of culture is more useful than attempting to compile simply a knowledge base of the facts of other cultures. According to Erickson's approach, the entire curriculum would need to be transformed to view historical and contemporary events, concepts, and issues from a multiplicity of contexts. In essence, such a method of teaching about cultures does not necessarily encourage adding more content to the curriculum, but rather proposes rethinking and reconceptualizing the content that educators already know.

Furthermore, Gay (1977), Mock (1983) and Nickolai-Mays and Davis (1986) recommend that teachers should become more knowledgeable about ethnic group experiences. In their view, teachers need to acquire a knowledge base about the lifestyles of different ethnic groups, including their cultural patterns, value systems, communication, learning styles, and historical experiences. Whenever possible, the teachers' knowledge and the curriculum that is implemented

must reflect the increasingly diverse student population. However, it goes without saying that such knowledge does not exist in a vacuum and should be discussed in conjunction with the skills, attitudes, awareness, and values required for teaching in a culturally diverse environment. Baruth and Manning (1992) state that it will not suffice for educators to have knowledge of culturally and racially diverse learners. Teachers also need to develop the attitudes that demonstrate genuine concern and caring for their students, and the skills to plan and implement instruction for a diverse classroom.

Before elaborating on the teachers' insights into the necessary awareness, attitudes, skills, and values that a multicultural educator should possess to teach effectively in a multicultural environment, I will first turn to Nieto (1992) and Banks (1997) who provide an overview of what it means to be a multicultural teacher. Nieto states,

> Becoming a multicultural teacher ... means becoming a multicultural person, without this transformation of ourselves, any attempt at developing a multicultural perspective will be shallow and superficial....It means reeducating ourselves in several ways.
>
> First, we simply need to learn more, for example, by reading a variety of materials and going to many culturally pluralistic activities. It means looking for books and other materials that inform us about people and events we may know little about. Given the multicultural nature of our society, those materials are available, although sometimes they need to be sought out because we have learned not to see them.
>
> Second, we need to confront our own racism and biases. It is impossible to be a teacher with a multicultural perspective without going through this process. Because we are all products of a society that is racist and stratified by gender, class, and language, we have all internalized some of these messages in one way or another....Our own reeducation means not only learning new things but also unlearning some of the old. The process is a difficult and painful one. It is nevertheless a necessary part of becoming multicultural.
>
> Third, becoming a multicultural person means learning to see reality from a variety of perspectives....Reorienting ourselves in this way can be exhausting and difficult because it means a dramatic shift in our worldview. After going through this process, however, we can turn with renewed vigor to our schools and classrooms to remake them into multicultural environments. (p. 275)

Nieto argues that to become a multicultural educator, we must learn more about diverse cultures and peoples, have the courage to ask difficult questions so as to confront our own racism and

biases, and develop expansive, alternative ways of thinking and viewing the world. Banks (1997) also outlines the characteristics of a multicultural teacher:

> Teachers who successfully implement equity pedagogy draw upon a sophisticated knowledge base. They can enlist a broad range of pedagogical skills and have a keen understanding of their own cultural experiences, values and attitudes toward people who are culturally, racially, and ethnically different from ourselves. The skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to successfully implement equity pedagogy are the result of study, practical experience, and reflective self-analysis.
>
> Reflective self-analysis requires teachers to identify, examine, and reflect upon their attitudes toward different ethnic, racial, gender, and social-class groups. Many teachers are unaware of the extent to which they embrace racist and sexist attitudes and behaviours that are institutionalized within society as well as how they benefit from these related societal practices.
>
> Multicultural knowledge includes key concepts in multicultural education such as culture, immigration, racism, sexism, cultural assimilation, structural assimilation, ethnic group, stereotypes, prejudice and institutional racism. (p. 85)

The eight educators documented in this study provide practical, detailed insights into what it means to be a multicultural educator, identifying the awareness, attitudes, skills and values necessary to teach effectively in culturally diverse teaching environments.

6.2 Awareness

According to Banks (1997), Burbules and Rice (1991), Giroux (1991), Greene (1993) and Nieto (1992), awareness of self is the first step towards developing awareness of difference. Becoming aware of self is accomplished through an examination of one's own beliefs and attitudes through introspection and reflection. Awareness of "other" is a primary objective of multicultural education, but it is a difficult personal and professional journey. In general, it is relatively simple to gain knowledge of students and other cultures, but it is considerably more difficult to <u>comprehend</u>, <u>appreciate</u> and <u>respect</u> the profound differences in cultural and racial perspectives. Hence, a first step in dealing with diversity in the classroom is to come to an acceptance of the reality and validity of difference. The teachers in this study recognize this

awareness as being vital to effective multicultural teaching, but also suggest that cultivating an awareness of the holistic student and an awareness of the students' life beyond the classroom walls is essential.

Cultivating an awareness of the holistic student

According to Miller (1988), the function of the teacher is to understand and educate not only the partial mind but the totality of the mind; to educate so as to live in the "whole river of life" (See chapter two). Thus, to be an effective multicultural teacher is to be aware of, and to cultivate an understanding of, the whole student. Learning to teach in a diverse society involves "understanding children's understanding, or exploring what it means to know a child, to consider his or her background, behaviours, and interactions with others, and to try to give reason to the way the child constructs meanings and interpretations" (Cochran-Smith, 1995; 511).

In order to gain an holistic awareness of students and their lived experiences, these teachers suggest the importance of observing students and encouraging them to talk about their lives. John watches his students carefully and if he detects a dramatic change in their behaviour, he can assume that something is out of the ordinary in his students' lives. He mentions the importance of developing trust with his students, and believes that it is an essential building block in fostering a sharing relationship with his students.

> *Know when your students are bleeding inside. Watch your kids. If you have an exuberant student and then that same student becomes introverted, something's up. If your kids trust you, they'll tell you. A young girl was concerned about her friend that was in crisis and she came to me, not the principal. I couldn't deal with the problem today, but tomorrow I'll try my best to resolve it. (6/1)*

Sarah uses journal writing to cultivate a greater awareness of her students and their lives. As a result, she was able to provide assistance to Marie-Hélène when her academic grades were affected as a result of the loss of her grandfather.

Il est impossible de connaître tous vos étudiants lorsque vous enseignez à l'école secondaire. Cette année, j'avais 330 étudiants. Vous risquez de vous épuiser à la tâche si vous êtes trop idéaliste et pensez que vous en viendrez à connaître tous vos étudiants. En bout de ligne, je suppose que j'en viens à connaître ceux que j'aime bien et ceux que je n'aime pas.

It's impossible to know all your students when you teach in a secondary school. This year, I had 330 students. You can burn out if you're too idealistic and think that you'll get to know all your students. In the end, I suppose I get to know the ones I like and the ones I don't like.

Lorsque je lis ce qu'ils ont rédigé, je découvre des choses au sujet de certains événements dans leur vie mais, ce qui est encore plus important, je découvre ce qu'ils ressentent. Il est possible d'apprendre des choses au sujet des parents et de la communauté par le biais des enfants. Il se peut qu'ils écrivent quelque chose au sujet des parents. Par exemple, une de mes étudiantes, Marie-Hélène, était très proche de son grand-père. Il est décédé cette année et cela fut très dur pour elle. C'est une jeune fille intelligente mais elle éprouve certaines difficultés d'apprentissage. Il arrivait souvent qu'elle ne faisait pas ses devoirs mais dans un devoir qu'elle a rédigé à mon intention, elle a avoué n'avoir absolument aucun respect pour ses parents. Ses parents étaient stupides et ils ne comptaient pas du tout pour elle. L'autorité morale dans sa vie était son grand-père. Je fus bouleversée lorsque j'ai lu cela. Elle venait de perdre l'adulte qu'elle respectait le plus et elle n'avait aucun respect pour ses parents.

In their writing, I find out about events in their lives, but more importantly I find out how they feel. You can find out about the parents and the community through the kids. They might write about the parents. For example, I had this one student in my class, Marie-Hélène, who was very close to her grandfather. He died this year and it was very hard for her. She's a smart kid but she has some learning disabilities. Often she did not do her work, but in one of the assignments she wrote for me, she revealed that she had absolutely no respect for her parents. Her parents were stupid and they meant nothing to her. The moral authority figure in her life was her grandfather. Reading this was shocking to me. She had just lost the adult in her life that she respected the most, and she had no respect for her parents.

Quelque chose a dû se produire parce que de manière générale, les jeunes veulent aimer leurs parents, même si le parent est un connard. Le fait d'apprendre cela à son sujet et au sujet de sa situation me l'a rendue plus sympathique, même si de toute façon je l'ai

Something must have happened, because kids generally want to love their parents, even if the parent is a schmuck. Knowing this about her and her situation made me more sympathetic to her, even though I always liked her as a person anyway. In school, she usually functions at 50-

toujours aimée en tant que personne. À l'école, son rendement habituel correspond tout au plus à environ 50-55% de ses capacités mais durant la période où elle était en deuil, elle a laissé ses notes descendre encore plus. Elle ne faisait plus aucun effort et nous savions pourquoi et c'est la raison pour laquelle nous comprenions ce qui se passait et nous avons tenté de lui venir en aide. (6/2)

55% at best, but during the mourning period, she let her marks drop even more. She wasn't trying anymore, and we knew the reason why, so we understood and tried to help. (6/2)

When a little boy in Diane's school acted out, she found out why, informed the boy's teacher, and as a result, was more compassionate towards the student.

Be aware of how your students are feeling. Some children will let you know and others won't. Some children will act out. You know that's an emotion that isn't being addressed. We had a little boy this morning whose teacher asked to have him taken out of her room because she could not deal with him. We found out later that his father had not come to pick him up at school the night before. He's expressing his emotions today. I knew he was disappointed and he took it out in class. (6/3)

Pierre has developed his own criteria to assess his students' well-being: by looking at their clothes, their hygiene, or their lunch box.

Je sais, deux ou trois mois après le début du mois de septembre, quels élèves ont besoin davantage d'aide que les autres. Je le sais parce qu'ils portent toujours les mêmes vêtements. Ils viennent à l'école sans s'être lavés. Ils n'ont rien pour le dîner et ils n'ont rien pour l'heure de la collation. Parfois ils viennent à l'école avec le même gilet qu'ils portent depuis des semaines sans que le gilet n'ait été lavé. Que ce soit l'été ou l'hiver, ces jeunes portent la même paire d'espadrilles.

Je sais que parmi les 18 élèves qui sont présentement dans ma classe, environ huit ou neuf n'ont pas mangé lorsqu'ils arrivent à l'école le matin. Une fois que nous avons pris notre collation le matin, les jeunes travaillent mieux. Cela ne fait pas de doute. (6/4)

I know two to three weeks into the month of September which kids need more help than others. I know this because they always wear the same clothes. They come to school not having washed-up. They don't have a lunch box and they have nothing for snack time. Sometimes they come to school with the same sweater for several weeks at a time and the sweater has not been washed. Whether it's the summer or winter, these kids wear the same pair of running shoes.

I know that of the 18 students I have now, about eight or nine have not eaten when they come to school in the morning. After we have our snack in the morning, the kids work better. There's no doubt about that. (6/4)

Queenie encourages her students to talk about their lives, but cautions that it is important to do so with sensitivity.

There's a teacher in this school that encourages the kids to talk with a lot of respect and feeling. There are many different cultures and you hear the young girls talk about their traditions and the place of women in those cultures. You hear about what they have to do when they go home, and their need to incorporate their parents' traditions when the girls are faced with a conflict. You need to do this at the elementary level. Doing it with a lot of sensitivity is very important. (6/5)

In addition to observation, teachers can access insights into their students' lives via a journal, investigating the reason why a student's behaviour is a departure from the norm, and by taking note of changes in a student's appearance and physical stamina. When interacting with students, developing trust and proceeding with sensitivity are vital.

Cultivating an awareness beyond the classroom walls

Cochran-Smith (1995) states that teaching and learning mean "understanding that any given instance of teaching occurs within a particular historical and social moment and is embedded within nested layers of context" (p. 504). Banks (1997), Cazden and Mehan (1989), Gollnick (1992) state that it is important for teachers to understand what is going on in their schools, with the students, parents, and teachers, and have an understanding of the history and values of the community. The teachers Sorin, Queenie, and Nadine provide examples to illustrate what it means to develop an awareness of the student's life beyond the classroom walls.

Sorin understands the impact of being Croat or Serb, or of being for or against a political regime in another part of the world. For many of his students, these are the very reasons why they are in Canada.

Je sais quelle est la différence entre le fait de donner son appui au Chah d'Iran et le fait d'être opposé à son régime. Je sais ce qu'un

I know what the difference is between supporting the Shah of Iran and being against his regime. I know what a Croat represents

Croate représente et ce qu'un Serbe représente. Vous devez avoir l'esprit ouvert et vous défaire de certains stéréotypes que vous pouvez avoir. Ces exemples peuvent nous paraître insignifiants mais c'est à cause de ces raisons que ces jeunes sont dans nos classes. (6/6)

and what a Serb represents. You have to be open and break down some of the stereotypes you may have. These examples may seem insignificant to us but it's because of these reasons that these kids are in our classes. (6/6)

Ladson-Billings (1995) argues for the importance of having a broader vision of the curriculum - one that extends beyond the classroom, throughout the school, and into the larger community. The curriculum should encompass everything that students experience under the umbrella of the school. The teachers in this study have interpreted this notion of a broader curriculum as "cultivating an awareness beyond the classroom walls." For example, Queenie knows that there is an elderly gentleman across the street from the school who has a talent for telling stories and who happens to be the grandfather of some of her students. She would like her students to listen to this Cantonese storyteller tell his tales.

There's a gentleman that lives across the street from the school. He's a grandparent. I've always said that that gentleman knows when I'm here until 7:00 and when I'm here on the weekends. Sometimes I forget he's there, sort of watching over me, making sure everything is okay.

I often hear him talking to people in the streets and telling them great stories on the sidewalk. So one day I asked his grandchildren to speak to him and see if he would come to the school and talk to us. Even if he only speaks Cantonese, we could work something out with his grandchildren to help. I thought to myself it's another way of learning. It's a different approach. It's more interesting than me just doing the talking all the time.

He's a very shy man. I don't know if he'll ever come to our school to share his stories and knowledge with us, but he knows we're interested in what he has to say. (6/7)

Erickson (1997) outlines that direct connections between the daily lives of students outside the classroom and the content of instruction in the classroom can breathe life into the curriculum and make it more relevant to the students. These connections also provide the teacher with the opportunity to learn about the cultural backgrounds and diversity of their students. Nadine believes that it is important to provide her students with the opportunity to see the

Canadian countryside or have a picnic in Mont Royal Park because she is aware of the repetitive nature of her students' urban lives: bus, school, home, television.

I know that some of these kids come from rural areas and when they come to Canada they're all of a sudden in a big city. That's why I like to take the children outside of the city and show them the countryside. Many of them come from rural environments and I want them to connect with that here in Canada. The growing of food, all the kids seem to connect to that. When we go to the farm, some of the kids will say, 'in my country' and they relate it back and are fascinated to make that connection.

For some of these kids, their reality is the apartment, the school bus, the school, and back to the apartment again. It's not real, but it's their lives. Any experiences outside of this circle come from television. So even if we take a walk up to Mont Royal and have a picnic, they're getting a chance to feel it for themselves. (6/8)

In essence, cultivating an awareness "beyond the classroom walls" for these teachers means: being aware of international events and political regimes that may cause these children and their families to seek refuge in Canada, knowing who in the community could be an enriching resource for the school, and making connections with the reality between the child's home life - what they are exposed to on a daily basis - and the ways in which the teacher creates the curriculum. Hence, the teachers' narratives of experience illustrate that educators need to cultivate an inclusive awareness of the whole student - an awareness of the student's life beyond the classroom walls - if they wish to teach effectively in a pluralistic, multicultural environment.

6.3 Attitudes

The teachers in this study contribute to the discussion by indicating the attitudes they consider to be important when teaching in a culturally and racially diverse classroom. These attitudes include accepting that they can learn from their students, and thus maintaining a positive perspective regardless of their daily challenges, and developing open-mindedness and flexibility in the face of diversity.

According to Allport (1979) and Rockeach (1969), attitudes consist of what we think and feel, and entail a predisposition to action. Gay (1977) discusses attitudes that teachers should develop when teaching in multicultural environments: coming to terms with the limits of their own understanding of cultural diversity; differentiating between stereotypes and authentic cultural patterns; and recognizing the legitimacy of diverse cultural patterns and perspectives. Bennett (1979), McDiarmid (1992), and Zimpher and Ashburn (1992) emphasize that teachers genuinely need to respect cultural diversity, to develop a willingness to explore diversity honestly, and to discuss openly their feelings relating to race, class and gender. Furthermore, Gollnick (1992) and Ladson-Billings (1991) add that teachers should develop a positive disposition towards teaching and working in a multicultural school.

Learning from students

Gollnick (1992) points out that effective teachers in culturally diverse classrooms make use of their students' everyday experiences by linking new concepts to prior knowledge. Teachers can accomplish this by finding examples, and by comparing, contrasting and bridging the gap between the student's personal knowledge and the materials and concepts. Teachers need to believe that "students come to school with knowledge and that that knowledge must be explored and utilized in order for students to become achievers" (p. 52). By "building on students' knowledge, teachers are able to teach complex ideas and skills without worrying that they are teaching above the students' level" (p. 117). The example below illustrates how Marie bridges the gap between her students' first language and culture and their new life in Québec, by asking her students to speak about their past experiences in their native country and their present lives in Montréal.

Je demande souvent aux élèves de parler de	*I often ask the students to speak about the*

leur pays d'origine. Je pense qu'il est important qu'il y ait un lien entre le Québec et leur pays. Il est tout naturel pour eux de parler de leur culture. (6/9)	*countries they come from. I think it is important that there is a link between Quebec and their country. It comes naturally for them to speak about their culture. (6/9)*

Ladson-Billings (1994) outlines that effective teachers draw out students, prompting them to develop and share their interests and, by doing so, reaffirming their contribution to the class. Queenie accepts that she is unable to know all aspects of every culture, and as a result, she turns to her students to learn from them.

It's impossible to know everything. As a teacher you have to be able to admit that and have a willingness to learn from your students. (6/10)

John encourages his students to speak about particular aspects of their respective cultures. What is essential is to do so without judging the students and the way in which they have chosen to live their lives.

Ask your students about the hijab *or the* shagor, *but not in a condescending way. Find out what they're about without passing judgment. (6/11)*

More often than not, students are eager to share particular characteristics of their culture or religion with their teachers and peers. For example, Diane describes an incident where a Greek student was incorrectly reprimanded because he did not know his birthday. If the teacher had simply asked her student why he didn't know his birthday, such an incident could have been avoided.

Ask your students questions. Ask them in a nice way. There was a teacher in a school where I taught who kept a little Greek boy after school because he didn't know his birthday. Can you imagine? She made him write his birthday 100 times. I told her that in the Greek culture you do not celebrate your birthday, but rather your name's day. She looked at me strangely. You can learn a lot from your kids if you just ask them. I've learned a lot from my Muslim students. Sometimes they bring in magazine articles for me to read. If you tell them you want to learn, they're happy to share. (6/12)

As educators we need to accept that we cannot know everything. The teachers in this study encourage us to turn to our students and ask questions of them: about their home life or their native country, with the objective of making links with Québec and Canada. Multicultural educators need to invite their students to guide them in their own learning about diverse cultures, religions and perspectives. It is a delicate "tightrope walk", however, because students do not necessarily wish to be singled out in this way. One needs to tread lightly and with flexibility (Feuerverger, 1997). There are times when students feel ill at ease when they are required to become the "representatives" of their whole ethnic group. Rather, their preference is to blend into mainstream society. This is the fundamental tension for students as they attempt to balance being "Canadian" and being "ethnic".

Maintaining a positive attitude

Haberman and Post (1992), Shade (1989) and Zeichner (1992) underline that effective teachers hold high expectations of success for their students, regardless of race, class, or gender. Undoubtedly, teacher attitudes can influence student achievement: students will learn more effectively if a teacher identifies and builds on their strengths. Teachers need to convey their positive expectations to their students, especially to those students who have experienced academic failure or disappointment. Ladson-Billings (1994) indicates that students learn more when teachers' expectations of them are raised. Students are quite adept at sensing a teacher's expectations. "This notion that all students can succeed may seem trite because it is constantly repeated in the pedagogical literature. However, it is not until you see it in action that you know it can be more than just a slogan" (p. 44).

Although John's student submitted a report that perhaps does not deserve such a high grade, John nonetheless recognizes the importance of maintaining a positive attitude about the

student's motivation, since this was the first report the student had submitted. By giving his student 80%, John is rewarding his student's honest effort.

Maintain a positive attitude. If your student got only 60% or 62% the last time and you work with the kid, the next time they'll get 70%. There is a student in my class [who] is learning disabled. He handed in a project on time. It was about six to seven pages long, typed, researched. Yes, there were spelling mistakes, but overall it was good. I gave him 80%. A teacher asked me why I gave him 80%. "Because the next time I'll give him 90%" was my response. Guess what happened today? He asked me if he could rework his project for a higher mark. He's going to try it again. I know he'll do it. This is the first time he has ever handed in something at school. (6/13)

The example below illustrates how Nadine supports one of her student's dreams at the expense of being ridiculed in the staff room. She believes in the student's dream and offers support by listening to his speech at lunchtime.

It was near the end of the school year, and the senior kids in our [elementary] school prepare speeches. The children can choose the topic of their speech. They often choose 'What I want to be when I grow up.' This one little boy shared with us that he wanted to be a doctor, well actually a gynaecologist, because he wanted to bring new life into this world. It was a simple speech, but it was his. His parents didn't write it for him.

This little boy was in special ed. He has emotional problems. He is often very distracted, but he was coming along and I knew him from music class. One day he asked me if I could listen to his speech. I listened to it and found it touching. This little boy was able to dream. It means to me that he hadn't given up. So many kids give up and this speech was a positive sign.

The day of the speeches in the auditorium I couldn't go because I was teaching my kindergartens, but at lunchtime I certainly heard about the speech. One of the teachers who had heard this boy was laughing so hard that she couldn't talk. She kept saying, 'Can you imagine - him - a gynaecologist? Can you imagine - that's what he wants to do? I haven't laughed so hard in so long. That kid a doctor.' And on she went. None of the teachers really said anything. I finally spoke up. I was hurt. I responded, 'If people didn't dream, they wouldn't achieve anything.' Well, she didn't stop talking. When I think of teachers like her, it makes me panic to send our children to school.

You see, as educators we're showing students the path to their future. That's one of our roles. We also need to teach them about the present. There is never any criteria to judge. He was showing so many good signs of improving.

Believe in your kids. If your kids have a dream, help them catch it. If you destroy anyone's dream, you create a nightmare. (6/14)

Both John and Nadine's colleagues saw an insurmountable gap between these special education students' (perceived) abilities, and receiving 80% or becoming a gynaecologist. Corson (1998) oultines:

> Teachers often do this kind of labelling when they set out the limits of their working interests. Edelman (1984) notes that professionals in schools often engage in rationalization, distortion, and repression in their discourse. They even see these practices as part of their work, because an important part of it is to define the status of the clients of education: the 'underachiever'; the 'retarded'; the 'discipline problem'; the 'dropout'....in the hands of the empowered professionals, performing their roles, the terms become tools of power that can shape students' destinies. (p. 8)

Learning and working towards academic success is a *process*. John and Nadine fully recognize that and want to provide genuine support to their students in that unpredictable process. Nadine's eloquence needs to be re-iterated when she explains that if educators develop a positive attitude towards their students' interests, motivations and dreams, then they are less likely to "**create nightmares**".

Open-mindedness

hooks (1994) states that learning and teaching in a multicultural environment requires a new habit of mind, one which is open to, and builds on, the paradoxes and uncertainty it confronts. Educators in culturally diverse classrooms need to be prepared to consider views and issues with an open and critical mind. They need to explore the relationship between fact and opinion before making judgements, and be prepared to compromise and change their minds. Bateson (1994) believes that openness to peripheral vision depends on rejecting the belief that there is only one way of interpreting the world. "Because we live in a world of change and diversity, we are privileged to enter, if only peripherally, into a diversity of visions" (p. 12). In

the example below, Nadine states that if educators enter teaching with an open mind, they will not need to be taught how to keep their hearts open to new things.

If you come with an open mind, you won't have to be taught how to keep your eyes and mind open to new things. (6/15)

Furthermore, Sorin explains how by inviting a rabbi to speak to his class, he demonstrated open-mindedness, and as such felt that he could make a similar request of his students when they visited a Catholic church, and later in the year did particular art activities for Easter.

Lorsque vous travaillez avec ces jeunes vous devez être ouvert d'esprit. Plus tôt cette année, j'ai demandé à un rabbin de venir s'adresser à la classe. Plus tard au cours de l'année, je les ai emmenés dans le Vieux-Montréal et nous avons visité la Cathédrale Notre-Dame et l'Église Bon-Secours. Une de mes élèves, originaire de Roumanie, a dit qu'elle ne pouvait pas entrer dans l'église parce que ce n'était pas sa religion. Je lui ai rappelé que plus tôt au cours du semestre j'avais invité un rabbin à venir nous parler.

When you work with these kids you have to be open-minded. Earlier in the year, I had asked a rabbi to come speak to our class. Later in the year, I took them to Old Montréal and we visited Notre Dame Cathedral and Bon Secours Church. One of my students from Romania said she could not enter the church because it was not her religion. I reminded her that in class earlier in the semester I had invited a rabbi to speak to us.

Lorsque sa mère a appris que sa fille n'était pas entrée dans l'église, elle est venue à l'école pour me parler. Elle m'a présenté ses excuses et m'a dit que sa fille accompagnerait la classe et entrerait dans l'église la prochaine fois. J'ai insisté sur le fait que cela n'était pas nécessaire mais la mère m'a répondu que puisque j'avais invité un rabbin à venir parler à la classe au sujet du judaïsme et leur expliquer certaines de leurs prières, que sa fille pouvait aller à l'église et ainsi élargir sa compréhension de la religion et de ce que cela représente pour les autres.

When her mother found out that her daughter had not entered the church she came to school to speak to me. She presented her apologies and told me that her daughter would accompany the class and go into the church the next time. I insisted it was not necessary, but the mother replied that since I had invited a rabbi to class to speak about Judaism and explain some of their prayers to the class, her daughter could go to the church and expand her understanding of religion and what it represents to other people.

Plus tard au cours de la même année, à l'occasion de Pâques, nous avons peint des oeufs de Pâques. La même petite fille a dit qu'elle ne voulait pas peindre d'oeufs parce

Later that same year at Easter, we were painting Easter eggs. The same little girl said she didn't want to paint eggs because she is Jewish. I didn't insist and told her it was fine.

qu'elle est juive. Je n'ai pas insisté et je lui ai dit que cela allait. Elle pouvait lire ou faire autre chose. Je ne sais ce qui s'est passé ce jour-là, mais la mère est venue porter quelque chose à l'intention de sa fille et elle a remarqué que sa fille était en train de lire et qu'elle ne participait pas à la même activité que le reste de la classe. J'ai dit à la mère que sa fille préférait ne pas participer et que de toute façon les arts plastiques n'étaient pas une activité obligatoire. La mère a parlé à sa fille en hébreu et la fille est ensuite venue me voir pour me demander si elle pouvait se joindre au reste de la classe et, encore une fois, il en fut ainsi parce que j'avais invité le rabbin à venir s'adresser à ma classe plus tôt au cours de l'année. Ma théorie est que si vous donnez, il vous sera donné en retour. (6/16)

She could read or do something else. I don't know what happened that day, but the mother came by to drop something off for her daughter and she noticed that her daughter was reading and not participating in the same activity as the rest of the class. I told the mother that her daughter preferred not to participate, and in any event the art activity was not obligatory. The mother spoke to her daughter in Hebrew and then the girl came to me and asked if she could join the rest of the class, and again it was because I had invited the rabbi to my class earlier in the year. My theory is if you give, you receive in return. (6/16)

Over the years, Pierre has learned the importance of "mindfulness", and as a result when a parent's reaction is abrupt, he does not react angrily or ridicule the parents' beliefs, but instead accepts the explanation that was given to him without judgment.

Il est important d'être ouvert à tout, différentes cultures, différentes coutumes. L'année dernière, certains parents originaires d'Iran étaient venus me voir à l'occasion d'une soirée en l'honneur des enseignants. À la fin de la soirée, j'ai serré la main du père et j'ai ensuite tenté de serrer la main de la mère. Elle a reculé et a eu le souffle coupé lorsque je me suis approché d'elle pour lui serrer la main. Cela m'a embarrassé sur le coup. Je n'étais pas certain de ce qui s'était produit. Son mari a rapidement commencé à m'expliquer que dans leur pays, les femmes n'étaient pas autorisées à entrer en contact avec quelque homme que ce soit à part leur mari. Elle porte le voile et ne quitte jamais la maison sans être accompagnée de son mari ou pour amener ses enfants à l'école.

It's important to be open to everything, different cultures, different customs. Last year, some parents from Iran had come to see me for teacher's night. At the end of the evening, I shook the father's hand and then went to shake the mother's hand. She stepped back and gasped as I moved towards her to shake her hand. I was embarrassed at first. I wasn't sure what had happened. Her husband quickly began to explain that in their country, women were not allowed to have any contact with any man whatsoever, other than their husbands. She wears the veil and does not leave the house for any reason unless she is with her husband or to take her children to school.

Sa réaction m'a surpris. J'ai eu moi-même un mouvement de recul mais j'ai gardé mon sang-froid. J'ai compris la situation et cela m'a aidé

When she reacted that way, I was surprised. I took a step back myself, but I remained calm. I understood the situation and it helped that the

que le père explique pourquoi elle avait réagi de cette manière. (6/17)	*father explained why she reacted that way. (6/17)*

Sorin modelled for his students what it means to be open-minded by introducing them to a number of diverse religious customs, whereas Pierre's open-mindedness enabled the father to provide an explanation to Pierre about his wife's reaction. Their thoughts concur with Taylor (1992) who reasons that all human beings are different from one another in various ways, and contends that such difference should not be characterized as a deficiency or deviant for failing to correspond to a traditional norm.

In sum, the teachers' voices of experiences have illustrated the importance of developing and maintaining a particular set of attitudes when working in a multicultural classroom, such as accepting that we can learn from our students just as much as they can learn from us, maintaining a positive perspective in the face of the challenges and uncertainty inherent in teaching culturally and racially diverse students, and finally, developing an open-mind towards diversity, compromise and change.

6.4 Skills

Cruickshank (1990), Gage (1989), Metcalf (1992) and Walberg (1990) state that there are certain skills which effective teachers use consistently and proficiently, and which may be among the most critical factors in determining a teacher's effectiveness. They include: establishing a context for the lesson and instruction, using variety in approaches, activities, and assignments, optimizing instructional time by having students engaged in academic tasks, encouraging critical questions and answers, providing clear instruction, monitoring student progress, and providing feedback and reinforcement. Gay (1977) suggests that educators in multicultural teaching and learning environments should develop cross-cultural interaction skills, learn how to develop and

evaluate multicultural curricula, and develop instructional techniques that are effective in pluralistic classroom settings. The California State Department of Education (1979) identified the following skills as necessary to teach in a multicultural environment: analyzing the influence of heritage, distinguishing between stereotypes and facts, recognizing prejudiced behaviour, using skills of conflict resolution, and identifying biases in media. The participants in this study indicate that the skills that multicultural educators should develop in order to teach effectively in a culturally diverse environment are: listening, conflict resolution, collaboration, and patience. Furthermore, the teacher Diane indicates:

> *Being an educator today is very difficult. There are skills that teachers need that perhaps when I began teaching weren't necessary. We came to school and taught. All we needed to know was the subject and how to teach it and that was it. Today you need a different set of skills. (6/18)*

With the school climate in Canada becoming increasingly complex, it no longer suffices for teachers to simply teach the curriculum. According to Diane, educators are required to develop a more demanding set of skills in order to reach their diverse student population and teach effectively. In my discussions with the participants, they are conscious of the increasing demands placed on teachers, and as such, have attempted to integrate new skills into their teaching practices.

Listening skills

In a pluralistic learning environment, teachers should listen and incorporate the student's voice, and by doing so teachers will gain insight into that student's prior knowledge, culture and perspective. hooks (1994) states that with regard to pedagogical practices "we must intervene to alter the existing pedagogical structure and to teach how to listen, how to hear one another" (p. 151). Listening must be developed not only for learning, but also for considering and responding

to others' points of view. In addition, Burbules and Rice (1991) articulate that a necessary communicative virtue that enhances dialogue across difference is self-restraint, so that "others may have a turn to speak" (p. 411). Nadine elaborates on this issue as she reminds us of the power of stereotypes in formulating assumptions about students' racial, cultural, or linguistic background, and urges us instead to listen to our students, as we may learn more, simply by listening to what they have to say.

It is good to know about the children's home life. I think that is true and I know all of that, but if we listen to the children sometimes we learn more. Sometimes if you go into a home you might stereotype the child, or put the child in a category that may be negative or positive. Whereas I think what we need to be doing is listening to the child. It's good to know about certain needs that we have to identify, but sometimes having certain facts about the child will not help us know. As a matter of fact, it may block us from getting information that we would have otherwise gotten through listening.

Listen to the children. You may learn more. Listen and observe what the child is experiencing. If we know certain facts about the child and their background it may be detrimental, and sometimes it may be helpful when the child comes in angry. Ask him to talk about it. Try to use the knowledge you have about the child to help you communicate and interact with the child.

I have often heard teachers say, 'So, what do you expect? You know where he's from.' You'll hear that sometimes. What can you do? But, perhaps this poor child has been trying to say something for days and we haven't heard it because we don't expect to hear it. We hear only what we expect to hear, because of their family or the culture they come from. (6/19)

Garcia (1991), Gaskell (1989) and Shor and Freire (1987) state that a trusting relationship with students is possible if teachers work at maintaining communication with their students. In the example that follows, Sarah contends that if educators listen with a closed mind, they will not be able to respond to their students' needs.

Si j'écoute sans être ouverte d'esprit, je ne serai pas affectée par ce que les jeunes disent, affectée émotionnellement je veux dire. Il n'y aura pas de réaction. Dans un tel cas, j'entends mais je n'écoute pas.

If I listen without being open-minded, I'm not going to be affected by what the kids are saying, emotionally affected that is. There won't be a response. In that case, I'm hearing, but not listening.

Si vous écoutez avec l'esprit ouvert, vous allez réagir à ce que les jeunes disent. Vous aurez

If you're listening with an open mind, you're going to respond to what the kids are saying.

peut-être à vous concentrer sur votre tâche d'enseignement mais, par la suite, lorsque vous aurez une minute, vous tenterez de leur parler, individuellement, et d'écouter ce qu'ils tentent vraiment de vous dire. (6/20)

You may have to attend to your teaching, but afterwards, when you have a minute, you're going to try and speak to them, one on one, and listen to what they are really trying to tell you. (6/20)

Queenie maintains that listening to parents requires a strong focus and highly developed active listening skills in order to fully comprehend the message they are attempting to convey. If, for example, parents or students have an accent when they speak French or English, then a more attentive form of listening is required.

> *You have to be able to listen and listen well. For example, there are parents in my school that when they speak, it's different and you have to listen carefully. If the parent has a heavy accent, I can't get upset and leave because I can't understand them. I have to stop, look at the person and really listen to what they are trying to tell me. Now, remember, that person doesn't always hear you and what you're trying to say. We often forget that we talk too fast and they don't always understand what we're saying either. (6/21)*

Nadine and Sarah suggest the importance of listening to students before making false assumptions about their lives, and listening with an open mind. Queenie indicates the importance of listening to parents with great attention and care, notably if their first language is neither French nor English. The participants' observations and comments are congruent with the research of Delpit (1988) who states that those in power must take greater responsibility for initiating the listening process. "To do so takes a very special kind of listening, listening that requires not only open eyes and ears, but open hearts and minds" (p. 297). When we listen to students and parents with an open heart and mind, we attain new levels of learning in the rewarding dialogue that unfolds.

Conflict-resolution skills

Teachers need to mediate conflict, make suggestions and give guidance to empower students to analyze and resolve conflict. According to Adler (1986), Dei and Razack (1996) and McPartland and Slavin (1990), conflict resolution skills have become increasingly valuable to teachers as a diversity of cultures and world views becomes more prevalent in the classroom. One way in which to lessen the impact of difference in the classroom is for teachers to learn mediation skills. Corson (1998) recommends that teachers learn how to resolve conflict in "a person-oriented approach, sensitive to the different values and norms of diverse students" (p. 215). In chapter eight of this study, I outline how teachers negotiate and transcend difference, and I provide detailed examples of how the teachers attempt to resolve conflict in a constructive manner. Nevertheless, I feel it necessary to highlight at this point that the teachers had identified conflict-resolution skills as being essential for mediating difference in the classroom and school.

Collaborative skills

Working in a collaborative manner with students, parents, and colleagues, and fostering cooperation among multiple stakeholders in the school community is becoming increasingly important when teaching in a multicultural environment (Sleeter & Grant, 1993). Nieto (1992) states that the role of the family, teacher, community, and school is to provide environments for success. "Each can work in different and certainly complementary ways to motivate students to succeed" (p. 245). Queenie concurs with Nieto's comment about the importance of working together to create environments for academic success, despite the irreconcilable differences the stakeholders may have.

Teamwork is important. Since I've been here, it's been difficult because everyone has individual goals and needs, and sometimes it is hard to think about the common good of all in the school. We need to share and cooperate. (6/22)

Lipsky and Gartner (1997) and Sharan (1985) indicate that collaborative efforts contribute to overall inter-group relations, and to improving relations in multicultural schools. Diane believes that it is not only students that should be taught cooperative learning skills - teachers could also stand to gain. In inclusive schools, where members of the teaching staff and various brokers communicate on a regular basis, dialogue is built into the regular school schedule in order to develop common ways to solve problems.

With fewer and fewer resources, materials and personnel, you have to work together with the other teachers in the school. We often talk about cooperative learning for kids; well, how about cooperative learning for teachers and parents. (6/23)

Banks (1991a) indicates that cultural and class differences have an impact on the way in which parents view their participation in their children's education. For many parents, if their child is well behaved and doing fine at school, they believe that they have no reason to visit. Simply put: no news is good news; school is the teacher's responsibility. Furthermore, Davidman and Davidman (1994) indicate that when teachers attempt to communicate and establish collaborative relationships with parents and students, they need to modify goals, expectations and strategies since pertinent differences frequently exist between the culture of the school, and the culture and language of the home. In the example below, the teacher Sorin demonstrates how his belief of collaborative parental involvement posed problems for him and his student.

Tentez d'avoir un contact aussi important que possible avec la famille. Aidez-les à comprendre le système qui est en place à l'école. Aidez-les à comprendre le développement de leur enfant à l'école ainsi que ce qu'ils peuvent faire à la maison pour aider leurs enfants, même s'ils ne parlent pas le français.	*Try to have as much contact as possible with the family. Help them understand the system that is in place. Help them understand their child's development at school, and how they can help their child at home, even if they don't speak French.*
Chaque soir, je donne à mes élèves une dictée d'une durée de 10 à 15 minutes. Je demande aux parents d'être avec leurs enfants lorsqu'ils	*Each night, I give my students a 10-15 minute dictation to complete. I ask the parents to be with the students when they do the reading and*

font leur lecture et leur dictée, même s'ils ne comprennent pas ce que les enfants disent. Je leur montre le livre la première fois qu'ils viennent en classe en soirée pour me rencontrer, de manière à ce qu'ils puissent prendre connaissance du livre et le reconnaître. Même si les parents ne comprennent pas le français, ils participent à l'éducation de leurs enfants.

dictation, even if they do not understand what the children are saying. I show them the book the first night they come to class to meet me so they know the book and recognize it. Even if the parents don't understand French, they are participating in their children's education.

Une fois, j'ai demandé à un parent originaire de Haïti d'aider sa fille, de passer du temps avec elle le soir lorsqu'elle lit. Je me suis rapidement rendu compte que la fillette devenait de plus en plus renfermée et j'ai même constaté la présence d'ecchymoses sur sa peau. J'étais très inquiet et j'en ai parlé au travailleur social. Assez rapidement, nous avons découvert que la fillette était victime de sévices à la maison. On m'a dit de laisser le travailleur social s'en occuper et je ne m'en suis pas mêlé mais j'ai gardé l'oeil sur elle et j'ai essayé de l'aider lorsque je le pouvais. Un jour le père de cette fillette est venu dans ma classe et désirait parler à sa fille. Il n'avait pas frappé à la porte, je lui ai donc demandé de quitter ma classe et de frapper à la porte, puisqu'après tout c'est ce que nous faisons ici au Canada. Je savais que je réagissais de cette manière à cause de ce qu'il faisait à sa fille. Il a quitté ma classe, a fermé la porte et a ensuite frappé à la porte et a attendu qu'on l'autorise à entrer. Je lui ai évidemment permis de parler à sa fille et j'ai ensuite commencé à lui parler. Nous en sommes venus à parler de discipline et il a dit que ses parents le frappaient toujours lorsqu'il ne se comportait pas correctement. Je l'ai rassuré que sa fille se comportait correctement. Il a répondu: "Mais elle ne fait pas son travail dans cette classe". Je l'ai à nouveau rassuré qu'elle faisait son travail mais qu'elle avait besoin de préparer ses dictées à la maison, comme la plupart des élèves. Il a demandé comment se pouvait-il qu'elle fasse son travail si je lui demandais de lire avec sa fille le soir.

One time I asked a parent from Haiti to help his daughter, to spend time with her at night reading when she read. I soon started realizing that the girl was becoming increasingly withdrawn, and I even noticed marks on her. I was alarmed and mentioned it to the social worker. Well, we found out that the girl was being beaten at home. I was told the social worker would deal with it and I stayed out of it, but I kept an eye on her and tried to help her when I could. One day this girl's father came to my class wanting to speak to his daughter. He didn't knock, so I asked him to leave my classroom and knock at the door, since after all that is what we do here in Canada. I knew I was reacting this way because of what he was doing to his daughter. He left my classroom, closed the door and then proceeded to knock on the door and waited for permission to come in. I let him speak to her, of course, and then I began speaking to him. Somehow we got around to speaking about discipline, and he said that his parents always used to hit him if he misbehaved. I assured him that his daughter was not misbehaving. He responded, 'But she is not doing her work in this class.' I reassured him that she was doing her work, but needed to practice her dictation at home, like the rest of the students. He said how could she be doing her work if I asked him to read with her at night.

Voyez-vous, il ne parvenait tout simplement pas à comprendre pourquoi je lui avais demandé de lire avec sa fille le soir. Il avait interprété cela comme voulant dire qu'elle ne faisait pas son travail et que je la punissais parce qu'elle ne se comportait pas correctement. Ce n'était pas le fait que sa fille avait des devoirs mais plutôt le fait qu'on lui avait demandé de superviser le travail de sa fille. Je demande aux parents de s'impliquer dans l'éducation de leurs enfants et voilà ce qui est arrivé.

You see, he simply could not understand why I had asked him to read with her at night. He interpreted this as her not doing her work and was punishing her under the understanding that she was misbehaving. It wasn't the fact that she had to do homework, but the fact that he was asked to supervise. I ask the parents to be a part of their children's education, and this is what happened.

Maintenant, il m'arrive souvent d'appeler les parents. Je leur demande de venir me voir durant mes pauses café. Je les invite à se joindre à nous dans la classe. Je fais très attention lorsque je leur explique quoi que ce soit. Je veux qu'ils comprennent ce que je fais. (6/24)

Now, I call the parents often. I ask them to come in when I have coffee breaks. I invite them to join us in our classroom. I am very careful when I explain things to them. I want them to understand what I'm doing and why. (6/24)

Sorin always recognized the importance of maintaining contact with his students' parents, and that conviction was further strengthened when he was confronted with the dilemma cited above. Indeed, Sorin's conception of the role of a parent in their child's education was unwittingly at odds with the viewpoint of the Haitian father. Sorin's experience in this case concurs with Jones' (1991) findings which indicate that establishing collaborative relationships between parents, teachers, and students will likely be more difficult when the home culture has a different conception of collaboration between the teacher and the parent.

Patience

Pursuing dialogue across difference can foster practices that support successful communicative relations. Burbules and Rice (1991) suggest that patience is one of the required

communicative virtues that needs to be in place in order for dialogue across difference to thrive. To truly achieve such a dialogue, we are required to stand back and re-examine our presuppositions and compare them to those which are different. In the example below, Pierre demonstrates how he has set up support systems for his students who are encountering difficulties with their homework. Although he has taken measures to address the immediate problem with his students, he nevertheless knows that patience is required before he sees noticeable results from such measures.

Vous devez avoir beaucoup de patience. Cela fait partie du travail d'enseignant. Ce que j'entends par "patience", c'est que lorsque vous constatez qu'un élève progresse lentement, vous devez examiner la situation dans son ensemble. Par exemple, j'ai 8 ou 9 élèves dans ma classe, presque la moitié de ma classe, dont les devoirs sont plus ou moins bien faits même après deux mois à l'école. Je sais également que leurs parents ne peuvent les aider à faire leurs devoirs parce qu'ils ne parlent pas le français. Ainsi, après l'école, nous avons une période d'étude et j'ai été capable de m'organiser pour que 6 de mes élèves y participent. Ils travaillent après l'école en compagnie d'élèves réguliers et d'un enseignant. Avec cette heure qu'ils obtiennent à chaque jour, je perçois habituellement un progrès mais c'est lent. (6/25)

You have to have a lot of patience. That's part of being a teacher. What I mean by patience is, when you see that a student is progressing slowly, you look at the whole situation. For example, I have eight or nine students - almost half the class - whose homework is not showing much improvement, even after two months of school. I also know that their parents cannot help them with their homework because they don't speak French. So after school, we have a study class and I was able to make arrangements to have six of my students attend. They work after school with regular students and a teacher. With that hour they get each day, I usually see some progress, but it's slow. (6/25)

The teacher Diane affirms that education requires patience. Many of the students in her inner-city school have a variety of problems, and unless the problems are addressed, she maintains that teaching and learning will simply not occur.

You must be understanding and patient. Education is a profession where that is absolutely necessary. I find a lot of teachers are not very patient and that is worrisome. They expect kids to know and do everything. Kids have so many problems that need to be addressed that if you're not patient, you won't be effective. (6/26)

The following illustrates the way in which Sorin demonstrates patience. For example, his students are learning to adapt to a new country, two new languages, and a different way of living. As a result, this reality impacts the students' learning as they attempt to integrate the changes into their lives.

Vous devez être patient. Vous devez tout répéter deux à trois fois parce que plusieurs de ces élèves apprennent une nouvelle langue, une nouvelle manière de faire les choses. Ils vont lentement commencer à réussir en classe et cela aura pour effet de les motiver à continuer à bien travailler. (6/27)

You have to be patient. You need to repeat everything two or three times because many of these students are learning a new language, a new way of doing things. Slowly they will begin to experience success in the classroom, and that will give them the motivation to continue to work hard. (6/27)

An effective multicultural educator must recognize the reality of their students' circumstances and develop patience accordingly, so as to allow their culturally diverse students the necessary time to learn and grow. In sum, these teachers have identified certain skills which they deem effective in enhancing the teaching and learning relationship in multicultural classrooms: listening with a heart and mind, resolving conflict through mediation, working collaboratively with various stakeholders, such as students, parents, colleagues, and the community, and developing a wealth of patience to ensure that each student is given an opportunity to do his or her best.

6.5 Values

Learning and teaching in a changing world requires an understanding of the ideals and values that guide our work. While responsibility and respect for others are the cornerstone of many school programs, other values are also important for developing a society in which citizens can maximize their potential and fulfill their commitments. Rockeach (1969) states that values are abstract ideas which represent a person's beliefs and modes of conduct. Universal values

such as fairness, equality, and justice are learned from concrete situations in our lives. Values govern our interpersonal relations and both teachers and students must be aware of their actions and intentions. The experienced practitioners have identified honesty, dignity, equality, and self-respect as fundamental values which effective multicultural educators should develop and possess. According to Nieto (1992), values must be reflected in teachers' daily classroom practices.

> [I]t should also be stressed that above and beyond all cultures there are human and civil rights that need to be valued and maintained by all people. These rights guarantee that all human beings are treated with dignity, respect and equality. Sometimes the values and behaviours of a group so seriously challenge these values that we are faced with a dilemma: to reject it or to affirm the diversity it represents. If the values we as human beings hold most dear are ultimately based on extending rights rather than negating them, we must decide on the side of those more universal values. (p. 279)

Honesty

John learned at an early age that it is certainly not worth trying to bluff a child, because nothing good will come of it. If teachers demonstrate honesty to their students, that is what they should expect in return.

> *My father always used to say that there are two things you can't fool - a drunk and a kid. If you're honest, your students will be honest. (6/28)*

Queenie values honesty and as a result, she would like to instill that value in her school culture and in her students. There is no more effective way of infusing such a value than by modelling it to the students on a consistent basis. Furthermore, she maintains that if she insists on her students being honest, then she is developing their sense of self-discipline and responsibility.

> *You have to be honest with these kids. This morning two children came in through the front door of the school, but only one child, the sister, came to the front office, with her report card full of 'lates' in her hand. The boy walked past the office because his teacher doesn't mark his lates. But the sister's teacher catches her. Her teacher is pushing for punctuality so she has all her lates marked up.*

I was working at the computer in my office and when she came to the office I asked who was the other person who came in with her. She said it's her brother, so I asked someone to go get her brother in class. When he came to the office, I said to him, 'I believe in honesty. There is a rule in this school that when you are late, you come to the office. Your sister told me that your report card shows no lates, and you both come together. Do you have any lates?' He responded that his teacher doesn't mark his lates.

I then asked him, 'Have you been coming for your late slip?' He responded no. I told him that that doesn't seem to be honest and I asked him how would I trust him if there were a problem in the future with someone else. If he came to me with his story, how would I be able to trust him? 'Do you want me to trust you? Well, you need to come to the office when you're late. I think that's a good beginning.'

This hit a chord with him because he realizes that he may need to come to me in the future. I have said that to other kids. 'Maybe I shouldn't ask for your story because I'm not sure if you're going to tell me the truth.' After that, I find they invariably come clean. I have always told them, you come clean first and you will get a good deal with me.

I want them to develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility. I look for kids to say 'I did this, I did that.' It always works. I praise the child for being honest. It doesn't mean that that child gets off scot-free, but I usually get the story clean as a whistle. It takes time doing it this way.

I was criticized at my last school because I would spend hours with the kids. (6/29)

In dealing with her student Robert, Diane also recognizes the significance of being honest and believes in building trusting relationships with students.

Kids will trust you when they think you are to be trusted. You can't say one thing and then mean another, or have rules for the teachers and rules for the kids. You have to be honest with them and not hide anything.

A few weeks ago, we got three new kids from a school nearby. One of the boys, Robert, is repeating a grade. This little boy has a lot of emotional problems and some learning disabilities. A couple of days after the boys' arrival, I saw Robert in the hallway. I said hello but had forgotten his name. I could tell he didn't seem happy that I had forgotten his name, so I asked him to remind me. He told me, but as he was turning away from me I could see that he had begun to cry. I told him straight away that I had forgotten his name and I apologized. I asked him to give our school a chance, even though he was new, and to trust me that I would be there to help him out.

The next day I was outside in yard duty and I noticed that Robert was playing with another little boy. I went up to him and said, 'Hi, I see that you found a friend.' He said yes and seemed happy that I had noticed him in the yard. Later in the week, the grade four boys were playing dodge-ball at recess, but Robert was alone and wasn't playing with anyone. I went up to him and asked him to follow me. I brought him over to the boys playing dodge-ball and asked if Robert could join them. 'They said, sure no problem. He can play with us.' You have to think about the children's feelings and follow up on what you say you're going to do. If you're honest with them, they'll trust you. (6/30)

It is evident from their stories that both Queenie and Diane hold honesty in high regard, and display their commitment to this value in their interactions with their students. A disposition to express oneself honestly and sincerely is a communicative virtue that is obligatory in order to dialogue across difference (Burbules and Rice, 1991).

Dignity

Culturally relevant teaching honours the students' sense of humanity and dignity, in that their complete personhood is never doubted. As such, self-worth is promoted in a very basic way by acknowledging the individual's worthiness. Fyfe and Figueroa (1994) and Ladson-Billings (1994) state that educators should have a sense of their own worth as individuals, as well as a sense of their students' worth. Nieto (1992) believes that students' rights and responsibilities in a democracy need to be discussed with regards to what is of concern to them and to their respective communities, such as poverty, discrimination, and violence. The participant Marie goes so far as to say that if teachers cannot respect the dignity of their students, they should not consider teaching. For example, when one of her students is ridiculed by her classmates because of the food she eats, Marie intervenes and speaks to the class because she believes that such ridicule is an attack on the child's economic condition, and thus on her dignity.

Si vous ne respectez pas les enfants et ne sauvegardez pas leur dignité, cela ne vaut alors pas la peine de songer à enseigner.

N'humiliez pas les enfants. Évidemment, il arrive qu'ils vous fassent perdre votre calme mais évitez de les embarrasser. Je me souviens qu'une de mes élèves une fois est venue me voir en pleurant parce que les autres élèves de la classe s'étaient moqués d'elle parce qu'elle mangeait toujours la même chose à chaque jour. Pour moi c'est une question de dignité

If you do not have respect for children and preserve their dignity, then it's not even worth considering teaching.

Do not humiliate the students. Of course you get upset with them, but don't embarrass them. I remember once that one of my students came to me crying because her classmates made fun of her because she ate the same thing every day. For me that is a question of dignity because it is tied to poverty. I spoke to the class because I do not tolerate that kind of

parce que c'est lié à la pauvreté. J'ai parlé à la classe parce que je ne tolère pas ce genre de comportement. (6/31)

behaviour. (6/31)

In the example that follows, Sarah explains that she would like to live in a society where people take responsibility for their own actions and demonstrate respect for others. Whenever possible, she encourages her students to treat themselves and each other with dignity and respect, to show value for the integrity of the individual.

J'accorde de l'importance à la justice et je ne permettrai pas à mes étudiants de me parler d'une manière qui ne serait pas la mienne si je leur parlais. Je n'accepte pas les commentaires racistes ou sexistes. Cela est inacceptable. Ils doivent traiter les autres avec dignité et respect. Je n'accepterai pas qu'un de mes étudiants s'exprime ou se comporte de façon dérespectueuse. Ils tentent d'amoindrir ma valeur ou la valeur d'autres personnes dans la classe.

I value justice and I won't let my students talk to me in a way that I would not talk to them. I will not accept racist or sexist comments. That is unacceptable. They need to treat others with dignity and respect. I will not accept it when a student speaks in a disrespectful way, or when a student acts in a disrespectful way in my class. They're trying to demean my value or the value of other people in the class.

Je désire vivre dans une société au sein de laquelle les gens sont responsables d'eux-mêmes, de ce qu'ils pensent et de leurs actions et sont responsables les uns envers les autres. C'est une condition essentielle pour le développement personnel et pour que les gens se respectent les uns les autres. Tout cela a trait à la justice. Je dis aux jeunes qu'ils doivent assumer la responsabilité de leurs propres actions. Ils ont parfois besoin d'exiger qu'on respecte leur dignité - c'est ma vie, c'est mon corps, c'est comme ça que je suis. (6/32)

I want to live in a society where people are responsible for themselves, for their thinking, for their actions and for one another. That's an essential condition for personal development and growth and respect for one another. All this has to do with human justice. I tell the kids that they have to take responsibility for their own actions. Sometimes they need to demand that others respect their dignity and tell them: "This is my life; this is my body; this is who I am as a person." (6/32)

Equality

Taylor (1992) posits that multicultural societies need to be built on the established principle of equal respect. Therefore, when embarking on the study of 'other', there needs to be a presumption of equal worth. Bennett (1986) argues that if teachers are to provide equal opportunities for learning, their expectations for student success must be equitable. Furthermore, Bennett (1995) claims that educational excellence cannot be achieved without educational equity, which means that equal opportunities must be provided for all students in order for each student to develop to his or her fullest potential. Banks (1993) states that "each major variable in the school, such as culture, power relationships, the curriculum and materials, and the attitudes and beliefs of the staff, must be changed in ways that allow the school to promote educational equity for students from diverse groups" (p. 1). The teacher Nadine acknowledges that her students' needs are different, according to their individual circumstances. "*In order to be equal, you have to have different rules because the needs of the children are different.*" Marie maintains that for her students to be treated equitably and for the teachers to provide an education that is equitable, the teachers must treat each student according to their individual needs.

J'ai l'impression que ces enfants sont mes enfants. J'essaye d'être juste et de ne pas favoriser qui que ce soit en particulier mais je ne suis pas capable de traiter tous mes élèves de la même manière parce que je sais quels sont ceux qui peuvent faire leurs devoirs et ceux qui ne peuvent pas les faire et quelles en sont les raisons. Vous devez faire montre de flexibilité et de compréhension. (6/33)

I feel these kids are my kids. I try to be fair and not favour one over the other, but I can't treat all my students the same because I know who can do their homework and who can't and what their reasons are. You have to be flexible and understanding. (6/33)

Campbell (1996) explains that learning to affirm differences, rather than denying them, is an approach which promotes equality between students belonging to diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic groups. Sarah attempts to explain to her students what it means to treat people

equitably with regards to human dignity and value. When she feels that her students are not respecting such principles, she openly addresses the situation in class with them.

Les être humains sont fondamentalement égaux en termes de dignité et de valeur. Lorsque je parle de cela avec les jeunes ils répondent : "Voyons Madame, ne me dites pas que je suis l'égal de ce type bien baraqué qui est en Secondaire 5. Je suis en Secondaire 1 et je ne suis qu'un petit morveux. Ils peuvent me pousser s'ils le désirent. Ne me dites pas que nous sommes égaux Madame". Bien, je ne dis pas que vous êtes pareils, mais ce que je vous dis est que vous avez les mêmes droits, la même valeur, la même dignité. Lorsque je constate que personne ne dit une telle chose dans ma classe, j'interviens. (6/34)

Human beings are equal in terms of fundamental human dignity and value. When I talk about this with the kids they say, 'Come on Madame, don't tell me that I'm equal to this big guy in Secondary 5. I'm in Secondary 1 and I'm just a little nobody. They can push me around. Don't tell me that we're equal Madame.' Well, I'm not saying that you're the same, but what I am telling you is that you have the same rights, the same value, the same dignity. When I don't see this being expressed in my class, I intervene. (6/34)

Nieto (1992) asserts that multicultural education should be concerned with equity and social justice for all people. In the end, if we maintain that accepting difference in our schools is a priority, we need to make provisions for our students' lived realities. The participants of this study have demonstrated the ways in which they have altered their curriculum, homework, and classroom discussion in order to address issues of equality for their students. If multiculturalism is be taken seriously as a way of life in Canada, then the principle of equal respect for all citizens needs to be fortified. It is inevitable that our struggle as a nation will continue as we search for practical ways in which to authentically demonstrate respect and integrate it into our daily lives as Canadians. Regrettably, each new wave of immigrants to Canada will need to fight for their right to equal respect. One of the dilemmas of building a nation, whose past and future is closely linked with immigration, is to reinforce why the newcomers should be entitled to such respect.

Self -respect

Teachers, in demonstrating that they value their students' contribution in class, will greatly enhance their students' learning. Cummins (1989) outlines that when students receive encouragement and guidance from the teacher, the student develops a positive sense of self. "It is in the interactions with individual educators that minority students are either empowered, or alternately, disabled, personally and academically" (p. 58). Teachers can foster a sense of personal and cultural identity and promote students' confidence in their ability to learn and to achieve academic success. Nadine is fully aware of the different expectations that people have of others, based on their class, gender, race, culture or language. To combat such inequities, Nadine reminds her students that they need to develop a strong sense of self, and that one way to do that is to achieve success by acquiring an education.

We talk about the importance of being confident and having a strong sense of self because I know that if a White, Black and Asian person walks into a room, people will have a different expectation of each of them. The person cannot do anything about these people's expectations; they can only be themselves. They have all the power to try and impress, to get through whatever barriers that exist. I impress upon the children that you can increase your choices and chances by getting an education, because education can be like an equalizer. I look at my children and I believe that they all have the potential to excel.

I see it in my five-year olds at school. They all want to be first. If you say 'line up' they all line up and they all want to be first. They want to lead. What happens when they are nine- or ten-years old? They know they have something to achieve or something to work towards. My kids are very aware of success and how important it is for them to achieve it in their lives. (6/35)

Sorin understands that asking his students to speak about their own countries enhances the students' sense of self. These ideas are in keeping with Corson (1998) who states that when teachers encourage students to share their ideas and experiences, "these children are empowered in the setting of the school by the orientation to the world that they bring from home. As a result, they are ready to convert the already valuable and similar cultural capital acquired in the home, into the high status academic cultural capital that the school offers" (p. 90).

En classe, j'essaye d'encourager les élèves à	*In class, I try to encourage the students to*

accorder de la valeur à ce qu'ils apportent au Canada en tant qu'immigrants. J'explique que chaque groupe d'immigrants a apporté une contribution au Canada. (6/36)

value what they bring to Canada as immigrants. I explain that each group of immigrants has made a contribution to Canada. (6/36)

In the example that follows, Sarah encourages her Muslim student Laila to continue to attend school and obtain an education because Sarah believes it is a way of respecting oneself and fulfilling one's wishes and dreams.

Une de mes étudiantes est musulmane. L'Islam est la religion que je connais le moins bien. Cela me dérange que Laila porte le voile si elle se sent obligée de le porter. Si elle le veut vraiment, c'est une autre histoire. Le voile et des vêtements amples peuvent permettre aux femmes de se mettre à l'abri des hommes qui pensent avoir le droit de faire des commentaires au sujet du corps d'une femme et au sujet de son apparence. Si vous portez le voile pour faire la volonté de Dieu, je pense que c'est bien, mais la réalité est que plusieurs de ces femmes portent le voile parce que leur père, leur mari ou leurs frères les y obligent.

I have a student that is Muslim. Islam is the religion I know the least about. It bothers me that Laila wears the veil if she feels that she has to. If she truly wants to, that's another story. The veil and loose clothing can be a safe haven from men who feel they have the right to comment on a woman's body and how a woman looks. If you wear the veil to respect the will of God, then I think that's fine, but the reality is that many of these women wear the veil because their fathers, husbands or brothers require it of them.

Un jour, alors que nous discutions de la droiture et de la liberté, Laila m'a dit: "Madame, à quoi cela me sert-il d'aller à l'école lorsque la seule chose que je ferai est de me marier lorsque j'aurai terminé mon Secondaire 5 et que je ne pourrai jamais travailler? Je serai toujours "la mère de" et "l'épouse de" quelqu'un, alors à quoi tout cela sert-il?" J'ai répondu: "L'éducation vous permet de construire à partir de ce que vous êtes en tant que personne. Peu importe ce que vous faites dans la vie, l'éducation est importante. Lorsque vous serez mère et que vous éduquerez vos enfants, il sera important d'être éduquée. Vous serez un modèle pour eux. Vous transmettrez à vos enfants ce qu'ils ont besoin de connaître. Comment savez-vous que votre mari ne vous quittera pas lorsque

One day, we were having a discussion about righteousness and freedom, Laila said to me, 'Madame, what is the use of me going to school and getting an education when all I am going to do is get married when I finish Secondary 5, and I will never be able to work. I will always be 'the mother of' or 'the wife of' someone, so what is the point?' I responded, 'Education helps you build on who you are as a person. It doesn't matter what you do in your life, it's important to be educated. As a mother educating your children, it's important to be educated. You will be a model for them. You're going to pass onto your children what it is they need to know. How do you know that your husband will not leave you at 40 with two kids? Don't you think you need an education? Don't you think you have the right to an

vous aurez quarante ans et que vous aurez deux enfants? Ne pensez-vous pas que vous avez besoin d'être éduquée? Ne pensez-vous pas que vous avez le droit de l'être? Vous ne pouvez jamais savoir ce qui surviendra dans la vie."

education? You never know what is going to happen in life.'

Je sais que les garçons musulmans dans la classe n'apprécient pas toujours lorsque je parle de cette manière mais je dis aux filles qu'elles doivent aller à l'école pour elles-mêmes. (6/37)

I know the Muslim boys in the class don't always like when I talk this way, but I tell the girls they have to go to school for themselves. (6/37)

Banks (1997) outlines that the teacher's "values and behaviours strongly influence the views, conceptions and behaviours of students. The teacher's values and perspectives also mediate and interact with what they teach, and influence the ways that messages are communicated and perceived by students" (p. 97). In sum, according to these educators, the reality of the multicultural classroom requires teachers to endorse certain values: to uphold honesty, to acknowledge each student's dignity, to support the principle of equal respect, and to promote an authentic sense of self-respect in each student.

In essence, becoming a multicultural educator is a journey. The teachers' reflections presented in this chapter serve as a starting point for further discussion around what it means to incorporate a multicultural philosophy into our lives, and what it means to become a multicultural citizen in a democratic, just society. As our teaching and learning environments in the multicultural classroom become more demanding, teachers will need to acquire a foundational awareness of the holistic student and of their world beyond the classroom walls, and develop the attitude that they can learn from their students. They will also see the importance of maintaining a positive and open-minded perspective in the face of diversity. Furthermore, in order to build a teaching repertoire to address diversity in the classroom, teachers need to develop skills in listening, conflict resolution, patience, and collaboration; and demonstrate the values of honesty, dignity,

equality, and self-respect. From the stories set forth above, it is evident that the veteran classroom teachers possess a wealth of relevant, experiential knowledge. Their approaches are relational and all encompassing. Nieto (1992) states that "multicultural education is a philosophy, a way of looking at the world, not simply a program or a class or a teacher" (p. 215).

Learning to interact with students in a multicultural way is a challenging and uncertain process, one that requires teachers to embark on a journey of personal and professional reconceptualization of self. We return to Nieto (1992) who indicates that the process of learning how to teach in comprehensively multicultural ways "is too often relegated to a secondary position, because content is easier to handle and has speedier results ....The processes of multicultural education are generally more complex, more politically volatile, or more threatening to vested interests. For example, changing a basal reader is far easier than developing higher expectations for all students. The first involves changing one book for another; the other involves changing perceptions, behaviours and knowledge, not an easy task" (p. 218).

> Curriculum and materials represent the content of multicultural education, but multicultural education is above all a process. First, it is ongoing and dynamic. No one ever stops becoming a multicultural person, and knowledge is never complete. Thus, there is no established "canon". Second, it is a process because it involves relationships among people. The sensitivity and understanding teachers show their students are often more important than the facts and figures they may know about the different ethnic and cultural groups. Third, and most important, multicultural education is a process because it focuses on such intangibles as teachers' expectations, learning environments, students' learning styles, and other cultural variables that are absolutely essential for schools to understand how to be successful with all of their students....The process is complex, problematic, controversial, and time-consuming but one in which teachers and schools must engage to make their schools truly multicultural. (p. 218)

As the teacher Queenie mentioned, "*It takes time doing it this way. I was criticized at my last school because I would spend hours with the kids.*" It takes time because it is a non-linear process that emphasizes the relationship between people. If a teacher chooses to be a multicultural educator and engage in a multicultural philosophy, it will inevitably require more

time and perseverance than just simply introducing a multicultural curriculum, as Nieto indicates above. Through the voices of experienced teachers, the challenge of responding effectively in a multicultural environment is addressed from a variety of perspectives. The participants' stories, represented as "slices of teachers' lives at specific points in time" (Ladson-Billings, 1994: 28), provide us with a concrete understanding of the challenges and uncertainties associated with teaching and learning in a multicultural environment.

The teachers' stories in this chapter demonstrate reflection and critical analysis as they draw on a range of resources, intelligence, and experiences in order to relate to their culturally and racially diverse students with sensitivity and understanding. Just as multicultural education is, first and foremost, a process, becoming a multicultural educator is, first and foremost, about the relationship teachers have with their students. This is evident in Phillion's (1999) account of the experiences of an immigrant teacher working in an urban Toronto school for over fifteen years. In examining new ways of interpreting multiculturalism in the classroom, Phillion was particularly struck by her participants' insights regarding what it means to be an authentic multicultural educator.

> In Bay Street School, and in Pam's classroom I see efforts to work with students as members of cultural groups and as individuals. In fostering programs such as the International Languages Program, in developing community events such as the Multicultural Fair, I see that Bay Street School values children's culture, protects their native languages, takes care of the aspects of identity related to group involvement. Pam values the intricacies of the individual aspects of children's identities, what makes them special as people that goes beyond cultural and linguistic aspects. For me, both aspects are integral to understanding students in our classes. Both aspects are important to create environments where children can feel they belong. (p. 235)
>
> In my inquiry, as I learned that Pam's practice was too complex to fit into theory, I searched for new ways to think about, talk about, and write about multiculturalism. I wanted to honour Pam, as a person with a complex, nuanced life, as a teacher with complex, thoughtful practice; not depict her as a typical representative of pre-established categories. In my inquiry I found that Pam herself did not subscribe to labelling and categorizing her students according to current theories, or psychological models; rather, she responded to students as complex human beings with personal narrative histories, with life experiences, with futures. As I slowly learned that Pam did not categorize students, so I slowly learned that her experiences were too complex

for me to categorize...My understanding of Pam and Pam's work was informed by an experiential, fluid, evolving notion of multiculturalism. (p. 248)

Concluding remarks

In the stories cited in this chapter, much like Phillion's inquiry with her participant Pam, the teachers' discourse is always in reference to their students. Cazden and Mehan (1989) insist on the importance of "trying to understand a student's many embedded contexts - family, community and other socio-cultural institutions - and looking at how those determine meaning for the student" (p. 513). In the end, the teachers, and the relationship they have with their students, are central to multicultural teaching, not just the curriculum, books or 'facts and figures,' as Nieto indicates.

The primary purpose of this chapter was to listen to the voices of experience and therefore create a global understanding of the multicultural individual who dialogues across difference. An authentic multicultural educator extends our understanding of the requisite qualities and characteristics for dialogue with 'other'. Further discussion of such a multicultural educator will be elaborated upon in chapter nine as a subtheme of this study. To sum up, I attempted to outline in this chapter the knowledge base that teachers need to possess in order to teach in a multicultural environment. I then gave voice to the educators in this study to gain an understanding of the awareness, attitudes, skills and values necessary to teach effectively in a pluralistic environment. Clearly, the richness of the teachers' reflections, shared in the form of these thought-provoking stories, add a layer of meaning to what a multicultural educator may look like.

Chapter Seven: Teaching and Living in Québec

Language is at the very core of Québec's identity. Along with culture, ethnicity, geography, and until quite recently, Roman Catholicism, language embodies the history of Quebeckers and their struggle to survive (Coulombe, 1995). In fact, Québec is the largest region in North America where French is widely spoken and used in the workplace, at school, and in the community. As such, the province of Québec is an important French-speaking jurisdiction in the Francophone world and the most significant in North America (Hamers & Hummel, 1994). To date, few societies have invested more in language planning than the province of Québec (d'Anglejan, 1984), where such planning has transformed the society from one dominated by English to one dominated by French. In light of these facts, Québec is viewed as the bastion of the French language in North America.

In this chapter, I will first share my participants' insights into what it is like to teach, live and work in Québec (See chapter five for a more detailed overview of the teachers). In section two of this chapter, I will examine the views of scholars and teachers on *Bill 101*, the future of Allophone, Francophone, and Anglophone students in Québec, and the future of the French language within the multi-layered context of Québec society. As mentioned earlier, it is important to note that the terms 'multicultural' and 'multiculturalism' define the cultural, linguistic and racial diversity that exists within our classrooms and our society at large, and does not suggest any partiality towards either the federal government's policy on Canada's growing diversity or Québec's response to the province's increasing diversity.

7.1 Teaching and living in the Province of Québec

In this section, the eight educators who participated in this study speak openly about their teaching experiences in Montréal. Their accounts provide multiple interpretations of the challenges that lie ahead for Québec, as the province asserts its French-Canadian political, cultural and linguistic identity within Canada, and as it faces an evolving definition of what it means to be a Quebecker, in terms of the relatively recent multilingual, multicultural, multifaith presence of its immigrants, who live primarily in the large metropolis of Montréal.

As mentioned in greater detail in chapter five, Québec's policy of interculturalism was officially adopted in response to the perceived affront to the province by the federal government's Multicultural Policy. The federal multicultural policy encouraged Canadians to accept cultural pluralism, while Québec's response was a policy of interculturalism, which recognized the acceptance of immigrants within the context of the province's distinct identity as a Francophone community, and the paramount importance of the French language and culture. Furthermore, my participants speak openly of the challenges they face with their students vis-à-vis embracing bilingualism and integrating it into their respective lives in Québec. For the purposes of clarification regarding bilingualism as discussed in this chapter by the scholars and educators, I would like to provide the reader with a working definition. Gardner and Lambert (1972) state,

> In acquiring a second language, a benefit is derived when there is a transfer of conceptual development from the second language to the native language, and the learner develops nativelike skill in the second language in natural ways. When acquiring a foreign, or second language, one needs to also examine deeply the nature and function of attitudes, stereotypes and value systems, and the role they play in second language acquisition. (p. 2)
>
> Theory variance in second language acquisition is also recognized: some learners may be anxious to acquire a second language as a means of being accepted in another ethnolinguistic group because of dissatisfactions experienced in their own culture, while others may be as interested, in a friendly and inquisitive way, in the other language and culture as they are of their own. However, the more proficient one becomes in a second language, the more he may find his place in his original membership group modified since the new linguistic-cultural group is likely to become something more than a mere reference group. It may, in fact, become a second membership group for him. A variety of factors - individual, social and pedagogical - interact in

unique ways in diverse settings to influence students' ultimate level of language development. (p. 4)

Furthermore, Lambert and Tucker (1972) state that bilingualism, or the acquisition of a second language, can be viewed as "a cognitively enriching experience for children where a three-dimensional perception of language is developed" (p. 66). This chapter articulates the teachers' wealth of daily experiences in the midst of the multiple interpretations and visions regarding bilingualism, multiculturalism and Québec.

Queenie

Queenie was born in Jamaica and came to Canada to pursue her studies in commerce in Montréal. She began teaching in 1976, and in 1992 became principal at the school where she currently works.

I'm an Anglophone. I've never been any good at languages, even though I've tried. I took French in Chicoutimi, Jamaica and here in Montréal, but I just can't speak French. I understand about 75% of what I hear. Not being able to speak didn't stop me from sending our children to French immersion. They're fluent in both languages.

Queenie recognizes that her inability to speak French has limited her opportunity for promotion in the field of business, and later in teaching. When she saw interesting job postings in the *Montreal Gazette*, she wanted to apply, but never did because fluency in French and English was a prerequisite. Later, when she became principal at the English school where she currently works, she inherited a French immersion program which had started two years earlier.

When this program was first started, there was a lot of animosity. You'd hear, 'The English teachers are losing their jobs and the French are coming in'. You see, it's an English school that offers a French immersion program. Most of our parents are primarily Anglophones, with some Allophones.

I feel really comfortable encouraging French immersion. I try to give the children as much support as possible. I try to explain to the parents that this [Québec] is home, and this is best for

their children in Québec. My limitations shouldn't stop others from doing what is best for them. I wish I could speak French. It certainly isn't because I don't want to or haven't tried.

Often, I have to remind the French teachers to send their correspondence to the parents in English, otherwise the parents get upset because they don't understand what the teacher is trying to tell them. We are, after all, a school serving the English community.

Despite the resistance that Queenie faced when she continued to offer and develop the French immersion program in her Anglophone school, she nevertheless believes that she is providing her students with an education that accurately reflects the direction the province will eventually take, with the status of French assuming even greater importance. Queenie recognizes that her inability to speak French has closed doors for her professionally, and would like to offer her students a future different from hers by giving them the opportunity to feel comfortable speaking and living in French in Québec. Interestingly enough, in order to avoid confrontational discussions with the parents in her school, Queenie has taken on a conciliatory role between the French teachers and the Anglophone parents. Her constituents are the parents, and although she may not always agree with them, she continues to ensure that all necessary information and services are available in English, even though she encourages French immersion in every aspect of her school.

Pierre

Pierre considers himself Canadian. He states that he is Canadian, but his roots are in Québec, and Québec, for him, is part of Canada. Pierre often speaks to his students about Québec and the fact that it is advantageous for them to speak French and to learn about the province. As such, it is extremely important for Pierre to integrate his students into Québec society as quickly as possible. One way in which he does this is to encourage them to learn French and to speak French whenever possible.

Il m'arrive de revoir mes élèves quelques	*I sometimes see my students a few years after*

années après les avoir eus dans ma classe. Je constate à quel point ils se sont intégrés - la musique qu'ils écoutent, et ainsi de suite. Ils parlent en français au sujet de la culture québécoise et de la musique québécoise.

they've left my class. I see how much they have integrated - the music they listen to, and so on. They're speaking in French about Québec culture and Québec music.

J'encourage mes élèves à parler le français le plus possible. Nous effectuons des sorties de groupe. Je les amène au théâtre français au centre-ville. C'est divertissant d'aller au théâtre. Cela leur donne également une idée de ce qui existe à part leur appartement et leur école. C'est une façon de les intégrer à la vie qui sera la leur ici au Québec.

I encourage my students to speak French as much as possible. We have outings. I take them to the French theatre downtown. It's entertaining going to the theatre. It also gives them an idea of what else is out there besides their apartment and school. It's a way of integrating them into the life they're going to have here in Québec.

Each October, Pierre selects certain parents and asks them to join him and the class to pick apples. He also does the same thing in March for an outing to a sap house or *cabane à sucre*.

La cueillette des pommes est un phénomène très québécois. C'est typique de ce que de nombreuses familles québécoises font à l'automne. Nous y allons au début du mois d'octobre et c'est seulement quatre ou cinq semaines après le début de l'année scolaire. C'est également une bonne manière de souhaiter la bienvenue aux parents. Je sélectionne les parents soigneusement - différentes nationalités et à quel point ils comprennent le français. Les parents ne s'intègrent pas facilement au groupe et c'est normal étant donné la langue et cela prend plus d'une journée pour qu'ils soient à l'aise.

Apple picking is very Quebecois. It's typical of what many Québec families do in the fall. We go in early October and it's only 4 or 5 weeks after school has started, so it's also a nice way in which to welcome the parents. I select the parents carefully - different nationalities and how well they can understand French. The parents don't mix well, that is understandable because of the language, and it takes more than just one day to put them at ease.

Pierre doesn't experience Montréal as a bilingual city, given that he communicates almost exclusively in French. Wherever he goes, he is served in French and is rarely required to speak English.

Il est possible de vivre en français ou en anglais dans cette ville. Je pense que nous tolérons la langue de l'autre. Des fois, je suis

It certainly is feasible to live in either English or French in this city. I think we're quite tolerant of each other's language. Sometimes I

obligé de parler l'anglais aux parents lors de la soirée des bulletins scolaires. Je comprends cela. J'en fais pas une affaire d'Etat.

have to speak English to the parents at report card night. I understand that. I don't make a big deal about it.

Tout le matérial que je reçois du conseil scolaire est en français. Le consultant pédagogique est francophone et toute la documentation est en français. Une fois, j'ai téléphoné aux bureaux du conseil scolaire afin de régler un problème avec mon chèque de paie. La dame qui a répondu à mon appel ne parlait pas beaucoup de français, alors j'ai essayé de lui expliquer le problème en anglais. Cela a pris cinq minutes pour déterminer le problème. Je sais qu'un de mes collègues aurait insisté de régler le problème en français, ce qui aurait pris plus de temps.

All the material I get from the board is in French. The pedagogical consultant is Francophone and all the documentation we get is in French. Once I had to phone the board office to straighten out a problem with my pay cheque. The lady that worked there couldn't speak much French, so I tried to explain my problem in English. It took five minutes to figure out what the problem was. I know if that had been one of my colleagues, they would have insisted to resolve the problem in French, which would have taken more time.

La loi 101 est, selon moi, une bonne chose pour le Québec. Maintenir la langue française est une chose très importante aux Québécois. Je ne pense pas que ces enfants [allophones] puissent bien s'intégrer à la société québécoise s'ils ne maîtrisent pas le français. Il ne faut pas sous-évaluer l'importance de l'anglais dans le monde, en affaires, en Amérique du Nord, quand on voyage; cependant le français est la langue de la province. Ces enfants doivent avoir une base solide en français et ensuite ils peuvent apprendre l'anglais.

I think Bill 101 *is a good thing for Québec. Maintaining our French language is extremely important to Quebeckers. You see, I don't think these kids [Allophone] can integrate well into Québec unless they know French well. You can't underestimate the importance of English everywhere, in business, in North America, when travelling, but French is the language of this province. These kids need to have a solid base in French and then they can learn more English.*

Je sais que mes enfants vont commencer à apprendre l'anglais en quatrième année, sinon on va les envoyer à l'école privée parce que on veut qu'ils arrivent à parler les deux langues. C'est la meilleure chose pour leur avenir.

I know that my children will be starting English in grade four; if not, we'll be sending them to private school because we want them to be able to speak both languages. It's the best thing for their future.

Pierre's insights demonstrate that he takes pride in having his students learn and appreciate what Québec has to offer culturally and linguistically. Although there are many ways of expressing one's attachment to a language, Pierre prefers to focus on helping his students develop a positive attitude toward French, rather than taking a personal position regarding linguistic issues at the Board office. Even though Pierre believes that the maintenance of the

French language is closely linked with the future of Québec, he fully accepts the strategic and dominant role that the English language plays in the world.

Nadine

Although Nadine does not speak French, her husband teaches in a French school and their children were sent to French schools, and now function well in both languages. In fact, one of Nadine's daughters chose to pursue her university studies in French. The languages spoken in Nadine's home are patois and English. When the discussion turns to her students at the English elementary school where she teaches, there is no doubt in Nadine's mind that the students should be bilingual.

Give these children an education that is suitable. What I mean by that is an education where the kids are comfortable in both languages. The education we're giving them now is excluding them. It is limiting their choices for the future.

By only educating students in English, Nadine believes that the educational system is doing a great disservice to the students. On a number of occasions, she has tried to raise this very issue with the school administration and colleagues at meetings. However, the discussion turns to the question of job loss for English teachers if the school were to become bilingual.

The issue of English teachers is not the only issue. Let's not forget that a lot of English families think we're traitors if we become an immersion school. I personally think it's an insular way of thinking. For these parents, they're taking a stand. They're resisting. They're in North America, and they want their child educated in English.

Our school is like an isolated little box, where only English is spoken. All around us French is spoken. I think that we're being unfair to the children. They grow up learning English, while French is kept from them. The parents who want their kids to get an education in both French and English are going to the nearby immigrant schools, and so enrolment is going down here. Everything is so political.

She feels, however, that things are beginning to change with a growing number of new teachers being bilingual and school meetings being held in both French and English.

The last batch of teachers that were hired at our school are fully bilingual. Our meetings are also becoming increasingly bilingual. The Francophone teachers might ask a question in French and the principal or another teacher may answer in English. I feel comfortable with that because that's what happens at my home - with my daughter going to university in French, and having Quebecois friends.

When I came to Québec, I really felt at a disadvantage. It was very uncomfortable for me. I wanted my kids to do well in Canada. I certainly didn't want them to go through what I went through. I'm Anglophone. I survived, but my students won't survive in Québec now - only knowing English.

Given that Nadine encouraged her own children to learn and speak French because she feels it is in their best interest to do so, she also maintains that not offering her students a bilingual education will limit their choices for the future. Other English-speaking parents have opted to send their children to the Francophone school down the street. According to Nadine, although her students live in North America, they live first and foremost in Québec, where the majority of the residents speak French as their mother tongue. Despite the fact that she speaks only English, Nadine does not perceive learning French as a threat, but rather as an advantage to one's personal development. She is at ease living and teaching in a bilingual environment, and would therefore like to ensure that her students also are at ease living in such an environment.

Sorin

Since Sorin arrived from the former Yugoslavia in 1974, he has been teaching in Montréal, and primarily in the 'classe d'accueil'. He has known bilingualism all his life because he was Romanian in Yugoslavia, and has learned from his own experience that bilingualism can bring personal enrichment. Apart from school, Sorin does not have much contact with Anglophones or Francophones, because once the summer holidays arrive, he returns to Yugoslavia to visit his family, so in essence his colleagues are his friends.

J'ai grandi baigné dans le bilinguisme parce que je suis originaire de la Yougoslavie mais je suis roumain. Lorsque je suis venu au Canada,

I grew up immersed in bilingualism, because I grew up in Yugoslavia, but as a Romanian. When I came to Canada, it was an

c'était un progrès par rapport à ce que j'avais connu dans mon pays; par contre, si quelqu'un vient d'une grande ville comme Paris ou Londres, je ne suis pas certain que Montréal représente alors un progrès.

improvement upon what I had known in my country, but if someone comes from a big city like Paris or London, I'm not sure if Montréal would be an improvement.

Pour moi, il est très enrichissant de tomber sur une ville avec des gens d'origines aussi diverses et qui proviennent d'un aussi grand nombre de pays. Prenez cette école par exemple, qui compte 64 nationalités. Dans mon pays, je connaissais des Allemands et des Hongrois mais je ne suis jamais beaucoup entré en contact avec eux comme je suis ici entré en contact avec des gens de nombreuses nationalités. En raison du fait que nous avons tellement de contacts, on est obligé de connaître un peu l'autre. J'essaye d' amener les enfants à tenter de connaître un peu les autres.

For me, it is very enriching to be in a city with people of so many diverse cultures. Look at this school, for example, with 64 nationalities represented here. Where I come from, I knew Germans and Hungarians, but I never had much contact with them like I have with so many nationalities here. Because we have so much contact, we cannot help but know a bit about each other. I try to teach this to the students. What I mean is, I try to encourage the kids to get to know one another.

Sorin hopes that his students will fall in love with the French language, the way he did. He encourages his students to speak French because he wants them to integrate into Québec society as quickly as possible. Sorin believes that the best way to do that is to speak the language and express oneself well in that language.

Je ne veux pas forcer les élèves à apprendre le français. Je veux qu'ils aiment le français, qu'ils tombent en amour avec la langue comme je suis moi-même tombé amoureux de cette langue lorsque j'étais en Yougoslavie. Je veux qu'ils s'expriment en français en toute confiance et alors ils vont tirer plaisir du fait de parler la langue.

I don't want to force the students to learn French. I want them to enjoy French, to fall in love with the language, like I fell in love with it when I was in Yugoslavia. I want them to have confidence expressing themselves in French, and then they will enjoy speaking the language.

On fait aimer la langue au lieu de l'imposer. Je connaissais des gens dans mon pays qui ont été contraints d'apprendre le hongrois à l'époque de l'empire austro-hongrois. Ils l'ont appris à la perfection, littéralement, d'un point de vue grammatical. Ma grand-mère, par exemple, a appris le hongrois et le parle maintenant parfaitement. Elle n'a par contre jamais aimé parler le hongrois parce qu'on lui défendait de

I want to make them love the language rather than impose it upon them. I knew people back home who were forced to learn Hungarian during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They learned it to perfection, literally, grammatically. My grandmother, for example, learned Hungarian flawlessly. She never liked speaking Hungarian, though, because they didn't allow her to speak her own language.

parler la langue qui était la sienne.

When students speak their first language, Sorin asks them about it. He tells them he wants to hear how their language sounds. The students are unquestionably pleased with such a request and are fascinated when there are similar sounds from one language to the other.

Certains de mes élèves parlaient le persan un jour et je leur ai demandé de répéter lentement ce qu'ils venaient de dire. Nous avons découvert qu'un mot persan veut dire la même chose en roumain. Les élèves adorent ce genre de choses. Lorsque nous parlons de la culture et de la société québécoise, j'encourage les élèves à me parler de leur pays - en quoi il est semblable, en quoi il est différent.

Some of my students were speaking Iranian one day and I asked them to repeat slowly what they had said. We discovered that a word in Iranian means the same thing in Romanian. The kids love this. When we talk about Québec society and culture, I encourage the kids to tell me about their country - what is the same, what is different.

Plusieurs élèves parlent l'anglais et c'est pourquoi j'indique parfois dans une dictée l'équivalent anglais de certains mots français (par exemple «is» pour «est» et «and» pour «et»). Je ne suis pas opposé à l'idée de recourir à l'anglais de cette manière si cela me permet d'offrir une explication de ce genre.

Several students know how to speak English, so sometimes English words crop up in the dictation, like 'est' and 'et.' So I write 'is' and 'and' and it seems to help them out. I have no problem using English if I need to explain a point like that.

Lorsque j'en ai la chance, j'insiste sur la beauté de la langue française. C'est de cette manière que j'encourage les élèves à parler français. J'imagine qu'un Québécois dirait que je prépare les élèves pour le Québec. Je dirais que je prépare plutôt les élèves pour le monde. Je voudrais leur faire aimer la langue, par des poèmes, la littérature, la musique. Il n'est pas possible d'imposer une langue. Regardez ce qui est arrivé aux autochtones, à leur culture et leur langue.

Whenever I can, I come back to the beauty of the French language. That is how I encourage the students to speak French. I guess a Quebecois would say they're preparing the kids for Québec. I would say I'm preparing them for the world, really. I want them to love the language by learning poems, literature, music. You can't impose a language. Look at what happened with the First Nations people, with their culture and language.

Sorin's keen interest in his students' first language and culture is refreshing. By demonstrating such an interest, he is able to make a link between the students' lived experiences to life in Québec and speaking French. In essence, Sorin believes that if his students appreciate the elegance of the French language and gain confidence in speaking it, they will be more motivated to

live and work in French. According to Sorin, the focus should therefore be on the student and the language, rather than on linguistic maintenance and its political implications. He wholeheartedly encourages the development of a curriculum in which children develop an interest in wanting to learn French and in making it a part of their life.

Marie

Marie loves living in Québec. When she first arrived in Canada in 1973, she lived in Manitoba and then moved to Québec with her family. She was pleased about the move eastward in 1989 because she wanted to get closer to the French language and to live in a French environment again. Shortly after Marie's arrival in Québec, she began teaching in a 'classe d'acceuil' and has been teaching there ever since.

J'adore vivre au Québec mais je n'écoute plus rien au sujet de la politique à la télévision ou à la radio. Je n'écoute pas les nouvelles venant du Québec et je ne lis pas de journaux publiés au Québec. Rien. Je préfère être ignorante et avoir l'esprit en paix, plutôt que d'être informée et frustrée.

I love living in Québec, but I no longer listen to anything about politics on TV or the radio. I don't listen to any Québec news or read any Québec newspapers. Nothing. I prefer to be ignorant and at peace, than to be informed and frustrated.

The following excerpts indicate that integration has been difficult for Marie, even though she speaks French. She and her husband have a handful of Quebecois friends. In fact, they have more English friends, perhaps because her husband is an Anglophone.

Nos enfants sont bilingues. Il arrive que des gens me disent que nous sommes chanceux d'avoir des enfants bilingues. Ce que je trouve personnellement très agréable, dans le fait de vivre à Montréal, c'est d'avoir accès aux deux langues. Si les gens n'étaient pas aussi fermés, ce serait l'idéal.

Our children are bilingual. Sometimes people tell me that we're lucky that our children are bilingual. What I find pleasant about Montréal is that we have access to both languages. If people weren't so close-minded, it would be ideal.

Mon mari travaille dans un magasin. Toutes les affiches à l'intérieur du magasin doivent

My husband works in a store. All the signs in the store have to be in French first and then in

être d'abord en français et ensuite en anglais. Les lettres qui composent les mots français doivent être plus grandes et les lettres qui composent les mots anglais sont deux fois plus petites et apparaissent après le français. Il n y a pas si longtemps, le magasin a fait faire des affiches et la taille des mots anglais inscrits par les illustrateurs était identique à celle des mots français.

English. The French has to be in bigger letters, and then the English letters must be twice as small as the French ones and must appear beneath the French. A while ago they had some signs made up at the stores, and the graphic artist made the English words as large as the French words.

Un client régulier du magasin a passé une remarque au sujet de l'affiche et a porté plainte à l'Office de la langue française. Un représentant de l'Office est venu au magasin, à la manière des Nazis en 1940, avec une caméra et il a pris des photos. Ils ont dû changer toutes les affiches. Les choses du genre m' enragent. Je trouve ça tellement stupide que l'anglais sur les affiches doive être deux fois plus petit que le français. Mon mari est un anglophone bilingue. Il sert ses clients en français.

A customer that comes in frequently made a comment about the sign and complained to the French Language Office. A representative of the Office came to the store, much in the manner of the Nazis in 1940, with a camera and took photos. They had to change all the signs. Things like this, they make me furious. I find this very stupid because English signs in Québec have to be 50% smaller than signs in French. My husband is a bilingual Anglophone. He serves his French customers in French.

Nous devons être ouverts d'esprit. Notre cher Monsieur Bouchard, il parle l'anglais et le français comme vous et moi et je suis sûre qu'il envoie ses enfants à des écoles bilingues. Etre aussi borné, c'est à ce moment-là que la Loi 101 devient bête.

We have to remain open-minded. Our dear Mr. Bouchard, he speaks English and French like you and me, and I am sure that he sends his children to bilingual schools. Being closed-minded like that, that is when Bill 101 *becomes silly.*

Given that the students live in Québec, it is important for Marie that French is the language taught in schools. She often reminds her students that they live in a French-speaking province and that French is the province's official language, and hence the language of instruction. Indeed, she shared with me that if *Bill 101* did not exist, everyone would probably go to English schools.

Nous devons reconnaître que le Québec est une province francophone. Permettez-moi de répéter ce que je viens de dire, c'est une "province" francophone. En France, vous n'envoyez pas vos enfants à l'école pour qu'ils apprennent l'espagnol ou une autre langue. C'est le français. En classe nous parlons du Canada et du Québec. Pour l'essentiel, ces

We need to recognize that Québec is a Francophone province. Let me repeat that again, it is a Francophone 'province.' In France, you don't send your kids to school to learn Spanish or another language. It's to learn French. In class we speak about Canada and Québec. In essence, these kids have come to Canada, not Québec in particular. If it had

enfants sont venus au Canada, pas au Québec en particulier. S'il avait été plus facile d'entrer au Canada par le Manitoba ou la Saskatchewan, ils auraient alors procédé de cette façon.

been easier to enter Canada through Manitoba or Saskatchewan, then they would have probably done it that way.

Lorsque je les entends parler et qu'ils ne s'efforcent pas de parler le français et qu'ils parlent l'anglais ou le tagal ou le hindi, je leur dit : "Écoutez, vous êtes maintenant au Québec et le français est la langue qui est parlée ici. Si vous étiez à Toronto, tout serait en anglais".

When I hear them talking and I don't see them making an effort to speak French, and they're speaking English or Tagalog or Hindi, I say to them 'Listen, you are now in Québec and French is the language that is spoken here. If you were in Toronto, everything would be in English.'

Lorsque les enfants ont recours à des mots anglais, je leur indique l'équivalent français. Le petit garçon à qui vous avez parlé ce matin oublie toujours l'équivalent français du mot "tomorrow". Il dit "tomorrow" plutôt que "demain". Je ne lui dis pas que c'est mal. Je lui dis que "demain" veut dire "tomorrow". C'est tout. Dans les limites de la loi, je pense qu'on peut leur faire aimer la langue française.

Whenever the kids use English words, I give them the French equivalent. The little boy you spoke to this morning always forgets the French word for 'tomorrow'. He says 'tomorrow,' rather than 'demain'. I don't tell him he's wrong. I tell him that 'demain' is the word for 'tomorrow.' That's it. Within the limits of the law, I think we can get the students to appreciate the French language.

It seems that Marie has reached a saturation point when it comes to the media and the political discourse regarding Québec and the future of the French language. Indeed, she considers the discussion on language frustrating. Marie sees it as perfectly logical that immigrants who come to Canada's French-speaking province be required to live, work, and attend school in French. It is unavoidable that English is spoken from time to time, but she does not waver about the importance of her students speaking French because they live in Québec. It is interesting to note that although Marie, along with her husband and children, is bilingual, she does not openly discuss the dilemma of how Allophone students should become bilingual, given their competing loyalties between their first language in the home, the French language in Québec, and the global dominance of English. Undoubtedly, there exists a real tension between

the primary importance of French in Québec and the new Quebeckers' maintenance of their first language and culture.

John

John, whose parents were originally from Guyana, was born and raised in Montréal. It has now been over twenty years since John began teaching English to high school students. He learned French in the streets of inner city Montréal, so as a result, his 'street' French is far better than his 'book' French. However, he still feels most comfortable communicating in English.

English is my first language, and I figure that if I want to impart knowledge to students, I'd better do it in my own language. Although I'm in an English school, there is a French stream and I hear French in the halls. I speak French in the staff room to the French teachers. It's a matter of being respectful.

John's daughter is bilingual. When she was young, John and his wife wanted the best for her and therefore decided to send her to a bilingual school. In contrast to Marie's statement, John thinks that *Bill 101* is unfortunate, since, as a mandatory law, it has the ability to alienate people. Furthermore, he believes that with *Bill 101,* Québec is creating '*Bill 101* kids' whose future may not be as promising because of their limited mobility in society.

If a culture is strong it is going to survive - it will stand on its own. When new immigrants come to Québec, they should be given the choice. Perhaps the students can begin with five months to a year in the French system, and then five months to a year in the English system. The parents and kids could make a decision after the first few years they're here. I think it could work because it is not so Draconian.

You see, unless these kids learn English, they are stuck in Québec. When the parents come to Québec, many of them can speak some English. So what starts to happen is that the parents become more mobile, in a way, because they can speak English, whereas their children are less mobile only knowing French. Quite the irony! Usually it's the kids [of immigrants] that are more mobile than the parents, right? In Québec, it's the other way around. I call these kids 'the Bill 101 *kids.' There's a lot of drawbacks with them only knowing French. They should learn both languages.*

After the 1995 Referendum, John followed the media coverage on how Québec intended to address its political and linguistic situation. He believes that the value of his house has decreased considerably and he is concerned about his pension. Québec is his home, where he was born and where his family lives. In the last few years, John has taken the time to become more informed about the political and linguistic situation in Québec, although he has always experienced its realities. He wanted to become better informed, but grew weary of the inflammatory representations in the media. So, he decided to join the executive of a provincial political party to become better informed as to what people were really saying and what was happening behind the scenes.

I was looking to get a handle on the situation without media involvement. After the Referendum, I decided that worrying was going to do me no good, so I became pro-active, as best I could. This is my home. When I was in Toronto this summer, I realised how much I missed hearing French in the streets, how Toronto has become so American. Montréal is still unique that way in North America. It's my home.

John advocates that all Quebeckers should have the freedom to choose the language in which they conduct their working lives, rather than have this mandated by the government. He also believes that learning only French is disadvantageous to the social mobility of Québec students. Although John sees great value in learning both French and English, the global importance of English leads him to question how many Allophones and new Quebeckers would choose to attend school and pursue their studies in French were it not obligatory.

Sarah

Sarah was born in northern Québec, as were both her parents. She considers herself an Anglophone, even though her mother is French-Canadian. For over ten years, Sarah has been teaching Moral and Religious Education to high school students in a French school. Oftentimes,

discussions in her class turn to the debate on tolerance and what it means to live in a tolerant, democratic society. In Sarah's discussion with her students, tolerance emerges as a contentious issue that is quite fragile in our society.

Cela me dérange lorsque les gens disent que les Canadiens sont tolérants et que le Canada est une société tolérante. La tolérance est présentée comme étant la valeur suprême des Canadiens. Cela reflète une étroitesse d'esprit et n'est pas du tout l'indice d'une réflexion approfondie.

It upsets me when people talk about Canadians being tolerant and Canada being a tolerant society. Tolerance is held up as a supreme Canadian value. It is short-sighted and not indicative of any serious reflection [on the matter].

Je demande à mes étudiantes et étudiantes s'ils désirent être perçus simplement comme une «personne tolérante». Qu'en est-il du fait d'être une personne accueillante et compréhensive? La différence entre la personne qui est tolérante et celle qui ne l'est pas tient à peu de choses et lorsque les temps sont durs, qu'il s'agisse de problèmes socio-économiques ou des conflits politiques, la tolérance est à la baisse. Un tel changement d'attitude peut survenir très soudainement.

I ask the students "Do you want to identify yourself as just a 'tolerant person?" How about as an accepting person, or an understanding person? The difference between being tolerant and not being tolerant is very small, and when we go through hard times—socio-economic hard times or political battles—we become less tolerant. This change in attitude can happen very quickly.

Sarah also talks to her students about issues of identity and to what degree does their first language and culture play a role in shaping their identity while living in Québec. The citation below demonstrates the complexity of the identity issue with regards to Allophone students, and why it is important for Sarah to broach the discussion on tolerance in Canadian society.

Mes étudiants et étudiantes, qu'ils soient immigrants ou allophones, me disent qu'ils ne veulent pas devenir des Québécois parce qu'ils n'ont pas l'impression de faire partie du Québec. Ils ne se sentent pas acceptés ici. C'est pourquoi je reviens souvent à cette question de la tolérance parce que chaque fois que Parizeau ou d'autres Québécois font des déclarations ou manifestent leur intolérance envers les immigrants, ceux-ci font encore moins confiance aux Québécois.

My [immigrant, Allophone] students tell me they don't want to be Quebeckers because they don't feel a part of Québec. They don't feel accepted here. That is why I often come back to this question of tolerance, because every time Parizeau or other Quebeckers make statements or demonstrate their intolerance towards immigrants, the immigrants distrust Quebeckers even more.

Although Sarah enjoys teaching in a French school, she reminds me that at the first school where she taught, there was a French Committee that would inquire if she spoke English in class and if she made spelling mistakes in French. In essence, she believes that such a 'Comité de francisation' does little to encourage French instruction in schools, for each school should be able to approach the subject in a way suitable to its community and its students.

Le Comité aspire à être différent de ce qu'il est. Ils désirent franciser les immigrants et les allophones et en faire des francophiles et non pas seulement des francophones. Ils veulent les amener à tomber en amour avec la langue française et d'une certaine manière c'est précisément ce que l'école parviendra à accomplir. Ces étudiants et étudiantes viennent ici avec leur propre identité et leurs propres expériences et ils sont contraints d'apprendre une nouvelle langue. L'école pense être capable de les amener à aimer cette nouvelle langue. C'est pourquoi ils veulent que les étudiants et étudiantes s'expriment uniquement en français et qu'ils fonctionnent uniquement en français et lorsque les choses ne se passent pas comme cela, l'école perd son calme. Mais tout cela est très irréaliste.

The Committee wants to be something that it is not. They want to francisize the immigrants and the Allophones and turn them into francophiles, not just Francophones. They want them to fall in love with the French language and somehow school will make that happen. These students are coming with their own identities and their own baggage and they're forced to learn a new language. The school thinks that they're going to be able to make them love it. So they want them to speak only French all the time, and function only in French all the time, and when that doesn't happen, the school gets very upset. But all of this is quite unrealistic.

Le fait de surmonter les résistances à une culture est semblable au fait de surmonter des idées sexistes ou racistes. Il doit exister un désir véritable d'embrasser la culture et la langue. Lorsque vous voulez embrasser une culture, c'est le signe d'une ouverture fondamentale. Il y a un amour de cette culture, vous êtes attirés par elle, vous établissez des amitiés. Il n'est pas possible d' imposer une langue ou une culture contre le gré de quelqu'un. Les élèves doivent découvrir la langue et la culture au contact de la littérature, du cinéma, de la musique, et non pas de la manière prévue par un Comité.

Overcoming resistance to a culture is like overcoming sexist or racist ideas. There has to be a willingness and an emotional movement towards the culture and the language. When you want to embrace a culture, there is a fundamental openness there. There's a love of it, an attraction to it, you build friendships. You can't force a language or a culture on someone. The students need to discover the language and the culture through literature, movies, music, and not according to what a committee wants.

L'intégration ne sera vraiment possible que s'il existe de plus grands contacts entre les

In order for integration to be more effective, there has to be greater contact between

immigrants et la culture francophone. Je suppose que cela signifie continuer à faire ce que nous faisons déjà mais sur une plus grande échelle. Les allophones eux-mêmes ont des préjugés au sujet des Québécois francophones. Les amis et l'amitié rendent possible des liens positifs. Lorsque vous rencontrez des gens d'une autre culture et que vous les appréciez, vous voulez embrasser leur culture et leur langue.

immigrants and the French culture. I guess it's doing what we're already doing on a grander scale. Allophones themselves have prejudices about the Francophone Quebeckers. Positive contact could be nurtured through friends and friendships. When you meet people from another culture and you like them, you want to embrace their culture and language.

D'une certaine manière, mes étudiants et étudiantes allophones ne se sentent pas les bienvenus. Pour commencer, on ne leur permet pas d' étudier dans la langue de leur choix. C'est la loi. Donc, dès le début, ils commencent sur un mauvais pied et la résistance ne va qu'en augmentant. J'ai appris le français au contact de mes amis qui, pour la plupart, sont francophones de naissance.

Somehow, my Allophone students don't feel welcomed. To begin, they are not able to study in the language they choose. It's the law. So, from the beginning, they're off to a bad start and a resistance builds from there. The way I learned French was through my friends, most of whom have always been French.

Je pense que l'important est de susciter une émotion chez ces jeunes. Vous pouvez insister et implorer mais le fait est que le français n'est pas la langue qui prédomine. La culture anglaise est tellement prédominante au sein de notre école. Je n'arrive pas à le croire. Il y a des étudiants et étudiantes francophones qui nous arrivent sans parler l'anglais mais qui sont bilingues lorsqu'ils nous quittent et ce phénomène n'est pas dû exclusivement aux cours d'anglais comme langue seconde.

I think it's going to work on an affective level with these kids. You can insist, implore, but the reality is that at our school, it is not French that is the dominant language. There is such a dominance of the English culture in our school. I can't believe it. There are Francophone students that come to our school and don't speak English, and when they leave us they are bilingual, and the ESL classes can only help to a certain extent.

L'anglais devrait être une culture secondaire alors qu'elle est en fait la culture dominante. La langue française et la culture française sont imposées aux allophones mais en réalité l'anglais prédomine. C'est la langue de la culture populaire, de la musique, de la technologie et il ne faut pas se le cacher, son influence est énorme.

English should be the sub-culture, but in actual fact it is the real culture. The French language and culture is imposed on the Allophones, but in reality English predominates. It is the language of pop culture, music, technology, and let's face it, that's a pretty strong influence.

Sarah tries to reconcile learning French with the notion of tolerance and asks her students to reflect on the way in which they want to live in Québec. In the end, she encourages her

students to be critical thinkers regarding their choices and their emerging identity as new Quebeckers. According to Sarah, unless Quebeckers demonstrate a genuine interest in welcoming and accepting immigrants to Québec, Allophones and neo-Quebeckers will learn French with resistance. The 'fundamental openness' Sarah speaks of echoes the same approach that Sorin encourages: have the students discover the history, culture and language of Québec through music, literature, movies and, most importantly, through authentic, congenial rapport with Quebeckers.

Diane

Diane's parents were born in Greece, but she was born in the Maritimes. Although Greek was the language spoken at home, she really only spoke English after moving to Montréal. Her husband's first language is also Greek, and their daughter attended French immersion school until grade five and then took advanced courses in French. Diane has spent her entire career at the same inner-city elementary school, as a teacher for the first six years, then a vice-principal for six years and finally as principal for the past 18 years.

We decided to put our daughter in a French immersion school. I'm happy that she speaks French well, but if I had to do it again, I'm not sure if we would send her to an immersion school. It's difficult to study in two languages. She would need French if she stayed here, but she couldn't get a job [in Québec] so she left. She's in law and you only really need English, I guess, but it's unfortunate that our young people are leaving.

Diane is not worried about the negative effects of *Bill 101* on Allophone students because she believes that parents will ensure that their children receive English instruction. She is, however, concerned about whether Francophone parents will ensure the same thing for their children.

Allophone students will be okay. They know they want to master the English language. It's the Francophone students I'm concerned about, because I see more and more that they're speaking only French, and no English. Down the road they'll need it. If these kids stay in

Québec, only knowing French is okay, but how about jobs elsewhere? They're denying themselves something.

Over the last few years, Diane's school has participated in a pilot project in which the students in her elementary school receive a third of their instruction (90 minutes a day) in French, rather than only 30 minutes a day. As an English institution, the school had to apply to participate in the pilot project.

The parents asked for this. We felt that 30 minutes a day wasn't enough, but they [the parents] weren't ready for immersion at that time. So we went to the board with our suggestion. It wasn't being done anywhere else. The program is tailor-made. All the students from grades one to six get 90 minutes of French each day, in science, math, whatever.

With the establishment of the new linguistic boards, Diane is concerned that her school will not be able to continue offering 90 minutes of French instruction a day. She knows for a fact that the parents will no longer accept anything less, and this is a promising sign that the parents would like to have their children receive additional daily instruction in French. She believes that Quebeckers would like to be bilingual, but the politicians simply do not get the message that being bilingual is an important goal for many Quebeckers. One of Diane's Francophone colleagues realizes that, after travelling to Western Canada and presenting a paper in English, the language seems like less of a threat. His attitude toward English changes as he becomes more tolerant and would like to encourage his children to learn the language.

It's too bad our politicians don't get the message. People want to be bilingual. They want to be able to speak English and French. They should be encouraging bilingualism, rather than cutting programs that help us get there.

I was at a conference out west with one of my Francophone colleagues and he had to do a presentation in English. He did a great job. People were clapping. They really liked what he had to say. When we returned to Montréal, he called me up and asked me if I could do him a favour, if I could find some English programs that his kids could attend. He realizes that there's another world out there, and he's got to prepare his kids for that.

Diane would like to see her school become an alternative school. She wants her school to eventually become a bilingual school, as opposed to an exclusively French immersion school. In fact she believes that if Quebeckers could speak both languages and be bilingual, then linguistic ghettos would not exist.

> *If more people were bilingual, we'd be less segregated. I used to worry about the Allophone kids, learning two languages, but they already* do. *They're learning French at school, but they're also learning English. There's no doubt. I hired two new teachers from McGill this year. Both are Allophones - young, enthusiastic. They both went to French schools, Collège Français, and then went to university in English at McGill. They're both bilingual and they're in my school teaching a number of different courses.*

Diane focuses her attention on the Francophone students, a group that the other educators in this study have not addressed as specifically. She is less concerned with the Allophone students than with the Francophones, because she believes that the Francophone students are not learning English. Diane is a strong advocate of bilingualism, but also alludes to the unemployment situation in Québec. Although her daughter went to an immersion school and had difficulties studying in two languages, it certainly would have been worth it if she could have lived and worked as a lawyer in Québec. With the job climate being poor, her daughter had no choice but to leave the province and look for work elsewhere. To avoid a similar reality at her school, Diane is hiring bilingual teachers.

The teachers' insights regarding teaching and living in Québec provide a number of alternatives. Although Queenie, Nadine, and Diane do not speak French, and John speaks only 'street' French, they each chose to send their children to French immersion schools, knowing that their children's opportunities in Québec would be limited were they to remain unilingual. Of the Francophone teachers, Marie's children are bilingual, while Pierre intends his children to learn English as well. Each of the participants advocates the importance of being bilingual in Québec,

and is intent on providing their children with greater opportunities to live well in Québec, in Canada, and abroad.

When the discussion turns to their students, the educators also speak openly of the importance of learning French, but differ somewhat in their reasons regarding why and how French should be taught. Queenie does not want the future prospects of her Anglophone students to be limited in Québec because they did not have the opportunity to learn French. For Pierre, however, learning French is the most effective means by which his Allophone students can integrate into Québec society. Nadine, for example, believes that her Anglophone students should be comfortable speaking in both languages, whereas Sorin would like to see his students fall in love with French, and discover the beauty of the language, as he once did. He also believes that only when his students learn French well, will they become fully integrated into Québec society. By teaching his students French, he maintains that he is also preparing them for the future. Marie reminds her students that French is the language spoken in the province of Québec, and although she may use English to explain a teaching point to her Allophone students, she insists that they must speak French because they live in a French-speaking province. As such, Marie does not address the complexity of the needs of non-Francophone students in her approach to teaching French. John, on the other hand, states that Allophone students should learn both French and English, without being forced to study only French. John believes that if Allophone students only learn French, it will limit their opportunities to live and work elsewhere in Canada. Sarah indicates that although her Allophone students learn French because they are required to do so, they fully recognize the importance of English in media, technology, travel, and popular culture, and therefore learn English on their own. And finally, Diane explains that it is difficult for students to study in two languages, as her daughter did for a while, but if Quebeckers do not speak both languages, it will be difficult for them to find employment.

In the end, although each teacher's position reflects their distinct vantage point, each believes that it is in their students' best interest to be bilingual. Whether the teachers or students are Francophone, Anglophone, or Allophone, whether or not they continue to reside in Québec, they will have a more promising future if they are able to express themselves aptly in both French and English. With life in Montréal being bilingual, it is no surprise that these Montréal educators encourage their students to become bilingual so they may participate fully in their society.

Admittedly, the unique socio-political context of Montréal and the bilingualism that characterizes it has been a source of motivation for me to continue living and working in both languages. Living in two languages may be perceived as being complex or challenging, but my experiences show that it is enriching to immerse oneself in many languages and cultures. Although most of the educators stress the value of bilingualism to their students in terms of their employability, two educators, Sorin and Sarah, speak of the aesthetic richness found in speaking and living in different languages and cultures.

On a daily basis I have lived, worked and studied in more than one language, in more than one culture. This diversity of experience has opened my heart and mind to feel and think differently according to the individuals or situations I encounter. The possibility for personal growth is limitless. As teachers and teacher educators, we must continually expand our way of 'seeing' in order to interpret the splendour and uncertainty of the world around us. My various perspectives as a researcher, teacher, woman, child of immigrants, and human being, and my facility in more than one language, French, English and Italian, has undoubtedly expanded my understanding of the differing values and motivations that shape people.

7.2 The changing face of Québec

In this section I will provide an overview of Québec's provincial language legislation, *Bill 101*, describing its impact upon the sphere of education. I will also outline the current relations between the Francophone, Anglophone, and Allophone communities in Montréal, the prominence of the French language in Québec, and the educators' responses to these issues on the basis of their observations in their classrooms and schools.

Bill 101

In 1977, *Bill 101* gave prominence to French in everyday life, work and education, whereby, according to the *Bill*, all children, with the exception of those whose parents had attended English primary and secondary school in Québec, were required to attend public school in French. Twenty years after *Bill 101* was introduced and came to be recognized as an integral component of Québec's vision for the future, it continues to generate passionate discussion regarding linguistic rights, cultural maintenance, and class mobility. Levine (1990) indicates:

> Despite this looming debate over the future of Francophone culture, there is overwhelming support in French-speaking Montréal for *Bill 101*. The law has become widely accepted as the cornerstone of Francophone linguistic security and a powerful symbol of the "Reconquest"... A new linguistic climate emerged in which French became Montréal's "public language": interactions in stores, restaurants, or other public places seemed much more likely to at least begin in French ... *Bill 101* was more than an exercise in language planning: it was the most important political symbol of a new era in Montréal's linguistic history. (p. 146)

Indeed, the Francophone, Anglophone, and Allophone educators in this study have reflected on the ambivalence inherent in *Bill 101*. A primary concern of the provincial government in Québec is the preservation of the French language. As such, pedagogical initiatives that speak to the relevant issues of diversity in the province are undermined at the expense of the official provincial mandate regarding the maintenance of French. For the Québec Ministry of Education,

the acquisition of French supersedes all other goals, hence, the complete acceptance and promotion of cultural, linguistic and racial diversity is highly unlikely in Québec if French language instruction were to be undermined.

As the teachers illustrate in this chapter, despite the inherent challenge between French language maintenance and multicultural education, they continue to develop strategies to deal with such a trying dilemma. Pierre is convinced that *Bill 101* is a good thing for Québec, because he feels that without it Allophone students would not integrate fully into Québec society. On the other hand, Sorin is concerned that if the French language is imposed on Allophones, as the English language and culture had been imposed on Canada's First Nations peoples, new Quebeckers will never willingly embrace French and render it an integral part of their lives. In addition, Marie reminds us of the importance of remaining open-minded when it comes to *Bill 101*. For her, the focus should remain on the fact that Allophone students live in a French-speaking province, for she wholeheartedly believes that, within the parameters of the law, her students can learn to appreciate French and incorporate it into their new life in Québec. Interestingly, John speaks of the '*Bill 101* kids' whose professional mobility is limited because they only speak French. According to him, both languages should be offered to new immigrants, leaving the parents to decide in which language they would like their children to pursue their studies. Sarah believes that imposing a language is unrealistic, and would prefer to see her students discover the French language and culture through an appreciation of literature, music, and personal contact with Quebeckers. In Sarah's experience, the Allophone students in her school have learned to speak English because it is the language of the dominant culture. Overall, Diane is not necessarily concerned about the Allophone students in Québec, since she believes they will inevitably learn English, however, she is preoccupied with Francophone students, many of whom only learn French as a way in which to maintain their language and culture in North

America. She questions openly what will become of Francophone Quebeckers when they must look for employment beyond Québec's borders.

D'Anglejan and De Koninck (1992) state that when it comes to the maintenance of the French language, the question is whether Francophone Quebeckers have the necessary power and charisma to generate a convergence of their own culture and those of other cultural communities in the development of a new type of Québec culture, pluralistic in outlook but expressed through the medium of the French language. Fishman (1991) indicates that the French language has indeed undergone a successful revitalization in the province of Québec.

> In the Parti's 1977 declaration on language policy, it was declared unacceptable to confine the French language 'to a bilingual collective life ... the result of which would be to reduce it to the level of folklore'. Indeed, even familiarity with the English language would have to be carefully regulated because 'only when the survival of the French language is assured ... will the English language cease to be the pervasive symbol of perpetual economic and cultural domination' that it still was. ...It was the destiny of the French language to 'accompany, symbolize and support a reconquest by the French-speaking majority in Quebec of that control over the economy which it ought to have. (p. 310)
>
> The Bill itself was a compendium of measures covering the various domains of modern life. Above all, it represented a governmental program for the francization of the workplace. ... The director of the 'Office de la langue francaise', an agency that was given vast new powers and responsibilities in connection with francization of the workplace, was quite correct in saying that Bill 101 went beyond anything previously undertaken. Bill 101 entered full-force into the new pursuit of 'labor market planning'. (p. 311)
>
> French Quebec adamance in continued support of Bill 101 is sufficiently great to endanger the continuation of the current association of Quebec with Canada and, if further indications are needed of the seriousness with which any threat of French hegemony in Quebec is regarded, this danger to the association with Canada is fully recognized by the pro-French forces without this recognition resulting in any tempering of the views or postures involved on either side. (p. 316)

Nevertheless, policy statements recognize the legitimacy and contribution of immigrant and Anglophone groups to Québec society. However, the expectation of the provincial government is that all groups will converge to share the responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of the French language (Plourde, 1988). Clearly, the prevailing belief in many schools and among the general public is that social integration cannot take place until the societal

language has been learned (Bourhis, 1984). Levine (1990) explains that the prominence of the French language in Montréal is no longer in question.

> Twenty years later, *Bill 101* and an unprecedented out-migration of Anglophones have assured that metropolitan Montréal will remain predominantly French-speaking. The demolinguistic future of Montréal is now clear: with little prospect of significant Anglophone in-migration, and continuing (albeit slowing) Francophone migration to the Montréal region from Québec's hinterland, Francophones will represent a stable and increasing share of Montréal's population. The fear of Francophone minorisation in Montréal, if ever credible, no longer exists. (p. 211)

Francophone, Anglophone and Allophone Relations

Beauchesne and Hesler (1987) examined the learning of French and the integration of students in multicultural French schools in Montréal, and their findings concluded that although minority-group students and their parents have favourable attitudes toward school and the learning of French, little intergroup communication takes place. In general, the various multicultural groups keep to themselves. As a consequence, Allophones cannot benefit from the informal contact with their Francophone peers, a contact that would be beneficial to language learning and social integration. Beauchesne and Hesler's study reflects Sarah's observations regarding the poor rapport between Allophone-Francophone students in her school. Levine (1990) admits that "new patterns of intergroup accommodations will also develop as Montréal adjusts to large-scale ethnic diversity" (p.216).

> *Bill 101*, by establishing French as Québec's official public language, brought Montréal's ethnic minorities within the ambit of the city's French language institutions and, for the first time, into large-scale interaction with Francophone society. The result has been "culture shock" as French-speaking Montréal experiences the processes of ethnic and racial conflict and accommodation typical of big cities in the United States. Through the late 1970s, the provincial government had no strategy and few institutions to help ethnic minorities find a place in Francophone society. Initially, the PQ's [Parti Quebecois] attitude was plainly assimilationist: in the Québec it sought to build, it assumed that immigrants would naturally blend in with the French majority in the same fashion that immigrants assimilated into English in the United States and Canada. Ironically, for a party created by individuals deeply committed to preserving their language and culture, the PQ seemed oblivious to the possibility that ethnic minorities might

want to maintain their "specificity" within a framework that acknowledged French as Québec's official language and majority culture.

However, by the early 1980s, as *Bill 101* inexorably promoted greater interaction between ethnic minorities and French-language institutions, the PQ began to incorporate "multiculturalism" in its approach to cultural development....By the end of the 1980s, the concept of "multi-ethnicity within a French framework" was "in" among Québec policymakers.

Despite provincial government pronouncements in favor of cultural diversity, many Francophones are uncomfortable with the ethnic and racial diversification underway in Montréal. This uneasiness has been exacerbated by the decline in the 1950s in the birthrate of native Francophone Québécois, a trend that raises the specter that "ethnic" Francophones will outnumber Francophones "de souche" in the not-too-distant future, with potentially profound consequences for the nature of Québec culture and society. (p. 219)

Furthermore, according to d'Anglejan and Koninck (1992), the perceived increase in the use of the English language among Allophone students in French schools has heightened the anxiety of Francophone parents and educators about the threat of English. School personnel express concern that neo-Quebeckers will not learn French if their exposure to the language is limited to the classroom and English is used elsewhere. Without a doubt, the main threat to the French language in Montréal stems from the influences of Americanization that seem to be of concern to many Western societies. However, Levine (1990) outlines that the big difference is that "Montréal's proximity to English-language influences and the presence of a sizable non-French-speaking population in the city, make English influences all the more immediate and pervasive," (p. 227) and that "the international status of English as a language of science and technology also will influence the future of French and English in Montréal" (p. 225).

Perhaps one of the most rewarding aspects of a heightened linguistic awareness in Québec is the *rapprochement* between the traditional charter groups. In the late 1980s, both of Montréal's major French-language newspapers alluded to the fact that linguistic barriers in Montréal were falling as Anglophones increasingly accepted a French Québec - '*un Québec français*' (*La Presse*, April 1987; *Le Devoir*, November 1988). In 1986, English Québec represented over half a million people, which in turn represents one-twelfth of the overall Québec

population. From 1971 to 1986, the English population declined a total of 13% in 15 years (Statistics Canada, 1989). In 1971, 37% of the English population declared itself to be bilingual, but by 1981, the percentage had risen to 53%. In 1986, over 80% of the Anglophone population remained in the Montréal area.The increase was largely due to out-migration, with unilingual Anglophones being more inclined to leave the province (Dallaire & Lachapelle, 1990).

There are additional indicators of the *rapprochement* in Montréal. Bilingualism among Montréal Anglophones is up dramatically, from an estimated 24% in 1960 to 36% in 1971 and 53% in 1981 (Census of Canada, 1971, 1981). Levine (1990) adds:

> In addition to the growing percentage of Montréalers capable of conversing in French and English, the "two solitudes" seem to be fading in other areas of Montréal life. English language schooling in Montréal has become contoured to Québec's French fact, with huge increases in French immersion programs and with some Anglophones even sending their children to regular French-language schools. (p. 215)
>
> Nevertheless, even if linguistic segmentation persists in the new Montréal, many of the elements historically associated with the city of "two solitudes" have been attenuated: linguistic hierarchy, English unilingualism, and an ability on the part of the Anglophones to ignore the predominantly Francophone society around them. (p. 216)

Concluding remarks

The educators in this study have expressed their desire to see their students be bilingual, in order to ensure promising employment opportunities in the future. I believe that if the educators continue to encourage their students to speak both French and English then the *rapprochement* of the two traditional charter groups, which began slowly after the Quiet Revolution, will continue to flourish. I make such a statement because in communicating with each other, each linguistic group will have a greater possibility to learn from one another. In essence, when we open our hearts and minds to alternative perspectives, we can begin to build a more compassionate understanding of 'other.'

Admittedly, I am relieved to witness the educators' interest in advancing bilingualism, because it is in living, learning, and working in both French and English that we can continue to appreciate one another - our differences, our strengths, our dreams. However, I also recognize, as do the teachers, that the language shift to French and English for Allophones in the pursuit of bilingualism within the parameters of the Québec language policy is a great challenge. The teachers are faced with an indisputable dilemma. Such dissonance between the Allophone's first language maintenance and the pursuit of bilingualism is unlikely to be resolved anytime soon. As the teachers' personal reflections in this chapter indicate, they make an earnest attempt to reconcile language policy objectives with their students' lived experiences by adopting official party discourse when required, otherwise, their classroom instruction is tailored to meet the specific needs of their students' experiences. I have lived the linguistic duality that Montréal offers on a daily basis. I can therefore attest to the fact that it has undoubtedly enhanced the aesthetic quality of my life. As an Allophone who speaks three languages, my "peripheral vision" (Bateson, 1994) is enlarged and my capacity to view the world from multiple perspectives has expanded to embrace a medley of viewpoints. Furthermore, as an Allophone who believes in the 'additive' enrichment of bilingualism (Cummins, 1988), my ability to see, think and dialogue in many languages and cultures has been illuminating. Although the linguistic challenge for Allophones may seem insurmountable, it is a challenge worth considering, for the benefits, in the long run, are many.

It may be perceived that, as a result of *Bill 101,* the French language is imposed on Allophones, however, I believe the *Bill* is necessary to ensure the future of the French language in Québec. In essence, what Québec is asking of their newcomers is not unlike what Canada and other multicultural nations ask of their new citizens: to participate in the democratic public life of their adopted homeland, using the language of that new homeland. Nevertheless, I am in

agreement with the teachers Sorin and Sarah when they state that they would like to see their students "fall in love" with the language, rather than learn it because they are required to do so. In order for Quebeckers and newcomers alike to wholeheartedly embrace French, they need to have a positive, personal rapport with the language, culture and people of the province. Such findings concur with Levine (1990) when he states that "new patterns of intergroup accommodations will develop as Montréal adjusts to large-scale ethnic diversity" (p. 216). The province of Québec, much like other immigrant-receiving countries of the post-war era, is in a period of experimentation as it continues to welcome immigrants and develop democratic policies regarding citizenship and linguistic and cultural diversity. In due time, as the city of Montréal adjusts to the diversity it is facing, new models of rapport between the Francophones, Anglophones, and Allophones will unfold.

In sum, I began this chapter by turning to the teachers for their insights and reflections on teaching and living in Québec. As the Québec government continues to actively define the role of the French language for the people of Québec, it is inevitable that discussion regarding the merits of such government intervention will be prominent within educational forums. Fundamental to any debate on teaching and learning in Québec is the examination of the challenges the province faces regarding the maintenance of French. In the final section of this chapter, I provided an overview of *Bill 101*, the prominence of the French language, the relations between Montréal's Francophones, Anglophones, and Allophones, and how these challenges have had an impact on Montréal as the city's cultural and racial fabric continues to change.

Chapter Eight: Sites of Negotiation that Transcend Difference

The educators in this study provide, in great detail, their personal and professional insights into the ways in which they transcend difference in their schools and classrooms with their students. Accordingly, this chapter focuses on their practical experience regarding issues of diversity and their application of new ideas and approaches. As such, the participants have identified ten sites of negotiation that transcend difference. The sites emerge from my qualitative data, in response to the interview questions that were formulated for the purpose of gaining insight into the practices of the experienced educators (see chapter four and Appendix A).

1) find common ground
2) become intercultural brokers
3) develop empathy
4) search for information that is inconsistent with stereotypes
5) encourage students to think about their actions in a personal way and at a global level
6) resolve conflict in a constructive way
7) resist the temptation to stay the same
8) treat students as equal but not the same
9) bridge the gap between the old world and the new: acting as brokers of information in Canada
10) remove obstacles that prevent students from performing at their best

Nieto (1992) states that if the purpose of education is to prepare children and adolescents for critical participation in a pluralistic society, the approaches that teachers use with their

students need to echo such a vision. In this chapter, I will first clarify the significance of these "sites of negotiation that transcend difference" within the context of multicultural teaching and learning environments (also see chapter three). I will then provide the insights of the teachers who, along with students, parents, colleagues, and the community, have attempted to dialogue across difference in sites of negotiation.

As mentioned earlier in chapter three, Taylor (1992) refers to Gadamer's (1975) 'fusion of horizons' which involves a broader horizon in which a 'third space' is negotiated. The negotiation of a third space entails developing new ideas and vocabularies that enable comparisons to be made between one culture and another, partly by the transformation of one's own standards. The third space becomes a re-negotiated cultural space, an outgrowth of the harmonization and fusion of cultures. Furthermore, Cummins (1989, 1992) refers to Vygotsky's (1978) view of learning that emphasizes the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD), where knowledge is generated through collaborative interaction and critical inquiry. This ZPD is the space where minds meet and new understandings can arise, and where "micro-interactions either reinforce or challenge particular educational structures within the school or school system" (p. 4). Within the ZPD, educators foster a learning environment where students' voices are expressed, amplified and co-created by students and educators. Cummins states that the ways in which educators define their roles with regards to culturally diverse students and communities will determine the extent to which they constrict or expand the ZPD to ground the curriculum in students' experiences, such that a broader range of possibilities for transcending difference in the classroom is available to both students and teachers.

Kozol (1991) maintains that insufficient information exists about effective teaching practices for the complex multicultural classroom. In addition, Banks (1991a) and Ladson-Billings (1995) affirm that teachers and teacher educators need to move from recognizing the

existence of that difference to learning how to *respond* to it. Hence, in this chapter we turn to experienced educators to acquire a better understanding of effective multicultural teaching practices, where the examples provided will illustrate how difference is affirmed, transformed and transcended into new forms of understanding. Giroux (1991) explains that if students are going to learn to take risks to confront critically their role as citizens in a democracy, they need to see such behaviour demonstrated in their teachers' social and pedagogical practices. Furthermore, Giroux (1994) maintains that educators need to demonstrate how difference collides and transcends as teachers and students continue to negotiate new forms of understanding. "Schools should become places where students and teachers become bordercrossers engaged in critical and ethical reflection about what it means to bring a wider variety of cultures into dialogue with each other" (p. 337). hooks (1994) states:

> It is fashionable these days, when 'difference' is a hot topic in progressive circles, to talk about 'hybridity' and 'bordercrossing' but we often have no concrete examples of individuals who actually occupy different locations within structures, sharing ideas with one another, mapping out terrains of commonality, connection, and shared concern with teaching practices. (p. 130).

Sites of negotiation that transcend difference

This chapter highlights the concrete examples of the ways in which the participants in this study negotiate a *third space of understanding and acceptance* with their students. Their collaborative interactions move towards a *fusion of cultures* where *difference is transcended.* hooks (1994) insists that the classroom "with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress" (p. 207).

The following pages offer the teachers insights, in the form of stories, into how they address issues of difference in their classrooms every day. Shabatay (1991) reminds us that stories have an ability to open our minds and hearts to learning.

> When we share stories from our lives, we begin to open ourselves to others, and perhaps nowhere are others more willing to come close enough to hear than when they are being told a story. Faithful listening means that we turn our attention to the words of another. We begin to imagine an event from the side of another person, to grasp his or her uniqueness. (p. 150)

Notably, there is no one solution to the complex problems which the participants face in their teaching environments. The ten sites of negotiation, outlined in this chapter, combine to form a unique and complex *blend of multiple strategies* and *transformative practices*. Although there is a strong correlation between each site, given that we are examining issues of diversity as seen and experienced through the eyes of classroom practitioners, for the purpose of gaining practical insights into the multicultural classroom, the sites will be discussed separately. In sharing the teachers' stories, it is my hope that I have captured the richness of the teachers' experiences, and the complexity of their reflective teaching.

8.1 Find common ground

Giroux (1994) articulates what it means for educators to engage in daily acts of negotiations across cultural and racial borders. He states that if multiculturalism is to continue as an overarching pedagogy in schools, educators need to encourage teachers and students to bring various cultures into dialogue with one another. Giroux, therefore, proposes an insurgent multiculturalism in which students and educators develop a new language that moves between borders, and travels within zones of cultural and racial difference. This insurgent multicultural curriculum consists of articulating a relationship between unity and difference. Therefore, rather than defining multiculturalism *for* difference or *against* unity, it is crucial that the educators

develop a unity-in-difference position in which the interrelationship between different cultures and identities creates dynamic sites of negotiation and dialogue. According to Burbules and Rice (1991), any discussion of difference can identify aspects of similarity within the differing points of view, and thereby provide educational opportunities.

The teachers John and Diane, in conducting dialogue across difference with their students and community members, demonstrate how both difference and sameness are in constant interaction with one another. In the example below, John discusses the sensitivity needed to approach the issues of anti-semitism and discrimination. He certainly understands the many faces of oppression - Jews, Blacks, women - so when the rabbi spoke about Jews, John spoke about his skin colour and growing up Black in Canada.

A few years ago, discrimination came up as an issue in one of my classes. So, we began discussing discrimination and anti-Semitism. I thought to myself, I could talk about discrimination against Jewish people. It's easy. I can talk about what I've read and the movies I've seen, but I thought no, that's not enough. So I spoke to a teacher whose parents are Holocaust survivors. I went to her because she thinks like me and teaches like me. I knew she would understand what I wanted to do. We talked about it and she suggested I contact a Rabbi that she knows. In the first class, he spoke about the Holocaust and then he came back and showed Schindler's List and he had an honest discussion with the kids.

The Rabbi and I tried to illustrate to the students that people will always discriminate against those who are different, whether it be religious, sexual preference, whatever. We pointed out that a Hasidic Jew looks different, like I look different because of the colour of my skin, and so it is much easier for people to discriminate when the difference is obvious like that. We also talked about other nations or people that have undergone prejudice, like the Irish, Ukrainians, Turks, Mexicans and so on. I try to make the links for these kids. (8/1)

In the account that follows, you will note that Diane makes a sustained effort to understand her student's behaviour towards Muslim girls. In the end, each one of us expresses our religious convictions and demonstrates our beliefs in our own way. Some are dictated by ritual, others by the words of God, in the form of the Koran or the Bible. By focusing on the little boy's disruptive behaviour, Diane tries to engage the students in dialogue regarding how each one of the students demonstrates reverence towards their respective God.

There is a lot of controversy around the hijab *- that women should have to cover their heads. Well, it's none of my business, but if a child is going to make fun of that, I'm going to make sure that child understands what they're doing. Three years ago, I had a Jewish boy, who was having emotional problems and difficulties integrating in the school. During recess he would run around and rip the* hijab *off the girls' shaved heads and make fun of them. When I found out about this, I asked the girls and the boy to come to my office.*

I first turned to the boy and asked him if he knew about the girls' religion and why they wore the hijab *and what it represented in their religion. He didn't. I asked him if he wanted to know and he did, so I let the girls explain to him what the hijab meant and why they wore it. Then I asked the boy what he wore when he went to the synagogue. He explained the symbolism of the* kipa *to the girls who didn't know about his religion.*

I believe that by proceeding this way, I was respecting both religions, instead of running him down. I wanted it to be an exchange so he wouldn't leave here just thinking about the trouble he got into and still not understanding anything about Muslims. I think they left the office feeling good about it all. (8/2)

John shares an incident in which some of his Black students are eager to begin exploring the sex shops on Rue Ste. Catherine. When speaking to his students, he extends his argument about oppression against Blacks to the treatment women have endured at the hands of men.

The other day one of my students was talking about porno shops and movies and the like, and I heard him say, 'Wow, I can't wait until I can go to those sex shops.' When I heard him say this I turned to the boy, who is Black, and said, 'For 400 years they exploited you and made money from the backs of your labour because you're Black. What do you think is happening to these women? By going to these places, you're supporting what is also exploitation. Most women are also slaves and are being exploited in this kind of work.'

I wanted to draw on the analogy of slavery and exploitation of Blacks and show him that exploitation manifests itself in many different forms. I talked about dignity and self-worth, and pointed out the parallel between the two. Sometimes the light doesn't always go on, but hopefully somewhere along the way, it sinks in.

Teachers don't always see their successes. Sometimes those successes are long term. I got a call from a student yesterday who has decided to go back to school. She called for a reference letter. That's what I mean. (8/3)

John and Diane, in each incident with their students, were the architects who built bridges by identifying commonalities between cultures. Bennett (1995) states that a multicultural curriculum which incorporates critical thinking needs to stress basic human similarities, where the goal is to "develop antiracist, antisexist behaviour based on awareness of historical and contemporary evidence of individual, institutional and cultural racism and sexism in our society and elsewhere in the world" (p. 344).

These powerful stories are *sites of negotiation* where a *unity-in-difference* position is developed by the teachers, for and with the students, to guide them in their critical thinking. Bennett (1995) argues that in fostering critical thinking skills in students, educators need to engage their students in "complex issues or problem-solving situations that are interdisciplinary and contain multiple points of view and possible solutions with differing consequences" (p. 341). In their teaching, and when responding to a given situation, John and Diane examined the larger canvas of life experiences to guide their students in developing an awareness of the similarities in the human condition, in spite of the apparent differences.

8.2 Become intercultural brokers

Ladson-Billings (1994) maintains that intercultural brokers can assist students to acculturate to an unfamiliar school environment, because they see themselves as members of several communities, such as the school and their cultural, linguistic and racial group. In the excerpts that follow, my participants Diane and Sarah illustrate how a daycare worker and teacher in their respective schools take on the role of intercultural brokers and provide their fellow teachers with a window into different cultures and other ways of living, a perspective that Diane and Sarah might not have otherwise received.

In the first example, Diane describes the importance of the "insider" status of Donna, the Chinese daycare worker at her school. Dei and Razack (1996) argue that intercultural brokers are bicultural individuals who are knowledgeable about the school culture and representative of their first culture as well. Quite often they belong to the ethnic group of many students at the school, and, as a result, can help bridge the gap between the school and the students' first language and culture.

I have a daycare worker in the school. Her name is Donna Chow. She is a great liaison for the Chinese community. She has a good sense of what is happening. Outside school, she helps many Chinese with the language, or helps them understand Canada for those women who were brought over to marry. When there are events at the school, I speak about it with Donna and she brings in people from the community to participate and help out.

I use her in the school not only as an interpreter, but also to explain things to parents. For example, if I have a child and the child needs to be assessed, it is very difficult for the parents to understand this. They immediately begin asking themselves what is wrong with their child, what is the school going to do to their child. In this way, Donna is able to reassure them, and tell them not to worry, that we just need to know how to help their child, and that the only way we can do that is to have the child assessed by the psychologist.

She is able to explain the background, that someone will come to the school once a week, sit down with their child and ask them to write a test. It doesn't involve going to the hospital, which is immediately what they think when you say the word psychologist. Donna's interaction with them is much more effective than saying the words 'psychological assessment' to them, and me struggling to explain that.

I also get to hear some personal things that go on in the Chinese community, so I understand better if a child has a problem. She explains things to me and the staff. Donna is not embarrassed to speak about the shortcomings of the Chinese: that women often are considered second class citizens, the men and their gambling, the difference between working class Chinese and the ones from Hong Kong. She knows her community, the kids, the school and she is able to explain things to us.

Several years ago, two young Chinese girls drowned. It was extremely painful for the families involved and everyone at the school. With Donna's help, together we were able to help the families. I know they accepted me because I was with Donna.

Years later, one of the families came back to the area. They had a son and they wanted their son to go to this school. Then they had two more sons and the fourth child was a girl. Donna was like a guard. She reminded the parents that they had to put their children in daycare so there's supervision when they're not around. Even though, financially, it was difficult for them, Donna told them they had to do it. It was, after all, due to negligence on their part that their first daughter drowned [she was left to care for herself]. They listened to her.

There is another case where a mother spoke no English and her husband passed away. She had relatives in Toronto and they wanted her to move there from Montréal. Donna wasn't convinced that it was in the mother's best interest to move to Toronto with her children, considering the family situation there. Donna remained in the background, giving her advice. The woman eventually moved back to Montréal with her children. Donna found a place for her, a job, subsidized housing. The children are at our school and they seem very happy, considering all the changes that have happened. The board has ethnocultural workers, but I have my own that knows the community. (8/4)

Sarah's account below illustrates that contact between different cultural and racial groups is more successful when there is equality of status, as is the case between Sarah and her colleague Jumal. This example concurs with Banks (1997), elaborating upon the work of Allport

(1954), who indicates that interracial and intergroup contact is enhanced in instances where cooperation is emphasized, group members pursue common goals and have equal status, they get to know each other as individuals, and the contact has institutional support and is sanctioned by authorities.

Pas cette année mais l'année dernière, lorsque nous étions à une école plus grande, un de nos enseignants s'appelait Jumal, il était libanais et un musulman pratiquant. C'était un type avec un bon sens de l'humour. Les gens l'appréciaient. C'était un type très bien mais il n'était pas très rigolo pendant le Ramadan. À chaque année, à l'époque du Ramadan, il était plutôt blême, on ne le voyait jamais au salon des enseignants.

Not this year but the year before, when we were at a bigger school, we had a teacher, Jumal, who was Lebanese and a practicing Muslim. He was a guy with a good sense of humour. People enjoyed his company. He was a very decent guy, but he wasn't much fun when it came to Ramadan. Every year, when he'd go through Ramadan, you could see he was rather pale, and we never saw him in the staff room.

À sa façon, sans en faire tout un plat et sans mentionner quoi que ce soit, il commençait à jeûner. Jumal a vraiment permis à un grand nombre d'enseignants de comprendre l'attitude des musulmans à l'égard du Ramadan. Il parlait du courage et de la force physique qui sont nécessaires pour jeûner de cette manière. Ce n'est pas une chose facile, le fait de se sentir différent des autres, lorsque tout le monde est en train de manger à l'heure du dîner et que vous allez prier.

In his own way, without making a big deal about it or mentioning anything, he would begin fasting. Jumal really helped a lot of teachers understand the attitudes that Muslims have with regards to Ramadan. He spoke about fortitude and the physical strength you need to do it. It's not an easy thing to do, feeling different from everyone else, when everyone's eating at lunch-time and you go off to pray.

Je me souviens lorsque "La Presse" a publié un article qui critiquait le port du hijab. Nous étions réunis à l'heure du dîner et nous discutions de l'article et du hijab et Jumal était présent. Il a expliqué la signification philosophique et religieuse du port du hijab. Il ne fallait pas le voir comme étant une manière d'opprimer les femmes. C'était une manière pour la femme d'exprimer son désir de faire la volonté de Dieu. Certains enseignants étaient d'avis qu'en réalité les femmes étaient forcées d'agir ainsi par leur père et leurs frères. Jumal a expliqué pourquoi sa femme avait choisi de ne pas porter le hijab ainsi que ce que le Coran dit au sujet du hijab.

I remember when the 'La Presse' article came out, criticizing the wearing of the hijab. *We were in the lunch room discussing the article and the* hijab, *and he was there. He explained the philosophical and religious meaning behind the wearing of the* hijab. *It was not to be seen as a way of oppressing women. It was the women's way of expressing her desire to be obedient to God. Some of the teachers felt that the reality was that women were forced by their fathers and brothers to do this. Jumal explained why his wife chose not to wear one and he explained what the Koran said about the* hijab.

À cause de Jumal, je pense que les enseignants ont beaucoup plus apprécié les étudiants musulmans de l'école. À plusieurs reprises nous avons eu des discussions au sujet du hijab. Lorsque nous avions des questions nous allions le voir. Je pense que sa présence à l'école a permis plus facilement à certains de comprendre ce qu'ils n'auraient pas autrement compris. Il ne nous disait rien à moins que nous ne lui ayons d'abord demandé. Il donnait simplement l'exemple. Nous étions prêt à l'écouter parce que c'était un homme droit et vertueux, un homme ayant la foi qui mettait ses valeurs en pratique et vivait conformément aux principes de sa religion.

Because of Jumal, I think the teachers appreciated the Muslim kids in the school a lot more. On many occasions, we had discussions about the hijab. *When we had questions we would go and see him. I think his presence in the school made it easier for some people to understand what they would not have otherwise understood. He didn't tell us things unless we asked. He just set an example. We were prepared to listen to him because he was an upstanding, virtuous man, a man of faith who put his values into action and lived by the principles of his religion.*

Le fait qu'il soit un membre du personnel a permis à certains membres du personnel qui ne connaissent pas l'Islam de comprendre ce que vivaient certaines étudiantes musulmanes. Cela nous a permis, de façon générale, de mieux comprendre cette religion et nous l'a rendue moins abstraite, parce qu'il était membre du personnel. (8/5)

The fact that he is one of the staff members made it easier for some of the staff who don't know about Islam to appreciate what some of the Muslim girls were going through. It made the general understanding of the religion more real for us because he was a staff member. (8/5)

The daycare worker Donna and the teacher Jumal learned to function as bicultural individuals in two distinct socio-cultural environments, as they integrated the reality of their lived experiences in two culturally different worlds (Darder, 1991). By understanding the codes, wisdom, rituals and beliefs of a student's first culture, the teacher, who is also the intercultural broker, can begin to develop solidarity with the student, as they provide insights into their first culture.

Aboud (1988) states that cultural brokers put a human face to the oversimplified beliefs that have become ubiquitous stereotypes. Donna and Jumal, as intercultural brokers in their schools, serve as guides that can be trusted because of the relationships they have developed within their respective communities. Furthermore, in both situations cited above, as the

intercultural brokers attempted to facilitate solidarity with the students and teachers, the inter-group experiences were meaningful and relatively positive (Amir, 1976; Allport, 1979).

8.3 Develop empathy

Nussbaum (1997) states that compassion "allows us to cross group boundaries" (p. 111) and is essential for civic responsibility.

> A society that wants to foster the just treatment of all its members has strong reasons to foster an exercise of the compassionate imagination that crosses social boundaries, or tries to. (p. 92)

The following excerpts demonstrate how Pierre and John attempt to develop empathy in their students by introducing them to the lives of people different from themselves, in the hope that prejudice about 'other' will be reduced.

Bennett (1992) affirms that developing empathy in students is a crucial trait of multicultural sensibility. In the end, students who demonstrate a reduction in prejudice show sensitivity and openness to alternative points of view and are able to think more critically. Byrnes (1988) indicates that curriculum with an affective component, which invites students to enter vicariously into the lives of people from different ethnic and racial groups, helps them develop an openness, and consequently once the students feel empathy, they are more prepared to respect differing points of view. Pierre asked his students to listen to a story told by a seven-year-old little girl about her living arragements at home. When the students break out in laughter, Pierre explains why such behaviour is inappropriate.

Un jour, nous parlions des pièces dans une maison. Nous passions en revue le vocabulaire	*One day, we were talking about rooms in a house. We were reviewing the French*

français. Je disais quelque chose comme : "Dans votre chambre, avez-vous ceci et cela?". L'élève à qui j'ai demandé de répondre à cette question a calmement répondu : "Pierre, je n'ai pas de chambre. Je dors dans le salon". Cette petite fille originaire de la Chine, qui était âgée de sept ans, a expliqué que deux familles vivaient dans un appartement 4 ½ à Montréal. Lorsque les autres élèves ont entendu cela, ils ont commencé à rire, même si plusieurs d'entre eux vivent eux-mêmes dans des appartements qui sont beaucoup trop petits. Je ne voulais pas que cette fillette soit gênée ou embarrassée mais je voulais que les autres élèves comprennent que leur rire était inopportun, alors j'ai posé certaines questions à la fillette et elle a expliqué où elle vivait.

vocabulary. I was saying something like 'In your bedroom, do you have this and that?' The student I called on quietly replied, 'Pierre, I don't have a bedroom. I sleep in the living room.' This little girl from China, who was seven years old, explained that there were two families living in a two-bedroom apartment in Montréal. When the other kids heard that, they began to laugh, even if many of them live in small cramped apartments themselves. I didn't want the girl to feel uncomfortable or embarrassed, but I did want the kids to understand that their laughter was inappropriate, so I asked the girl some questions and she explained where she lived.

La fillette nous a dit que neuf personnes, quatre adultes et cinq enfants, vivaient dans un espace qui serait normalement occupé par une ou deux personnes. J'ai demandé à la fillette pourquoi il en était ainsi et elle expliqua que son père n'avait pas beaucoup d'argent et qu'il en coûtait moins de vivre ensemble. Sa mère et sa tante préparent les repas et la petite fille dans ma classe prend soin de ses frères et soeurs et de ses cousins et cousines.

The girl told us that there were nine people, four adults and five children, living in the space where one or two people would normally live. I asked the girl why that was the case, and she explained that her father didn't have much money and it costs less to live together. Her mother and aunt prepare the meals, and the little girl in my class takes care of her siblings and cousins.

Les autres élèves dans la classe ont écouté dans le silence. Lorsqu'ils comprennent, cela semble moins drôle. (8/6)

The other students in the class listened quietly. When they understand, it seems less funny. (8/6)

In the following excerpt, John asks a Native woman and her daughter to come speak to his class about the challenging situation they were facing. John's discussion exemplifies Delpit's (1990) contention that exposing students to the life experiences of others who may be rejected or discriminated against, can help students to understand and reduce prejudice. Allowing another reality to penetrate our consciousness is not easy, and at times, may also be painful since it

means turning ourselves inside out. Learning what it may be like to walk in another's shoes is one way in which to begin the dialogue. It is this kind of learning that John would like for his students.

After work, I often go to a gym downtown. Not this Christmas but the Christmas before, there was a guy sitting at the corner begging for money at the corner of St. Catherine and MacKay streets. I bought him a cup of coffee and got on the train to come home. A few days later, I returned and there is a lady sitting with this guy. I guess he remembered me from the other night, and he says, 'If you think I have a hard story, you should hear this lady's story.' The lady is crying and I ask her what is wrong. She says that she came to Montréal with her daughter because her daughter has a brain tumor.

'Where is your daughter,' I ask. 'She's in the Faubourg Mall.' I said to the mother, 'Come with me. I want to meet her.' I started talking to the girl and I told her I have a brain tumor, too. I told them I had been treated for it and my doctor was Dr. A. As luck would have it, he was also her doctor. 'Tell your doctor you know Johnny Campbell. I've known him for years. He'll take good care of you.'

I asked the mother and the daughter if they would mind coming into my classroom. The following day, I told the kids that a Native woman and her daughter were coming in to speak to them. I explained the situation. When the mother and daughter came in, the kids were quite traumatized by how the girl looked. You see, the tumor was affecting her face. Her face was dropping on one side.

My kids were touched by what the mother and daughter had to say, about the illness, being in a big city. They live on a reserve. A lot was foreign and difficult for them to understand when they came to Montréal. The cultures are so different. The kids decided, on their own, to pass around a hat and every one of those kids gave money. If that wasn't enough, because these kids can be tough kids, they accompanied the girl to the front door and picked her up out of the wheelchair to help her leave the building. They knew she needed help.

Later that month, the best artist in the class made a big postcard for the girl when she went in for treatment and everyone signed it. The mom still writes us. The kids were moved. I never thought I'd see that. There's something to be said for that. (8/7)

Pierre and John had their students listen to stories that did not necessarily bridge two worlds. In effect, they asked their students to *confront* another world, another reality, such that the impact of the shared stories was felt by many students. Pierre's students became silent and soon found the student's living conditions less humorous, while John's students, of their volition, raised money and later designed a card for the native girl while she was receiving treatment at the hospital. These stories of experience concur with Maxine Greene (1991) who suggests that multicultural education can only take place when we can "be friends of one another's minds"

(p. 18). Furthermore, Bennett (1995) states that when emphasis is placed on developing empathy, the outcome is "self-awareness of the cultural assumptions that people of different cultural backgrounds make about each other's behaviours and cognitions" (p. 343). Greene (1995) reminds us that imagination makes empathy possible. Indeed, imagination is the cognitive capacity that allows us to reconceive our own reality and lend credibility to alternative realities, and hence develop empathy.

8.4 Search for information that is inconsistent with stereotypes

The following stories demonstrate how Queenie gleaned information about a student with learning disabilities that was inconsistent with stereotypes, and how Pierre challenged gender stereotypes held by one of his students. Campbell (1996) and McDiarmid and Price (1990) suggest that teachers need to respond to their students as individuals, rather than as representatives of a particular group. However, despite their best efforts in this regard, teachers frequently view their students as representatives of a particular group and tend to generalize about them. As such, it is far easier to make assumptions than to ask questions about what it means to be poor, to have a learning disability, or to be Black.

Queenie is certainly aware that the practice of labelling students has become more widespread in recent years (Ayers, 1993). Moreover, she understands that labelling limits her students' ability to develop other skills, such as math and chess.

Look at the picture of this child. He's special ed. He's in an LD1 class, in a closed class, for children that have real learning disabilities. He doesn't know how to count but he is one of the best chess players that we have. This kid is definitely breaking the stereotypes - when you look at the academic record for these kinds of kids. What we did was we allowed him to play chess at lunch. When it was time for the chess competition at the board, we allowed him to represent the school. He did well. Magnificently well, as a matter of fact.

Since he became a chess champion, his math has improved and his grades have soared. The change came in his self-esteem, because now he was being recognized. His name was in the

newsletter to all the parents. He got certificates, medals, a T-shirt, and the chess champion is doing well at school. Surprise, surprise! (8/8)

Queenie judged the worth of her student from multiple perspectives and focused on his strengths as a way to combat the stereotypes attached to his 'label'. As a result, the student became a well-known chess player within the board of education, and his performance in math improved considerably. In the example that follows below, it is evident that the student Hamed is raised in an environment where the roles of men and women are clearly defined. The teacher Pierre feels that in order to be fair to all of the students in the class, Hamed needs to share in the clean-up duties like the rest of his peers.

Tous les élèves ont à chaque jour des responsabilités, ils doivent aller chercher les collations, prendre les présences, nourrir la tortue. À toutes les deux semaines, il y a une rotation et chaque élève doit assumer une nouvelle responsabilité. Un de mes élèves est âgé de huit ans et il est originaire de la Somalie. Pendant une période de deux semaines, c'était à son tour de donner un coup de balai dans la classe. Hamed est venu me voir après l'école et m'a dit qu'il ne pouvait pas balayer. Il m'a dit : "Je ne fais pas cela. Ma mère lave et ma soeur nettoie et balaye. Elles font tout. Mon père, mon frère et moi-même jouons aux cartes ou regardons la télévision".

All of the students have responsibilities each day; they have to get the snacks, take the attendance, feed the turtle. Every two weeks we rotate, and the students' responsibilities change. I have a student who is eight years old and comes from Somalia. For a two-week period, it was his turn to sweep the classroom. Hamed came to me after school and told me that he could not sweep the class. He told me, 'I don't do that. My mother washes, and my sister cleans and sweeps. They do everything. My father, my brother and I, we play cards or watch television.'

C'était la première fois qu'un élève était venu me voir et m'avait parlé de cette manière. J'étais au début très troublé parce qu'il m'avait dit mais j'ai compris que ce qu'il m'avait dit était le reflet de ce qu'il avait appris à la maison. Je n'était pas sûr de ce que j'allais faire dans un tel cas. Il a dit cela tout bonnement. Je lui ai donc dit que chaque élève dans la classe serait responsable de la même tâche au cours de l'année et que pour être juste envers tous les membres de la classe, il aurait

It was the first time any student had come to me and spoken to me that way. I was initially quite disturbed by what he told me, but I recognized what he was telling me was a reflection of what he had been taught at home. I wasn't sure how I was going to handle this one. He said it so matter-of-factly. So I told him that each student in the class would be responsible for the same task during the course of the year, and in order to be fair to all members of the class, he would have to sweep.

à balayer. Je lui ai également parlé des tâches domestiques que j'accomplis à la maison. J'ai terminé en disant que s'il y avait un problème, son père pouvait venir me parler en personne.

I also told him about the housework I do at home. I finished off by saying that if there was a problem, his father could come and speak to me directly.

Bien, il a continué à protester. Les premiers jours qui ont suivi la discussion, il refusait de le faire. J'ai expliqué qu'il était juste pour tous les élèves que chacun accomplisse les corvées. Il a lentement changé d'avis. Il a vu les autres élèves, et en particulier les garçons, en train de balayer et il a lui-même accepté de le faire, bien qu'à reculons.

Well, he continued to protest. For the first few days after the discussion, he wouldn't do it. I explained that it was fair to all the children if everyone did the chores. He slowly came around. He saw the rest of the kids, and particularly the boys, sweeping and he did it, although reluctantly.

Dans la classe d'arts plastiques, il refusait de laver les pinceaux après les avoir utilisés. Tout ce qui avait trait au nettoyage n'était pas pour lui. Il aimait peindre mais il ne voulait pas nettoyer les pinceaux. Encore une fois, j'ai eu à lui expliquer qu'il en était peut-être ainsi à la maison mais qu'à l'école et dans la classe avec les autres garçons et filles, chacun avait une responsabilité et que s'il accepte de venir en classe, il doit alors accepter les règles et les responsabilités que les autres élèves acceptent. Il a accepté de le faire et maintenant il le fait.

Whenever it was art class, he didn't want to clean the paint brushes after he had used them. Anything having to do with cleaning, was not for him. He enjoyed painting, but he didn't want to clean the paint brushes. Once again, I had to explain that perhaps it was like that in his home, but in school and in the classroom with other boys and girls, each child has a responsibility and if he accepts to come to class, then he must accept the rules and responsibilities the other kids accept. He proceeded to do it and now he does it.

Hamed avait besoin de comprendre qu'il n'y a pas des règles pour les garçons et des règles pour les filles à notre école. Je pense qu'il comprend cela maintenant, du moins en ce qui concerne l'école. (8/9)

Hamed needed to understand that there aren't rules for boys and rules for girls in our school. I think he understands that now, at least when it comes to school. (8/9)

Pierre recognized that Hamed was not required to do any housework at home. At school, however, Pierre felt it was his responsibility to challenge Hamed's gender stereotypes, which he felt were unacceptable in Canada. When Pierre was faced with this conflict, he needed to see beyond his own stereotypes and prejudices as he assessed how to proceed with Hamed. After much reflection, Pierre chose to remain firm with Hamed in the hope that the modelling by the other boys and girls in the class would eventually lead him to change his behaviour and

participate in classroom duties. Queenie's and Pierre's examples mirror Nieto's (1992) statement that affirming difference remains a challenge for all of us.

> Dealing with people who are different from us in hygienic practices, food preferences, and religious rites that we may find bizarre can be trying. It is also extremely difficult and at times impossible to accept and understand cultural practices that run counter to our most deeply held beliefs. For example, if we believe strongly in equality of the sexes and have in our classroom children whose families value males more than females, or if we need to deal with parents who believe that education is a frill and not suitable for children, or if we have children in our classes whose religion forbids them to take part in any school activities except academics - all these situations test our capacity for affirmation and solidarity. (p. 278)

Stereotyping and labelling concentrates on specific deficits, offering a single lens which can distort our vision. Hewstone and Giles (1986), as cited in Corson (1998), indicate:

> Stereotypes influence the way information is processed about the members of groups; stereotypes create expectancies about other people and the holders of stereotypes often search for information and behaviours in others that will confirm those expectancies; stereotypes constrain their holders' patterns of communication and promote communication which confirms the stereotypes held (i.e. they create self-fulfilling prophecies). (p. 118)

In effect, Nieto (1992) asserts that less effort is required to pigeonhole people to the predetermined biases we hold, than to attempt to understand their real situation. When critical thinking is encouraged and stereotypes are challenged, students learn to make evaluative judgements about the worth, accuracy and value of information. Taking action to meet the social and academic needs of the diverse student population often entails questioning assumptions and challenging internalized falsehoods (Weil, 1992). In sum, Queenie's and Pierre's stories illustrate how differences of ability and cultural interpretations of gender can be transcended when inconsistent information that gives rise to stereotypes is confronted.

8.5 Encourage students to think about their actions in a personal way and at a global level

Sociological research by classical theorists indicates that one of the most prevalent forms of fragmentation of life is our division of people into *us* and *them* (see chapter two). When we descend to this level, we ignore our basic connectedness as human beings, since we continue to divide people according to colour, race or particular 'isms.' Feuerverger (1994, 1997), (King *et al.*, 1994) and Miller (1998) suggest that a multicultural curriculum cannot come to life unless fair-minded, critical thinking is at the heart of teaching and learning. Such a curriculum requires that teachers and students care about human welfare beyond that of themselves, their families and friends.

The teachers Nadine and Sarah demonstrate how they encourage their students to develop an awareness of children's rights and socio-political realities outside Canada's borders. Ladson-Billings (1994) states that the emphasis on thinking globally and acting locally engenders a sense of personal and political efficacy and a participatory attitude. When students are encouraged to think about their actions, they develop a global awareness and perceive the world in an holistic manner. In the excerpt below, Nadine elaborates on the YMCA project that her students participated in with five Latin America countries, and what they learned from such interactive activities.

I was involved in a project that was comprised of a three-way partnership between the YMCA, our school, and five countries in Latin America. In this project, we tried to create hands-on programs for young children about their rights. Across cultures, we tried to encourage self-expression, solidarity, responsibility. The hands-on activities were fun and we used everything from storytelling and games to puppets and theatre.

We did a lot of activities, like the right to expression, to a future, to education, the right to safety, community, and ethnic origin and language. In talking to the children a lot of things came up, like what do you need to stay alive - food, home, friends, clothes. At five years of age, they knew what they needed. The activities showed children that they had choices and responsibilities.

This kind of program allowed my kids to learn about children in relation to other children elsewhere in the world. Children are inspired when they know that other children in other parts of the world share their feelings, their rights, their responsibilities. Somehow, they begin to feel a sense of commitment to children who live far away.

In one class, the children drew their hands and they wrote about what they do with their hands. When we were all done, we packaged up the paper hands and sent them to Ecuador and exchanged our ideas with the children from there. The kids were excited to talk about what the children from Ecuador had sent us. We learned about what their situation was. We began talking about children at risk and the kids said that children are at risk in Canada too, but in a different way. I asked the children how they think that knowing about their rights would change things in their lives, and for the children in Latin America. We talked about it and when the teachers from Latin America came to our school and spent time in our classroom, they were able to share feelings, drawings and ideas with them. Some of the teachers that came up from South America could only speak Spanish. That didn't seem to be a problem with the kids.

I'm glad I was asked to participate in the project. Sometimes it's difficult to know right away what kids have learned, but I have no doubt that they benefited greatly from the activities. (8/10)

In choosing to become involved in the YMCA program, Nadine's objective was to introduce her students to overarching, univeral values (McLeod, 1992). She wanted to create a wider audience for their efforts, as they brought their initiatives and their sense of self into focus with the children's rights activities in which they participated. In effect, Nadine was teaching locally to her students what she believed in globally for all children. According to Bennet (1995), given that we live in an increasingly interdependent world, possessing a limited knowledge of global issues is almost foolhardy.

In the example that follows, Sarah attempts to create a learning environment that encourages her students to think about core Canadian values, and non-democratic values elsewhere in the world, and she does so through the use of literature. By selecting a novel that examines human rights issues, Sarah would like to impress upon her students that Canada is indeed a free country, where justice and freedom are ideals we rarely fight for anymore.

Il existe un livre que j'aime demander aux étudiants de lire, l'histoire de Carmen Quintana, une femme chilienne qui a été brûlée par les militaires durant le coup d'état de 1973 lors duquel le gouvernement de Allende a été renversé. J'ai choisi ce livre parce qu'il a trait à une jeune femme avec qui les étudiants peuvent s'identifier. Elle a lutté pour quelque

There's this book I like to have the kids read, the story of Carmen Quintana, a Chilean woman that was burnt by the military during the coup in 1973 which overthrew the government of Allende. I chose this book because it's about a young woman the students can relate to. She fought for something she believed in. Many of these teenagers are

chose en quoi elle croyait. Plusieurs de ces adolescents sont en quête d'idéaux et voilà une femme idéaliste, qui croyait que sa famille et les Chiliens et les autres peuples de la terre ont le droit d'avoir du pain sur la table et le droit de travailler. Nous sommes si choyés dans ce pays que nous prenons beaucoup de choses pour acquis.

looking for ideals, and this is an idealistic woman, who believed that her family and Chileans and other people in the world have the right to bread on the table and the right to work. We are so pampered in this country that we take a lot for granted.

Les étudiants aiment cette histoire parce que même si elle est horrifiante, ils peuvent s'identifier à Carmen Quintana. Dans ce livre, elle parle de sa vie, de sa jeunesse, du fait d'aller à l'école, de son adolescence, des fêtes auxquelles elle a participé. Je ne pense pas qu'ils peuvent s'identifier immédiatement à l'activisme politique qu'elle a développé alors qu'elle était adolescente. Certains élèves connaissent son histoire, surtout s'ils viennent de l'Amérique Centrale ou de l'Amérique du Sud.

The kids like the story, because even though it is horrifying, they can relate to it. The book is written in a way that she talks about her life, about growing up, going to school, being a teenager, going to parties. I don't think they can relate right away to the political activism that she develops as a teenager. Some of the kids know her story, especially if they come from Central or South America.

J'ai décidé d'exposer les étudiants à cette histoire parce qu'elle a trait aux droits de la personne et parce que je veux qu'ils comprennent le pays qui est le nôtre - que c'est un pays libre et que nous sommes si choyés, pas seulement d'un point de vue matériel, mais également en ce qui a trait à l'égalité, la justice, la liberté, les droits de la personne et la dignité humaine. Je ne pense pas qu'il existe ailleurs dans le monde un autre pays semblable au Canada.

I do this story with the kids because it's an issue of human rights and I want the students to understand the country we live in - that it's a free country and that we have so much, not just materially speaking, but also when it comes to equality and justice and freedom, and human rights and basic dignity. I don't think there is a place like Canada anywhere else in the world.

Ici, les policiers ne vous arrêtent pas à moins qu'il ne soit évident que vous avez fait quelque chose de mal. Je veux que les élèves pensent à ces questions en matière de droits de la personne parce que je veux qu'ils aient une conscience politique, même si elle est peu développée. Je veux qu'ils comprennent que ce qu'est notre Charte canadienne des droits et libertés et ce qu'elle signifie et qu'ils comprennent ce que nous avons dans ce pays.

Here the police don't stop you unless you've obviously done something wrong. I want the kids to be thinking about these issues of human rights because I want them to have a political consciousness, even if it's under-developed. I want them to understand what our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is, and what it means, and get them to understand what we have in this country.

Ce livre me permet d'aborder ces questions. Je sais qu'ils préféreraient regarder un

I use the book as a way to get into these issues. I know they would prefer a video but it would

enregistrement vidéo mais cela serait trop facile. Les vidéos font partie de toute cette expérience passive. Je veux qu'ils lisent le livre parce que plusieurs d'entre eux n'ont pas eu la chance de s'asseoir pour lire pendant une demie-heure. Ces questions en matière de droits de la personne sont invisibles pour nous en tant que Canadiens. C'est comme le battement de notre coeur, nous le prenons pour acquis. Je veux qu'ils imaginent ce que cela signifierait de ne pas avoir ces libertés. (8/11)

be too easy for them. Videos are part of that whole passive experience. I want them to be reading the book because many of them do not have the experience of sitting quietly and reading for half an hour. These issues of human rights are invisible to us as Canadians. It's like our heartbeat; we take it for granted. I want them to imagine what it would be like not to have these freedoms. (8/11)

For Sarah, the most obvious reason for requiring her students to study the Chilean story of Carmen Quintana is because this story, along with so many other stories that can be told, contains knowledge that is readily put to use in the outside world. Nussbaum (1997) states:

> Narrative imagination is an essential preparation for moral interaction. Habits of empathy and conjecture conduce to a certain type of citizenship and a certain form of community: one that cultivates a sympathetic responsiveness to another's needs, and understands the way circumstances shape these needs, while respecting separateness and privacy. This is so because of the way in which literary imagining both inspires intense concern with the fate of characters and defines those characters as containing a rich inner life, not all of which is open to view; in the process, the reader learns to have respect for the hidden contents of that inner world, seeing its importance in defining a creature as fully human. (p. 90)
>
> It is all the more urgent to cultivate the basis of compassion through the fictional exercise of imagination - for if one cannot in fact change one's race, one can imagine what it is like to inhabit a race different than one's own. (p. 92)

Nadine's and Sarah's primary objectives are to raise their students' awareness around global issues and develop empathy for 'other'. In order to help students become effective and compassionate citizens, the school must help them to develop "clarified, reflective, and positive identifications and attachments to their cultural communities, the nation-state, and the global world society" (Banks, 1988b: 124). Furthermore, Giroux (1994) stipulates that when we bring various cultural interpretations into dialogue with another, classroom interactions become sites of negotiations where the richness of difference becomes the focal point.

8.6 Resolve conflict in a constructive way

Conflict resolution skills have become increasingly valuable to teachers as diverse cultures and worldviews collide in the classroom. Adler (1986) states that one way in which to lessen the impact of difference in the classroom is for teachers to learn mediation skills. Nieto (1992) concludes that where "basic values of different groups are often diametrically opposed, conflict is inevitable" (p. 277). She adds,

> It needs to consider not just the pleasure of diversity but more fundamental issues that arise as different groups negotiate community and the basic issues of material life in the same space - a process that equally might generate conflict and pain. (p. 277)

In the example that follows, Marie illustrates how she attempts to resolve conflict with several Muslim students regarding a visit to a church. The narrative account illustrates her forthright manner, as she treats her students as individuals, albeit respecting their religious difference.

A chaque année, nous visitons la Chapelle du Bon Secours à Montréal. J'explique aux élèves que nous allons seulement visiter l'église et non pas y prier. Par contre, si certains veulent prier, ils sont les bienvenus. Nous avions obtenu le consentement de tous les parents.

Il y a deux ans, nous avions un nombre assez élevé d'élèves musulmans. Lorsque nous sommes arrivés à la cathédrale, un groupe de musulmans a choisi de ne pas entrer. Lorsque nous sommes ressortis, un groupe de cinq ou six musulmans ont accusé deux autres élèves musulmans qui étaient entrés dans la cathédrale de ne pas être de vrais musulmans. Les deux élèves, qui étaient frère et soeur, ne savaient pas quoi faire. Ils étaient passablement troublés par toute cette histoire, de telle sorte qu'ils sont venus nous parler à moi-même et un de mes collègues. Je n'ai pas hésité à laisser savoir au groupe d'élèves musulmans à quel point leurs remarques

Every year, we visit the Bon Secours Chapel in Montréal. I explain to all the students that we are only going to visit the church and not to pray there. If someone wants to pray, however, they are welcome to do so. We had the consent of all of the parents.

Two years ago, we had a particularly large number of Muslim students. When we arrived at the cathedral, a group of Muslims decided not to enter it. When we came out, a group of five or six Muslim students accused two other Muslim students that had gone into the cathedral of not being true Muslims. The two students, who were brother and sister, didn't know what to do. They were quite upset about the whole thing, so they came and talked to my colleague and me. I did not hesitate to let the group of Muslim students know how unfair their comments had been. I didn't want to wait until we returned to class to discuss this. I felt that it had to be dealt with right then and there.

avaient été injustes. Je ne voulais pas attendre que nous soyons retournés en classe pour en discuter. Je sentais qu'il était nécessaire d'en parler sur-le-champ.

Voyez-vous, durant le Ramadan, les mêmes élèves qui ne sont pas entrés dans la cathédrale avaient par exemple montré aux autres élèves comment ils priaient. Ils ont apporté leurs tapis et les autres choses dont ils se servent pour prier. Il n'y a pas beaucoup d'autres enseignants qui permettraient à leurs élèves de faire une telle chose dans leur classe. J'ai rappelé ce fait aux élèves. C'est pourquoi j'ai trouvé que leur comportement ce jour-là avait été impardonnable. Nous avons parlé de ce que signifie le fait de juger ce que d'autres personnes font et si nous avons le droit de faire cela.

You see, during Ramadan, the same students who didn't enter the cathedral had demonstrated to the class the procedures of their prayers. They brought in their carpets and other material they needed in order to pray. There are not that many teachers who would allow their students to do such a thing in their class. I reminded the students of that. That's why I found their behaviour inexcusable that day. We talked about what it means to judge other people's actions and whether we have the right to do that.

Je voulais qu'ils comprennent que les élèves musulmans qui sont entrés dans l'église sont tout aussi musulmans que les autres qui n'y sont pas entrés et qu'ils n'étaient pas moins musulmans du simple fait d'y être entrés. Je leur ai rappelé que nous avions fait preuve d'une grande ouverture d'esprit lorsque nous leur avions demandé de nous parler de leur religion en classe. Ce jour-là je leur demandais la même chose. (8/12)

I wanted them to understand that the Muslim students who entered the church are just as Muslim as the others who didn't, and just because they went into a church they are no less Muslim. I reminded them that we had demonstrated great open-mindedness, by asking them to share their religion in class with us. That day I was asking the same of them. (8/12)

Without reservation, Marie addressed the situation with her students on the spot, in order to illustrate that she did not approve of her Muslim students' behaviour. Marie reminded these students that earlier in the year the class was open-minded when the Muslim students demonstrated the procedures of the Ramadan prayers, and now it was their turn to remain open-minded and not judge their classmates. Teachers in multicultural classrooms will repeatedly face controversial issues, and can certainly gain from preparation in conflict resolution. Singh (1989)

points out that having the will to resolve controversial issues relating to discrimination reflects a commitment to fundamental values of justice, fairness and respect for others.

In the examples that follows, Sorin demonstrates how he attempts to resolve conflict in a constructive manner with two young boys who are acting out for reasons that are at first unknown to him. His sense of honest caring for the students is deeply apparent. McPartland and Slavin (1990) state that conflict resolution helps establish mutually supportive relationships between the teacher and the students, and when teachers are committed to empowering their students, they help them analyze and resolve conflict. The approach Sorin takes with his two students concurs with Corson (1998), who recommends that teachers negotiate and make agreements with their students about solving mutual problems and acting on them. "The views of those with interests at stake, especially the children themselves, need to be consulted and taken into account at every stage" (p. 131).

Ling, ce petit garçon qui était dans ma classe, harcelait Vladimir, un petit garçon d'origine russe. Ling faisait vraiment le pitre, bousculant Vladimir, le dérangeant tout le temps, faisant l'idiot. Vladimir m'en a parlé et j'ai tenté de parler à Ling. Cela n'a pas changé grand chose. Je ne sais pas pourquoi il ennuyait Vladimir. Je savais que Ling éprouvait de la difficulté à s'adapter à la langue et au fait d'être ici.

There was this boy Ling in my class, who was harassing Vladimir, a Russian boy. Ling was really acting out, bumping into Vladimir, disturbing him all the time, being silly. Vladimir talked to me about it and I tried to speak to Ling. It didn't change much. I don't know why he was bothering Vladimir. I knew that Ling was having difficulties adapting to the language and being here.

Lorsque j'ai de nouveau parlé à Ling par la suite, il a dit qu'il espérait que l'avion ne quitterait pas. J'ai essayé de comprendre ce qu'il voulait dire. J'ai fini par comprendre qu'il faisait référence à l'avion que son père devait prendre pour retourner en Chine pour son travail. Ling est enfant unique. Sa mère travaille durant le jour et prend des cours de français le soir et lorsque Ling retourne à la maison le soir son père avait l'habitude d'y

When I spoke to Ling again in a later conversation, he said he hoped the plane wouldn't leave. I tried to understand what he meant by that. I came to understand that he was referring to the plane his father was to take to return to China, for work. Ling is an only child. His mother works during the day and takes French language classes at night. So when Ling would come home in the evenings, his father was usually there and they'd do

être et ils faisaient des choses ensemble, allaient au centre d'achats, rendaient visite à des gens. Il m'a dit qu'à chaque soir il priait pour que l'avion ne quitte pas, pour que son père puisse rester ici avec sa famille.

things together, go to the mall, visit people. He told me that he prayed every night that the plane would not leave, so his father could stay here with his family.

Pour en revenir à Vladimir, je savais qu'il s'ennuyait lui aussi de son père. Depuis la séparation de ses parents, il voyait rarement son père, parfois durant la fin de semaine. J'ai expliqué à Vladimir que Ling faisait le pitre parce qu'il craignait de perdre son père et je suis certain qu'il pouvait comprendre cela parce qu'il s'ennuyait lui-même souvent de son père. J'ai expliqué que Ling voulait être son ami et qu'il était particulièrement doué pour les mathématiques. Vladimir avait besoin d'aide en mathématiques. Il a comprit ce que je disais et a finalement accepté Ling. Le français de Vladimir a toujours été bon, de telle sorte qu'il aide Ling dans ce domaine. (8/13)

To get back to Vladimir, I knew he also missed his father. Since his parents had separated, he rarely saw his father, sometimes on the weekends. I explained to Vladimir that Ling was acting out because he was anxious about losing his father, and that I am sure he could understand because he often missed his father. I explained that Ling wanted to be his friend, and that he was particularly good at math. Vladimir needed help in math. He understood what I was saying and finally accepted Ling. Vladimir's French has always been good, so he's helping Ling along. (8/13)

In order for Marie and Sorin to resolve the conflicts mentioned above, they needed to seek new ways of listening. Feuerverger (2001) states that when conflicting viewpoints exist, "dialogue is envisioned as a necessary way to authentic collaboration, reflection and negotiation" (p. 40). Both teachers attempted to understand the reasons behind the students' actions, before responding to the situation. In essence, they needed to open themselves up to new ways of seeing and responding (Delpit, 1990). Accordingly, by interpreting the situations from an holistic perspective and taking into account the students' motivations, sense of loneliness and religious learning, Marie and Sorin were able to resolve the conflict between the students in a fair, respectful manner. Hence, the teachers demonstrated how they negotiated a third space (Taylor, 1992) where differences of religious beliefs and family situation were transformed and transcended. In essence, these teachers' classrooms are like "borderlands, … where the interrelationships of different cultures and identities are … sites of crossing, negotiation,

translation and dialogue." (Feuerverger, 2001: 91) In resolving the conflict, alternative strategies were developed, and new avenues of dialogue were created.

8.7 Resist the temptation to stay the same

According to Fullan (1991) and Richardson (1990) teachers today face many changes, and demand for change will always be present in culturally diverse classrooms. The multicultural classroom environment requires that teachers be flexible and adaptable, open to change and able to accept such uncertainty as they work with their students. Effective teachers are able to adapt to a variety of circumstances as they consider alternative approaches to problem-solving.

Bateson (1989) recommends that, when faced with diversity, we must embrace multiplicity and accept ambiguity. Furthermore, when we participate in unfamiliar experiences, we develop a new vision of learning. In the following excerpt, Sorin discusses the special demands placed on him with respect to a student who had witnessed horrible violence in his native Nicaragua. Although, he was uncertain how to respond to his student's tragic situation, Sorin made every effort to adapt and ultimately make changes for the benefit of the student.

Il y a deux ou trois ans, un de mes élèves était un petit garçon originaire du Nicaragua. Lorsqu'il était jeune, il avait vu son père et son oncle être fusillés par des soldats. Ils sont venus dans sa maison et il a tout vu. Je ne sais pas comment il s'en est lui-même sorti.	*Two or three years ago, I had a little boy from Nicaragua in my class. When he was young, he had seen his father and his uncle shot in front of his eyes by the army. They came into his home and he saw all of this. I don't know how he escaped the same fate.*
Pedro venait en classe à chaque jour et s'asseyait tranquillement et ne disait pas un mot. À chaque matin, à environ 10h00, il me demandait la permission d'aller à la salle de bain. Il ne parlait pas le français mais il pointait du doigt son estomac et disait "Señor mal".	*Pedro would come to class each day and sit quietly, not saying a word. Each day around 10:00 in the morning, he would ask me if he could go to the washroom. He couldn't speak French well but would point at his stomach and say 'Señor mal'.*

J'ai découvert par la suite qu'il allait à la salle de bain à tous les matins pour y vomir. Un des élèves me l'a dit. J'ai appelé sa mère et elle l'a emmené voir le médecin. Quelques semaines plus tard, j'ai reçu une lettre d'un psychologue me demandant s'il me serait possible de jouer le rôle de père plutôt que d'enseignant et de passer plus de temps en compagnie de Pedro lorsque cela serait possible.

Bien, je ne peux dire que cette demande m'a fait plaisir. Qu'allais-je faire? Être un père. Je savais cependant que Pedro et sa famille traversaient une période difficile, en raison du fait par exemple qu'ils devaient s'adapter au mode de vie des Québécois. J'allais donc lui demander de m'aider, lui demander de faire des photocopies pour moi, de faire des choses pour moi à l'heure du dîner, de me parler. Cela a bien fonctionné. Je pense que cela a aidé. (8/14)

I later found out that he was vomiting in the washroom every morning. One of the kids told me. I called his mother and she took him to see a doctor. A few weeks later, I received a letter from a psychologist asking if it would be possible for me to take on the role of a father, rather than a teacher, and spend extra time with Pedro whenever possible.

Well, I can't say I initially felt comfortable with this request when I heard it. What would I do? Be a father. I knew, however, that it was a difficult time for Pedro and his family, with the adjustment to Québec and all. So I would ask for his help, ask him to make photocopies for me, do things for me at lunch, get him to talk with me. It worked out fine. I think it helped. (8/14)

Although Sorin was reluctant at first to play the role of a father, since he is not a father and was unsure how to do this, he understood the importance of following the psychologist's advice and of paying considerable attention to Pedro during this difficult grieving period. hooks (1994) states that if educators want to respect diversity, they have to confront the limitations of their training and knowledge, as well as a possible loss of authority. "It is hard for individuals to fully grasp the idea that recognition of difference might also require of us a willingness to see the classroom change, to allow shifts in relations to students" (p. 30).

In the following example, Queenie explains how one of her students was being denied the opportunity to attend a school trip to Ottawa. Although Queenie fully understands the reasons why her student had been prohibited from participating in the past, she nevertheless approached the father to persuade him to reconsider his position.

Tracey is from the West Indies. She has never been able to go away from home on any trips. Last year, when I organized the trip to Ottawa, I really wanted Tracey to join us. I hadn't been successful in the past to convince her father to have her come. Going to Ottawa is part of social studies, but more importantly these kids get to see museums, visit Parliament, have a picnic. It's important that the kids get to see where Canada's laws are made, where the Supreme Court is.

Tracey's father is a single parent and he has never allowed her to join us on school trips. He is scared that something will happen. I felt that she needed to go because I know she goes nowhere. She is not allowed to leave the house, unless she goes with her father. I suppose I could have stopped trying, but I really wanted Tracey to join us.

I spoke to her father and told him I thought it was important that Tracey visit Ottawa with her classmates. I reassured him that I understood what his concerns were. I guaranteed him she'd be with me all the time. He had my word. I told him that if anything happens to me, then something will happen to her, otherwise she is under my wing. Well, I talked to him face to face, and convinced him. That girl had a wonderful time in Ottawa. She still talks about that trip. (8/15)

Queenie was not only aware that Tracey came from a protective single-parent environment, but was also cognizant of the attitudes held by West Indian parents towards their daughters. In previous years, this little girl was not able to attend educational school trips because of her father's fears. Queenie wanted Tracey to be exposed to new situations and engage her in a different kind of learning outside the classroom. It took her some time to convince Tracey's father, but her efforts paid off.

Sorin and Queenie could have responded to these situations in predictable ways. Sorin could have simply concluded that Pedro's discomfort was due to his social, cultural and linguistic adjustment to Québec, and Queenie could have just accepted that Tracey would once again be unable to visit Ottawa. Instead, these educators resisted the temptation to stay the same, and chose to transcend boundaries of family, class, and gender difference to provide their students with opportunities for growth. In their own way, these teachers demonstrated how they chose to embrace change in order to foster a more equitable learning environment for their students.

8.8 Treat students as equal but not the same

Nieto (1992) states that when teachers and schools attempt to be "colour-blind", by treating all students in the same manner, they do **not** acknowledge difference. Teachers assume that to be colour-blind is to be fair, honest and ethical, and that to see difference is to see inferiority. However, such colour-blindness frequently results in a teacher's refusal to accept difference, which may in turn lead to a denial of the student's identity and, ultimately, make their difference invisible. These differences may influence how students learn.

Campbell (1996) states that learning to affirm difference, rather than denying it, is a means of promoting equality between students belonging to diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic groups. Whenever possible, teachers' expectations and demands should be adapted according to the lived reality of their students. In the example that follows, Diane demonstrates how she disciplines a student differently because of the uncertainty of his foster home predicament. Given the situation, the teacher recognizes that she needs to adopt a more appropriate form of discipline.

Peter has been acting out lately. I know there has been a lot of uncertainty about his foster home and he must be feeling anxious about that. His teacher came to speak to me about him. He has really been unmanageable as of late. I spoke to Peter's teacher and we came up with a strategy. When she can't seem to handle him in class, she sends him to my office with a note 'You wanted to talk to Peter.' So Peter waits in my office and when I have a few minutes, I sit down and talk to him. I don't want to pry, or ask about his personal life. I know his whole family, his mother, his aunt, and even his grandmother. He knows I care about him, so he talks to me. He needs that and then he returns to class and he's fine.

If that were another child, I would say 'you are out of line and you know what is considered appropriate behaviour in this school,' but I can't do that with Peter, because we don't even know where his mother is right now. The kid is disturbing the class, but I can't treat him the same because he is asking for help. He's asking to be heard. This student needs a different kind of attention and support from me. Once the foster home situation sorts itself out, it'll be better. Typical discipline, like staying after school, will not work with this kid. He comes and talks for about 10-15 minutes and then he's fine. (8/16)

When educators accept difference, it should not devalue the student's background or lower the expectations of their abilities. Diane made allowances for her student in accordance

with her perception of the student's individual circumstances. Nieto contends that being colour-blind is a way of denying the differences that make us who we are as people. In the end, treating everyone the same does not necessarily lead to substantive equality; in some cases, it serves to perpetuate the inequality that already exists.

According to Kohl (1991), educators have difficulties accepting the idea that "equal is not the same" because in doing so, they may need to lower their expectations or dilute the curriculum so that all students can learn. Perhaps the more appropriate question that needs to be asked is: does such inequality reflect a deficiency on the part of the student, or on the part of a system that unfairly distributes resources and opportunity? McLaren (1989) proposes that to accept difference is to make provisions, where the student's experiences are viewed as a strength which can be drawn upon. Rather than place the blame on difference, it is more important to take into account the reluctance of the educational system to meet the needs of the diverse student population. "Educators must examine how schools themselves reproduce those aspects of the wider society that contribute to gender, class and racial injustices" (p. 239). In the following example, Marie demonstrates how she alters a homework program for her student because of his responsibilities at home. Her student was still required to complete the homework, but practical concessions were made in order to ensure that the homework was done.

Il y avait un petit garçon originaire des Philippines, Jason, qui n'est pas allé à l'école pendant deux ans dans son pays alors que sa mère attendait d'obtenir des autorités de Manille les documents qui lui permettraient d'émigrer. Je ne suis jamais parvenue à comprendre pourquoi il en était ainsi, mais c'est ce qui s'est produit.

There was a little boy from the Philippines, Jason, who did not go to school for two years in his country while his mother was waiting for their immigration papers from Manila. I was never able to understand why that was the case, but that is what happened.

Jason est arrivé ici à notre école et il devrait être en cinquième année mais il n'a pas été à l'école depuis la deuxième année. Même après

Jason arrived here at our school and he should be in grade five, but he has not been to school since grade two. Even after he had been in my

avoir été dans ma classe depuis un certain temps, il ne faisait pas ses devoirs. J'ai donc essayé de comprendre ce qui se passait, pourquoi il ne faisait pas ses devoirs. Il y a un bébé dans sa famille. Durant le jour, la mère, qui est mère célibataire, prend soin de l'enfant mais une fois que Jason et sa soeur sont arrivés à la maison, c'est à eux de prendre soin du bébé. La mère suivait un cours de langue et travaillait à temps partiel. Il arrivait souvent la nuit que le bébé ne dorme pas et lui-même ou sa mère devait en prendre soin, ce qui explique qu'il n'était pas capable de faire ses devoirs.

class a while, he was not doing his homework, so I tried to find out about his situation, why he wasn't doing his homework. There is a baby in his family. During the day, the mother, who is a single parent, takes care of the child, but once Jason and his sister came home they take care of the infant. The mother had language classes and part-time work. Often in the evening, the baby would not sleep, and either he or his mother had to care for the baby, so he was not able to do his homework.

Je n'étais pas certaine de ce que je devais faire au sujet de la situation à la maison, j'ai donc communiqué avec la travailleuse sociale pour lui en parler et elle a tenté de leur venir en aide. Mais dans ma classe, j'ai également tenté de faire quelque chose. J'ai expliqué qu'il demeurait important de faire ses devoirs. Tous mes élèves ont des devoirs à faire à chaque soir. Je donne beaucoup de devoirs. Dans le cas de Jason cependant, je lui ai indiqué quelles étaient les choses qui importaient plus que d'autres. J'ai également expliqué qu'il serait difficile pour moi de recommander qu'il soit admis dans l'année suivante si je ne percevais pas d'amélioration dans son travail. Jason a fait ce qu'il a pu et le travail qu'il n'a pu faire à la maison, il le corrigeait avec nous en classe le jour suivant.

I wasn't sure what to do about the situation at home, so I contacted the social worker about it and she tried to help them out. But in my class, I also tried to do something. I explained to him it was still important to do his homework. All my students do homework every night. I give a lot of homework. I did, however, prioritize for Jason, showing him that some things were more important than others. I also explained that it would be difficult for me to recommend him for the next grade if I didn't see an improvement in his work. Jason did what he could, and what work he didn't do at home, he corrected with us in class the next day.

Il était important que j'adapte au cas de Jason les règles que j'avais établies au sujet des devoirs. Vous devez adapter votre enseignement à la situation particulière de vos élèves. (8/17)

I needed to adapt my homework rules for Jason. You have to adapt your teaching according to your students. (8/17)

Schofield (1997) believes that the colour-blind perspective is appealing because it is consistent with the long-standing North American emphasis on the importance of the individual. It is a point of view that sees difference as irrelevant to the way in which individuals are treated. In both of the situations illustrated above, the student's behaviour was not acceptable: the student

Peter was acting out at school because of the uncertainty with his foster home, and the student Jason was not completing his homework because he assumed the role of caregiver for his younger sibling once he returned home. However, in each incident, the teachers' expectations and demands were adapted according to the reality of the students. Nieto (1992) articulates that the maxim "equal is not the same" implies acknowledgement of the differences students bring to school. Failure to acknowledge such differences often results in teachers and administrators labelling a student's behaviour as deficient. The teachers' stories affirm that these pedagogical practices can "transform and transcend difference into new forms of understanding" (Giroux, 1991: 507) and thereby provide students with equitable opportunities for learning.

8.9 Bridge the gap between the old world and the new: Acting as brokers of information in Canada

Spindler and Spindler (1991) state that teachers can serve as brokers of information for their students by assisting them as they make the transition from their home culture to Canadian society at large. In many respects, the participants of this study consider themselves 'Canadian hosts' for those students who face the challenges and uncertainties of living in a new society. Fiedler (1971) and Triandis (1975) contend that brokers of information can suggest alternative behaviour in a given situation, or provide more appropriate solutions to problems that the students may be encountering.

In the following excerpt, Sorin demonstrates how he assists his students in understanding and adjusting to customary practices in Canada. Sorin's actions concur with Campbell (1996) and Delgado-Gaitan (1993) who maintain that such teachers can provide much needed guidance to students, and represent an important communication channel between home and school.

J'essaye de les aider à comprendre les coutumes en vigueur ici au Canada parce qu'ils arrivent de leur pays d'origine avec leurs propres idées. Ils sont, après tout, des nouveaux venus et sont peu familiers avec notre façon de faire les choses. Je leur rappelle souvent que ce qui est acceptable dans leur pays n'est pas acceptable ici. Par exemple, cracher dans la rue. J'ai remarqué que cela se produit avec un certain groupe de jeunes et dans certains coins de Montréal.

Lors de nos sorties de groupe, nous tentons de nous comporter et d'agir comme des Canadiens et de respecter leur façon de faire les choses. Par exemple, jeter des rebuts dans la rue. Parfois, je vois mes élèves manger un biscuit et jeter l'emballage au sol. Lorsque je leur demande pourquoi ils agissent ainsi, ils disent que dans leur pays il y a des gens peu fortunés qui travaillent le soir, des gitans qui nettoient la rue la nuit. On ne voit pas de poubelles à tous les deux coins de rue comme c'est le cas ici.

Un autre exemple est le fait de parler fort en public. Je leur ai demandé pour quelle raison ils font cela et ils ont expliqué que dans leur pays, et c'est encore plus vrai s'ils ont vécu dans de grandes villes, avec beaucoup de gens dans les rues, vous devez parler fort pour que l'on vous entende. Ici au Canada, les rues sont désertes. Dans leur pays, si vous voulez que l'on vous entende, vous devez crier, me disent-ils. Je les rassure en leur disant que je comprends ce qu'ils disent et leur rappelle qu'il est préférable de ne pas parler fort.

Une autre chose, les élèves ne disent pas toujours merci. Je parle de l'importance de dire merci lorsque quelqu'un fait quelque chose pour eux. Si quelqu'un les aide à faire leur devoir, ou tient la porte pour eux dans le métro, ils doivent dire merci. Je leur explique toujours ce que c'est que de la neige, de quoi c'est fait et que ça ne fait pas mal. Souvent, les élèves ne veulent pas sortir à l'extérieur

I try to help them understand the customs here in Canada, because they come with their own ideas from their own country. They are, after all, newcomers here and are unfamiliar with the way we do things. I often remind them that what is acceptable in their country is not acceptable here. For example, spitting in the streets. I have noticed that it happens with a certain group of kids, and in certain areas in Montréal.

When we have outings, we try to behave and act like Canadians, and respect their way of doing things. For example, throwing litter. Sometimes, I see my students eat a cookie and throw the wrapper on the ground. When I asked them why they do that, they say that in their country there are poor people that work in the evening, gypsies that clean the streets during the night. There are no garbage cans at every second street corner like we have here.

Another example, is speaking loudly in public. I asked them why they do that and they explained that in their countries, and more so if they come from big cities, with many people in the streets, you have to speak loudly to be heard. Here in Canada, there's no one in the streets. Back home, if you want to be heard you have to scream, they tell me. I reassure them that I understand what they are saying and remind them that it is best not to speak loudly.

Another thing, the students don't always say 'thank you.' I tell them about the importance of saying 'thank you' when someone does something for them. If someone helps them with their homework, or holds the door for them in the subway, they should say 'merci.' I always explain what snow is, and what it is made of, and that it doesn't hurt. Often, students don't want to go outside when it

lorsqu'il neige et dans certains cas, c'est parce qu'ils ont peur de la neige. Certains élèves ont piqué une colère terrible en ma présence, insistant qu'ils ne veulent pas sortir à l'extérieur parce qu'ils ont peur. Je leur explique toujours que la façon dont les Canadiens font les choses n'est pas nécessairement la meilleure. Ils doivent savoir ce qui est acceptable et ce qui ne l'est pas et la différence entre les deux pour éviter d'être tournés en ridicule. (8/18)

snows and for some, it is because they're afraid of the snow. Some students have had terrible temper tantrums in front of me, insisting that they do not want to go out because they're scared. I always explain to them that the Canadian way is not necessarily a better way of doing things. They need to know what is acceptable and what is not, and the difference between the two so they are not ridiculed. (8/18)

Sorin discusses with his students the rationale and the appropriateness of certain 'Canadian' behaviours and why the students, now living in Canada, should adhere to such conduct. Sorin cites relevant examples of what is suitable comportment in Canada, such as the importance of not spitting or littering in the streets, speaking quietly and being appreciative of one another. In the excerpt that follows, Nadine's interaction with her student affirms that she has a fundamental grasp of the knowledge and experiences that are most worthwhile in Canada, and as a result, she takes time to expose her student to appropriate ways to proceed, and offers solutions that are suitable within a Canadian context.

I can remember a little boy who came from Jamaica. He arrived in grade five. His teacher was saying this kid doesn't know anything. Why doesn't he know how to speak English. He couldn't have gone to school before he came here.

I heard this in the staff room in the morning and I asked the teacher to send him down at recess time, and he came down. He looked at me. I'm from Jamaica, as I mentioned to you. I spoke to him in patois when he entered the room. His eyes lit up and he started telling me many things. He told me how confused he was. In Jamaica, he had gone to a rural school. Hearing the English we speak here was like a new language for him. He wasn't hearing anything he understood. He told me he didn't understand anything his teacher said. I tried to explain to the teacher to just give him time until his ears became accustomed to what he was hearing. She didn't seem to understand what I was saying, 'Jamaica is an English island. You speak English there, don't you?' Yes of course, I pointed out, but there are many different dialects and patois. Furthermore, if a child comes from a rural area, he probably only spoke patois, except if he went to certain schools. We left it that she would send him to me if there was something she wanted to explain to him and I would try to help him.

He would often come to me and talk to me after school. Come winter, he didn't know what to do. He had to be properly dressed or he would end up with pneumonia. I showed him how to put on gloves, how to close his jacket so to keep the warmth inside. You see, in Jamaica,

to put on a jacket is a decorative thing, it's something to look smart in. Having learned this through my own experiences, I knew what to say to him. (8/19)

Both Sorin and Nadine assumed the role of 'brokers of information' by providing their students with practical and reliable meanings of Canadian values, behaviours and attitudes, and helping them navigate and grasp the uncertainties and challenges of living in a new society. In essence, these teachers' micro-interactions with their students fostered an environment in which new understandings could arise in the ZPD space to which Cummins (1989, 1992) refers. The ways in which educators define their roles regarding culturally diverse students and communities determines the extent to which they constrict or expand the ZPD, so as to ensure that the curriculum reflects the students' experiences, and that an expanded space is available to students and teachers for transcending difference in the classroom.

8.10 Remove obstacles that prevent students from performing at their best

Bell (1991) articulates that a major goal of multicultural education is the intellectual, social, and personal growth of all students to their highest potential, so as to provide students with equality of opportunity. It follows, then, that developing strategies which focus on dismantling barriers to student achievement can be effective in the multicultural classroom. Nadine demonstrates how she works with an East Indian student to eliminate an obstacle which prevented her student from reaching her full potential at school.

One year, I had a little girl who was East Indian and there was another little girl who was from Africa and her skin colour was very, very black. There were other children in the class that year who were mixed, but the majority were white. One day, we sat down for story time and the East Indian girl said, "I'm not sitting down beside her because she's Black." It happened so quickly, you know, that I didn't know how to react. Another child in the class responded, "But, you're Black. Why don't you sit beside her?"

The East Indian girl responded, 'I'm not Black' and immediately began to cry. She added, 'I know I'm Black, but I don't want to be Black. I don't want to be Black.' When I heard

this, I thought it was the most disastrous thing I had ever heard and seen. These children are five years old. They're looking at skin colour. They don't understand anything about race. I must admit, though, that her outburst explained a lot of things, because she was an aggressive child. She would often get into arguments with the other children in the class. Nothing was ever good enough for her, and she would often complain about things.

Of course, I didn't know what to do at the moment this happened. I tried to comfort her. I asked her what is so bad about being Black. She responded that she didn't really know, but that she didn't want to be Black and she didn't like people who were Black. As she was telling me this I was holding her and I said to her, 'Do you like me?' She looked at me and said, 'I love you.' I realized that she didn't see me as 'Black.' I was the teacher that she got along with. But I knew it was more than that. Somehow, she came to believe that being Black was not good. We left it for the moment, but I knew I would come back to it.

In my lessons, I began doing 'I'm happy to be me.' 'What am I worth?', 'Does hair or eye colour, change the kind of person you are?', 'What do you like about yourself?' I explained that there will always be things you don't like about yourself, things you can change and things you can't, like features that are a part of us: the lips, the nose, the hair. The children played with each other's hair. I had the children look at themselves and describe who they are and how they look.

As we worked on it throughout the year, I can't give a particular example when she said 'I am happy to be Black', but she began to accept the colour of her skin. One day when I asked if someone wanted to talk to us about something they do in their community, she volunteered. She brought in her music and showed us the circle dance. After the dance was over I said to her, 'You are so lucky to know that, and the only reason why you know that is because of your family, your friends and the community you come from. That is why you were able to share something special with us today.' She responded, 'Well, you know, I'm Indian.' She was beginning to accept that as an East Indian, her skin was dark. You could see that she was certainly happier in class. She was smiling more. I talked very openly about colour with her. I demystified words and expressions for her. By the end of the year, she could talk about herself. She was beginning to develop her self-worth. I was proud of her. She was in our school until grade 4 or 5, until she moved to Chicago with her family. She still writes us every year to let us know how she's doing. (8/20)

Nadine found something of value to emphasize in her student who faced particular obstacles with regard to her self-perception and racial identification. She found something she could build on, something the student knew how to do, or cared about (Ayers, 1993). Due to Nadine's careful intervention, the student's sense of self was greatly enhanced, and as a result, this impacted positively on her commitment to school and learning.

In the example below, Sorin discusses the plight of a little girl from Bulgaria who is not eating her lunch. When he finds out that there is no money at home, he prepares food for her, but she still does not eat. It turns out that she is bringing the food home to her mother. In the end,

with the help of the principal, enough food is provided for both mother and child. Sorin's gentle "mindfulness" of this situation saved the day in this particular case.

Il y a une petite fille dans ma classe qui vient de Bulgarie. Son père est décédé cette année avant leur arrivée au Canada, de telle sorte qu'elle est arrivée avec sa mère et aucun autre membre de sa famille. Périodiquement, durant la journée, la petite fille venait me voir pour me demander à quel moment ce serait l'heure du dîner. Elle demandait : "Quand allons-nous manger?" Elle était si tranquille et j'attribuais son silence au fait qu'elle tentait de s'adapter à la vie dans un autre pays.

There is a little girl in my class from Bulgaria. Her father died this year before they arrived in Canada, so she arrived with her mother and no other family members. Periodically, throughout the day, the girl would ask me when it was time for lunch. She would ask, 'When are we going to eat?' She was so quiet and I attributed her silence to her trying to adapt to life in a new country.

Un jour, certaines filles dans ma classe m'ont dit que cette petite fille ne mangeait rien du tout. Dès que j'ai entendu cela, j'ai préparé un repas additionnel pour elle à chaque jour elle ne mangeait toujours pas. Je ne parvenais pas à comprendre ce qui se produisait. Sa mère était à la recherche d'un emploi et un certain délai s'était écoulé avant qu'ils ne reçoivent de l'aide sociale. Ils furent donc sans l'argent pendant un certain temps. Pendant deux ou trois jours la petite fille n'avait rien à manger. Lorsque je lui ai demandé ce qui se passait, elle m'a dit qu'ils n'avaient pas d'argent pour manger. Je suis donc allé au bureau du principal, qui a fait tout ce qu'il pouvait pour lui venir en aide. Le principal a été capable de préparer un dîner pour la journée ainsi que le souper pour elle et sa mère. Nous l'avons surveillée durant la journée pour nous assurer qu'elle mangeait son dîner et qu'elle ne le gardait pour le donner à sa mère le soir.

One day, some of the girls in my class told me that this little girl was not eating at all. Once I heard this, I prepared an extra lunch for her each day, but she was still not eating. I couldn't understand what was happening. Her mother was trying to find work and there had been a delay in getting social assistance. So for a while they were without money. For two or three days, the little girl had nothing to eat. When I asked her about the situation, she told me that they didn't have money to eat. So I went to the office and spoke to the principal who did everything possible to help her. The principal was able to prepare a lunch bag for the day, and dinner for her and her mother. We would monitor her during the day to ensure that she was eating lunch and not saving it to give to her mother in the evening.

Ils ont maintenant un endroit où loger. Ils ont obtenu de l'argent. Le principal a demandé à la mère d'oeuvrer à titre de surveillante à l'heure du dîner, pour lui permettre de gagner un peu d'argent en attendant qu'elle trouve un emploi ailleurs. Je vois cette fillette dans ma classe maintenant. Elle sourit, réussissant maintenant beaucoup mieux à l'école. C'est

Now they have housing. They've received money. The principal has asked the mother to be a lunch-room monitor, so she can make some money while she finds a job elsewhere. I see this girl in my class now. She is smiling, doing much better at school than before. It's a sad story, but we do our best. (8/21)

une histoire triste mais nous faisons de notre mieux. (8/21)

Once Sorin understood that his student's obstacle was hunger, he promptly made arrangements for his student and her mother to receive food at home, and the principal found temporary work for the mother as a school monitor. In their own ways, Nadine and Sorin exposed the discrepancies of living in an inequitable society and found strategies to reduced the barriers to their students' achievement. Nieto (1992) states:

> Schools are organizations fundamentally concerned with maintaining the status quo and not exposing contradictions that make people uncomfortable in a society that has democratic ideals but where democratic realities are not always apparent. Such contradictions include manifestations of inequality. Yet schools are supposed to wipe out these inequalities. To admit that inequality exists and that it is even perpetuated by the very institutions charged with doing away with it is far too dangerous an issue. Nevertheless, such issues are at the heart of a broadly conceptualized multicultural perspective because the subject matter of schooling is society, with all its wrinkles and warts and contradictions. (p. 217)

The accounts of these teachers, in which they illustrate their transformative practices, are a testamony to the courage and open-mindedness that multicultural teaching requires. Interpreting these multicultural spaces for the richness they represent, and creating new forms of understanding to affirm and transcend difference, have been lifelong processes for them. The sites of negotiation portrayed in this chapter, in the form of insightful stories, provide an overview of what is workable when teachers and students transcend their personal experiences to make meaning of difference. The stories illustrate the educators' expressions of care, perseverance and fortitude as they provide practical wisdom into their work. Indeed, the sites are "powerful moments when boundaries are crossed, differences confronted, discussion happens, and solidarity emerges" (hooks, 1994: 130).

The stories highlighted in this thesis demonstrate how the educators challenge and critique traditional approaches to teaching which have silenced students in the past. The teachers in this study repeatedly demonstrate what Pendlebury (1995) and Shulman (1987) call practical wisdom, which is based on a personal sense of what works. Coles (1989) and Richardson (1994) state that stories have the potential to transform us by making the wealth contained in them a part of our own understanding and practice. Moreover, Witherell and Noddings (1991) and Witherell (1995) contend that stories contribute to our understanding of everyday life, by constructing and transforming the meaning of difference.

In essence, these educators demonstrate that multicultural teaching is an evolving, dynamic and complex process which can provide enriching personal and professional growth. However, the relatively new terrain of diversity brings with it uncertainty in procedure and protocol within educational settings. Despite such complexity of difference, and the fact that "there is not nearly enough practical discussion of ways that classroom settings can be transformed so that the learning experience is inclusive" (hooks, 1994: 35), the teachers in this study make every attempt to understand this new terrain and work within it. Their stories demonstrate what is good, what works and what is of value, as they search for creative ways to provide equitable learning and teaching environments to their students. These pedagogical accounts capture "the origins and expression of goodness" (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis, 1997: 9) as they identify the ways in which they engage in daily negotiations (Giroux, 1994) across cultural and racial borders.

Although the participants of my study began teaching in mono-cultural environments, over the years, they have developed new multicultural perspectives to respond to the ongoing changes in their classrooms. In their own way, the stories illustrate that the teachers developed innovative ways in which to validate their students' differences and move beyond them to create

new spaces for learning together. Teaching in such a way is undoubtedly "fraught with obstacles and challenges. It is a process of working against the grain of much of current school practice and engaging in the risky business of constructing new roles for teachers" (Cochran-Smith, 1995: 520). Although, multicultural education is "extremely difficult, painful, and time-consuming," (Nieto, 1992: 279) the teachers take risks as they depart from the norm and develop new forms of understanding with their multicultural students.

Concluding remarks

Each of the stories, in their own way, represents "small victories" (Ayers, 1993), as the educators negotiate new sites of mutual understanding and respect. The teachers' stories of experience extend the theoretical discussion on multicultural understanding of human difference by providing practical examples and insights into what works when teaching in a versatile, multicultural environment. In essence, the teachers demonstrate the need to continue to search for practical ways to transcend boundaries of difference, and locate new spaces of understanding in which teachers assume the risks of dialoguing across difference. Admittedly, there is something very real and human about these everyday stories, and therein lies their power to inform, inspire and guide us to a more compassionate acceptance and understanding of difference.

The purpose of this chapter was to provide practical insights into the responses of experienced educators to issues of diversity, as they create new spaces of understanding in their classrooms. I began by identifying 'ten sites of negotiation that transcend difference' as they pertain to multicultural teaching and learning environments and clarifying their significance. I then provided contextual examples of teachers who have attempted to dialogue across difference in such sites of negotiation, and examined their insights on the ways in which they transcend

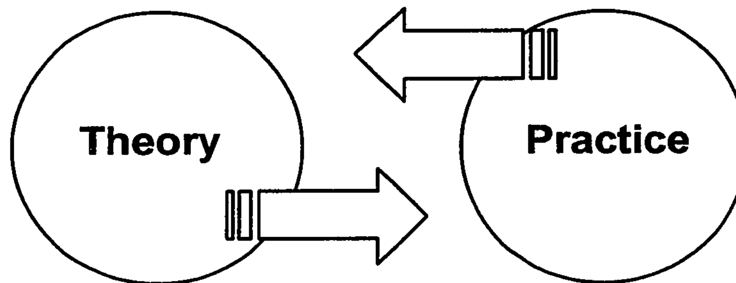
difference with their students in their schools and classrooms. Further discussion of these findings will be set out in chapter nine as a subtheme of this study. In sum, the teachers have innovated new forms of teaching and learning in a multicultural world by "mediating across borders that are in a constant state of transition" (Anzaldua, 1987: 3).

Chapter Nine: Interpretative Themes

In this chapter, I will develop the themes of this study that have emerged from the data presented in previous chapters. The overarching theme of this study is the importance of forging a more substantial link between theory and practice, so as to narrow the gap between the two spheres, and advance the discussion on issues of multiculturalism and education. In this chapter, I will elaborate on how the wisdom of the teachers has the potential to inform theory. As such, in developing this overarching theme, I will examine how recording "good" practices in social science and educational research, and broadening the audience beyond academia, can bring these spheres into closer proximity with each other. I will also explore three subthemes that I have identified in reviewing the data: the teacher's changing role in the multicultural classroom, the qualities and attributes that need to be in place for effective dialoguing with 'other', and the importance of providing equitable education for all students (see fig.1). In discussing these themes, there will inevitably be some overlap; however, for the purposes of analysis, each theme will be interpreted separately.

Québec is clearly an appropriate setting for the examination of the interlocking issues of education, multiculturalism, and identity in Canada, given the powerful debate surrounding issues of language, culture and identity in that province. As Taylor (1992) rightly points out, "recognition forges identity" (p. 66), therefore as Québec came to assert the uniqueness of the French language and culture in Canada, it also began to build an identity based primarily on its specific linguistic and cultural location in North America. In this case study, the teachers work within the unique political landscape of Montréal, where they attempt to integrate the pedagogical approaches which are responsive to the specific situation of the city and, as a result,

Figure 1
Building Bridges of Understanding
Researching, Teaching and Learning Together



Theme 1: Theory and Practice: The potential for bridging two worlds

- Record 'good' practices in social science research
- Broaden the audience beyond academia to include teachers and teacher educators

Theme 2: The teacher's changing role in the multicultural classroom

- Banks (1993, 1997, 2001)
- Cummins (1992)
- Giroux (1991, 1992)
- Zeichner & Tabachnick (1992)

Theme 2: The teacher's changing role in the multicultural classroom

There exists the implicit recognition that multiculturalism is a **mainstream** construct in the everyday classroom. Therefore, teachers need to:

- Collaborate with a greater number of constituents
- Become cultural mediators and intercultural brokers
- Embrace change with adaptability and flexibility

Theme 3: Dialoguing with 'other'

- Bateson (1994)
- Burbules & Rice (1991)
- Delpit (1988, 1995)
- Geertz (1983)
- Giroux (1992, 1994)
- Greene (1995)
- Gudykunst & Kim (1992)

Theme 3: Dialoguing with 'other'

Teaching in today's classrooms, and dialoguing with 'other' are one and the same. As a result, teachers need to:

- Gain **awareness** of the holistic student, and cultivate awareness beyond the classroom walls
- Learn from their students, maintain a positive **attitude** and perspective and remain open-minded
- Develop the **skills** of active listening, conflict resolution, collaboration and patience
- Model the **values** of honesty, dignity, equality and self-respect

Theme 4: Providing equitable education for all students

- Banks (1997, 2001)
- Corson (1998, 2001)
- Cummins (1986, 1989, 1992)
- Feuerverger (1994, 2001)
- Nieto (1992)
- Taylor (1992)

Theme 4: Providing equitable education for all students

To render the educational system **equitable** for all students, teachers need to be courageous, take risks and:

- Treat students 'equal but not the same'
- Challenge falsehoods and question assumptions
- Remove obstacles that prevent students from performing at their best

The Foundation
Creating a new theoretical understanding of multiculturalism as a mainstream construct in education within the specific context of Montréal and providing a role model for other Canadian venues

create a new and original understanding of multiculturalism as a mainstream construct in the classroom, and in society at large. Although my participants must contend daily with complex tensions created by language, culture, and identity, their stories nonetheless illustrate the measure of success they achieve with their students.

It was of paramount importance to me while completing this dissertation to maintain and honour the authenticity of the teachers' voices, their wisdom, and the power of their stories. Throughout this study, the teachers have conveyed their knowledge in the form of stories within the interview process. In order to gain a profound understanding of how educators' wisdom can enhance the discussion on multicultural education, this thesis shows that teachers' insights needed to be represented in the manner in which they were shared: through the power of story. Hence, excerpts of the teachers' stories will guide the development of the subthemes.

9.1 Theory and Practice

As mentioned earlier, the overarching theme of this study focuses on the practical insights educators bring to the academic discussion on multiculturalism, education and teacher education. This thesis illustrates how the educators' *practices* in multicultural classrooms have the potential to shape the construction of *theory*. Hence, recording the evidence of "good" practices, and broadening the audience beyond academia are concrete ways in which we may proceed to reconcile the gap.

9.1.1 Theory and Practice: Recording "good" practices in social science research

The participants in this study repeatedly expressed a genuine desire for the research to focus on what they were doing 'right' in their classrooms, instead of what needed to be done better. They strongly believe that the challenges they face in multicultural classrooms, and their

efforts to teach in such an environment, need to be recognized. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997) state that social science researchers have been, "much more vigilant in documenting failure than they have been in describing examples of success (p. 9)." Working with diversity, and the uncertainty and second-guessing which comes with it, is a formidable task which few of us could easily translate into success. When I think of success as researcher and educator, I think of the teacher Queenie, who encouraged a special education student to play chess at lunch, and thereby dramatically improved his math and academic standing at school (see 8/8); or the teacher Nadine, whose East Indian student became a more confident learner and more proud of her racial background after Nadine's intervention (8/20); or the teacher Sorin, who helped two students who were acting out in class by encouraging them to work together (8/13).

As educational researchers, we need to provide genuine praise to those educators who listen with an open mind, "suspend" their beliefs, and interpret and negotiate differing opinions and value orientations on a daily basis. Focusing upon the notion of "good" practices, which can be interpreted as what the teachers are doing *right*, allows us to open a space for examples of success that inform and shape theoretical frameworks that address diversity. Such a focus gives me hope that educators will be able to teach and learn effectively in their multicultural schools. Oftentimes, multicultural rhetoric is brimming with commentary on what needs fixing. That same rhetoric in society sometimes borders on discussions of racism, classism, and discrimination, with little emphasis on the 'small and not so small victories' of multiculturalism. The participants in this study experience 'small victories' with their students and the community at large. When difference is transcended with a spirit of compassion and open- mindedness, such victories inspire me to continue working in the field of multiculturalism with students, researchers, and teachers. Therefore, emphasis needs to be placed on "good" practices because this approach has a real potential to guide the dialogue on difference.

9.1.2 Theory and Practice: Broadening the audience beyond academia to include teachers and teacher educators

Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997) speak about broadening the audience, "communicating beyond the walls of the academy," and addressing a "wider, more eclectic audience" (p. 10). By making the insights of experienced practitioners on issues of diversity in classrooms and schools a deliberate focus of this thesis demonstrates my intention to 'broaden the audience' to include a greater number of stakeholders in the discussion on multicultural education. By broadening the audience beyond academia, we can move outside the "inner circle" of theory, and dialogue in an inclusive and holistic language so as to involve a greater number of constituents in issues that concern us all.

The educators' stories of experience in this study have informed my understanding of diversity. Their voices speak with conviction about the importance of demonstrating compassion and teaching with an open-mind, free of judgement. To understand and live comfortably in the presence of difference is to accept not only the complexity, but also the *wonderment* that such difference brings to our lives, and to society at large. Forty years after my father arrived at the port of Halifax, I took a journey to this historic east coast city to see for myself what might have been my father's first impressions of this distant land. I spent days walking around the city, and hours walking through the museum at Pier 21, which honours the immigrants who arrived at Canada's Atlantic port over a period spanning eighty years. At the start of the exhibit, there was a detailed list displaying the immigrants' countries of origin. The list was very long. I stood back and marvelled at it. I could not help but think about the people from around the world, with diverse languages and religions, who chose Canada as their new homeland. I could also not help but think how we somehow need to continue finding ways to live, work, and grow together to

build a multicultural nation. This is what I mean when I speak of 'wonderment'. When other nations draft anti-immigration laws, build "walls" around their racial and class-based ghettos, or inadvertently segregate their citizens according to skin colour, we, in Canada, are attempting to make sense of this messy reality called multiculturalism. As Canadians, we are acknowledging the blemishes, the inconsistencies, the awkwardness of living in a country that is blending diverse dialects, traditions, skin colours, religious icons, and incompatible family beliefs, into an expanding concept of nationhood - and trying to make it work. What an exciting and frustrating experiment! Every country has its aberrations, and Canada is no exception. I certainly do not want to dismiss the racism and discrimination that can be the by-products of immigration. As a nation, we have undoubtedly come a long way from the racism and anti-Semitism evident in the Ministry of Immigration of pre-war and post-war Canada (Abella & Troper, 1982). Nevertheless, my participants demonstrated in their interactions with their students, that diversity is a Canadian reality - which is manageable, rewarding and increasingly becoming a mainstream construct. Once we accept this to be true and integrate it on a daily basis into our lives, then we will move past the sometimes meaningless social rhetoric on multiculturalism. The profound stories in this thesis demonstrate how we can learn from one another - not with food and fanfare - but with compassion and open-mindedness.

Using the participants' reflective insights, I was able to construct a comprehensive understanding of what an effective multicultural educator might look like. The teachers also spoke of the challenges they face teaching in the reality of *Bill 101*, and in the specific socio-linguistic location of Montréal. Living in the dynamic context of Montréal, where issues of language, culture, and identity are primordial, I have experienced the awakening of my own ethnicity in the past six years. This has informed my choice of thesis topic, the direction of this study, and the way in which I reflected on the interviews with my participants. Furthermore, the

vivid examples of new forms of understanding which the teachers in this study have repeatedly demonstrated, have advanced the discussion regarding sites of negotiation, and created the space for differing cultures to intersect and ultimately *transcend* difference. In the end, it is my hope that this study will demonstrate the paramount importance of teachers' input in the construction of theory, because it is they who are most intimately involved in the process of social change in the classroom, and it is they who are required to face the challenges of diversity on a daily basis. By broadening the audience to include experienced teachers, and by reaching out to teacher educators in the context of this thesis, there is enormous potential to reconcile the gap between the spheres of theory and practice, and create new opportunities for alternative interpretations of multiculturalism.

9.2 Theme Two: The teacher's changing role in the multicultural classroom

My participants have certainly reflected on their changing roles in the classroom. Not only have they come to understand, and ultimately accept, that their role in the school and classroom has undergone a fundamental transformation in the past decade, but the teachers have also come to recognize that they are required to integrate multiple roles into their teaching repertoire. Perhaps the most striking discovery that emerged was their implicit recognition of multiculturalism as a mainstream (NOT a peripheral) construct, and as a reality of everyday teaching and learning in our contemporary classroom.

Firstly, according to the scholars, the educators' role is to guide the students in discovering their identity and agency and to create new spaces for dialogue (Giroux 1991, 1992), to use diversity as a resource in curriculum (Banks 1992, 1993, 1997), and to address the power structure, and work towards changing it (Cummins 1992). The scholars focus their attention on curriculum and classroom instruction in order to meet the changing needs of students in the

multicultural classroom (see chapter three). My participants agree that changes in curriculum and classroom instruction need to be integrated and assessed in a critical manner. However, their emphasis rests squarely on the multiple and changing roles, which they play inside and outside of the classroom. Consequently, the teachers outline the way in which their roles have changed over the years: they collaborate and dialogue with a greater spectrum of people on a daily basis; they have assumed more active roles as cultural mediators and intercultural brokers; and they are required to demonstrate greater flexibility as they attempt to find alternative solutions and strategies to their students' dilemmas.

9.2.1 The teacher's changing role: Collaborating with a greater number of constituents

In our present-day classrooms, the parameters of a teacher's responsibility extend beyond the classroom and into the student's family and community. Their professional rapport is no longer limited to the classroom and school, but requires collaboration and dialogue with parents, grandparents, extended family members, foster parents, community members, and social agencies. Educators in multicultural teaching environments are learning to dialogue with a larger, more diverse group of people.

Teachers are learning to collaborate with different people in order to provide their students with more equitable access to resources and opportunities for achievement. For example, the teacher John turned to a Rabbi to help him illustrate to the students the interconnectedness of discrimination and racism: "*The rabbi and I tried to illustrate that people will always discriminate against those who are different, whether it be religious, sexual preference, whatever*" (8/1). Furthermore, the teacher Sorin recounts why it is important for him to have as much contact as possible with his students' families, lest misunderstandings occur, as in the case of the Haitian father.

Somehow we got around to speaking about discipline, and he said that his parents always used to hit him if he misbehaved. I assured him that she [his daughter] was not misbehaving. He responded, 'But she is not doing her work in this class.' You see, he simply could not understand why I had asked him to read to her at night. He interpreted this as her not doing her work. Now I call the parents often. I am very careful when I explain things to them. I want them to understand what I am doing and why. (6/24)

Another example is the teacher Diane who turned to her Chinese day-care worker in the school to assist her in understanding what was happening with two Chinese students and their families. "*She knows her community, the kids, the school, and she is able to explain things to us* (8/4)". In sum, John turned to a rabbi to help him explain discrimination and racism; Sorin maintains a high level of contact with his students' families in order to avoid misunderstandings, and Diane turned to her day-care worker for insights on Chinese culture. Each of the teachers has learned to collaborate with a greater number of constituents in order to gain a better understanding of their students' lives, and ultimately to teach in a more effective manner.

9.2.2 The teacher's changing role: Becoming a cultural mediator and intercultural broker

Frequently, the teachers play the role of cultural mediator and intercultural broker, helping their students to adapt to Canadian cultural practices. For example, the teacher Nadine speaks about a young Jamaican student who was having difficulties adjusting to his new life in Québec.

"*I spoke to him in patois when he entered the room. His eyes lit up and he started telling me many things. He told me how confused he was... He would often come to me and talk to me after school. Come winter, he didn't know what to do... Having learned [from] my own experiences, I knew what to say to him.*" (8/19)

The teacher Sorin tries to help his students understand the customs in Canada and how they accord with the traditions and practices of their country of origin.

"*They are, after all, newcomers here and are unfamiliar with the way we do things... I always explain to them that the Canadian way is not necessarily a better way of doing things.*

They need to know what is acceptable and what is not, and the difference between the two so they are not ridiculed." (8/18)

The teacher Sarah speaks of her Lebanese-Canadian colleague, who served as a guide to the students by putting a human face to the continuing dilemma bicultural individuals confront in Canada. "*Jumal really helped a lot of teachers understand the attitudes that Muslims have with regards to Ramadan... Because of Jumal, I think the teachers appreciated the Muslim kids in the school a lot more* (8/5)". In summary, both Nadine and Jumal assume the role of intercultural broker for their students, while Sorin plays the role of cultural mediator, as each attempts to facilitate the acculturation process in Canada for their students. Nadine, Jumal and Sorin are bicultural Canadians that live between two worlds, and as a result, because of their personal experiences with immigration and adaptation to their new homeland Canada, they were able to reach out to their students and provide not only practical assistance but also a sympathetic ear, as their students struggle to merge two competing realities - the culture acquired at home and the mainstream Canadian culture they live in the public domain.

9.2.3 The teacher's changing role: Embracing change with adaptability and flexibility

Educators in multicultural teaching and learning environments are required to adapt to changing circumstances and to demonstrate flexibility when seeking new ways of doing things in their classrooms and schools. My participants are aware of the need for change and, whenever possible, they consider alternative ways of responding to a given situation. As such, they have learned to resist the temptation to stay the same and have chosen instead to embrace change and adaptability. For example, when one of Queenie's students was kept from joining a field trip, she spoke to the student's father, who in the past had not been easily persuaded.

"He is scared that something will happen. I felt that [the student] needed to go because I know she goes nowhere. I spoke to her father [and] reassured him that I understood what his concerns were. I guaranteed him she'd be with me all the time. He had my word... Well, I talked to him face to face, and convinced him." (8/15)

When the teacher Sorin was approached by the Board psychologist to assume a fatherly role to his student Pedro, who was going through a difficult grieving period, he was unsure how to proceed, but understood the importance of following the psychologist's advice.

"Well, I can't say I initially felt comfortable with this request when I heard it. What would I do? Be a father. I knew, however, that it was a difficult time for Pedro and his family... So, I would ask for his help, ask him to make photocopies for me, do things for me at lunch, get him to talk with me." (8/14)

The way in which Queenie and Sorin embrace flexibility and adaptability is a testimony to their mindfulness and strength of character. They were responsive to their students' circumstances and acted in the best interests of their students. In their own way, Queenie and Sorin are aware of the need for change and, whenever possible, they have considered alternative ways of responding to a given situation: Queenie adapted her strategy so that her student could go on a school trip, and Sorin needed to be flexible when asked to help his student through a difficult grieving period. They demonstrated flexibility as they sought alternative ways of doing things in their classrooms.

In sum, social science research advances the dialogue on multiculturalism by providing a conceptual overview of the educator's role in encouraging democratic principles, critical thinking and equitable learning. The teachers complement this research by providing accounts of the multiple roles they assume as they collaborate with people inside and outside the school system; as they become cultural mediators and intercultural brokers for their students, and as they learn to adapt and embrace change as they seek alternative solutions to the challenges they face. In their own way, my participants offer a new conceptualization of diversity that brings multiculturalism

to the forefront and renders it mainstream. The way in which my participants teach is not exclusive to the multicultural classroom, but rather it is an expression of their beliefs and values, and representative of the way in which they lead their lives on a personal and professional level.

9.3 Theme Three: Dialoguing with 'other'

Teaching in a multicultural environment and dialoguing with 'other' requires a different kind of educator than we have seen in the past. In actual fact, my participants' exemplary practices demonstrate that teaching in our present-day classrooms and dialoguing with 'other' are one and the same! The teachers make no distinction between the two phenomena, since a fundamental component of their teaching consists of dialoguing with difference. If only I had been fortunate enough to have had a teacher who recognized my difference, while still seeing me as part of the class.

I will firstly outline the contribution of the research to the discussion on the qualities and characteristics necessary to dialogue with 'other'. The research literature, as outlined in chapter three, indicates that, in encounters of difference, educators need to demonstrate the following qualities: be grounded in respect for 'other' (Giroux 1991, 1992), suspend judgement and accept the validity of differing points of view when interpreting the world (Gudykunst & Kim, 1992), be vulnerable and seek incommensurable perspectives (Delpit, 1988), define and interpret their location with respect to 'other' (Geertz, 1983), develop empathy and engage in enriching dialogue with one another (Greene, 1995), accept ambiguity when faced with issues of diversity and cultivate an openness to peripheral vision (Bateson, 1994), express themselves honestly and sincerely, examine their presuppositions and compare them against different ones, accept that they can make mistakes, and develop tolerance and patience (Burbules & Rice, 1991). In the following sub-sections, the educators highlight their views on the qualities and characteristics

which are required to teach effectively in a multicultural environment. The discussion with the educators was framed so as to determine what kind of individual makes intercultural communication possible. What follows is an overview of the educators' recommendations with respect to the qualities and attributes that must be developed in order to teach effectively in the everyday classroom.

9.3.1 Dialoguing with 'other': Awareness

Research literature places emphasis on the fact that the first stage of growth for teachers is awareness of self. Such awareness becomes a foundation, a prerequisite, for accepting the validity of difference (Banks, 1993, 1997; Greene, 1995; Gudykunst & Kim, 1992). Interestingly, my participants never mentioned this notion of self-awareness explicitly, but accepted it as a given. They also suggest by their example that the function of teachers needs to shift towards an awareness of the holistic student, the totality of the person in their classroom. For example, the teacher John tells us to "*know when your students are bleeding inside. Watch your kids*" (6/1), and the teacher Pierre observes his students very carefully, "*I know two to three weeks into the month of September which kids will need more help than others. I know this because they always wear the same clothes. They come to school not having washed-up. They don't have a lunch box and they have nothing for snack time*" (6/4).

Another realm of awareness cited by the teachers is the notion of developing a broader curriculum by 'cultivating an awareness beyond the classroom walls'. Such awareness can breathe life into the curriculum. For example, the teacher Sorin tells us, "*I know what the difference is between supporting the Shah of Iran and being against the regime. I know what a Croat represents and what a Serb represents. These examples may seem insignificant to us (as Canadians), but it is because of these reasons that these kids are in our classes*" (6/6). The

teacher Queenie knows that the old gentleman who lives across the street from her school is the grandfather of one of her students. "*I often hear him talking to people in the streets and telling them great stories on the sidewalk. So one day I asked his grandchildren to speak to him and see if he would come to school and talk to us. I thought to myself, it is another way of learning. It's a different approach*" (6/7).

In sum, awareness of self is the starting point for teachers who desire to engage in meaningful dialogue with the "other". Secondly, educators must develop an awareness of the totality of the student that sits before them, by cultivating mindfulness of the student's dreams and wishes within the classroom and beyond. The teachers' attentiveness and sensibility create opportunities for them to learn and enhance their understanding of their students' circumstances. Such an approach is constructive in developing effective teaching and learning relationships with their students.

9.3.2 Dialoguing with 'other': Attitudes

Attitudes consist of our thoughts, feelings and beliefs regarding what is true, false, desirable or undesirable (Allport, 1979). Effective teachers believe that they can learn from their students, and use their students' everyday experiences to link new concepts to prior knowledge. For example, the teacher Queenie states: "*It's impossible to know everything. You have to be able to admit that and have a willingness to learn from your students*" (6/10). The teacher Marie often asks her students to speak about their country of origin, "*I think it is important that there is a link between Québec and their native country. It comes naturally for them to speak about their culture*" (6/9).

In addition, the teachers believe that maintaining a positive attitude will have an impact upon the students' achievement. If a teacher has high expectations of success for their students

and learns to build on their strengths, students will learn more effectively. John advises us to "*Maintain a positive attitude. If your student got only 60% or 62% the last time, and you work with the kid, the next time he'll get 70%*" (6/13). Nadine reminds us that as educators, "*We're showing kids the path to their future. That's one of our roles. Believe in your kids. There is never any criteria to judge. If your kids have a dream, help them catch it. If you destroy a kid's dream, you create a nightmare*" (6/14). Educators in multicultural classrooms need to consider views and issues with an open and critical mind. Nadine states, "*If you come with an open mind, you won't have to be taught how to keep your eyes and mind open to new things*" (6/15). And Sorin mentions that when you work with these kids, "*You have to be open-minded. My theory is if you give, you receive in return*" (6/16). In sum, according to my participants, in order to engage in meaningful teaching and learning experiences with students, teachers must develop certain attitudes, such as, accept that they can learn from their students; maintain a positive perspective vis-à-vis their students' efforts and achievement; and develop a spirit of open-mindedness.

9.3.3 Dialoguing with 'other': Skills

The teachers have identified listening, patience, conflict resolution and collaboration as the skills they have developed and have come to rely on to teach effectively in their classroom. To begin, the educators recognize the importance of just simply listening. Nadine, for example, states that it is good to know about the children's home life, but "*if we listen to the children, sometimes we learn more. Listen and observe what the child is experiencing. Try to use the knowledge you have of the child to help you communicate and interact with the child*" (6/19). The teacher Sarah recounts, "*If I listen and I'm close-minded, I'm not going to be affected by*

what the kids are saying, emotionally affected that it is. There won't be a response. In that case, I am hearing and not listening" (6/20).

The development of patience is another skill that can put the teacher in good standing and will undoubtedly open up the opportunity for more respectful intercultural dialogue. The teacher Diane mentions the importance of being patient:

"*Education is a profession where that is absolutely necessary. I find a lot of teachers are not very patient and that is worrisome. They expect kids to know and do everything. Kids have so many problems that need to be addressed that if you're not patient, you won't be effective.*" (6/26)

Sorin outlines:

"*You have to be patient. You need to repeat everything two or three times because many of these students are learning a new language, and a new way of doing things. Slowly they will begin to experience success in the classroom, and that will give them the motivation to continue to work well.*" (6/27)

Resolving conflict has become increasingly valuable to teachers as a panoply of cultures and world views come into contact with each other in the classroom. The teachers discussion corroborates the research on conflict resolution, as cited in Feuerverger (2001).

Conflict resolution and peacemaking are inexorably intertwined. In fact, peace comes not from the absence of conflict in life, but from the ability to cope with it. ... Peacemaking becomes possible only if we are able to confront human differences and to acknowledge their legitimacy. One of the most widely accepted notions of peace education reform in United States and Canada is the school conflict education strategy of peer mediation training. The program teaches students how to manage conflicts constructively using negotiation procedures and peacemaking skills. (p. 87)

The teachers believe that a way in which to work more creatively with difference is to learn mediation skills. For example, it is important to Pierre that his students feel secure, and one way in which he promotes that is by teaching them how to solve problems for themselves. When a problem arises between two students, he takes on a mediating role.

"*I want them to know that it is important for me that everyone gets along in class and that they're happy to be at school. I am present when they discuss things, but I let them solve their*

problems. The children know the consequences of their actions when they step out of line." (6/10)

The teacher Diane feels that she is often mediating. She tries to sit the students down and determine what has happened.

> "*I see the difference between the teachers that have mediation skills and those that don't. When I began teaching you would say to the student, 'Okay, you're punished,' but it doesn't work like that anymore, and I don't think the problem ever got solved, really. Hear them out. It seems more fair.*" (6/12)

The final skill that the teachers have highlighted is collaborative working skills. The teachers understand that working collaboratively will contribute to overall inter-group relations, particularly in multicultural learning environments. Diane states that, "*With fewer and fewer resources, material and personnel, you have to work together with the other teachers in the school. We often talk about cooperative learning for kids - well, how about cooperative learning for teachers and parents?*" (6/23). To conclude, listening, patience, conflict resolution and collaboration are the skills which the teachers have come to rely on to teach effectively in their multicultural classroom. Few would argue that being patient and developing listening skills are a given in education, but the need for enhanced conflict resolution and collaboration skills is highlighted here. This is because of the multitude of values, beliefs, differences and customs which collide in the multicultural classroom.

9.3.4 Dialoguing with 'other': Values

Learning and teaching in our changing classrooms requires an understanding of our ideals and values. The educators have identified a certain set of values to be of importance when teaching in a multicultural environment: honesty, dignity, equality, and self-respect. The teacher

John tells us what his father used to say about honesty, "*There are two things you can't fool - a drunk and a kid. If you're honest, your students will be honest*" (6/28). The teacher Diane says:

> "*Kids will trust you when they think you are to be trusted. You can't say one thing and then mean another, or have rules for the teacher and rules for the kids. You have to think about the children's feelings and follow up on what you say you're going to do.*" (6/30)

Culturally relevant teaching places value on the students' sense of humanity and dignity. Marie reminds us that, "*If you do not have respect for children and preserve their dignity, then it's not even worth considering teaching*" (6/31). Sarah insists that her students treat their fellow classmates "*with dignity and respect. I will not accept it when a student speaks in a disrespectful way, or when a student acts in a disrespectful way in my class*" (6/32).

Another value of importance to the educators is equality. The teachers demonstrate equality when they provide equal opportunities for learning, and set equitable expectations for student success. Equitable does not necessarily mean equal. Nadine points out that in order to be equal, you have to have different rules for different students because the needs of the children are different. Marie adds, "*I try to be fair and not favour one over the other, but I can't treat all my students the same because I know who can do their homework and who can't and what their reasons are. You have to be flexible and understanding*" (6/33). Indeed, teachers who demonstrate the importance of self-respect, develop in their students a positive sense of self. Sorin tells us that he tries to encourage his students, "*to value what they bring to Canada as immigrants. I explain that each group of immigrants has made a contribution to Canada*" (6/36). Nadine talks to her students about the importance of being confident and of having a strong sense of self because she knows that "*if a White, Black and Asian person walk into a room, people will have different expectations of each. The person cannot do anything about these people's expectations, they can only be themselves*" (6/35).

The research literature in chapter three provides a theoretical overview of what the scholars suggest to be of relevance when dialoguing with 'other'. Their theoretical tenets outline certain personal and professional changes that educators need to undertake in order to dialogue effectively with "other". However, the participants in this case study have complemented the theoretical contribution to the discussion by expanding on the qualities and attributes that need to be developed when teaching in a multicultural environment, and have done so by providing a more specific and concrete overview of the awareness, attitudes, skills, and values required. Their experiential knowledge serves as a guidepost in formulating practical responses within a storied context (Beattie, 1995; Connelly & Clandinin, 1995, 1999). In the end, when one reflects on the teachers' stories of experience as they relate to otherness, it is evident that dialoguing with 'other' is a critical component of being an equitable, ethical teacher in today's schools.

9.4 Theme Four: Providing equitable education for all students

The participants in this study fully recognize that their actions and behaviours may potentially have a great impact upon their students' sense of self and on their students' overall ability to experience success in an educational system that is fundamentally grounded in a lack of respect for diversity. The sites of negotiation in this case study illustrate that the participants wholeheartedly believe and teach with the conviction that all students, regardless of class, race, gender, religion, ethnicity, have the right to an equitable education.

Scholarly research indicates that multicultural societies need to build on the principle of the politics of equal respect. Just as all citizens must have equal civil rights, all citizens should also enjoy the presumption that their traditional culture has value (Taylor, 1992). Banks (1993) indicates that the primary goal of multicultural education is to provide each student with an equal opportunity to attain high academic achievement in school. Each major variable in the school,

from the culture and curriculum, to the attitudes and beliefs of the staff, "must be changed in ways that allow the school to promote educational equity for students from diverse groups" (p. 1). Cummins (1992) believes that in order to provide culturally diverse students with an equitable education, programs must be established to develop the students' first language skills, and by doing so, students will develop a sense of personal and cultural identity.

Feuerverger (1989, 1991, 1994) states that the language and culture of minority students need to be recognized and promoted in schools and the curriculum literature. Regrettably, throughout my elementary and secondary years, the curriculum did not reflect my culture or my experiences outside of the classroom. In primary school, I recall that my teachers wanted to change my name from Gina to Jean, I suppose because Gina seemed exotic and was perhaps awkward to pronounce. Indeed, many children of immigrants can recall similar incidents. Furthermore, the literature, that adorned the library and classrooms, was unfamiliar to both my parents and me. In like manner, the school notices that were sent home were incomprehensible. My parents simply signed on the dotted line and returned the notices with me the following day. In secondary school, the curriculum in English, history, and science classes was unidimensional, with limited interpretations from other cultural perspectives. Moreover, the languages that could be studied were the conventional French or Latin, with few opportunities for heritage language instruction. In essence, my teachers were "colour-blind", since they treated us all in the same manner, and as such did not acknowledge our differences. They assumed that by being colour-blind, they were being fair. Such an argument can no longer be acceptable in Canadian schools: affirming difference rather than denying it is a means of promoting equality between students belonging to diverse racial cultural and linguistic groups.

9.4.1 Providing equitable education for all students: Treating students as equal but not the same

In an effort to compensate for the inequities inherent in our social and educational systems, the teachers in this study treat their students as equal but not the same, recognizing that treating everyone the same does not necessarily lead to substantive equality, but rather may perpetuate the inequality and inequity that already exists. Learning to affirm difference, and work within it, is consistent with an approach that strives to promote true equality. For example, when a student was acting out in Diane's school, she had to consider an alternative approach to address the discipline problem.

> *Peter waits in my office and when I have a few minutes I sit down and talk to him. He knows that I care about him so he talks to me. He needs that and then he returns to class and he's fine. If that were another child, I would say 'You are out of line and you know what is considered appropriate behaviour in this school,' but I can't do that with Peter because we don't know where his mother is right now. Typical discipline, like staying after school will not work with this kid. He comes and talks for 10-15 minutes and then he's fine.* (8/16)

The teacher Marie was also faced with a similar situation when her student Jason was not completing his homework. When he arrived from the Philippines a few years ago, Jason returned home from school each night to become the primary caregiver for his younger siblings.

> *I wasn't sure what to do about the situation at home, so I contacted the social worker about it and she tried to help them out. But in my class, I also tried to do something. I explained that it was still important to do homework. I did, however, prioritize for Jason. I showed him what homework was more important than others. Jason did what he could, and what work he didn't do at home, he corrected with us in class the next day. I needed to adapt my homework rules for Jason. You have to adapt your teaching according to your students.* (8/17)

Diane disciplined her student effectively by talking to him in her office, while Marie insisted that her student do his homework, but limited the assignments to what he was able to complete each evening. The teachers' responses to their students' dilemmas is testimony of the teachers' spirit of compassion in the face of the circumstances that their students encounter.

Diane and Marie knew their students well and were familiar with the personal circumstances that were impacting on their education. As a result, they were able to respond accordingly and address the real situation to ensure that their students would learn despite the odds they were facing. In the end, since both Diane and Marie were attentive to their students' complex situations, the treatment they ultimately gave their students was equal but not the same.

9.4.2 Providing equitable education for all students: Challenging falsehoods and questioning assumptions

If educators wish to meet the academic needs of their diverse student population, it often means questioning assumptions, including beliefs about student motivation and potential achievement, and challenging the falsehoods that have been internalized for so many years. For example, the teacher Pierre was astonished when his student Hamed refused to take part in school chores like the rest of the students in the classroom. Hamed told his teacher that it was his mother and sister who do the cleaning at home, not him or his father. When Pierre insisted that Hamed share the clean-up duties like the rest of the students, the boy continued to protest.

> "*He slowly came around. He saw the rest of the kids, and particularly the boys, sweeping, and he did it reluctantly. I explained that perhaps it was like that in his home, but in school and in the classroom with other boys and girls, each child has a responsibility and if he accepts to come to class, then he must accept the rules and responsibilities the other kids accept. He now does it.*" (8/9)

Another example is when Queenie encouraged one of her students with learning disabilities to play chess at lunch. In due time, her student became the school chess champion and his math grades soared.

> "*The change came in self-esteem, because now he was being recognized. His name was in the newsletter to all the parents. He got certificates, medals, a T-shirt, and the chess champion is doing well at school. Surprise, surprise!*" (8/8)

In sum, Pierre wanted his student to understand that regardless of what he was taught at home, different rules do not exist for boys and girls in school and in Canadian society at large. Gender equality is entrenched in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and is a fundamental belief to which many Canadians are committed. Hence, Pierre felt strongly that Hamed understand this fundamental principle now that he and his family reside in Canada. One way to work towards a unified concept of nationhood in Canada is to continue to openly challenge beliefs such as those that Hamed holds. Queenie recognized that labelling can limit students' ability to develop other skills, such as math and chess, and instead, in this case, she chose to focus on the student's strengths as a means of combating stereotypes.

9.4.3 Providing equitable education for all students: Removing obstacles that prevent students from performing at their best

Another way in which these teachers provide their students with equality of opportunity, is by developing strategies that remove barriers to student achievement, whether the barriers are experienced by individual students, or inherent within the educational system. For example, the teacher Nadine recalled having an East Indian girl in her class who was ashamed of her skin colour. In response, Nadine began to facilitate self-esteem games with the students, which focused on skin colour and personal attributes. Later in the same year the student began to accept that, as an East Indian, her skin was dark. Nadine could see that she was certainly happier in class. *"She was smiling more. I talked openly about colour with her. I demystified words and expressions for her. By the end of the year, she could talk about herself. She was beginning to develop her self-worth. I was proud of her"* (8/20).

Sorin provides another example when he demonstrates concern for a little girl in his class who had arrived earlier in the year from Bulgaria. Once school began in the morning, the little girl would ask him what time lunch would be. Some of the girls in the class told Sorin that she was not eating at all, so he made arrangements to have an extra lunch made for her each day, until a bureaucratic delay with their social assistance could be resolved.

> "*When I asked her about the situation, she told me that they didn't have money to eat. So I went to the principal who did everything possible to help her. The principal was able to prepare a lunch bag for the day and dinner for her and her mother. Now they have housing. They've received money. The principal has asked the mother to be a lunchroom monitor, so she can make some money while she finds a job elsewhere.*" (8/21)

In both these situations, the teachers understood that shame and poverty were the barriers that stood in the way of their students performing at their best, and, as a result, strove to find solutions within their means to reduce the negative impact these humbling barriers had upon their students' achievement. My participants Nadine and Sorin wanted to see their students experience success at school, but they understood that such success would be unattainable, given the obstacles their students were facing. How humiliating for Sorin's student to admit to him that there was not enough money at home to buy food! Sorin immediately became an advocate for his student and her mother. If he had not intervened, perhaps this disheartening case would have been overlooked because there are so many issues to deal with at school on a daily basis.

If educators are fully committed to teaching, and if they choose to teach with *tenderness* and *kindness*, then their hearts and minds will witness poignant events such as these time and time again. As educators we can choose to walk away and claim that we are at school simply to teach, and hope that our students will learn from our classroom instruction, or we can choose to be honest with ourselves, that teaching is about witnessing the hardships some of our students may be enduring, and play an active role to effect change. Oftentimes, as educators, we are in a position to exercise power. When I was in school, my parents, as new immigrants, certainly had

no voice to politely participate in their children's education. They did not understand the educational system and therefore had no choice but to silently conform. I, on the other hand, as the "polished" Canadian who speaks without a pronounced accent, can work within the school system to access the necessary resources and power to advocate for my students, as Sorin did with such kindness for his student that was hungry. If equitable education for all students is a priority, educators need to be advocates within the system.

In sum, in order to provide each student with equitable education, the teachers have demonstrated ways in which they provide equitable learning environments: they adapt their curriculum and classroom instruction to treat their students as equal but not the same; they challenge falsehoods that are the cornerstone of stereotypes; and they remove obstacles which prevent students from performing at their best. The participants' stories of experience indicate that they have the courage to take risks, as they endeavour to right some wrongs and render the educational system more equitable for all students.

Teaching in Montreal

As Québec seeks recognition for its distinctive status within Canada, its ethnic minorities are also demanding greater recognition from the Québec government. The introduction of *Bill 101* in 1977 is the foremost example of the Québec government's efforts to shape the province's linguistic and demographic future. Unquestionably, *Bill 101* has a direct impact on the education of all Québec students to this day. The teachers in this study recognize that it is important for their students to be bilingual in order for them to participate fully in Québec life, and enhance their employment opportunities within and outside the province. The participants indicate that they acknowledge not only the bilingual character of Montréal, but also the powerful allure of the English language for Allophones. Through the power of story, my participants have

demonstrated how they operate within a socio-political context in which Montréal's growing cultural pluralism is viewed by certain observers as an obstacle to the promotion of the French language in Québec. As a result, competing visions of the province manifest themselves in the province's educational system.

Regardless of such competing visions, my participants demonstrate exemplary open-mindedness with regard to the intertwined futures of Québec, Montréal and the French language. By encouraging bilingualism, they are preparing their students for life inside and outside Québec's borders. It goes without saying that the task of integrating the subthemes elaborated upon in this chapter into a teacher's already demanding set of responsibilities is a daunting one. However, these teachers continue to experience a certain degree of success in their classrooms despite the challenges posed by Montréal's growing cultural pluralism. It is my hope that this case study, which provides examples of the application of "good" teaching practices in the unique location of Montréal, can be utilized as a role model for other classrooms and communities elsewhere in Canada. The participants have created a new understanding of multiculturalism as a **mainstream** construct in education, within the specific context of Montréal. If a similar study had been undertaken elsewhere in Canada, perhaps Quebeckers would have discounted it, contending that its findings could not be applied within their province. However, given that this study was conducted in the unique educational environment of Montréal, it is my hope that teachers in all Canadian urban centres will believe that they can experience similar success in their multicultural classrooms.

Concluding remarks

The research literature that I have consulted puts forward thought-provoking theoretical frameworks regarding the issues and challenges that educators face in their schools and

classrooms. These teachers enhance the frameworks by providing vivid examples of the new spaces which they have created with their students, parents, colleagues and community. These practitioners' authentic voices invite dialogue as they grapple with complex truths and offer irreconcilable value orientations inherent in a multicultural society. Their stories remind us of the richness we can experience when responding to the challenges of living, working and teaching in the relatively new terrain of multiculturalism. My participants have also demonstrated that teaching and learning in a multicultural environment requires more than just pedagogy, strategies or theory; it requires a fundamental shift in mindset. Accordingly, they have developed and expanded on new ideas and vocabularies, which have enabled them to critically interpret and transcend the differences between their culture and race and those of their students. As such, they have transformed their own standards of viewing the world by negotiating new forms of understanding.

Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997) suggest that "the formulaic structure of academic documents is meant to inform, not inspire" (p.10). Hence, academic argument informs our understanding of difference in an orderly fashion by offering hypotheses regarding how to teach and learn in a multicultural environment. Such scholarly discourse outlines plausible assumptions that must be considered in order to effect change. The teaching practitioners in this study expose their vulnerabilities and uncertainties as they create new spaces of understanding and acceptance with their students. Indeed, the vulnerability expressed by these teachers is in keeping with Behar (1996, as cited in Feuerverger, 2001) who indicates that the truth lies in speaking and writing vulnerably about our lives. In essence, these practitioners serve as an inspiration as they consider alternative ways of thinking, and as they continue to find ways in which to ensure academic success for their students.

Ultimately, the teachers' insights and vivid stories invite us to think more deeply about issues that concern us as Canadian citizens living in a multicultural society. In articulating a new vision for education, my participants clearly indicate that multiculturalism has moved from the periphery to the mainstream. They implicitly acknowledge that multiculturalism needs to be part of our mainstream, and not simply be reduced to convenient or politically correct rhetoric. For these educators, teaching in today's schools means believing in the totality of the themes discussed in this chapter, accepting such a challenge and wholeheartedly incorporating it in everyday classroom practices. In the end, my participants speak in a language that invites us to imagine a myriad of possibilities as we continue to navigate our way through this uncharted terrain.

In this chapter, I have provided a discussion of the overarching theme, which examines how teachers' practical experience has the potential to inform theory. In developing this theme, I examined how recording "good" practices in social science research, and broadening the audience beyond academia can bring the spheres of theory and practice into closer proximity with each other. I then explored three subthemes: the teacher's changing role in the multicultural classroom, the qualities and attributes that need to be in place in order for teachers to effectively dialogue with 'other', and the importance of providing equitable education for all students. In closing, I highlighted the challenges of teaching in multicultural classrooms in the unique socio-political and linguistic venue of Montréal, and the possibilities for the wider applications of this study.

Chapter Ten: Concluding Remarks

In the first section of this final chapter, I summarize each of the previous chapters and state my principal findings. In section two, I examine the five contributions which my thesis makes to the discussion on multicultural education, which are to:

- narrow the gap between educational theory and classroom practice
- present the qualities and characteristics of what a multicultural educator might look like
- provide contextual examples of how teachers and students transcend difference
- examine diversity in the unique linguistic and cultural setting of Montréal
- identify "good" teaching in a multicultural environment

In section three, I outline the five principal implications of this study, and in the last section, I bring this study to a close with the teachers' final reflections on teaching and learning in a multicultural classroom.

10.1 Chapter summary and principal findings

Chapter one introduces the study and provides an overview of the theoretical framework underlying it. I begin this thesis by articulating my impressions about living and working in French and English in Montréal. As an Allophone from Toronto, I expect at the outset to conduct my qualitative study exclusively in English. My arrival in Montréal makes me realize that I must conduct my research in both French and English schools, with Francophone, Anglophone, and Allophone teachers, in order to faithfully capture the linguistic duality and diverse cultural reality of the city.

Chapter two outlines how three fundamental pillars help ground my thoughts, actions and beliefs, and expose me to multiple ways of viewing the world. I provide a general overview of my

life as a bicultural individual, leading to four critical incidents that impact the direction I come to take in my professional journey. These critical incidents demonstrate for me the extent to which educational institutions and teacher education programs still do not go far enough to address the complexity and challenges of the multicultural classroom, in order for practitioners to feel sufficiently prepared to face this reality as they begin their teaching careers. Furthermore, my own teaching experience in a mono-cultural environment in Eastern Europe confirms the necessity to encourage an open dialogue on diversity.

Chapter three provides an interpretation of the scholarly literature in the areas of language, culture, and identity, and draws upon other research regarding the stories of teachers immersed in diversity, and authentic encounters of difference. I also provide an overview of the theoretical framework supporting this study. The first section of this chapter is devoted to the review of the literature on issues of language, culture and identity. The scholarly works articulate conceptual frameworks, and propose pedagogical and curriculum initiatives for the multicultural classroom. The second section of the chapter defines the selection criteria for the teacher participants in this study. Whereas the selection of teachers for previous studies was typically defined by racial group, class, gender, or school grade, this thesis attempts to accomplish what most studies have not done by offering a group of participants based first on the extent to which teachers were immersed in diversity, and second on linguistic considerations in order to reflect the unique bilingual venue of Montréal. In the third section, I review the scholarly contribution regarding the conditions and characteristics which need to exist in order to facilitate dialogue with 'other'.

In chapter four, I discuss the qualitative methodology of this study, and indicate how story and narrative are central to understanding teachers, and how case study methodology contributes to our knowledge of complex, social phenomena. Since I agree that there is "power in pluralism" (Greene, 1993: 17), and believe that "difference is a source of strength" (Bateson, 1994: 12), it was

vital for me to locate a research paradigm that would enable me to record evidence of "goodness" in educational endeavours, rather than employ one which viewed difference as a problem or weakness. I believe that all genuine efforts made by teachers to embrace difference need to be rewarded. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis' (1997) notion of goodness spoke to my conviction that research paradigms need to shift their emphasis from a focus on insufficiency, to one that documents success.

Chapter five presents the teacher participants in my study, and examines the socio-political realities that impact their classrooms and shape their teaching environments. I introduce the teachers through the use of vignettes, which gives each of them a forum to discuss their values, families, dreams and vision. The biographical vignettes in this chapter provide an understanding of the veteran teachers as individuals and as educators. Each teacher is a linguistic, cultural, or racial bordercrosser (Anzaldua, 1987), and consequently has developed a "double vision" (Hoffman, 1989) of the world.

To this end, chapter six offers the teachers' stories and practical reflections which outline the qualities and characteristics of the multicultural educator, one who attempts to dialogue with 'other', and confront it in a pluralistic setting. Being a multicultural educator and engaging in a multicultural philosophy involves more than merely devising a multicultural curriculum. Just as multicultural education is first and foremost about process, becoming a multicultural educator is first and foremost about the relationships teachers have with their students. In each of the stories cited in chapter six, the teachers' discourse is always in reference to their students. It is the teachers, and their relationship with their students, who are central to multicultural teaching, not the curriculum, books, or 'facts and figures', as Nieto (1992) also observes. In essence, becoming a multicultural educator is a personal, social, emotional and pedagogical journey.

In chapter seven, I first provide an overview of the linguistic, educational, and socio-political issues that impact Montréal, as the city's cultural and social fabric continues to change and influence its urban life and identity. I then turn to the teachers for their insights and reflections on teaching and living in Québec, and on the future of Francophone, Anglophone, and Allophone students in Montréal. In their own way, each of the educators emphasized the importance of being bilingual in Québec, which they consider a prerequisite to their students securing greater opportunities in Québec, in Canada, and abroad. Indeed, the students' multicultural, multilingual characteristics have shaped the teachers' views as the educators continue to struggle with the inherent dissonance between French language maintenance and diversity. Nevertheless, the teacher-student relationship guides the learning, and as such, dictates the teachers' course of action whenever faced with the linguistic dilemmas cited in chapter seven.

In chapter eight, I provide contextual examples, in the form of stories, of teachers, along with their students, parents, colleagues and community, who attempt to dialogue across difference within sites of negotiation. The relatively new pedagogical terrain of diversity brings with it dimensions of uncertainty in procedure and protocol within educational settings, both in Québec and the in rest of Canada. Despite the complexity of difference, the teachers are attempting to understand this new terrain and work within it. Their stories demonstrate what is good, what works, and what is of value, as they creatively search for ways to provide equitable learning and teaching environments for their students. Multicultural teaching is "fraught with obstacles and challenges. It is a process of working "against the grain" of much of current school practice and engaging in the risky business of constructing new roles for teachers" (Cochran-Smith, 1995: 520). Despite the challenges, the teachers in my study continue to take risks as they depart from the past norms and develop new forms of understanding with their multicultural students.

Chapter nine elaborates upon the overarching theme of this study, which is the importance of forging a more substantial and meaningful link between theory and practice in multicultural education, with the intent of narrowing the gap between the two spheres and advancing the conversation on these issues. Furthermore, I explore three subthemes which are identified in the data analysis:

- the teacher's changing role in a multicultural classroom
- the qualities and characteristics that need to be in place to facilitate dialogue with 'other'
- the means by which equitable educational opportunities may be provided to all students.

In the final section, I outline how the teachers work within the unique political and linguistic landscape of Montréal to integrate pedagogical approaches that are responsive to its specific situation in Canada. Chapter nine therefore highlights what the teachers feel to be true: that teaching and learning in a multicultural environment extends beyond pedagogy, strategies, or theory, and requires a *fundamental shift in mindset.* The educators in this study develop and expand upon new ideas and vocabularies, which enable them to reflect critically, interpret, and transcend the differences between their culture and race, and those of their students.

10.2 Contributions of this study

I intend that my thesis contribute to the discussion on multicultural education in the following ways: 1) narrow the gap between educational theory and classroom practice; 2) provide an overview of an effective multicultural educator by outlining the awareness, attitudes, skills, and values an educator should develop in order to teach effectively in a multicultural environment; 3) provide contextual examples, in the form of stories, in which a "third space" (Taylor, 1992) is created between teacher and learner in "sites of negotiations" (Giroux, 1994); 4) examine these issues in Québec, where cultural pluralism has a significant impact on the

province's changing identity; 5) outline the criteria regarding "good" teaching in a multicultural environment (see fig. 2).

10.2.1 Theory and Practice - Working together to improve education

As mentioned earlier, the underlying objective of this thesis is to narrow the gap between educational theory and classroom practice, within the context of diversity in education. The teachers' insights are presented through the power of story, in order to gain an understanding of how the educators' wisdom can enhance the theoretical and practical discussion on multiculturalism. By proceeding in such a manner, I hope to broaden the discussion beyond the purely theoretical in order to include the practical observations of teachers. The focus on case study methodology "deepen[s] the conversation" (Geertz, 1973) on multicultural education and on the knowledge teachers possess in multicultural teaching and learning environments. Since multiculturalism is about living with difference on a daily basis, the participants indicate the need to dialogue in a language that is inclusive, promising and engaging. They speak in voices that are accessible to everyone.

This study also purports to narrow the gap between theory and practice by focusing on the "good" practices in the multicultural classroom. By acknowledging and documenting the teachers' everyday accomplishments in such a complex and challenging environment, we gain practical insights into what works in multicultural classrooms. In the end, the teachers' stories provide us with direction regarding what is realistic in a bilingual, multicultural environment such as Montréal, as they describe examples of success which illustrate how they affirm and transcend difference in their classrooms. Teaching in pluralistic environments comes with a certain amount of risk-taking and a great deal of second-guessing. For these reasons alone, it is

paramount to recognize and document the teachers' moments of creativity and resilience in transcending difference in their classrooms.

Another way in which this study intends to forge a more substantial link between theory and practice is in relation to the three subthemes presented in chapter nine, and the engaging discourse with which my participants communicate their practical wisdom. According to Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman-Davis (1997), scholars present their findings in a language "that is often opaque and esoteric. Rarely do the analyses and texts they produce invite dialogue with people in the real world. The formulaic structure of the written pieces is meant to inform, not inspire (p. 10)". Indeed, academia provides us with conceptual frameworks for the multicultural classroom, such as antiracist borders pedagogy (Giroux, 1991, 1992), the social action approach in curriculum (Banks, 1993), equity pedagogy (Banks, 1997) and collaborative critical inquiry orientation (Cummins, 1992), where hypotheses are articulated in an intellectual language, and where the focus remains on developing alternative curriculum and reconstructing power relations between the teacher, the student and society at large.

The participants in this study inform us about the multicultural classroom in a concrete manner. They offer hands-on strategies from real-life experiences to inform our understanding of multicultural ways of knowing, teaching and learning. They inspire us to reflect more deeply about multicultural issues in the classroom, and through their stories, suggest alternative strategies for teaching multicultural students. Ultimately, they transform the theoretical discussion into a practical one. Their voices illuminate and extend the conversation on diversity.

10.2.2 Present the qualities and characteristics of a multicultural educator

This thesis attempts to provide a multi-layered understanding of an effective multicultural educator from a very concrete perspective. Earlier, in chapter three of this study, I provided an

overview of the scholarly literature on the qualities and characteristics that need to be in place in order to dialogue effectively with 'other'. For the purpose of analysis, I listed such qualities and characteristics, but the totality of the multicultural individual still remained unclear for me. Understandably, the scholars' objective was not to sketch a portrait, but to provide their analysis of what they believed to be of relevance when dialoguing with 'other'. However, from my vantage point, as a teacher and teacher educator, I needed to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of what makes a good multicultural educator, and grasp the image of the totality of such a person. I, therefore, turned to the educators for their input in terms of what is necessary to dialogue across difference. What follows is an overview, from the perspectives of the scholars as well as the educators, of the conditions, qualities and characteristics that need to be present to dialogue with 'other'.

Prior to engaging in dialogue across difference, we need to interpret our location in relation to 'other' (Geertz, 1973), to believe that by examining opposites we can reach the heart of the issue (Geertz, 1973), to understand different points of view as being equally valid (Gudykunst & Kim, 1992), and to recognize that there is no certainty for success (Burbules & Rice, 1991).

During dialogue with 'other', we need to suspend judgment (Gudykunst, 1988), to accept ambiguity (Bateson, 1989), to look for meaning regarding how 'other' understands human relations (Geertz, 1973), to seek to understand the reasons behind the actions of 'other' (Gudykunst, 1988), to look for what we hold in common (Greene, 1993), to express ourselves clearly and honestly (Burbules & Rice, 1991), to listen with an open heart and allow 'other' to speak (Delpit, 1988; Burbules & Rice, 1991), to admit mistakes (Burbules & Rice, 1991), to demonstrate patience, sensitivity (Burbules & Rice, 1991), and empathy (Greene, 1995).

In addition, the multicultural educator who dialogues with 'other' will need to acquire an holistic awareness of the student, and of the world beyond the classroom; adopt the attitude that educators can learn from their students; and recognize the importance of maintaining a positive and open-minded perspective in the face of diversity. Also, the multicultural educator will need to display skills in listening, collaboration, conflict resolution, and patience, and hold certain values in high esteem such as honesty, dignity, equality, and self-respect.

Indeed, dialoguing with 'other' brings with it great possibilities for *personal growth.* When we engage in such dialogue, learning is possible in spaces of contrast (Bateson, 1989); the more we dialogue with 'other', the more flexible we become; and in broadening our understanding of 'other', we broaden our understanding of self (Burbules & Rice, 1991). As I indicated in chapter six, the teachers add a dimension to the discussion on dialogue with 'other' by outlining the awareness, attitudes, skills, and values required to dialogue across difference. Being a multicultural educator extends beyond introducing a multicultural curriculum or transforming pedagogical practices. **It is a way of life**. It is a philosophy that is engaging and all encompassing. Embarking on a personal and professional journey of reflection and growth requires a great deal of risk and time, and is essential for the implementation of an authentic multicultural curriculum. Nieto (1992) reminds us that becoming a multicultural person "is above all a process. It is ongoing and dynamic. It is a process because it involves relationships among people" (p. 218). The multicultural educators presented in this study give us a starting point for further discussion on the personal and reflective journey upon which educators need to embark if they wish to dialogue successfully with 'other'.

10.2.3 Provide contextual examples of how teachers and students transcend difference

The third contribution this thesis intends to offer the field of multicultural education is a series of contextual examples, in the form of stories, of the ways in which experienced teachers address issues of difference, and move *beyond* them. In chapter eight of this study, the teachers have identified sites of negotiation for affirming, responding to, and transcending issues of difference in their classrooms. The scholars articulate that, in order to move beyond difference, teachers and students need to "engage in daily acts of negotiations across cultural and racial borders" where educators bring "various cultures into dialogue with each other" (Giroux, 1994: 337). Taylor (1992) refers to a "broader horizon where a third space is negotiated (p. 70)", through the development of new ideas and vocabularies between teachers and students. Furthermore, Banks (1997) views equity pedagogy as a reform movement, which "educates students for social change and equips them with decision-making skills in order to participate fully in society" (p. 86). Cummins (1992) introduces the collaborative critical inquiry orientation, where educators encourage the development of student voice through critical reflection on social issues, and where interaction unfolds in a space entitled the "zone of proximal development (ZPD)" (p. 4).

These scholars provide thought-provoking theoretical overviews of the educational inequities which exist, and articulate the role of the teacher in addressing such inequities, while illustrating possible approaches to combat such inequities. However, they do not specify concrete, practical ways to address difference in the classroom. The scholarly literature proposes various ways in which to reconstruct knowledge or redesign curriculum, and offers a focus on the dysfunctional socio-educational system, whereas the teachers' focus is usually directed towards the student. The teachers in this study illustrate the disappointments, moral dilemmas, successes

and self-doubts inherent with the classroom interactions in order to develop and justify their multicultural practices. Their stories of experience are multidimensional and they amplify the substance of the theoretical discourse in multicultural education. My participants speak in a clear voice, as they outline their pedagogical practices, and highlight the strategies they use when they are confronted with difference and wish to move beyond it in order to provide their students with an equitable education.

10.2.4 Examine diversity in the unique bilingual setting of Montréal

My study examines difference in Québec, where competing tensions exist regarding the maintenance of the minority French language in Canada. Montréal is a unique social, political and linguistic venue in Canada. If this study had been conducted in Toronto, Vancouver or elsewhere in Canada, the underlying tension of the maintenance of a minority language would not have unfolded as it does in the dynamic, bilingual venue of Montréal. Québec's response to the federal vision of multiculturalism was to adopt a policy of interculturalism, which recognizes the reality of Québec's identity as a distinct Francophone community, and where cultural pluralism is accepted on the condition that it continues to promote the French language. Levine (1990) states that "despite provincial government pronouncements in favour of cultural diversity, many Francophones are uncomfortable with the ethnic and racial diversification underway in Montréal" (p. 219). This thesis on diversity in education in Montréal is therefore perhaps more vital than elsewhere in Canada. Hence, the fourth contribution of this study is as follows: regardless of the unique challenges that such a bilingual, socio-political environment poses, my participants are able to address issues of diversity in their classrooms and provide solutions to the complex dilemmas they face in specific and concrete ways.

10.2.5 Good teaching in a multicultural environment

This study provides a discerning examination of what is good teaching in a *multicultural* environment, and as such requires us to think beyond the boundaries of what is good teaching *in general*, and expand our interpretation to embrace the reality that diversity is an integral component of our communities, schools and classrooms. Accordingly, good teaching in a multicultural environment consists of a synergy of four corresponding elements: 1) the teacher's commitment to personal growth, 2) a new interpersonal approach with students, 3) dynamic school and community involvement and 4) working towards socio-educational change. In essence, the voices of the participants corroborate with the notion that good multicultural teaching means bringing the personal and the interpersonal together to work for social change. They state unequivocally that good multicultural teachers are interested in their students' community and their lives outside of the classroom and school. As a result of these findings I have created an overview of good teaching in a multicultural environment, which is outlined below, and hopefully may serve as a guiding framework that can provide us with direction as we navigate our way through the disconcerting terrain of diversity in education.

1) The teacher's commitment to personal growth in a multicultural context

- develop the awareness, attitudes, skills and values as outlined in this study
- embrace change with flexibility and adaptability
- being a multicultural educator is a way of life - a philosophy that is all-encompassing

A new interpersonal approach between teacher and student in a multicultural context

- teachers and students transcend difference by negotiating a 'third space' (Taylor, 1992) of acceptance and understanding
- teachers shift from coercive to collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 1992) to empower their students
- the *relationship* teachers have with their students is central to multicultural teaching, not the curriculum

2) Enhanced rapport between multiple constituents: teacher, student, school and cultural communities

- collaborate with a greater number of constituents in the school and community at large
- take on the role of cultural mediators and intercultural brokers

4) Working for social change and educational equity for all students

- challenge societal power structures (Banks, 2000) within a framework of pluralism
- provide equal opportunity for learning to **all** students
- adopt a social justice approach where fairness, mutual advantage, resource distribution and socio-political consensus are addressed (Corson, 2001)

It is inevitable that certain socio-economic forces shape educators and their teaching and learning environments. Consequently, the voices that emerge in this study conclude that our changing, diverse society dictates that being a good teacher is being a good multicultural teacher

Figure 2
Contributions of the Study

1) Narrows the gap between educational theory and classroom practice

- Presents teachers' insights through the power of story
- Records examples of 'good' practices in the multicultural classroom
- Recounts teachers' experiences in an holistic way and in an accessible discourse

2) Presents the qualities and characteristics of a multicultural educator

- Articulates the qualities and characteristics that need to be present *prior* to dialoguing across difference and *during* the dialogue
- Outlines awareness, attitudes, skills and values necessary to dialogue with 'other'

3) Provides contextual examples of how teachers and students transcend difference

- Records vivid examples, in the form of story, of how difference is negotiated and transcended in the multicultural school and classroom

4) Examines diversity in the unique bilingual setting of Montréal

- Addresses issues of diversity in the classroom while responding to the reality of a bilingual environment
- Documents the teachers' narratives in French and English to reflect the bilingualism of this unique North American city

5) Outlines what is good teaching in a multicultural environment

- Highlights the teacher's commitment to personal growth in a multicultural context
- Encourages a new interpersonal approach between teacher and student in a multicultural context
- Enhances rapport between multiple constituents: teacher, student, school and cultural communities
- Works for social change and educational equity for all students

in a conscious way. As such, there must be an implicit acceptance that multiculturalism has become a mainstream construct in our everyday classrooms. Accordingly, this thesis proposes that it is only a matter of time before the discourse in teacher education will need to shift from 'what is good teaching' to 'what is good multicultural teaching' in order to grapple with the magnitude of this societal challenge both in Québec and in the rest of Canada.

10.3 Implications of this study

In this section, I briefly outline the five principal implications or directions for practical implementation. They are as follows:

- reconceptualize difference
- reframe teacher education to include the voices of experienced educators
- develop a new discourse in multicultural education
- position relationship-building at the core of multicultural teaching and learning experiences
- encourage scholars and practitioners to dialogue across their differences in order to advance the discussion on multicultural education.

10.3.1 Implication: Reconceptualizing difference as a source of strength

Teaching and learning in a multicultural society brings with it great challenge and uncertainty. Working in such a relatively new terrain requires vision, open-mindedness and a willingness to change and view the world from multiple vantage points. As mentioned in chapter three, I agree with Greene's (1993) notion that there is power in pluralism, and that as a society, we have yet to discover the possibilities for expanding community. As well, Bateson (1994) suggests that we need to recognize difference as a source of strength. In the space of difference, new depths of learning can unfold. Burbules and Rice (1991) state that it is due to the difficulty

of intersubjective discourse that we can experience profound learning. Benefits can be derived from participating in conversations with those like us, but there are also benefits to be gained from engaging in discussions with those unlike us. The first implication of this study is, therefore, *to reconceptualize the way in which we construct theory regarding difference.*

As social science researchers, and as educators, we must identify the inherent strength and creativity within difference, and recognize it as enriching, despite its evident incommensurable perspectives. The teachers in this study encourage us to believe in the power of pluralism by giving us the necessary guidance and courage. As such, their stories are a testimony to the multiple possibilities for success in facilitating the dialogue with 'other'. The teachers' interactions with their multicultural students illuminate the richness one can find at the core of difference, and demonstrate that dialogue across difference is possible. Such a message must be communicated to all stakeholders: researchers, educators, students, and community leaders. It is evident from their stories that the participants in this study strongly believe that multiculturalism needs to be a part of everyday teaching and learning in our classrooms. They, therefore, corroborate the primary focus of this thesis: to merge theory and practice within the context of diversity in education.

*10.3.2 Implication: Reframe teacher education to include the **experienced** educator*

If learning to listen to teachers' stories of experience is an important step towards creating an understanding of teaching (Coles, 1989; Lampert, 1985; Paley 1986, 1988; Pinar, 1981), this study argues that listening to the voices of teachers immersed in diversity is a way to advance our understanding of multicultural teaching. Therefore, an important challenge facing the professional development of classroom teachers is finding effective ways to involve veteran practitioners in teacher education programs. Hence, the second implication of this study is that teacher

development programs need to be reframed in a way that gives central importance to experienced multicultural teachers and their ways of knowing.

As highlighted in chapter three of this study, Calderhead (1988) states that theory and practice are frequently regarded as separate entities in teacher education. However, Smyth (1995) argues that this dichotomy is a false one and the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education needs to be a continuous, interactive one, in which the teachers' voices need to be heard and their insights documented (Goodson, 1991; Smyth, 1987). Furthermore, Carter (1992) and Schon (1987) highlight that experienced practitioners are holders of personal practical knowledge from which wisdom is derived, and frameworks are developed to make sense of classroom events. As such, teacher education programs would undoubtedly be enriched in theoretical and practical ways if faculties of education were to implement a curriculum that includes the vast richness of the teacher's expertise. Therefore, in order to gain insight into the multicultural classroom, the multicultural teacher needs to be at the **centre** of teacher education programs. It would be of immeasurable benefit to organize preservice and inservice courses in which experienced teachers share their knowledge with student teachers. Inevitably, such an approach would go beyond the usual interaction between the student teacher and the host teacher.

10.3.3 Implication: Develop a new discourse in multicultural education

Theoretical frameworks within the complex landscape of difference have the ability to inform us. However, unless these frameworks are communicated in an accessible language which teachers, students, parents, community members and policy makers can easily understand and implement, then the frameworks will likely remain theoretical constructs that are left unused in future educational reform. Hence, the third implication of this study is to develop a new discourse for multicultural education that is accessible and based on the veteran teachers' voices.

Such a discourse needs to be built upon the practical realities of what unfolds in the multicultural classroom on an everyday basis. In essence, the new discourse on multicultural education evolves from the teachers' language that is directly shaped by the practitioners' tangible experiences in the classroom with their students. Such a language can inform classroom-based curriculum on multicultural issues, school board policy initiatives and teacher education program design. For example, in chapters six and eight, my participants identify the ways in which they transcend difference in a language that is from the heart. They speak of "finding common ground", of "removing obstacles that prevent students from performing at their best", and of "resisting the temptation to stay the same". In the clarity of the teachers' words there is great wisdom that has the potential to guide the dialogue with 'other' and render it more inclusive, less inhibiting. The teachers' simplicity of thought and expression render their insights accessible to everyone. Indeed, the language in which they express themselves is a starting point for further discussion that could revolutionize the discourse in multicultural education.

10.3.4 Implication: Relationship building in the multicultural classroom

In chapters six and eight of this study, I offer the teachers' insights on the attributes of an effective multicultural educator, and the sites of negotiation that transcend difference. They indicate that multicultural education is first and foremost about **relationships.** Accordingly, the fourth implication of this study is that multicultural education programs need to be reshaped so that the primary focus for curriculum design and knowledge reconstruction includes the importance of developing the teacher-student relationship in the multicultural classroom in an integrated way. This thesis demonstrates how fundamentally embedded within the teachers' discourse is the relationship with their students. The teachers' stories demonstrate reflection, critical analysis, and an ability to draw on a range of resources, intelligence and wisdom to relate

to their multicultural students with sensitivity and understanding. This is not to negate the other studies that focus on these issues (see chapter three), however, what is unique here is the sense that a heightened understanding of multicultural issues should be part and parcel of everyday pedagogy. In the final analysis, the teachers' insights clearly indicate that multicultural education is a process which needs to emphasize relationship-building at its absolute centre.

10.3.5 Implication: Scholars and practitioners need to dialogue across their differences

In keeping with the overarching theme of this study of narrowing the gap between educational theory and classroom practice, the fifth implication is that the individuals who face the daily challenges of teaching in a multicultural environment and are most intimately involved in the process of change, are the same individuals who **need to be heard** and reflected in social science research on multicultural education. In other words, in order to advance the discussion on multicultural education, the educators need to be given a privileged seat when theory is being constructed. Conversely, scholars must also be invited into the classroom to be afforded the opportunity to dialogue with practitioners, and evaluate the **concrete** ways in which their findings can assist in providing equitable education to students.

10.4 Final thoughts

There is no accurate way of predicting what diversity will look like in Canada in the decades ahead, however Fleras and Elliott (1992) indicate that there will be increased pressure to bring multiculturalism in line with the realities of the new mosaic. Furthermore, they insist that as Canadians, if we wish to adequately address the issues of political unity, social equality and cultural diversity, we need to expand our commitment to multiculturalism. With many of Canada's institutions undergoing scrutiny and debate, multiculturalism should be no different if

we want to ensure that it remain productive and serve the needs of Canada. When reflecting on diversity in Québec and Canada, it is apparent that the emphasis requires a new and broadened perspective. This need implies changing our conception of the world, where the preservation of difference cannot be seen as an end in itself, but as a means to broaden our collective understanding as a nation.

The eight teachers with whom I had the privilege to work have inspired me to continue learning and taking risks in my teaching and my research. Their teaching practices have renewed my faith that we will find ways in Québec and in the rest of Canada to live equitably and justly in a society of difference. Pierre, Sarah, Nadine, Sorin, Queenie, John, Marie and Diane are committed individuals with a vision and a heart. The way in which they teach reflects their personal philosophy of treating the individual that stands before them with dignity and respect. They are model educators that believe in their students, and believe that teaching has the power to make a difference. They have chosen the teaching profession because kids are worth it, because kids deserve to be listened to, and because they represent our future. Undoubtedly, my participants' teaching practices are enhanced by the social, cultural and linguistic wealth that is a vibrant part of the Québec landscape. Regardless of the challenges and setbacks they may encounter, their passion for teaching continues to be fuelled by their students and by the relationships they have developed and maintained with them year after year. It was a distinct honour to have worked with these educators who have changed me forever.

I bring this study to a close with a series of final reflections from the teachers. When asked what they would say to guide novice teachers in their new profession as educators, they opened up their hearts and relied on their practical wisdom to share their advice and enthusiasm. Their compassionate insights give me hope that someday we will create a meaningful educational dialogue that embraces all Canadians.

Dear Educator: You are faced with the most pleasant of tasks. You will be teaching children of a Diaspora, children who despite their youth are learned individuals who bring a multiplicity of cultural experiences to our mosaic. These students will ironically become your teachers. Many have symbolically and literally bathed in the Ganges, breathed air from the summit of the Blue Mountains of Jamaica, fished the waters of the Yangtze and breathed the fumes of the steaming teapots of Nippon. There is no doubt that your classroom will be a richer place because of the hue of skin, or the lilt of tongue. Your task of teaching will be made much easier if you accept that each person brings something special to the round table, where you sit as the teacher. Benefit from this richness of experience. (John)

Chaque enfant et chaque famille sont différents et uniques. Notre rôle ne se limite pas à être enseignant. Il faut être bon pédagogue et fin psychologue, afin d'intéresser les élèves à ce que nous faisons en classe, de leur donner le goût de venir à l'école. L'aspect le plus important est certainement d'avoir l'esprit ouvert face aux différences. Les nouveaux arrivants ont acquis une mode de vie, des croyances, des coutumes. Il s'agit pour nous de tenter de les comprendre et de les respecter. C'est à ce moment que notre rôle en tant qu'enseignant devient doublement important. Il s'agira pour nous de trouver des moyens supplémentaires pour tenter d'aider ces élèves à atteindre leurs buts. (Pierre)

Every child and every family is different and unique. We are not only teachers; we also need to be good educators and psychologists in order to maintain the students' interest in class, and to motivate them to come to school. The most important thing is to have an open mind towards difference. New immigrants have acquired a way of life, certain beliefs and customs. We must understand and respect them. It is at this very moment that our role as teachers becomes important. That means that we need to find twice as many ways to help these students reach their goals. (Pierre)

La partie la plus importante d'une personne est la partie qui n'est pas physique. Nous sommes des âmes en évolution, des âmes qui sont logées dans notre corps. Si vous parvenez à porter un tel regard sur les gens, à regarder leur âme, vous pouvez transcender toutes les différences. Oui, ils sont noirs ou originaires de l'Inde ou musulmans mais il est possible pour les gens de se comprendre et de s'apprécier mutuellement d abord et avant tout en tant qu'êtres humains.

The most important part of a person is the non-physical part. We are souls evolving, souls housed within our bodies. If you can look at people this way, look at their souls, you have transcended all difference. Yes, the students are Black or East Indian or Muslim, but most importantly try to understand one another and appreciate each other as human beings.

Il est important d'amener les étudiants et étudiantes à se dépasser. Les jeunes se plaignent parfois que je les force à réfléchir et ils ne veulent pas réfléchir au sujet de questions importantes mais certains de ces jeunes viennent me voir des années plus tard et

It's important to challenge our students. The kids sometimes complain that I make them think, and they don't want to think about critical questions. Years later, however, some of the same kids come back and say, "You know Miss, I'll never forget our classes and

me disent, "Vous savez madame, je n'oublierai jamais les classes que nous avons eu et les choses dont nous avons parlé et le fait que vous nous avez forcés à réfléchir." (Sarah)

the things we talked about. You pushed us to think." (Sarah)

Every child, by being in my classroom, has already earned my respect. These children are struggling to grow up in a world very different from the one we grew up in. Listen to them. To look is to only see Black, Asian, tall, beautiful - to listen is to hear the heart. Too often we expect the worst of children and treat them as such because we think we know what to expect. Well, actually the opposite is true. When we expect the best, we usually get it. Search for their strengths and encourage their development as much as possible. Imagine twenty years from now. Think about that, and have it guide you. (Nadine)

Chers enseignants et enseignantes : Acquérir les connaissances nécessaires sur la culture et les coutumes de vos élèves - remarquez que ceci s'apprend 'sur le tas' en discutant avec les enfants, les parents, en observants nos chers petits. Nous sommes là pour faciliter leur intégration au pays, mais ne portons pas d'oeillères. Nos jeunes immigrants ont, eux aussi, leur baggage culturel: il est tout simplement différent du nôtre. Ne jugeons jamais. Bref, soyons, nous, enseignants et enseignantes débordant d'énergie, d'altruisme, de courage afin d'ouvrir le chemin de la vie à ces enfants du monde qui nous sont confiés. Bonne chance! (Sorin)

Dear teachers: Learn about your students' cultures and customs. Learn 'on the job' through discussions with students and parents, and through your observations. As teachers, we are there to facilitate their integration into the country. Try not to be blindfolded. Our young immigrants also have cultural baggage which is quite different than ours. We should never judge. Overall, as teachers we need to be energetic, altruistic and courageous, so that we can show these children, who have been entrusted in our care, the road to life. Good luck! (Sorin)

Every time student teachers come to my school I go to the dollar store and buy a few bags. I pick up bags—I get a garbage bag, shopping bag, gift bag. Each bag is different with surprises inside. I give each student teacher one with erasers, pencils, stickers, whatever. I make it my business to prepare each bag differently. We have a little party with all the staff present on the last day before the student teachers leave our school, and these bags are my send-off gift to them. I tell the student teachers that one lesson I've learned as a teacher is that in teaching, there are many surprises. Every day that you come to school you have to have your bag of tricks ready, and no matter how prepared you are, during the day, you're going to have to put your hand in that bag and pull out a trick and try to see and understand what will work with what child. Sometimes it doesn't work, and if it doesn't work, you have to know yourself well enough and be confident in yourself to say this isn't working and go back into your bag and take out another trick that may work. You have to be flexible and open-minded, then assess the situation and react. (Queenie)

Chers enseignants et enseignantes : Permettez-moi de vous dire que vous avez choisi le plus beau métier du monde. Félicitations! Enseigner dans un mileu multiculturel relève de tout un défi. Mais si vous possédez l'amour de ce que vous faites, des enfants ainsi que des connaissances générales de votre matière, alors, vous êtes sur la bonne voie. Enseigner dans un tel milieu requiert patience, disponibilité, structure. Il nous faut être conscients des difficultés qu'ont ces élèves d'apprendre une nouvelle langue et une nouvelle culture. Aidons-les à s'adapter à leur nouveau pays tout en se respectant eux-mêmes! (Marie)

Dear teachers: Allow me to tell you that you have chosen the most beautiful profession in the world. Congratulations! Teaching in a multicultural setting is a quite a challenge. But, if you love your work and your students, then you're on the right track. Teaching in such an environment requires patience, availability, and structure. You need to be conscious of the students' difficulties in learning a new language and a new culture. Help them adapt to their new country and help them respect themselves! (Marie)

Well, what should I say, after 28 years of teaching in a multicultural, inner city environment. I would say that you need to be a caring individual. You need to be sensitive, open-minded and ready to respond to any possible situation. Be human with these kids and tell them that you make mistakes and that you're sorry when you've done something wrong. Respect them. Build trust. Develop relationships. Learn from your kids. You're not only a teacher, you're learning, too. Praise them. Don't wait forever to praise them. Be generous and honest with your praise. See yourself through the eyes of your students. What do you see? Ask yourself, do you really want to teach here, in this environment? Above all, you're there to serve these children. That's your mission, goal and job. (Diane)

In sum, I would like to end this thesis in saying that these educators have given me a new and promising way of seeing education. Their wisdom and compassion have helped me overcome my sense of disillusionment with my childhood teachers, and allowed me to recover my excitement in teaching. By their example, and through their stories from the heart, these teachers have restored my faith in the power and possibilities of education.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Tell me something about your background? Where were you born and educated? How long have you lived in Montréal? How long have you been teaching and what subjects do you teach?
2. Who are your mentors? Tell me about your parents, your family and your values?
3. What do you enjoy reading? What are your hobbies? What do you enjoy doing? What are your dreams?
4. Do you speak French or English? Do your children or your partner speak French or English? Where did you learn the language (either French or English)? Did you want to learn French or English? What language (s) do you speak at home? What was your first language?
5. Tell me about your current school - the students, the administration, the parents, the demographics, the community.
6. Tell me what it means to live in a bilingual, multicultural city like Montréal? How do you feel about the politics of the province? How would you best describe this city?
7. Why are you a teacher? Why did you go into teaching? How would you describe your philosophy of education?
8. What do you enjoy about teaching? What makes it difficult to be a good teacher?
9. Tell me about your teaching - what you believe in, and what is important to you as an individual and as a teacher?
10. What do you think 'works' in your inner-city multicultural classroom and school? What do you believe is important to be an effective teacher in such an environment? Would you say that you get along with your students? If yes, why do you think so?

11. What attitudes do you think are important to teach these students? What do you need to be aware of?

12. Tell me about the skills teachers should possess in order to work in your classroom or in your school?

13. What are your values? Where do those values come from? Are there fundamental values a teacher should hold in order to teach students from diverse racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds?

14. Tell me about your students? How do they learn? When we look at issues of difference of gender, race, class, culture, religion and language, how do you as an educator acknowledge and respect that difference towards the student, and then move beyond it? What do you do in your classroom and in your school to make that happen?

15. Tell me what you do when you're confronted with a multicultural issue or problem in your classroom or school? How do you respond? What are you thinking when you're responding in such a way? Take me through the reflective journey in your mind. I would like to understand how you arrived at making your decisions, and why you chose to respond in the way that you did.

16. If you had a group of preservice or novice teachers in front of you, what would you tell them about teaching? What would you tell them about teaching in a multicultural, multiracial school? What would you want them to know?

17. If you had a magic wand and you could change teacher education so that teachers would be more effective in multicultural classrooms, what changes would you make?

Appendix B: Code Categories for the purpose of Analysis

- living in Montréal, teaching in Québec (Q)
- speaking French in Québec, Bill 101, language issues (Fr)
- recommendations, advice (Fr-Rec)
- teacher's background, values, personal life, beliefs (T)
- school, students, administration (S)
- stories about teaching in a multicultural classroom (Mcl)
- attitudes (Att)
- awareness (Aw)
- skills (Sk)
- values (Val)
- effective teaching (ET)
- what strategies do they use/ what do they do? (Strat)
- advice for teachers (Adv)
- difference - examples, what do they do (Diff)
- gender (Diff-G)
- race (Diff-R)
- class (Diff-C)
- culture (Diff-cult)
- religion (Diff-Rel)
- language (Diff-L)
- equity (Diff-Eq)
- practical ideas - what are they doing hands-on, daily (Pr)

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