

INCLUSION THROUGH INTERCULTURAL APPROACHES TO
EDUCATION: SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS FOR
REFUGEE INTEGRATION

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
 CHAPTER	
I. EDUCATION AND REFUGEE INTEGRATION	1
What Does Nareen See? What Does Nareen Hear? What Does Nareen Feel?	2
Who Manages Nareen’s Educational World?	4
Background	6
Acculturation Trends	8
School Leaders and Change	9
Statement of the Problem	12
Viewpoints and Positionality of the Researcher	13
Conceptual Framework	15
Purpose of the Study	17
Research Questions	18
Study Design	20
Delimitations to the Study	21
Organization of the Study	23
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	24
Refugees and International Policy Perspectives	25
U.N. Policy on Refugees	25
UNHCR Education Policy	26
Refugee Students: Journey and Identity	27
Transnational Experiences of Refugee Students	27
Displacement and Knowledge in Transition	33
Schools and Cultural Hegemony	34

Learning through Shared Inquiry	36
Cultural Wealth across Borders	38
Resettlement over Borders	41
Problematizing Acculturation through Inclusive Programs.....	43
Schools and Acculturation	44
Cultural Responsiveness and Student Integration.....	47
Intercultural Approaches to Educational Change	49
Tension Between Multiculturalism and Interculturalism	52
Schools as Localities of Change	53
Equitable Programs for Refugee Students	56
Implications for School Improvement	60
Critique of the Literature	62
Conclusion	63
 III. METHODOLOGY	 66
Rationale for the Research Design.....	66
Multi-Sited Ethnography	68
Researcher Positionality and Data Collection.....	71
Site Selection and Participants.....	72
Qualitative Purposeful Sampling Protocol.....	79
Data Collection Techniques.....	80
Data Analysis	84
Validity and Trustworthiness.....	87
Trustworthiness in the Research	89
Ethical Considerations	92
Positionality and Reflexivity.....	93
Limitations	94
Summary	97
 IV. PROFILING ECOLOGIES OF A MULTI-SITED ETHNOGRAPHY	 98
Findings in a Relational Context.....	99
School Systems as Sites of Integration for Refugee Students	100
Eastdale Metropolitan Area, Central Texas	101
Meyland, South Holland	113
Conclusion: Systems and Organizations for Refugee Support.....	123
 V. EMERGING STORIES OF CHANGE AND SUPPORT: FINDINGS ON SELF, ORGANIZATION, AND COMMUNITY	 125

The Importance of the Issue of Refugee Student Integration	126
Mr. Hidalgo and the Concept of Cultural Inclusion	128
Informing the Community about Refugee Resettlement	130
Ms. Stijkstaad and Aspects of Shared Knowledge	132
Intercultural Practices and Student Integration.....	136
The Role of Language Access in Family and Student Involvement	139
The Crucial Role of Teachers	140
Strengthening Class Community through Intercultural Practices	143
Developing Practices to Support Student Integration	145
Incorporating Cultural Experiences in the School Community	149
Cultural Wealth in Classroom Communities	149
Classroom Presentations as Cultural Exchange.....	154
Intercultural Exchange in School Communities	161
Determining and Monitoring Effective Programs	163
The Need for Sustained Evaluation	164
The Utility of Immediate Feedback	166
Types of Program Evaluation at ISK.....	168
The Characteristics of Leaders Who Support Refugee Students	174
School Staff and Inclusive Campus Culture	175
Community Partners View Language Access as Essential.....	176
Teachers Mentoring Students	179
Program Innovation as a Process	181
Self-Awareness and Reflection are Critical for School Improvement	183
 VI. THEMES THAT DEVELOPED FROM THE RESEARCH PROCESS.....	185
Classroom Communities as Sites of Shared Knowledge.....	185
A Classroom Presentation on Dutch Secondary Schools	187
The Push towards the 2/3 DY Cohort.....	191
VMBO, HAVO, or VWO: Is the Choice up to You?	193
Overcoming Obstacles to Succeed: Student Stories	196
Student Interactions within the Classroom Community	196
Ahna: A Student Determined to Succeed	200
Eleni: A Voice of Anguish, a Voice of Encouragement.....	202
Practitioner as Advocate, Researcher as Respondent	208
Insights from a Practitioner: Working with Ibrahim.....	209
What are You Doing Here, Meneer?	212
Developing Shared Ecologies of Knowing through a Plática.....	213

Research Positionality: My Efforts as a Research Partner.....	217
Transitions as Part of the Ethnographic Research Process	219
Shared Experiences and Collaboration for the ISK Parent Night	221
Practical Applications of the Conceptual Framework	226
Conclusion: Intercultural Experiences and Responsive Schools	229
 VII. INNOVATION AND CHANGE IN CONTEXT AND PROCESS	232
The Self and Recommendations for Change and Advocacy	233
Student Learners as Leaders	234
Teachers as Essential to the Knowledge Network.....	236
The Organization and Recommendations for Change and Advocacy	238
Campus Culture and Leadership Efforts.....	238
The Community and Recommendations for Change and Advocacy.....	240
Collective Community Decisions on the Role of Education	242
Looking Beyond Programs for the Integration of Refugee Students.....	243
Integration and a False Sense of Permanence.....	247
The Role of Research in Site-based Evaluation.....	248
Practitioner and Scholar: Research Crossing the Three Ecologies	249
Future Research Questions	253
 APPENDIX SECTION.....	256
REFERENCES	264

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. District Refugee Student Population by Grade	73
2. District Refugee Student Population by Socioeconomic Status	73
3. District Refugee Student Population by Gender	73
4. Vrede College Student Population by Home Country	76
5. Research Partners in the Multi-Sited Study	77
6. Individuals Served by Marigold Refugee Resettlement Program.....	111
7. Individuals Attending Marigold Educational Programs	112
8. Secondary School Diploma Programs in Dutch Schools.....	118

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Conceptual Framework for the Research Project	16
2. Visual Overview for the Multi-Sited Ethnography.....	70
3. Map of Central Texas.....	72
4. Map of The Netherlands	75
5. Photograph from the presentation on Dutch secondary schools.....	117
6. Diagram of the Dutch secondary school system.....	118
7. Students working in table groups in an ISK class.....	137
8. The <i>Zebra</i> textbook used by students in the ISK program	143
9. The cover of the <i>Welkom op School</i> textbook	162
10. A page from the <i>Welkom op School</i> textbook.....	162

ABSTRACT

This study examined how educational leaders enact policies and practices to support the integration of refugee students. During periods of resettlement, refugee students faced systemic acculturation in schools as they adjust to social and cultural norms. Campus leaders established specific programs in collaboration with community partners to integrate refugee students into school communities. The research questions for this project were related to how school leaders promote sustained integration of refugee students. This research investigated innovative, campus-based programs with an intercultural approach to support refugee students. The study incorporated a multi-sited ethnography to develop a relational study of how school leaders support refugee integration. Campus leaders supported the integration of refugee students through equitable, culturally responsive practices. The inclusion of intercultural aspects in school-based programs promoted the integration of refugee students in both the school and greater community. The results of this research have implications in both school leadership and community development.

Keywords: refugee integration, intercultural education, school improvement, school leadership, qualitative methods, multi-sited ethnography

I. EDUCATION AND REFUGEE INTEGRATION

Perspiration dripped off my brow, onto my glasses, and then smack-dab onto my notes. I stood with a sudden feeling of dread in front of 150 people in a large chapel on the west side of Athens. It was my first graduating class of refugee students completing an English language program. The children had arrived in Greece to escape armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the mid-1990s. Sister Stavra (all names in this research are pseudonyms in order to protect the privacy of both research partners and individuals mentioned in this study) had asked me to say a few words to commemorate the event.

The audience waited impatiently, a couple of people cast a curious expression, and then the teenagers, who sat in a small group, caught my eye. As the few words I had jotted down became illegible, my mind raced for some phrase to celebrate the fourteen students who had finished the course. All of a sudden, the words of Luka, a student graduating that night, came to me in a flash: “When we study together, I learn about us and where we are going.”

This experience in Greece encouraged my work as an educator to support refugee students in the process resettlement and integration into new school communities. In my roles as a teacher, school counselor, and campus administrator, I have endeavored to support change that results in sustainable improvement and to increase educational opportunities for students.

As a school practitioner, I entered the field of educational research to combine the insights, stories, and observations that I gathered as an educator with the pursuit of critical inquiry in the field of school improvement. The following narrative inspired the

development of this dissertation project, as I sought to conceive a study that could explore the issue of the integration of refugee students and contribute to the research base on school improvement.

What Does Nareen See? What Does Nareen Hear? What Does Nareen Feel?

This research study begins with a story, one that inspired this specific research project. As an educator, I had worked in schools that provided programs for recently arrived refugee students in both primary and secondary schools. Also, I had spent time with both American and European organizations offering support services for refugees. Yet, one situation with a student and her family provided me with an insight into the type of obstacles that refugee students face as they integrate into a new school and, thus, a new society.

Nareen, a four-year-old student in early primary education, changed my perspective on how schools support refugee students within the context of the campus community. Within this entire research study, I use pseudonyms for all people and research participants to protect individuals' identities, and fictional names are employed for all locations, so that the specific choice of research sites remains unidentifiable. I was working as a school counselor at an elementary school in Eastdale, a city in Central Texas. One of my duties was to provide guidance lessons to the different classrooms. For some reason, I felt challenged when presenting to Nareen and her classmates in Ms. Landon's class; the room itself was very well organized, somewhat partitioned with different centers and such for the students to be active throughout the day. Overall, the class was exciting, rambunctious, and full of energy. The teacher monitored and kept watch over the vibrant group of 12 to 13 children, while interjecting ever so often to work

on numerical fluency or letter sounds. Storytime was a highlight for many of these students, and that is where my weekly presentations fit in. In many cases, guidance lessons are stories of either situations at home or school that provide an idea of how the students can use interpersonal skills to face a challenging situation.

While older students might be able to entertain a presentation of 15 to 20 minutes, younger children, especially in Pre-K, offer a much smaller window of opportunity. I often told a story through a picture book and then spoke to students about how the story applies to daily life. In most cases, the students always had something to say, possibly not on topic, yet an expression of their personality. One student might say, “I like the picture.” To that comment, another student would discuss their favorite color, and then another student would mention something about buttercrisp cookies or snowflakes. Of course, some students, like Nareen, would not engage verbally with the story and, at times, not even follow along with the colorful pages of the picture book. What is it that students like Nareen see and hear, as a teacher tells a story or recounts a lesson? From the teacher’s perspective, the student had difficulty in acclimating to the classroom dynamic, and the teacher sought help in finding support for Nareen.

As part of a campus support team, I regularly met with teachers like Ms. Landon and staff, such as campus social workers, parent support specialists, and school administrators, to discuss student concerns, which could be academic, behavioral, or related to health or family issues. At one of these meetings, I remember that Ms. Landon discussed Nareen’s behavior in the classroom. According to the teacher, Nareen would not interact with other students and appear distraught; other times, she would act aggressively towards her peers, sometimes pushing or hitting them with no apparent

reason. While the teacher hoped for an immediate remedy to behavior concerns, a school social worker and I cautioned the movement towards any impetuous decisions. In fact, the social worker put forward that same question: “What does Nareen see and what does she hear in the classroom? What is the classroom environment like for her?” After all, the student had only recently arrived in the U.S., and her family and she came from a part of Iraq still was engulfed in hostility and strife. Nareen’s quotidian reality, one etched with shrapnel and nuanced with explosions, was unlike that of a typical student of an Eastdale elementary school. In this respect, the teachers and school leaders had to understand from where Nareen had come in order to find ways to help her. School leaders, the teacher, and the parents devised a plan to support Nareen so that she could become more familiar with the school routine and environment.

Who Manages Nareen’s Educational World?

Overall, the first year that Nareen spent in school was a difficult transition. Yet, the first meeting between school staff and her parents proved very useful in providing support for time in school. As we introduced ourselves that first morning together, we expressed observations about Nareen in terms of the way she interacted with peers in class as well as in other parts of the school, such as the school cafeteria, the playground, and the hallways. Briefly, the student had a tendency to wander away from the line of students during periods of transition, while often at lunch she refused to sit at the cafeteria table with her peers. The teacher provided many of these opinions, while the school administrator emphasized the need for students at a young age to follow both classroom and campus-wide expectations for behavior. From my perspective, no one in the group spoke to the needs of Nareen and the aspects of her educational world.

For the interests of Nareen to be discussed and considered, the conversation needed more than the teacher's input. As a group, we needed to critically evaluate what we were doing to support Nareen in this new educational environment and, concurrently, what we were not doing to manage her educational world. After the administrator had discussed the hallway and cafeteria expectations for students, we asked the parents of Nareen about their opinion of the situation at school. As Nareen's father spoke about his child and the amount of trauma she had already endured at a young age, I wondered what the school had done to frame the concept of schooling in a way that Nareen could easily adjust to a new educational environment. Nareen's parents described how she became very agitated by loud, sudden noises, which were common when she was an infant in Iraq. Her mother mentioned how Nareen would cringe at these sounds and attempt to cover her ears to keep any piercing sound at bay.

The group of educators sat around the table with Nareen's parents and we listed all the possible sounds that could trigger Nareen to feel uncomfortable in school: tardy bells; morning announcements over a loudspeaker; the din of voices and shouting in a school cafeteria; the shrill of a whistle, when the teacher calls students to attention on the playground; the roar of laughter during story time on the classroom carpet; and countless other occasions when students are a bit louder than average. The conversations of that day demonstrated how shared ecologies of knowledge and experience benefited both the classroom and school community. I witnessed Nareen's parents become advocates, as they partnered with teachers and educators to shape the educational experience for their daughter, so that the school community could become more responsive to the needs of Nareen. Yet, a dramatic change happened in the way Ms. Landon approached students

new to her classroom, because she began taking inventory of background, previous experience, and possible delicate areas of friction or discomfort that new students bring with them into the classroom. In fact, this set of questions eased the transition of new students into the classroom, because it gave the teacher an opportunity to familiarize herself more thoroughly with the student through the input and interaction with the child's parents.

As I encountered refugee students like Nareen on school campuses, I noticed that specific practices and policies seldom had a correlation to this concept of integration. I began asking school leaders, support staff, and program coordinators of local refugee organizations questions about the ways in which they support students and family members during this process of integration. Through these interviews, observations, and conversations, I discovered that throughout Eastdale, school leaders cooperated with local organizations to support refugee students as they integrate into the campus communities.

Background

The purpose of this study is to investigate how school leaders develop and monitor policies and practices for the integration of refugee students. Specifically, this study examines the way in which school programs, at times with the support of community programs, support refugee students as they integrate into the public school environment. This research project is an investigation of the policies and practices for supporting refugee students in public schools. As refugee families arrive in a host country through resettlement, education represents a gateway to a new life (Bal & Arzubiaga, 2014). Yet, the families face a difficult process of adjustment during resettlement, and school leaders need to collaborate with local organizations to assist

refugees with the transition to a new environment (Norberg, 2017). This study focuses on how school and community leaders develop policies and practices to support refugee integration.

Refugee families arrive in a new country through the process of resettlement, and school enrollment represents one of the first priorities in this extensive process. As families seek stability in the resettlement process, schools constitute a place where refugee children integrate into the local community (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; UNHCR, 2012). Youth and adolescents, some with formal education and others with little or no schooling, enter public school and face the challenge of acclimating to the school environment (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015; UNHCR, 2012; UNHCR, 2018). Refugee parents and children attempt to navigate the processes of schooling, including homework, grading, attendance, and the school cafeteria, yet the public school setting often fails to resemble previous academic experiences in the students' home countries (McBrien, 2005; Norberg, 2017).

School leadership strives to provide a safe educational environment for all students (Fullan, 2016; Huber, 2004); however, some students often become marginalized within the school context. Campus leaders attempt to mitigate these social or cultural stressors through programs to integrate these students into the campus community (Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013; Simich, Beiser, Stewart, & Mwakarimba, 2005). Refugee students face numerous complex factors as they attempt to integrate into the school culture. Current institutional structures in public schools encourage newly arrived refugee students to assimilate in order to be successful in terms of academic

achievement and performance within the context of schools as locations for advancement and professionalization from a social perspective.

Acculturation Trends

Berry (1997) opined that the concept of acculturation occurs during the interactions that a person raised in a different sociocultural environment has within a new, unfamiliar cultural reality. Through his acculturation framework, Berry (1997) hypothesized that mitigating factors, such as pressures from the origin, or heritage, community, predominant influences of the host society, and the existence of social support mechanisms, drive the processes by which newcomers integrate and acculturate effectively within the new environment. In this study, I utilize the term heritage as a descriptor for refugee students' country of origin or cultural identity, as did Creese, Bhatt, Bhojani, and Martin (2006) and Salo and Birman (2015).

The approach to acculturation developed by Berry (1997) concludes that the individual either gains needed social skills to function effectively or succumbs to relentless pressure of the new sociocultural environment. In all, the model proposed by Berry (1997) aligns with the multicultural approach of one dominant society with a multitude of disparate, enriching ethnic influences (Kymlicka, 2015; Modood & Meer, 2012; Taylor, 2012); the newcomer remains a person who faces necessary change, as the process of integration requires her or him to become familiar and adaptable to the sociocultural realities of the host country.

Within schools, aspects of acculturation reflect trends that occur on the greater social scale. Most programs for refugees integrate themes of acculturation, which McBrien (2005) defined as “the change in an individual or a culturally similar group that

results from contact with a different culture” (p. 330). During resettlement, the newcomer faces conflicting motivations to conform to the host society as well as preserve the culture of origin (Salo & Birman, 2015). While the majority of interactions occur within the host society, newcomers, such as refugee students, negotiate these conflicting positions within both the broader host country (the context of school or work) and the heritage culture (the context of home or an ethnic enclave within the host country) (Birman & Simon, 2014). As refugee students adjust to life, the school represents a place of the contrasting dynamics of integration and differentiation. In this way, school leaders work to construct a campus culture that involves and represents the multiple perspectives and ontologies of all its members.

School Leaders and Change

Campus leaders face the challenge of creating a school culture that integrates refugee students and grants them equitable educational opportunities (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; UNHCR, 2012). Refugee resettlement predominantly occurs in urban areas, and school leaders work to reconfigure practices in urban education to be more inclusive (Bal & Arzubiaga, 2014). The arrival of refugees to urban areas through resettlement affects policies and practices in the school settings (Bal & Arzubiaga, 2014). Campus leaders support programs for integrating refugee students into the campus culture and community, as well as preparing them for the complexities of education in the host country (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; UNHCR, 2012).

As a focus of this research, students from refugee communities establish cultural wealth through connections with fellow students and family members of the heritage country. As new citizens of the host country, refugee students depend on these aspects of

cultural wealth, as they serve as a resource for members of specific ethnic or cultural group within a larger, culturally diverse society. This study incorporates the work of Yosso (2005) in its focus on the impact of cultural wealth in social environments, such as schools and campus communities. As schools attempt to integrate students into the campus culture, an important question that arises in this study: How can school leaders understand the cultural wealth of newcomer students as a valued asset to the greater school community? Schools are a hallowed ground, places where dynamic learning and educational exchange occur on a daily basis, and students develop a more comprehensive understanding of the world through sociocultural interactions (Biesta 2013; Rancière, 1991). This development, in turn, prepares students to be more active in their intellectual and social growth within the context of schooling (Guajardo, Guajardo, Janson, & Militello, 2016; Valenzuela, 1999). Biesta (2013) described schooling as an experience permeating classroom instruction that results in the self-actualization of the student, who benefits from an educative process steeped in dialogical learning. Schools represent the domain where students arrive at these moments of curiosity and discovery for their intellectual growth (Biesta, 2013). This study incorporates Biesta's (2013) notion of individual and intellectual development through discussion, discourse, and equitable exchanges grounded in school environments. For this project, this type of education builds community through school-based initiatives to understand the social and cultural wealth of all students and stakeholders. However, a key insight which Biesta (2013) offers contains the essence of this learning dynamic: to learn from someone entails a much different experience than to be taught by someone.

Educational leaders, who aim to create an inclusive and diverse school community, integrate programs that respect and celebrate aspects of students' cultural wealth through instruction, campus culture, and partnerships with local organizations (Bajaj & Bartlett, 2017; Norberg, 2017; Read, Aldridge, Ala'i, Fraser, & Fozdar, 2015). Through a more inclusive school community, campus leaders promote a diverse culture that fosters intercultural respect (Askins, 2016; Catarci, Gomes, & Siqueira, 2017; Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014). This research project draws on the assertion that that interculturalism is a similar yet more developed form of multiculturalism, one in which cultural and ethnic groups attain aspects of autonomy (Modood & Meer, 2012). For campus cultures, school leaders implement multicultural programs to support diversity; the inclusion of intercultural aspects promotes the exchange of cultural knowledge, experience, or influences (i.e., cultural wealth) (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Yosso, 2005), among members of a community or social group (Moskal & North, 2017; Norberg, 2017).

Through these perspectives, programs that seek to integrate refugee students by promoting diversity were of great interest in this study. Programs as such are considered either multicultural or intercultural; initiatives are referred to as multicultural when they celebrate and promote the concept of diversity among all cultural groups within a particular society (Modood & Meer, 2012; Tanaka, 2007), while intercultural programs tend to promote equitable exchange of cultural wealth among different groups within a population (Askins, 2016; Díaz, 2013; Moskal & North, 2017). This study analyzed how refugee students become part of school communities through both programs supported by

school and community leaders. In this research, I developed a relational study of how school leaders support refugee integration.

Statement of the Problem

Forced displacement of people has become a concern across the globe due to military activity, political conflict, and the escape of persecution (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Many refugee families resettle in Europe or the U.S., where school environments have traditionally supported structures for at-risk students. Yet, the issues affecting the lives of refugee students include factors that extend beyond economic and social concerns. For example, refugee students can often have difficulty in adjusting to sociocultural systems of new environments, as they often have varying levels of previous educational experience and proficiency in the language of the host country. Further, refugee students often experience discrimination with the school or community, as educators, school staff, and students lack cultural competency. Also, among the challenges for refugee students are delays in family members finding employment and the experience of trauma and stress associated with the processes of adjustment and acculturation (Capps et al., 2015; Kornfeld, 2012; Lazarevic, Wiley, & Pleck, 2012; McBrien, 2005; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012).

Both schools and community organizations constantly face the challenge of supporting refugee students and their families who carry experiences of exile and forced migration throughout the resettlement process (Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012; Waite, 2016). Even though programs exist to familiarize newcomers with the school environment, little attention is directed to the social and cultural experiences which refugee students bring to the classroom community. To meet the needs of these

students, school leaders establish policies so that campus communities welcome refugee students. Schools represent a system that provides assistance to refugee family members (Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011), and school leadership in partnerships with local organizations attempt to devise programs that bridge social and cultural differences (Capps et al., 2015; Naidoo, 2012).

This research explored how school programs promote an intercultural dynamic across a campus and refugee student integration. Through initiatives incorporating intercultural awareness across a campus, school leaders develop an organization that sustains diversity and inclusion through intercultural exchanges, dialogue, and community building (Read et al., 2015). Such initiatives sponsor dialogue among campus community members and create a platform for authentic, sustained cultural exchanges. School-based activities include leadership efforts to develop students' intercultural competence within teachers' instruction and use curricular practices that reflect the students' language and sociocultural experience (Martínez-Usarralde, Yanes-Cabrera, & Llevot-Calvet, 2016). The present study examined policies in place to facilitate effective programs established by school and community leaders to integrate refugee students into the school culture. This research considered change efforts by school and community leadership through a multi-sited ethnographic study of refugee student integration.

Viewpoints and Positionality of the Researcher

This research project evolved from my approach to teaching and public education. The rationale for this study stems from the duty of the community and the state to provide certain services to its people, one of which includes providing primary and secondary education to every child. As a collective doctrine shared by the majority of nations across

the globe, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) states in Article 26 that every individual has the right to education. In Texas, the case *Plyler v. Doe* also guarantees that each child has the opportunity to attend school and receive an education (Plyler v. Doe, 1982). As a cornerstone to my ontology, the opportunity for schooling remains an inherent right for all individuals, no matter the child's gender, race, ethnic origin, or creed.

The topic of this research project relates to this concept of equitable forms of schooling to programs for refugee students who face alternating periods of displacement, adjustment, and acculturation within the process of school integration (Capps et al., 2015; Kornfeld, 2012; Lazarevic, et al., 2012; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012). In my approach to this investigation, I participated in the study as a school leader who has worked with refugee students and families as they adjusted to schooling and public education in a new country. Yet, this positionality as an experienced educator affected the research process (Chavez, 2008). I acknowledge the fact that I have never experienced displacement or forced migration, so my perception originates from the perspective of a school leader determined to enact positive change in schools. I attended both public and private schools, with experience as a student and educator in the U.S. and other parts of the world. To say the least, my experience differs greatly from a refugee child integrating into a school in Central Texas or Western Europe; thus, I had to consistently reflect on the research process and my positionality as both a researcher and participant in efforts to support refugee students and their families (Chavez, 2008).

In this study, I analyzed how school and community leaders develop, implement, and monitor support programs for refugee students. In my work as a school practitioner, I

have worked closely with teachers, school staff, and community members who support refugee students as they transition to public schools during resettlement. For this reason, I designed this research project to examine the decisions, efforts, and actions by school and community leaders who devise and monitor programs for refugee students.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides a means to both view and develop a study; it also provides a reasoning as to the importance of a particular research topic (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017; Roberts, 2010). The framework used for this study synthesizes two main theoretical approaches, critical theory and ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016), to provide a lens for investigating efforts by campus and community leaders to support refugee students, as well as the process of student integration.

Using a conceptual framework of critical theory allowed me to analyze the transformative potential of community involvement and culturally responsive programs to integrate students (Freire, Freire, & Oliviera, 2014). Critical theory provided the capacity to analyze social and political realities through the analysis of a particular subject (Budd, 2008; Long, 2017). Through critical analysis, the subject, its origin, and the sociocultural relationships are redefined through results of the inquiry, thus providing a transformative nature to the study. From a critical perspective, this framework considered elements of oppression, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and academic experience inherent in school cultures (Spivak, 1988) for marginalized and displaced youth. This perspective also informed the transnational element of the integration of refugee students into school communities; as refugee students adjust to new places and social interactions, their heritage country continues to define their resettlement and

development. Please see Figure 1 for a visual overview of the conceptual framework that guides this research.

The conceptual framework of this study also drew from work that places an emphasis on the inclusion of cultural wealth of refugee students in the school community, as these transnational students arrive in a new school community with social knowledge and cultural experiences from a diverse context (Yosso, 2005). Community and school leaders valuing students' cultural wealth operated through a paradigm of cultural exchange that promotes diversity. Yosso's (2005) concept of collective cultural wealth informed my conception of how school leaders support and sustain these systems to integrate refugee students into campus communities. This perspective considered the ecology of influences and sociocultural intersections involved in the analysis of policies and practices to support integration of these displaced students.

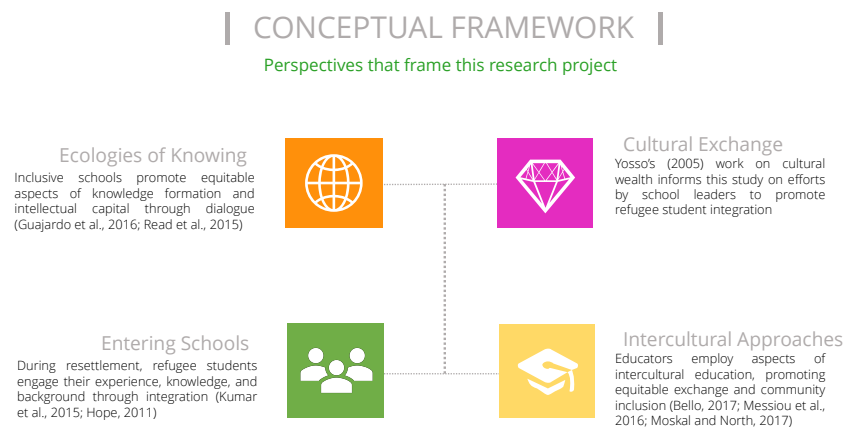


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for the Research Project.

The conceptual framework used for this study combined strands of critical theory with the concept of ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016) to discover how schools integrate displaced students through intentional, culturally responsive practices at both the classroom and community level. Guajardo et al. (2016) ascertain that inclusive forms of dialogue and cultural exchange promote inclusion and an inclusive dialectic of both personal and community agency. As part of a school improvement study, this investigation used a lens that incorporates aspects of organizational change and intercultural practices as tangible elements that support student integration. At the foundation of this framework are the tenets of inclusion, participatory learning, and community development. When school leaders and stakeholders initiate programs promoting inclusion and diversity, school-based systems valuing cultural experiences of students foster a more diverse, intercultural campus community (Ishimaru & Galloway, 2014). This analysis placed an emphasis on the inclusion of cultural and social experience of displaced students in the local school community. For this framework, educational leaders benefit from operating through a paradigm of a cultural community that integrates the cultural identities of all its members, including refugee and displaced students, with those of the entire school community.

Purpose of the Study

This research project examines how school leaders develop and monitor policies and practices for the integration of refugee students into school communities. Specifically, this study investigates the way in which campuses and districts support refugee students in partnership with community organizations (the Definition of Terms in Appendix A provides explanations of terms specific to this research study).

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide this study:

- Why are the issues of programs and policies for refugee integration important for school leadership and stakeholders?
- What are the most effective practices that school and community leaders employ to promote an intercultural approach to education that encourages dialogue and mutual respect among all stakeholders?
- When do school leaders incorporate cultural experiences of refugee students into campus-based practices?
- How do school and community leaders define and measure program effectiveness?
- What are the skills, dispositions, and worldviews of effective school and community leaders?

To address these research questions, the study analyzes the relationship between improvement efforts and aspects of cultural inclusion in relation to integration of refugee students across campuses and communities. The study considers effective programs as those promoting diversity, interaction, and cultural inclusiveness. Through methods of ethnographic research, I report on the presence of programs fostering diversity, interaction, and cultural inclusiveness using narrative documentation as well as summarization of observations and findings. Through the implementation of these aspects in campus programs, a leadership team provides more opportunities for refugee students to participate in the school community (Morrice, 2013). Since schools represent the community in which they operate, this study conceives refugee programs as a

collaborative effort of utilizing school and community resources to better integrate refugee students into the campus community.

Themes related to the research questions include:

- *Cultural inclusion makes community*: There is a significant effect on student integration from intercultural initiatives that aim to educate students and staff of the host school as well as the refugee students.
- *Intercultural programs create long-lasting community*: There is significant effect of intercultural programs on refugee students staying enrolled at a particular campus or district.
- *Leaders' perceptions affect programs*: The perceptions of school and community leaders on support programs significantly mediates the effect of cultural integration for refugee students at the specific campuses.
- *Support programs benefit both refugee students and the campus community*: The occurrence of orientation programs through intercultural dynamics significantly benefits the enrollment and attendance of refugees and other newcomers at the school (Adalbjarnardottir & Runarsdottir, 2006; Bello, 2017; Fullan, 2016; Greenholtz, 2000; Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013).

The findings from this study inform research for both school and community programs for refugee students in relation to the development of campus cultures with diverse populations. The results of this ethnographic research also apply to locations supporting orientation of students and families across different geographical settings, including sites both in the U.S. and other parts of the world. With the increase of refugee

students in schools, educational leaders struggle with the challenge of building school community for people who have experienced trauma and have ethnic and cultural backgrounds with which many school leaders have little previous knowledge.

Study Design

This research study employs a multi-sited ethnographic approach to examine the experience of school and community leaders. A multi-sited ethnography allows the researcher to develop a fluid, organic view of a subject by situating the study in different locations (Marcus, 1995; Pierides, 2010). As part of the multi-sited study, I conducted research at schools and partnering organizations in the region of Eastdale, in Central Texas, and Meyland, a city in South Holland, Netherlands.

This study analyzes qualitative data sources of semi-structured interviews, observations, and the use of fieldnotes during ethnographic work. Additional resources consist of archival research specific to refugee programs and the use of quantitative data in the form of descriptive statistics (i.e., school enrollment and student demographics). The use of multiple methods in data collection offers more vantage points than the use of one particular method, and it allows for the observation of various aspects of that which is studied (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013).

This research takes a critical approach to substantiate inquiry into the concept of cultural spaces as locations of tacit acculturation. Through qualitative research methods, this study incorporates the attitudes, insights, and experience of educators, students, and other stakeholders as part of the discussion on inclusive cultural practices in schools (Shaw & DeForge, 2014). With the multi-sited ethnographic approach, the research

develops an analysis of the perceptions, occurrences, and beliefs used to formulate, oversee, and evaluate specific programs related to integration of refugee students.

As an ethnographic study allows the researcher to develop a broad understanding of a sociocultural setting (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009), I immersed myself in Central Texas and South Holland to develop a deeper understanding of conversations, decisions, and processes that led to the development of programs and policies to support refugee students. Likewise, the study used this data to critically inquire into the effect of policies and practices developed to support students experiencing displacement and resettlement. The findings obtained from this research provide researchers and practitioners with information to affect change in both practice and policy for supporting the integration of newcomer and recently arrived students.

Delimitations to the Study

I have narrowed the scope of this study so that it is a feasible project. Roberts (2010) defined delimitations as the manner in which the researcher establishes the specific scope of a study. As this investigation examines efforts to enact programs and policies to support refugee integration, parameters exist within the boundaries of this ethnographic research.

This study was conducted in the timeframe of March 2017 to January 2019. An extensive period of time was needed to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Isaac & Michael, 1995), both of which are discussed at length in the section that follows. Since this research project used a multi-sited ethnography, extended periods of time are recommended to conduct worthwhile fieldwork (Marcus, 1995; Pierides, 2010). In addition, another delimitation existed in the

inclusion of programs and policies specifically designed for refugee students in public high schools. For this project, I examined efforts by schools and community partners to support refugee students entering secondary school (in most cases ninth or tenth grade). This focus acted as a further delimitation of the project, since I chose not to include early education, primary school, or middle school (junior high) initiatives in my research.

Two distinct regions represent the location of the study: schools and community organizations in particular urban areas in Central Texas and the Netherlands. Through the use of a multi-sited ethnography analysis, this study investigated trends across different locations that describe how school-based programs provide forms of support. The Dutch experience was significant for this study because the country has a history of practices that encourage integration of refugees through forms of youth and adult education (Long, 2015).

In terms of the delimitations regarding the sample of this study, I chose to interact with school and community leaders actively supporting refugee students through daily interactions and instruction. The criteria for including partners in this research related to their specific experience in supporting and monitoring refugee integration. School leaders who participated in the study included administrators, counselors, teachers, and district staff who devise, implement, and monitor programs specifically supporting refugee integration. Community leaders who participated in this research included program managers and staff of refugee resettlement agencies, as well as other organizations providing specialized support to refugees. I viewed these participants as more than respondents or informants, because they influenced and were concerned about the direction of the study through repeated engagement and a tacit commitment to the aims of

the research study. These aspects of the time, place, and particular research partners involved at the different sites that comprise this multi-sited investigation represented the unique scope of this study.

Organization of the Study

Chapter Two presents a review of literature related to the intersection of refugee resettlement and education programs to support these students in terms of the research questions advanced in this study. The literature review examines policies for refugee resettlement as well as the concepts of integration and acculturation within the context of school in the host country. Additionally, the review considers the transference of social capital through structures of education and modalities of cultural responsiveness.

Chapter Three describes the methodology employed to address the research questions and investigate both policies and practices through the multi-sited ethnography. The findings of this study are presented across three chapters. Chapter Four presents the findings in terms of the organizations and sites of the study. Chapter Five presents the findings by answering the five research questions of this study. Chapter Six provides themes, stories, and narratives derived from the data analysis. Chapter Seven offers recommendations based on the analysis provided in Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six and advances areas for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Movement of displaced people has increased dramatically over the last decade, as millions of refugees encounter forced migration caused by persecution and the escalation of armed and political conflict across the world (Arsenijević et al., 2017; Norberg, 2017; Tsavdaroglou, 2018; UNHCR, 2018). In addition, resettlement agencies and local organizations operate to provide basic services, such as housing and schooling, to the refugee population. Schools as receiving institutions have faced challenges in integrating refugee students (Taylor & Sidhu, 2012; Waite, 2016; Waters & LeBlanc, 2005). Incidents of displacement, flight, and resettlement reflect how war, political upheaval, and ethnic strife often force people to flee their home country and seek safety in another location. Consequently, refugee families seek resettlement after moving across countless borders, cultures, and nations.

Education represents an important aspect of support in programs for resettlement of refugee families (Collet, 2010; Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010; Matthews, 2008). Education also offers refugees and their family members a sense of stability (UNHCR, 2012). This literature review provides the foundation for my study focused on education programs for refugee students and efforts by school leadership to enact policies and practices fostering the inclusion of these students in the school community.

First, this literature review examines global policies on refugees and efforts to provide specialized educational programs. The second aspect of this discussion considers the refugee experience as a transnational experience across borders, one of individuals experiencing a transformation of cultural wealth through displacement and resettlement. The third part presents the influence of school leadership on refugee programs in school

communities, with special attention on the promotion of diversity and intercultural exchange to provide more equitable interaction. This chapter then offers a brief critique of the literature and a conclusion of the efforts of school leadership to support refugee students.

Refugees and International Policy Perspectives

This section provides information on refugees, defined as people who must flee their homeland and seek protection from warfare, political strife, or personal endangerment (OECD, 2015; UNHCR, 2012; UNHCR, 2018). The discussion begins with information from the perspective of United Nations (UN) agencies and then reviews the policies for refugee resettlement and education programs originating in host countries.

U.N. Policy on Refugees

Recently, many people throughout the world have been forced to seek temporary shelter in neighboring countries. However, in many cases this temporary settlement in a host country becomes a permanent exile. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) calculates that 65.6 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide. Of this amount, 22.5 million people are identified as refugees, while only 189,000 individuals are granted resettlement annually (UNHCR, 2018). Many refugee families are forced to stay in host countries or migrate to a safer place because of the situation in the home country. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) describes the conditions in a home country as so dangerous or difficult that citizens have to travel to another country to have protection from their origin country or government (2015). In collaborating with neighboring countries that receive refugees, the UNHCR aids partner states to provide temporary housing, health care, and education.

People classified as refugees are displaced on average for 17 years (OECD, 2015). Resettlement programs in the host countries promote economic independence and social integration. Some support is provided to refugee families, yet the organizations that work with these families encourage them to find work as soon as possible (Singer & Wilson, 2006). After a large influx of refugees in the 1980s, certain receiving nations set quotas on how many refugees they admit for resettlement (Vernez, 1991). However, once refugee resettlement occurs, the UNHCR establishes education programs in both temporary and long-term refugee campus and settlement areas.

UNHCR Education Policy

The UNHCR develops a global strategy to provide refugee children and young adults educational opportunities. According to the 2012-2016 Education Strategy (UNHCR, 2012), schooling represents a means for protection against abuse, recruitment, and exploitation for children and young adults. In order to develop education programs, international organizations collaborate with the national systems of education. The strategy of the UNHCR depends on the cooperation of state department agencies with local authorities to carry out specific programs at a network of sites (UNHCR, 2012). The UNHCR recognizes that educational programs perform better when they exist in safe environments and allow for students to freely participate (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). This process requires much coordination among different entities, which can often lead to delays in program services.

Even though necessary to provide education to refugees and displaced people, there is a struggle to find funds to pay for these programs. In terms of education funding, only 2% of humanitarian aid goes toward schooling programs and services (OECD,

2015). In the 1980s, donor nations required the UNHCR to make more economical decisions when providing relief work for refugees across the world (Moore, 1988). In the transition from displacement to resettlement, refugee students experience varied forms of education, dependent upon the institutional structure of the host nation (Crisp, Talbot, & Cipollone, 2001; Ryu & Tuvilla, 2018). This variation influences the way in which refugees arrive in the country of resettlement and integrate with the host community.

Overall, the UNHCR develops and implements policies for its refugee programs, while host countries determine which policies and programs to enact for the resettlement process. The next section of the literature review explores the process by which refugee students arrive in a host country during resettlement and enter the campus culture of a local school. This experience often involves a transnational movement across multiple nations and informs the sociocultural experience of students encountering displacement.

Refugee Students: Journey and Identity

This section explores refugee youth and adolescents as transnational students, and also examines schools as places for equitable access to education within a social context. The last topic in this section looks at the movement of cultural capital across borders, and the influences of cultural wealth and sociocultural experience on the refugee student's educational trajectory.

Transnational Experiences of Refugee Students

The study of the transnational quality of education remains extensive, and this literature review examines how the transnational student, specifically the refugee student, navigates the space within the public education classroom. The literature considers the transnational student as an individual living between cultures and societies, traveling

from one country to another yet remaining connected to the cultural and social realities of both locations. In her analysis of transnationalism, Sánchez (2004) described how migrants generated links to home countries through familial, cultural, or social connections while establishing a life in another country; in this way, the transnational individual exists within a duality of place through simultaneous connections to both the heritage and new country. Within this project on refugee integration in schools, the concept of refugees as transnational students remains viable for the discussion of refugees as displaced individuals.

As a transnational individual in the school setting, the refugee student balances a life between two worlds. The student preserves cultural and ethnic identity through a connection to the heritage country, yet simultaneously acclimates to the sociocultural norms of the host country (Sánchez, 2007; Sánchez & Kasun, 2012). With refugee students, a different type of transnational experience develops, as the aspects of exile and exclusion resemble a hidden transnationality (Sánchez, 2004) since the heritage country represents a place of no return. For this study, the refugee experience represents a fractured transnationality, as the intent to return to the home country exists, yet in actuality, a return would be too difficult (Esses, Hamilton, & Gaucher, 2017).

Koser (2007) examined the strenuous relationship between refugees and the state, both viewed through the lens of transnationalism; although this analysis considers the nature of immigration policies for asylum seekers and refugees, in general, transnational approaches to policy decisions provide little benefit in terms of the refugee population. For Koser (2007), the spaces for inclusion into the community are limited by the abundance of people choosing economic or forced migration, while the refugee

population, with few resources and no options to return to a home country, remain dependent on policies negotiated by the UNHCR and state governments.

Often, refugee families aim to return to their home country, yet prolonged conflict prohibit them from permanently relocating to their heritage nation (Fazel et al., 2012; UNHCR 2012). Many families resettle in host countries and initiate contact with people of their heritage country; yet, the connection to the heritage country resembles the duality of attachment to different locations, as the individual acclimates to the host country while still connected to the country of origin. In this way, the transnational journey affects individuals as they develop and integrate into the new country. Sánchez and Kasun (2012) described this intentional movement as dynamic; the individual incorporates aspects of self from the home country while integrating into new systems and places across frontiers. The application of transnational theory aligns more closely with aspects of migration studies, especially those involving nations with contiguous borders (Tsianos & Karakayali, 2010; Waldinger, 2017). Yet, the relationships that refugee students experience as newcomers in a host country involve multiple forms of adjustment and negotiation that transnational students encounter in a sociocultural context.

A concept that also provides a similarity between the transnational and refugee students exists within the support systems from fellow citizens of the heritage country. Ghorashi (2004) discussed how exchanges and interactions through a diaspora assist families and individuals to maintain cultural and social contact with their heritage countries. This concept grounds the refugee experience in the host country, as the transnational identity occupies a space that is removed from the territory, the physical presence of the home country (Ghorashi, 2004). Sánchez (2007) noted that transnational

students also maintain connection with their origin country, while navigating assimilation into sociocultural systems of their new home. Through the perspective of transnationalism, youth, adolescents, and adults adjust to sociocultural parameters of the host country. These students who cross borders to attend school, work, and develop a career also remain connected to their heritage country. Likewise, refugee youth and adolescents acclimate themselves to the new environment and acquire skills to participate in schools and other social settings. Yet, these transnational individuals actively participate in the development of their identity, as they adjust to the new environment.

Students, in general, develop social skills through community involvement within the context of campus environments (Guajardo et al., 2016; Warren, 2011). Through processes such as social acclimation, refugee students encounter similar situations as transnational students upon entering school environments in host countries. Yet, refugees as transnational students benefit from support mechanisms within the school environment, and Norberg (2017) highlighted the need for school leaders and other staff members to attend and provide specific training on issues of diversity, inclusion, and culturally responsive school communities. In addition, Koyama and Bakuza (2017) emphasized that the experience of transnational students demands that school leaders devise support programs that better meet their needs as well as those of family members. To meet the needs of refugees, Taylor and Sidhu (2012) posited that educational leaders who devised inclusive programs recognized how these students adjust and cope with cultural and social differences.

Overall, stakeholders and school leaders devise policies, practices, and support programs to assist refugee and transnational students as they transition to the school

setting. Yet, many of these policies and programs fail to meet the specific needs of these students. Sánchez (2014) described specific policies in terms of language instruction that represent overbearing, oppressive forms of English-only instruction. As legislators determine language of instruction and teaching materials for countless classrooms, the lack of culturally responsive instruction and curricula affects all students in the public-school setting (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016; Sánchez, 2014). This study is grounded in the understanding that each student brings experience and worth to the campus environment, and the transnational student, who lives between two countries and two cultures, possesses knowledge and capacities developed in the home country that can be utilized to integrate into the new country of residence. Triandafyllidou (2009) referred to this capacity as “transnational wealth,” a term related to the Bordieuan “social and cultural capital,” discussed further in the next section. This concept of transnational wealth positions the refugee student as a person of unique abilities to navigate sociocultural situations. School leaders knowledgeable of these forms of skills, capacities, and resources implement support strategies that facilitate student integration into the greater campus community that extends to involve all students and stakeholders.

Assistance and, more importantly, advocacy remain significant for parents and family members of refugee students. The role of families and parents plays a crucial role in the transition of the refugee student to a host country. Koyama and Bakuza (2017) concluded that refugee parents formed active relationships in school districts as they eschewed the stereotype that newcomers seldom participate in school activities because of their lack of experience in campus matters. Active support structures, either through schools or other social systems, for adults positively affects a sense of permanence in a

new country, as Bolzman, Kaeser, and Christe (2017) argued in their study of transnational adults in Europe. As the individual becomes more settled and familiar with specific place, Bolzman et al. (2017) suggested that the people who experience prolonged resettlement experienced a conflict of place in relation to the presence or absence of family and social networks.

A lesson that Walker (1996) introduced revolves around the idea of parent involvement with teachers. Walker (1996) described a situation at a school in which parents worked closely with campus leaders to improve the infrastructure and provide resources from their own funds. This idea grounded the concept of community development in action and participation of the parents and local stakeholders. Often, parent participation resembles a mere presence, (i.e., the fact that parents enrolled in PTA or attended school events). In the school described by Walker (1996), the importance of parent participation affected all areas of the organization, such as budget, resource management, and fundraising. This form of parent involvement allows the student to receive more support within the school environment through mechanisms of community development emanating from the structure of family.

The refugee experience represents a specific concept in studies of transnational movement within the context of immigration, migration, and movement across borders. Refugee students experience displacement, transition, and adjustment within the context of resettlement. When refugee students experience resettlement in a host country and enter a school community, how do school leaders support the integration of these students? The arrival and integration of refugee students remains pertinent to this

research on how school leaders develop diverse campuses that support inclusive forms of education.

Displacement and Knowledge in Transition

Schools in the U.S. and Europe provide supports for students who arrive with different forms of knowledge and experience. Refugee students present unique challenges to school leaders in their understanding of instruction and classroom interaction (Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010). Schools have a great impact on newcomer students, especially in the case of academic performance and advancement, but also in the way that the newcomer students, and the entire community, integrate into the school and the society (OECD, 2015). From a sociocultural standpoint, information and learning has countless meanings, as different perspectives can be viewed as “right” and “correct” from varied perspectives. For this discussion, knowledge is a subjective consequence of the analysis of raw information (Burke, 2012) through schooling. With this socially constructed, participatory aspect of knowledge, the individual interacts through ecologies of knowledge, which include a greater interaction and understanding of the self, the locality of learning (i.e., the school, and the greater community) (Guajardo et al., 2016). Through these forms of knowing, the individual learns more about the self as well as about the community.

As much as knowledge might be viewed as an individual entity, the moment when knowledge becomes transitive represents the time in which knowledge carries a social characteristic. Knowledge works as a tool of power, a vehicle to sway opinion and represent authority. Foucault (2002) often characterized the construct of knowledge as a determining factor in the power structure of a social authority. Systems such as schools

and universities that instruct students also provide society with knowledge, and these institutions control the dissemination and attainment of knowledge. However, for this study, knowledge exists ephemerally, without the restraints of an objective truth, as Nietzsche (1967) related it to attempts to leverage reason through human concern. When knowledge becomes a product of many people, knowledge is socially created and determined by circumstances, power dynamics, and a variety of influences.

Because the refugee represents a person in political, social, and cultural transition (Taylor & Sidhu, 2012), the experience of resettlement compels the individual to adjust to social conditions established within the institution of schools. These places of learning welcome new students on a regular basis, yet displaced students attempt to negotiate entry into these social structures with their unique cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). These forms of wealth are transformed so students can participate in school communities, which exist to teach and prepare students for social activity and engagement. Thus, as schools prepare students for social participation, these institutions seek to conform students to think, act, and behave in a certain way. Schools function on a sociocultural level to develop and prepare students (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Foley, 1990; Giroux, 1983), yet all students, especially those experiencing displacement, receive equitable opportunities to integrate in schools.

Schools and Cultural Hegemony

According to Gramsci (2011), the state acts politically over its citizens through legislated, hierarchical power constructs embedded in social institutions, such as schools and universities. Gramsci (2011) argued that an ideological, cultural framework promulgates values of the controlling group through conduits found in civil society, such

as the media, religion, and education; these aspects of civil society deliver messages and foment consent, which immanently work to reinforce the predominant values and mores (Burke, 2012). According to Gramsci, the construct of cultural hegemony represents the purveyance of ideas and value systems of a dominant group on subordinate groups of a population within society.

From the perspectives of Burke (2012) and Freire et al. (2014), schools exist to instruct people about forms of knowledge that both guide and determine social access and participation. Gramsci (2011) believed that schools form active, engaged members of civil society. Furthermore, Gramsci (2011) noted that schools perform an important civic duty as they introduce and prepare students for social engagement and participation. Education, thus, provides a foundation for cultural and social networks (Mayo, 1999), which lead to participation and integration in society. Schools as public institutions reciprocate and inform the ideas and values in both a social and cultural context.

In many cases, school leaders veer away from practices of encouraging active student participation because issues of student achievement and accountability take precedence, as state and national governments implement systems of accountability for education (Biesta, 2010; Fullan, 2016; Ryan, 2004). When instruction and educational outcomes are defined by policymakers, the responsibilities of schools, classrooms, and the educational process become focused on an accountability (Biesta & Säfström, 2011). As school leaders focus on student achievement, campuses as sites of learning reproduce inherent inequities in curricular and instructional practices (Foley, Morris, Gounari, & Agostinone-Wilson, 2015).

As institutions that measure and determine performance, schools proliferate forms of education that simply instill knowledge and specialization to represent and reinforce the sociocultural hegemony of the state (Biesta, 2010; Gramsci, 2011). Learning defers to schooling, as accountability for measured educational progress defines school improvement. Through this systematized process, education becomes a political act controlled by supervisors, lobbyists, and legislators. Attempts to measure instruction stem from neoliberal trends to monitor teacher and student performance (Giroux, 1983).

When policy drivers push accountability mechanisms into classrooms, school leaders focus on performance results, which emerge as mere datasets, failing to correlate to individualized aspects of learning (Burke, 2012; Rancière, 1991). It can be beneficial to hold educators accountable, so that students have equal and equitable access to learning. Yet, schools have become institutions of high-stakes test preparation, and school leaders depend on data analysis to attain campus accountability measures. In many ways, schools exist to ignite curiosity and discovery, as both Biesta (2013) and Rancière (1991) demonstrated; schools also represent places where people heighten an understanding of the self and the community through dialogue and community involvement (Guajardo et al., 2016).

Learning through Shared Inquiry

Schwarzman (2015) discussed the idea that Gramsci viewed all people as intellectuals, meaning that all human activity involves thought and, thus, is an intellectual act. From a Gramscian perspective, the organic intellectual learns, conceives knowledge, and expands ideas through shared inquiry with peers and colleagues, who themselves engage in thought, critical study, and a form of subjectification, reminiscent of Biesta

(2014). Similarly, Rancière (1991) purported intellectual emancipation for all, with specific attention to respect for the working class and marginalized citizens. The ideas of Biesta (2014) and Rancière (1991) show the influence of Gramsci, who criticized an educational model creating vocational programs to maintain a social construct and to reinforce the predominant cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 2011).

The organic intellectual, as the teacher and schoolmaster for Biesta and Rancière, approaches students with the concept of equal intelligence (Gramsci, 2011). Across these concepts, the idea of the equality of intelligence remains prevalent; through the conflation of individual will and dialogical interaction, every individual and citizen learns within a social reality, which heightens the understanding of both the individual and the community (Guajardo & Garcia, 2016; Guajardo et al., 2016).

Likewise, Rancière (1991) and Biesta (2014) promote an interdisciplinary, humanistic approach to education providing pathways for critical thinking and discovery. The student gains the opportunity for growth, individualization, and emancipation through education (Biesta, 2013; Rancière, 1991). In this mode, schools are instrumental in developing the organic forms of knowledge of all students in the area of language among others (Gramsci, 2011). Gramsci supported the idea that successful schools both encourage students to participate actively in lessons and provide instruction connecting to social and cultural realities (Mayo, 1999).

Within this context, all students and all individuals are artists, activists, and intellectuals; each individual possesses the capacity to think critically about society and culture. In this way, the role of the intellectual, according to Gramsci, inherently relies on the emancipatory traditions possible through participatory forms of learning and

dialogical interaction. On a conceptual level, the school remains the location where all students, including displaced and refugee students, thrive and develop knowledge. The refugee student, who arrives on a campus with little sociocultural experience in the host country, depends on a unique manifestation of cultural wealth, informed by experiences of flight, exile, and trauma (Keles et al., 2016; McBrien 2005). The next part of this literature review examines the concept of cultural wealth, a resource with which students learn, develop, and negotiate in the school environment.

Cultural Wealth across Borders

As this study considers leadership efforts to support refugee student integration in school communities, this section centers on the concept that each student arrives at a campus environment with sociocultural resources gained through parental and family relationships, community involvement, and ethnic or cultural heritage. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) focused on this topic, especially as it relates to the conflation of social development through both daily life and civic institutions, such as schools, local economies, and political endeavors. In the case of this study, the Bordieuan analysis would put forth that the student arrives at school with aspects of social and cultural wealth, which in turn transform into other forms of wealth (e.g., scholastic, linguistic, or symbolic), through the process of education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

School, as an institution of learning, prepares students for further academic work, social and cultural growth, and civic engagement. The student arrives at the school with elements of knowledge and sociocultural resources (i.e., cultural capital), which in turn are changed into negotiable, valued assets (e.g., scholastic or social wealth), through education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). As the student proceeds with this form of

capital, as well as others (i.e., linguistic, social, and symbolic capital), the educational process bolsters these assets (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). The educational process affects the capital so that the individuals are involved and more adept in understanding and moving through social institutions. Yet, when students enter the school with more social or cultural wealth, they attain more value through the educative process. Cantú (2016) discussed this disproportionate facet of Bordieuan thought, as schools can be viewed as locations that reproduce the sociocultural constructs of inequity. As schools move students through programs of learning, they inherently maintain the status quo. Likewise, refugee students encounter the institution of school with varying forms of cultural wealth acquired from exile, displacement, and resettlement.

Cultural capital represents more than the means of access and achievement in schools and social structures discussed in the Bordieuan model. Yosso (2005) argued that the Bordieuan concept of cultural capital creates inherent inequities, since people outside the dominant society lack the appropriate cultural resources to negotiate the social systems. Yosso (2005) established the difference between an individual's cultural capital and community cultural wealth. This more collective sense of cultural wealth aligns to forms of knowledge and social interaction dispersed throughout a community. Triandafyllidou (2009) depicted the construct of transcultural wealth as sociocultural resources upon which transnational students and families rely as they adjust to new locations. Communities that include refugee families depend on these forms of transcultural wealth, as they develop local aspects of collective cultural capital in the process of integration. For Hope (2011), these forms of community support foment participation and social integration, as the concept of Bordieuan social capital evolves

from a means of individual advancement or recognition to a pathway towards social integration. Through these interchanges of community cultural wealth, newcomers and transnational students experience forms of social and cultural capital as transcultural networks that facilitate patterns of integration.

The displaced student represents a newcomer who possesses experiences that remain different and unknown to peers in host countries; refugee students and families face exile, loss, suffering, and the risk of violence (Arsenijević et al., 2017; Kersch & Mishtal, 2016; Tsavdaroglou, 2018). When refugee students arrive in a school setting in a host country, integration becomes difficult since displaced students enter the campus environment without the predominant sociocultural experience or resources (Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010). During resettlement, refugee students and family members engage their experience, knowledge, and background as forms of sociocultural wealth. These experiences contribute to their collective cultural wealth, and they rely upon these resources during the process of resettlement and integration. Erel (2010) emphasized the dependence on social interaction among refugee families with relatives and people of similar backgrounds. According to Erel, involvement in the local resettlement community authenticates aspects of cultural wealth, which substantially aids the adjustment process. Similarly, Hope (2011) analyzed aspects of family support programs, especially those that acknowledge these transnational aspects of cultural wealth, as they provide newcomers with valuable connections to social integration in the host country. In conclusion, the newcomer arrives in a host country with a wealth of knowledge, background, and abilities. These aspects of collective cultural capital facilitate the process of participation and integration in the host community.

Resettlement over Borders

Children and youth are connected to a sense of place that informs who they are and their identity. When young people are uprooted, their sense of place, as well as their sense of identity, readjusts once they settle in a new community. Refugee families that reside in similar ethnic communities reproduce familiar customs and hierarchies in schools and other places of social and cultural interaction (Kumar et al., 2015). Yet, at times, families arrive for resettlement without support from relatives, extended families, or established ethnic enclaves to assist in the transition. Sites for refugee resettlement are moving away from traditional immigrant gateways and to smaller urban areas in the U.S. (Singer & Wilson, 2006). In this way, refugee students and families often resettle in places outside of metropolitan, diverse urban environments.

In a short time, refugee students have to calibrate their identity within the new school and community surroundings. The experience of departure and resettlement accentuate the fluid characteristics of identity for refugee families (Binder & Tošić, 2005). Within this discussion, the campus represents the locale where cultural capital is redistributed to shape a new identity. The classroom itself can be seen as a place of varying meanings, sometimes safe, other times isolating (Weems, 2010). Each refugee student encounters social and cultural realities in schools as an intersection of multiple influences, not just simplistic binaries such as citizen or newcomer. Through these interactions, the refugee student forms an identity from aspects of the journey across borders or through the development of social and cultural capital in the host country. For children and young adults, the setting of this change continues to be the school (Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010; Matthews, 2008; Tyrer & Fazel, 2014; Yohani, 2011).

The school as a space is established by specific policies and curricula; these contested spaces provide inclusion when they are more accepting and more diverse (Wood & Lemley, 2015). The focus remains on the place of the school and the services provided to the refugee students, in that the instructional spaces include refugee students more equitably when their experiences and cultural wealth are embedded within the learning (Comber & Nixon, 2013). Through cultural analysis, Gonzalez (1997) demonstrated how the individuals of society or a location (e.g., refugee or newcomer students) pass through a system of actualization through which individual cultural resources, or a version of collective cultural wealth, and identities are changed and reconstituted through interactions.

Through aspects of collective cultural wealth, the refugee student becomes more involved in the school community. For Gonzalez (1997), cultural representations define and explain epistemological origins, such as foundations of knowledge, and social structures. Yet, in this perspective, one's identity develops through transition and resettlement. Cultural interactions provide glimpses to ontological perspectives from evidence acquired through "social relationships which, from the point of view of the daily construction of the meaning of life and the world, elaborate the evident and the necessary, values and multiple identities" (Gonzalez, 1997, p. 8). The refugee, as a transnational resident in a host country, redefines both social and cultural wealth in the process of integration to the new environment, as the individual's identity develops through social networks supported by community cultural wealth.

For this study, the interaction of refugee students with school cultures represent points of intersectionality of adjustment and integration, as refugee students face

processes of acculturation through schooling. Refugee students encounter difficulties in social contexts as they navigate resettlement; yet, these movements strengthen cultural resolve, interdependence, and ingenuity as these students enter schools through relocation and resettlement (Bal & Arzubiaga, 2014). When the process of transition and integration fail to consider the cultural capital of each student, schools rarely offer equitable opportunities. At this point, school leadership and stakeholders act to develop systems that promote inclusion of all students in the school culture.

Problematizing Acculturation through Inclusive Programs

Schools become a central location for refugee families once they arrive in the country of resettlement. The school provides immersion programs and resources to facilitate this process. To support refugee students and their families, school leaders and stakeholders consider the specific needs to which support programs attempt to respond. In fact, Krūsteva and Brown (2013) emphasized that a majority of newcomers and their families require assistance with situations outside of the school premises. This support focuses on helping newcomers acclimate to a new country; assistance includes short-term financial aid, insight about health care options, and vocational training for gaining employment (Vermette, Shetgiri, Zuheiri, & Flores, 2014). Within the context of schools, educational leaders design policies and programs for refugee integration.

For school leadership, this study recognizes that effective programs for refugee students consider cultural and social aspects in campus orientation programs. School leaders develop community through orientation programs for both newcomers and members of the campus community; these initiatives create an understanding of the different barriers that refugee and displaced students face when they enter a new

environment. However, many support programs emphasize acculturation for newcomers so that they can adjust and succeed in the school setting (Esses et al., 2017; Lazarevic et al., 2012; McBrien, 2005). This section of the literature review analyzes acculturation trends existing in school programs for integration, as well as efforts by school leaders and stakeholders to enact more inclusive approaches.

Schools and Acculturation

As schools provide assistance to refugees and family members, refugee students receive varied levels of support (Simich et al., 2005). Often schools fail to provide quality education to refugees, and refugee resettlement has led to both social and cultural inequities as well as a lack of basic services (Pinson & Arnot, 2007). The school environment remains the place for social and cultural interaction. Yet, this environment often remains aligned to the dominant group, as aspects of cultural wealth of the newcomer population fail to pertain to established sociocultural archetypes, as argued by Yosso (2005) and Cantú (2016). While campus leadership creates systems to encourage acceptance of newcomers, students comply with expectations and gain recognition upon integrating into the school community. Educational support systems for refugees differ from those for other newcomers. Vernez (1991) highlighted the fact that refugee families receive many forms of support during resettlement, as integration into the host country remains a primary goal. In this way, refugee students and their families inherently encounter aspects of assimilation as they receive support services to integrate into the host community.

Refugee students systemically encounter aspects of acculturation to participate and thrive in schools (McBrien, 2005; Mosselson, 2007). Most programs for refugees

integrate themes of acculturation, which McBrien (2005) considered as changes that people undergo when they live and interact with a different culture. Undoubtedly, refugees face challenges adjusting to schools as well as social and cultural practices of their new environments (Hastings, 2012; Lazarevic et al., 2012).

Alba and Holdaway (2013) discussed how immigrants and refugee students struggle with participation and academic performance because of obstacles in the process of integration into new school environments. The authors argued that the educational systems themselves remain rigid, and certain stakeholders intend to preserve inequities for the betterment of the children of the elite: “Educational systems are ‘reactive,’ they are not pliable.... These are systems in which privileged groups... seek to achieve their own ends, which include bestowing advantages on their children through education” (Alba & Holdaway, 2013, p. 258). Change efforts in schools are often manipulated by dominant groups (Fullan, 2016; Warren, 2011), yet refugee students who arrive in a host country face challenges, such as rigid school policies and parents and family members who support the status quo, in order to advance academically and integrate into school communities.

Moreover, schools at times aim to assimilate students into campus cultures with a disregard for cultural wealth. Valenzuela (1999) examined how schools lack culturally responsive practices through forms of subtractive assimilation, purposefully diluting teaching and instruction for marginalized students. Programs with this approach integrate students through acculturation, while failing to recognize the cultural wealth of refugee students.

Simich et al. (2005) presented a study demonstrating how social support positively affects the lives of refugee students and their family members; the students benefited from initiatives that familiarize them with the system of schooling and social interaction. Overall, adjustment to school environments includes factors that extend beyond student expectations and social norms. This process of acculturation through schooling is supported through the hierarchy of refugee families themselves. McBrien (2005) stated that refugee parents' ideas of assimilation affect their children's opportunity for academic success and integration.

As newcomers to the educational process, refugee students bring collective cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) as well as aspects of transcultural wealth (Triandafyllidou, 2009) to the learning environment as they integrate into a campus culture. Yet, support staff and the campus community equate acclimation with achievement and progress and do not fully understand refugee students' struggle to adjust and participate in the school environment (Krüsteva & Brown, 2013; McBrien, 2005). In this way, the learning environment often lacks components of personal connection, and Askins (2016) argued that the practice of engaged, interpersonal communication supports the development of forms of intercultural trust. This study examined efforts by school leadership to support refugee students as they adjust and integrate into school culture, especially as these leaders respond to the pressures created by forms of acculturation in campus environments. This study found that intercultural programs became opportunities to create equitable spaces that value the cultural wealth of all students. School leaders who value the input of the entire community engage with stakeholders to develop campus-based policies and practices that benefit all students.

Cultural Responsiveness and Student Integration

The concept of cultural responsiveness provides a way for school leaders and teachers to promote diversity and respect the multitude of cultural backgrounds that comprise a campus population. As students enter the educational environment, campus and district staff attempt to facilitate systems instilling diversity and acceptance throughout school communities. Khalifa et al. (2016) described culturally responsive efforts in school settings as attempts by educators and fellow stakeholders to formulate learning environments that effectively relate to sociocultural backgrounds and the needs of the students. In this way, cultural responsiveness across campuses adheres to Yosso's (2005) concept of cultural wealth, as sociocultural experience of refugee students remains integral to the fabric of the school community.

Educators and community leaders often collaborate to implement culturally responsive campus programs to promote integration and a respect for diverse cultures (Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010; Kornfeld, 2012; Norberg, 2017). Educational leaders often concentrate on ways to measure organizational effectiveness, especially through academic achievement and instructional practice. Yet, Khalifa et al. (2016) indicate that school leaders positively affect a campus when implementing culturally responsive practices, and these practices increase student achievement and participation in addition to stimulating community involvement. School leadership and stakeholders that implement culturally responsive policies and practices provide a collective response to trends in acculturation, as the myriad of cultural backgrounds of newcomers, such as refugee students, are both respected and integrated into the greater campus community.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) demonstrated that leadership efforts directed at student learning and involvement greatly increased campus leader efficacy. Student learning becomes more participatory when school leaders intentionally incorporate culturally responsive practices (Khalifa et al., 2016). Furthermore, Guajardo and Garcia (2016) demonstrated that school leaders and staff more effectively implement instruction and organizational change efforts when they promote participation and community engagement through culturally responsive practices.

School-based programs involving culturally responsive practices provide an intersectionality of student identity within the context of school and the greater community (Guajardo et al., 2016; Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014). A campus vision embracing collective cultural wealth addresses the diversity within the school. Campus leaders bring effective results when they create a welcoming, diverse vision that embraces stakeholders' cultural identities and blends values of specific groups (Creese, Bhatt, Bhojani, & Martin, 2006). Additionally, Salo and Birman (2015) stated that interactions about and exchanges of aspects of collective cultural wealth in the workplace or other social settings promote satisfaction with the environment. Thus, valuing heritage culture in the workplace, school, or social situation improves integration without mandating culturally restrictive forms of acculturation. Salo & Birman (2015), in their study of acculturation in the workplace, mentioned that the appearance of collective cultural aspects in social situations attributed to positive comments and satisfaction about the place of employment. The authors, themselves, recommended an ethnographic study to observe ways in which intercultural exchanges promoted patterns of integration.

A common thread in the literature is that acculturation represents a culturally limiting notion to exclude certain aspects from a dominant sociocultural group. When any public place that is part of civil society, i.e., a workplace, a school, or a community center, becomes a setting that incorporates a collective sense of cultural wealth, the setting resembles an extension of the culture backgrounds of the greater community. Instead, intercultural practices appear through the promotion of community activities with a cultural theme, from inclusive pláticas and discussions about colleagues' cultural backgrounds, and visual representations of cultural elements in neighborhoods and community centers (Askins, 2016; Bello, 2017; Moskal & North, 2017). This inclusive and intercultural environment encourages people to participate and integrate into the diverse, dynamic community.

As a concept, acculturation represents an alignment to a specific cultural archetype within a social situation by newcomers or marginalized people (Betancourt et al., 2015; Keles et al., 2016; McBrien, 2005; Phillimore, 2011). Policies and programs that support different cultures benefit from efforts to promote diversity across a workplace or campus. School leaders that incorporate a cultural vision for inclusivity frame campus communities as dynamic organizations that promote exchange and understanding of diverse cultural elements.

Intercultural Approaches to Educational Change

Multicultural approaches to education encourage the acceptance and integration of all backgrounds. Some change efforts develop only from input and the perspective of the predominant cultural group, which maintains influence over the institution. Moskal and North (2017) observed that school leaders, who promote an intercultural approach in

terms of instruction and participation, encourage the participation of all cultural and ethnic groups, as these forms of inclusive leadership effectively integrate newcomers, refugees, and migrants. Fazel et al. (2015), in a similar line of reasoning to Yosso's (2005) concept of collective cultural wealth and Triandafyllidou's (2009) concept of transnational capital, affirmed that each individual possesses cultural wealth, and displaced students benefit most when school programs integrate cultural elements from their lives into the context of learning and intercultural exchanges.

Initiatives to implement culturally responsive practices are closely related to trends in school improvement, which includes more than increased performance on high-stakes testing and assessment measures (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Schools that benefit students, teachers, and all stakeholders focus on instructional improvement and increased educational opportunities (Messiou et al., 2016; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). School leaders ameliorate options for academic growth and discovery at a campus when they collaborate with stakeholders to support participation and engaged learning. Transformative change in education occurs with intentional planning and vision by school leaders in conjunction with campus stakeholders, including parents, staff, students, and community members (Fullan, 2016; Ross-Gordon et al., 2015). Through an intercultural approach, students of different backgrounds integrate into the school community while maintaining their cultural identities and developing aspects of the campus's community cultural wealth.

Bello (2017) examined the positive effect of intercultural approaches as a critical component of programs promoting diversity and cultural exchange; the use of intercultural practices, such as providing language access for students and family members, campus-wide policies promoting the inclusion of every student's cultural

background, and engaging student learning in the local community, reduced aspects of prejudice within the population of a host country. As an organizational culture, a school follows patterns established by the campus leadership team, which prioritizes the vision for learning and instruction. However, campus climate greatly affects student participation in the school community: one student's sense of belonging (i.e., involvement in the school culture, feeling supported, developing quality relationships with other students and staff) differs greatly from another's, especially in the context of academic performance and race or ethnicity (Voight, Hanson, O'Malley, & Adekanye, 2015). For schools to become sites of engaged learning, school leaders must incorporate policies and practices respecting diversity and intercultural exchange (Moskal & North, 2017).

The connection between teachers and students represents a concept that highlights community building in schools. In fact, teachers that promote diversity integrate different opinions and points-of-view to build equitable classroom communities (Messiou et al., 2016). When students learn in classrooms that value diversity and multiple viewpoints, educators challenge the intransigent nature of schools and support intercultural exchanges (i.e., reciprocal interactions that value all social and cultural backgrounds) (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014; Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013). From either a multicultural or intercultural perspective, school leaders and stakeholders develop inclusive practices when they actualize policies and programs that are both culturally relevant and responsive to all members of the school community. However, multicultural approaches have received increased scrutiny because of tendencies to align these strategies with a broad-based social identity representing an amalgamation of diverse cultures into a

particular regional or national cultural conglomerate (Long, 2015; Tanaka, 2007; Taylor, 2012). The section that follows discusses the tension between these two approaches in the context of campus support for refugee students.

Tension Between Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

Within this discussion, I have examined efforts by school leaders, community members, and other stakeholders that could be characterized as either multicultural or intercultural, with a slight difference in theoretical application separating the two approaches. Creese et al. (2006) argued that school leaders support students, both those of different cultural backgrounds and newcomers, when programs provide multicultural aspects to learning and development. Modood and Meer (2012) analyzed interculturalism as an approach derived from multiculturalism, yet intrinsically related to the promotion of diversity and cultural pluralism.

Moskal and North (2017) identified aspects of multiculturalism that resemble inclusive practices yet encourage contributions to the greater society. A multicultural perspective attempts to blend certain aspects of diverse cultures into a widespread, comprehensive mixture of traits, customs, and beliefs that the dominant society prefers and upholds (Giroux 1983; Gramsci, 2011). However, in this multicultural view, those aspects of cultural wealth not appreciated by the dominant group remain outside the confines of that which is culturally valued and relevant. Tanaka (2007) conceived an educational space beyond multiculturalism, one in which the disparate, monocultural groups cease to confront ethnically diverse multicultural ones. Through this perspective, intercultural approaches embody a shared sense of collaboration and personal reflection, as Díaz (2013) alluded to in a study of teacher training initiatives.

Kymlicka (2015) argued that the application of multicultural practices posed a threat to national solidarity, which resembles an inclusive form of social membership for people of certain cultural origins. In these cases, when individuals with a different, or culturally and ethnically unfamiliar, sense of identity interact with the predominant social group, admission into the socially accepted multiculturalism is revoked (Kymlicka, 2015). Within a population, newcomers and the displaced gradually become members of the collective society, and both Bello (2017) and Messiou et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of implementing programs that support diversity and cultural inclusion to develop positive results.

While Kymlicka (2015) and Modood and Meer (2012) discussed these aspects in relation to political rhetoric, a connection to trends in school improvement exists. In cases of integration into the school community, educational leaders often view campus culture as a predefined entity. Changes in student population occur regularly, and a diverse, inclusive school community enacts both policies and programs to integrate refugees and other newcomer students. Refugee students that arrive in the U.S. or Europe for resettlement have moved through a geographic network of marginalization. Social and cultural factors affect the educational experiences of these newly arrived students, and school leaders are responsible for enacting systems of inclusion and cultural relevance into campus-based change initiatives.

Schools as Localities of Change

This section of the literature review examines efforts by school leaders to support the integration of refugee students. School leadership significantly impact both campus and institutional culture, in addition to student performance (Guajardo et al., 2016;

Ishimaru, 2014; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Even for preliminary stages of organizational change, innovation occurs when strong school leadership incorporates multiple stakeholders as active change agents (Fullan, 2016). As Bello (2017) noted, approaches to institutional change that implement intercultural practices stimulate crosscultural dialogue and reduce prejudice in the host community. A key for schools to become sites of engaged learning is a commitment to collaboration, as school leaders become agents of change by integrating all stakeholders in the improvement process.

School leaders become agents of community development as they encourage stakeholders to participate as drivers of improvement measures (Fullan, 2016; Guajardo & Garcia, 2016). Innovations in education happen through discovery, collaboration, and reflection by all stakeholders involved in the process. School leaders that focus on improving instruction positively affect student learning and participation (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Through the support of engaged and transformative learning, schools become localities of both organizational change and increased participation.

Educational leaders engage in a process of change to increase engagement and participation on a campus. School improvement on the organizational level focuses on changes to the school culture (Fullan, 2016; Kezar, 2001; Kotter & Cohen, 2012). Concepts of organizational change begin with how staff, students, and individuals interact with one another and how they conceptualize education. School improvement depends upon a cultural shift that values increased educational opportunity; the institutions, defined as schools, prepare students to participate in a society that values human interaction through dialogue and reflection.

School leaders shift the direction of schools by transforming the campus mindset through collaboration; an approach that invokes the input of multiple stakeholders increases both student participation and community involvement (Warren, 2011). Guajardo et al. (2016) discussed the concept of ecologies of knowing, which represents a collaborative epistemology based on exchanges of experiences, lessons learned, beliefs, and empirical evidence. These ecologies, or knowledge resources, inform the self, organizations around the self, and the larger community. Warren (2011) echoed this sentiment in finding that school leaders who sustain diverse school communities establish systems that celebrate aspects of cultural wealth through daily practices of engagement and community development. Through their participation in inclusive spaces of learning open to all stakeholders, displaced persons, such as refugee students and their family members, utilize their cultural experience as transnational students to attain agency through their education (Banki, 2012). By creating a more inclusive school community, campus leaders promote diversity and intercultural respect.

In initiating change efforts at schools, campus leaders support involvement from all stakeholders by integrating forms of reciprocal learning, both in the classroom and the greater school community. This inclusive process represents sustained efforts at school improvement through community involvement (Guajardo et al., 2016; Warren, 2011). Transformative educational change develops when dynamic social practices engage stakeholders to participate in reform efforts. In all, community development represents action and participation, as this vital aspect to school improvement emanates from the locus of the school. Through dialogue and involvement, school leaders ensure that parents, family members, and community stakeholders have access to change efforts at

campuses. Yet, school leaders set the tone for an organization's change efforts, which result in more equitable educational opportunities.

Ishimaru and Galloway (2014) examined organizational leadership in the context of fair, equitable school environments. A campus leader implements a campus vision of mutual trust and inclusion to develop campus-wide equity. Inclusive decision-making and participation for all stakeholders leads to diverse perspectives, consensus, and an environment of equity (Ishimaru & Galloway, 2014). A school that includes diverse opinions and incorporates systems of collaboration for policies and decision-making resembles an organization more representative of all its members (Sergiovanni, 1999).

To ensure that schools remain committed to change, school leaders implement practices that foster stakeholder participation and collaborative problem-solving. Change in schools occurs over a long period of time, especially within the context of campus cultures (Gonzalez, 2012). For engaged participation of all stakeholders, school leaders develop a vision with long-term goals for campus equity and increased opportunity. Schools as locations of change thrive when school leaders promote inquiry and discovery, which are key components of both transformative learning and school improvement.

Equitable Programs for Refugee Students

The policies and work of school leaders affect the trajectory of campus culture and climate. In a school with diverse populations, educational leaders influence campus culture with decisions and policies for creating an inclusive community (Morrice, 2013). Often, refugees encounter bias as they arrive in communities unfamiliar with certain ethnic groups. Programs at schools in the U.S. or Europe attempt to incorporate these

students into the school community. Yet, this type of education resembles a form of education very different from that which exists in refugee camps. Classes and education programs in refugee camps resemble interventions as stopgap measures, in that they provide refugee children with some semblance of informal instruction (Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). School leaders create intercultural approaches to education when they implement policies to promote inclusion and diversity, especially for students not having encountered formal education in the U.S. or Europe.

The presence of refugee students and others facing displacement within a school community has the potential to add a positive dimension to educational systems that promote forms of multiculturalism (Banki, 2012). Yet, a multicultural approach to education extends beyond a program for refugee and newcomer students. Campus leaders bring effective results when they create a multicultural vision that embraces stakeholder's cultural identity and develops systems of cultural exchange and discovery (Creese et al., 2006). Cultural and social wealth of refugee students that are valued by school leaders make the campus community more respectful of its members, which makes it closer to the concept of a multicultural community (Fazel et al., 2015; Ishimaru & Galloway, 2014). Intercultural community interaction promotes dialogue and exchange among all students and staff members, which leads to a greater sense of emotional connection among students and staff (Askins, 2016).

Organizational efforts for cultural change. Within the context of school improvement, this project analyzes how school leaders respond to the issue of student integration. A core concept in this analysis is that school leaders maximize change efforts to integrate all students into the school culture. These efforts affect the entire

organization; when improvement efforts engage the entire school, sustained change is more likely to exist (Kotter & Cohen, 2012). Giroux (1983) stated that school leaders highlight the transformative nature of learning when they support participatory forms of education, and Morrice (2013) demonstrated how participatory learning influences school culture by promoting intercultural exchange and diversity. This project additionally investigates school leaders' efforts at promoting participatory learning through community involvement (Warren, 2011). Likewise, this study considers efforts to affect student integration through cultural inclusivity and intercultural practices.

Culturally responsive school cultures. Through culturally responsive practices, schools provide more opportunities for student engagement and participation by creating equitable spaces of knowledge formation that integrate transnational students into the community as active, participatory learners (Guajardo et al., 2016; Sánchez, 2007). The refugee student resembles the transnational student, as she experiences displacement and is forced to meet the challenge of integration and assimilation (Basu, 2013; Binder & Tošić, 2005). Educational leaders who foster cultural exchanges build intercultural awareness, as the student is able to integrate social capital through cultural exchanges (Banki, 2012; Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014). School programs promoting diversity and cultural wealth of all individuals have instituted an intercultural approach to support the integration of refugee students into campus communities (Moskal & North, 2017). In this way, the conceptual framework considers cultural inclusion and exchange as campus-based practice to promote student integration.

Perceptions of school leaders influence decisions across a campus. Schools need spaces for learning that invite the student into the greater community and that help to

make the broader community aware of the challenges that refugees face in the process of resettlement and integration (Basu, 2013). School leadership that recognizes the transformative nature of schooling for refugees (Morrice, 2013) can inform the school culture to promote intercultural exchange and campus-wide diversity. Leaders that engage community members change a traditional campus into one that embraces diversity and intercultural exchange (Guajardo, 2016).

The type of engagement chosen by school and community leaders remains important for both student and parent involvement in the campus culture. This use of dynamic forms of discussion in classrooms and community conversations increases participation of all stakeholders. This study implements the use of *plática*, a type of conversation, an “expressive cultural form shaped by listening, inquiry, storytelling and story making that is akin to a nuanced, multi-dimensional conversation” (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013, p. 160).

These participatory discussions bring elements of cultural wealth into the schools of local communities and foster the involvement of all students, parents, and community members. In addition, the use of *plática* allows narratives of lived experiences to imbue the fabric of the school and greater community. Likewise, educators that practice this form of engaged discourse in the classroom through thoughtful and critical inquiry promote equity and diverse opinions in the educative process (Freire et al., 2014; Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013).

School leadership that involves all stakeholders positively impacts the community ethos to develop a sense of intercultural respect (Spiteri, 2013). Educational leaders who foster cultural exchanges build intercultural awareness through a broader community

understanding of diversity across the campus (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014). In all, this study places an emphasis on the inclusion of cultural wealth of refugee students through engaged participation with the local school community.

Implications for School Improvement

This study relates to a number of themes in school improvement. One topic prevalent in this analysis is how campus leaders develop initiatives for culturally inclusive, intercultural practices (Greenholtz, 2000; Moskal & North, 2017). Schools that provide intercultural programs promote strategies to integrate students while respecting cultural experiences of all stakeholders (Moskal & North, 2017; Read et al., 2015). Campus leaders that work with community members collaborate to change a traditional campus into one that emphasizes intercultural exchange (Guajardo et al., 2016; Morrice, 2013). In addition, campus leadership cultivate systems of intercultural respect when all stakeholders participate in educational change efforts (Spiteri, 2013).

Another theme present in this study is community engagement. School and community leadership devise programs creating spaces of acceptance and understanding for stakeholders. The way schools academically prepare and socially integrate students addresses the axiological attributes assigned to educational institutions, as schools that value student creativity promote discovery and imagination; while schools valuing accountability measures favor standardized testing and forms of learning by rote (Biesta, 2015). Schools perform a service greater than measuring student performance and preparing a future workforce (Giroux, 1983; Vasquez Heilig, Ward, Weisman, & Cole, 2014). Schools represent locations that provide assistance, direction, and support to all kinds of students, including those experiencing displacement (Epstein et al., 2011). As

leaders implement community programs, schools foster a broader understanding of diversity across a campus (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014). The impact of engaged participation and insight derived from shared perspectives foster change and innovation in how schools both represent and define their communities.

Community partnerships extend the efforts of campus leaders beyond the walls of the school. School leaders engage the community during change initiatives, and they stay informed by open communication with stakeholders (Fullan, 2001). In the case of displaced students, schools collaborate with local organizations to transition and prepare these students to new environments (Norberg, 2017). Krūsteva and Brown (2013) also emphasized that schools cooperate with outside agencies to provide academic and other assistance. This study considers the advantages of cultural inclusion through aspects of collaboration among school and community stakeholders. Educational leaders benefit from developing a vision of cultural exchange that values cultural identities of all stakeholders.

The school remains a first place for social interaction. Often schools fail to provide quality education to refugees, and refugee resettlement has led to both social and cultural inequities (Capps et al., 2015; Pinson & Arnot, 2007). Most programs for refugees integrate themes of acculturation, which McBrien (2005) defined as the change in one cultural group upon interacting with a more dominant group. Undoubtedly, refugees face challenges adjusting to schools as well as to social and cultural practices of the host country (Hastings, 2012; Lazarevic et al., 2012). This study examines efforts by school leadership to provide spaces for learning and interaction through both campus-based strategies and community partnerships.

Critique of the Literature

Overall, there is little research into the practice of school-based programs for refugee students, since most support or intervention programs are offered by community organizations (Tyrer & Fazel, 2014). Yet, in the U.S., where there is a trend in some states to reject mandates for refugee resettlement, refugee families often have little choice for where they resettle. Refugee programs are rarely based at schools, a fact which eludes organizations such as the UNHCR (Ahlen, 2006). Additionally, the literature would benefit to further investigate policy implications from the level of the UNHCR to governmental and nongovernmental agencies that are responsible for refugee resettlement and support programs. In terms of support programs in schools, campuses and districts venture unknowingly into the realm of refugee support services, since resettlement patterns and efforts vary according to quotas established by nations and governments. In this way, leaders institute support initiatives without suitable training and vision for inclusive school communities (Koyama & Bakuza, 2017).

Within the literature on both multicultural and intercultural approaches to newcomer students, at times the analysis of these two approaches places them in contrast to one another. Moskal and North (2017) offered a direct critique of multiculturalism, as an all-encompassing perspective on culture that failed to integrate newcomers, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. The authors recognized that critiques of both multiculturalism and interculturalism promote trends in education, as well as national policies of social solidarity, to be more exclusive, since increased migration poses threats to “social cohesion” (Moskal & North, 2017, p. 105). The literature that investigates multicultural policies supporting refugee students provides a more reliable perspective

when the political implications become part of the educational and sociocultural implications. In fact, education gains greater social importance when its political implications remain part of the discourse and analysis.

Kymlicka (2015) claimed that leadership efforts, in schools as well as in politics, promulgate a systemic bias for local citizenry over the input and the experience of refugees and other newcomers. In both education and politics, Kymlicka (2015) supported a more intercultural approach, which fosters integration and social interaction instead of policies that characterize migrants and refugees as social and cultural threats. A key point is that the two theories of multiculturalism and interculturalism are not mutually exclusive. Modood and Meer (2012) argued that the problem involving multiculturalism and interculturalism remains a moot point, because these two approaches continue to be interconnected. Additionally, the authors claimed that political critiques of interculturalism derive from nationalistic policies that reject integration. More inclusive education policies provide a more diverse learning experience and school community. These concepts further the discussion on efforts by school leadership and stakeholders to promote refugee student integration and participation in schools and campus cultures. Future research would benefit from including these topics in analyses, policy recommendations, and programming in order to advance more equitable forms of refugee student integration.

Conclusion

The UNHCR determines policies for temporary refugee settlement in countries neighboring areas of conflict; however, the host countries establish these programs. While the percentage of refugees worldwide that settle in Europe and the U.S. remains

very small, families that do arrive in places like Central Texas or South Holland benefit from programs that help them adjust to the new environment. The issues affecting the lives of refugee students include factors that extend beyond economic and social concerns (Alba & Holdaway, 2013; Eisenbruch 1988; Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; McBrien, 2005; Norberg, 2017). Schools that support refugee integration develop programs that foster cultural responsiveness throughout the campus community. The cultural component of refugee resettlement includes the transnational conveyance of cultural wealth, and educational leaders incorporate these cultural aspects as they construct a multicultural vision for campuses.

School leaders in the U.S. face the challenge of building school community and supporting people from diverse backgrounds. Refugee students come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds with which many school leaders have little experience. Through repeated models that support assimilation, traditional education programs maintain the marginalized status of the refugee students, as the programs establish specific forms of acculturation to absorb students into the greater campus culture. As an aspect of school improvement, campuses consistently work to improve instruction and learning. Student involvement and stakeholder participation remain important aspects of educational reform (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

School reform, according to Fullan (2016), focuses on changes to the culture of schools on both the local and national level. The required impact of widespread change inspires an innovativeness in the way school leaders, staff, and all stakeholders conceptualize learning, schooling, and education. Change efforts in schools accompany a cultural shift to bring about sustained improvement through dialogue, discourse, and

reflection. Concurrently, programs that foster an intercultural approach creates spaces of interaction and exchange among all stakeholders. The efforts of stakeholders and school leaders determine campus policy, and a more diverse, culturally inclusive vision contributes to more sustainable forms of integration for refugees and other displaced students.

III. METHODOLOGY

This goal of this study was to investigate how refugee students integrate and participate in public schools through specific support programs. Utilizing a multi-sited ethnographic approach, I observed how school and community leaders develop practices for integration of refugee students across different locations. Through qualitative research, the project also examined leadership efforts to monitor these programs and to engage stakeholders, such as students, families, school staff, and community members, to address the inclusion of refugee students. Furthermore, I investigated how community and educational leaders perceive programs within a cultural context of schools as locations for participation and integration.

Rationale for the Research Design

As I focused on how school leaders develop practices to support refugee students, this research took a critical approach to examine refugee programs in the school setting. The investigation was developed through critical inquiry as part of reflexive research and analysis of data sources. In developing my research project, I considered the political nature of qualitative research that posits beliefs about equity, social justice, and inclusion within the research subject itself (Hatch, 2002). Shaw and DeForge (2014) described the development of particular views through aligned research, stating that “the more we put particular beliefs into practice in our research, the stronger and more tacit those beliefs likely become” (p. 1578). The investigation informs the practice of inclusive education by establishing a critical inquiry through observations, discussions, and interviews within the context of the ethnographic research process. The participants’ and the researcher’s conceptualization of inclusive practices and intercultural educational exchanges evolved

organically through reflection, dialogue, and participation, similar to the way Guajardo et al. (2016) described the development of dynamic social processes to inform both research and community involvement.

Over the last three years, I worked as an administrator at public schools in Central Texas. In fact, I carried out a pilot study at multiple sites within the Eastdale school district. For this preliminary research, I used interviews, both formal and informal, as well as observations of planning meetings, seminars, and professional development workshops. The school districts that I visited for this pilot study required Texas State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval; the procedure of acquiring the IRB endorsement allowed me to develop the scope and methods for this study at an early stage of the process.

Through the pilot study, I found an increase in the collaboration between schools and local organizations to support refugee integration. As part of the multi-sited project, I conducted research at schools and partnering organizations in Central Texas and the region of South Holland. The Dutch experience was significant for this study because systems exist in the Netherlands to promote civic integration for children and families (Long, 2015). Collaboration between community support programs and schools provides benefits to student learning (Israel, Goldberger, Vera, & Heineke, 2017). These types of partnerships were in a nascent stage in Central Texas, and findings from Dutch schools could exemplify how the partnerships function to promote refugee integration. Within the U.S. discourse in both traditional and social media, politicians, journalists, and acclaimed experts used xenophobic discourse to critique immigration policy and refugee resettlement. These attitudes were reinforced at key moments of both the news and

election cycle, as refugees, asylum-seekers, and immigrants were compared to marauding gang members and criminals, who aimed to destabilize national security (Berger, 2018). Similarly in the Netherlands, certain political ideologies expressing fears of migrants and refugees have grown in popularity (“A split over refugees,” 2017). Nonetheless, both municipal and national Dutch governmental policies have supported the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers in social settings and institutions throughout the country. This study investigated how school leadership supports refugee integration, and the implications of this research offer insights for similar initiatives across Texas, the U.S., and the world.

Multi-Sited Ethnography

For this research project, I implemented a multi-sited ethnography to study how school leaders devise and monitor programs and policies to integrate students experiencing refugee resettlement. This type of ethnographic approach provided an insight into how people and organizations interact, respond, and develop across different locations, as each place exists with different social and cultural realities (Marcus, 1995). Through this method, the subject of study is situated in multiple contexts through an analysis of separate events and places; the research itself attempts to comprehend and define the subject within particular conditions and systemic influences (Marcus, 1995; Pierides, 2010). I opted to use this particular methodology to understand how educational leaders devise school programs in coordination with community support to address refugee student integration.

The study design for this research employed a methodology that analyzes a subject existing in different locales through a relational analysis of site observations,

interviews, reflective fieldnotes, and archival documents (Marcus, 1995). The multi-sited ethnography examines the conflation of apparent systems within the complex sociocultural environment; Marcus (1995) referred to this environment as the lifeworld, representing contiguous social and cultural realities. A defining principle of this approach involves the repositioning of that which is researched, since the subject itself exists in diverse contexts and dynamics (Marcus, 1995; Pierides, 2010).

I chose a multi-sited ethnography to show how leaders in different geographical locations and contexts devised programs to promote the integration of refugee students, who face much different acculturation patterns than those encountered by immigrants of similar backgrounds (Lazarevic et al., 2012). This subject within this methodology existed across two distinct locations and in specific times. In the multi-sited ethnography, the perceptions of the research partners and the researcher exist within particular moments, systems, and spaces. This approach required a respite of beliefs and presumptions in order to be fully present, aware, and receptive to reality as it occurs (Senge, 2005). Likewise, the ethnographer observes and participates in the environment, and she responds to the demands of the multiple sites (see Figure 2 for a visual overview of the multi-sited ethnography for this research study).

Through a process of conducting a study in multiple locations (Pierides, 2010), this type of ethnographic approach investigated different sites for a particular research effort (Marcus, 1995). Furthermore, through the multi-sited approach I collected stories and narratives from different locales with attention to a particular subject, which in this case was programs for refugee students. This ethnographic process additionally impels the researcher to consider ontologies that constitute interpretations, views, and

understandings of these stories and narratives in the context of the places, people, and systems involved (Guajardo, Guajardo, Salinas & Cardoza, 2019).

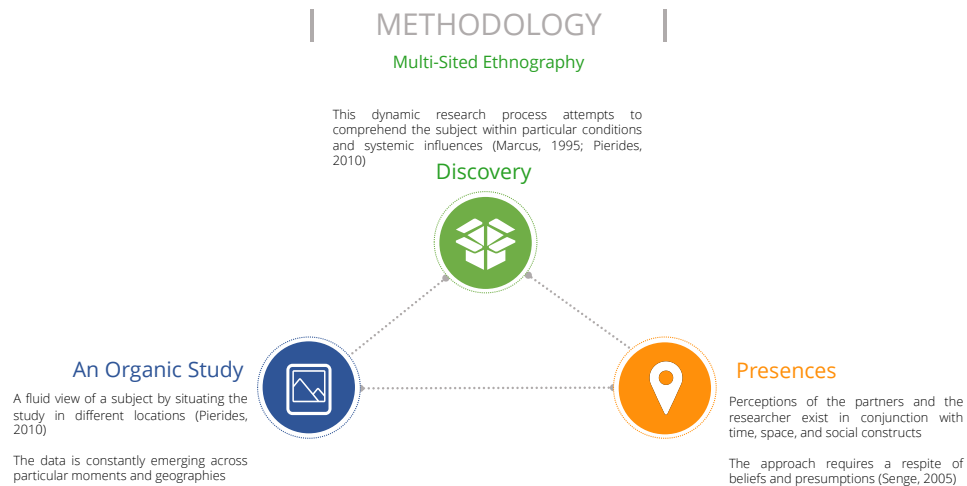


Figure 2. Visual Overview for the Multi-Sited Ethnography.

In addition, I employed the multi-sited ethnography for the specific purpose of focusing in on two specific locations, Central Texas and South Holland, to gain a credible understanding of the global process of how refugees integrate into communities. In looking at particular sites at two distinct locations, I aimed to address the external generalizability of systems in place as refugees are incorporated into these locations of resettlement.

As a choice of one of the sites within this study, the Dutch experience represented a compelling site for this research because themes of integration exist in both national and regional programs to assist refugees and other newcomers (Di Saint Pierre, Martinovic, & De Vroome, 2015; Long, 2015). My research focus explored the experience of leaders who devise programs to support refugees as transition from

displacement to resettlement and integration through public education. These policies and programs provided a context for determining how the partnerships between schools and community organizations promoted refugee integration.

Burawoy (2000) provided a means to examine the processes which occur in disparate locations, advising the use of a global type of ethnography that examines systems influenced by globalization on the local level. Refugee students that arrive for resettlement in the U.S. and the Netherlands have moved through a geographic network of marginalization across many nations. In this way, the use of a multi-sited approach aligned with Burawoy's (2000) call to distinguish global phenomena of displacement in the context of the experience of refugee resettlement.

Researcher Positionality and Data Collection

This research project remained inherently ethnographic, which entails that I, as a researcher, embedded myself in the locations of study (Foley, 1990). The multi-sited approach allowed me to view systemic issues on a local level. This project evolved through my work in public schools in Central Texas and my interest in dynamic approaches to refugee integration in South Holland. Cognizant of my own positionality, I consistently distinguished my work as a school leader with that as a researcher so that I could avoid conflating the two roles on a daily basis.

To undertake ethnographic research, I realized that I would need to stay for an extensive period of time at the different sites of this project to make the study both reliable and thorough; the aspect of a sustained study is pertinent for an ethnographic research project to gain a sense of credibility (Creswell, 2014). Ethnographic research involves building relationships with people, whom I see as partners within the scope of

this study. I had already spent much time in Central Texas, where I had worked in public education for ten years. In fact, I had collected preliminary data during the pilot study on this topic. For this research project, I collected extensive data in Central Texas, as well as in South Holland. Another important aspect in this methodology is the selection of the sites and participants in the study.

Site Selection and Participants

This research study investigated school leaders who develop and implement programs for refugee students. For the first site, the purposeful sample of the study was taken from the greater Eastdale urban area, a fictional name for a city in Central Texas (see Figure 3). The district includes 90 elementary schools, 20 middle schools, 13 high schools, and 7 other schools that are alternative, specialized, or consolidated campuses. Approximately 80,000 students were enrolled annually in the district during the 2017-2018 period.

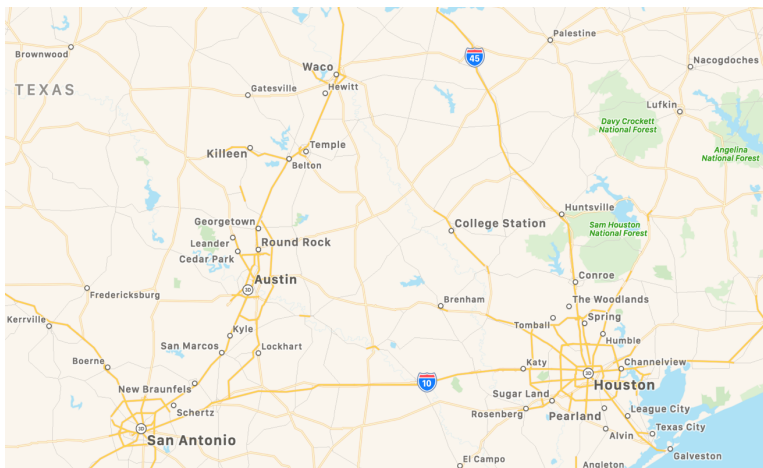


Figure 3. Map of Central Texas (Maps, 2019a).

The following data represents the specific population of refugee students throughout the entire district, including both primary and secondary schools. The overall demographics of the refugee student population in Eastdale schools are presented by grade in Table 1, by socioeconomic status in Table 2, and by gender in Table 3.

Table 1

District Refugee Student Population by Grade

Grade	Number of Students	% of Total Refugee Student Population
Kinder & Early Childhood	177	17.95
Elementary (1-5)	434	44.02
Middle (6-8)	162	16.43
High School (9-12)	213	21.60

Table 2

District Refugee Population by Socioeconomic Status

Application Processed for	% of Total Refugee Student Population	
Free and Reduced Meals	Number of Students	
Yes	725	73.29
No	261	26.47

Table 3

District Refugee Population by Gender

Identified Gender	Number of Students	% of Total Refugee Student Population
Female	495	50.20
Male	491	49.80

In the Eastdale school district, refugee students predominantly attend 11 elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools, for a total of 16 campuses. Other students transfer to schools that fail to have significant populations of refugee students. Data dealing with socioeconomic conditions of students in Eastdale schools show that a substantial amount, more than 73 percent, apply for free or reduced meals, which represents a measure in U.S. schools of low socioeconomic status.

While the intersectionality of the integration of refugee students and families within the context of socioeconomic status, class, and economic participation in host societies has been discussed (De Vroome, Coenders, Van Tubergen, & Verkuyten, 2011; Hall, 2018; Kancs & Lecca, 2018), this subject is beyond the scope of this study. Additionally, this type of socioeconomic data for students was not available at the other research site of this investigation. Within the context of the Eastdale district, this study mainly considers one (1) school, the Global Campus, that identifies as a site supporting refugee students in secondary school.

I carried out the second phase of this research in Meyland, a fictitious name for an actual city in the Netherlands that has a diverse, multinational population. The city has a noticeable international feel due to the high number of international organizations and corporations located in the city. The International Court of Justice, the International

Criminal Court, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons are all located in cities close to Meyland, as are the headquarters of Shell and other multinational corporations. Additionally, the political capital of the Netherlands is located in a city close to Meyland, which became a home for many people commuting to the nation's capital and other parts of the Netherlands.

In the western part of the country, Holland represents one of the most populated parts of the country. In fact, in the country of the Netherlands, there is no area or region actually named Holland. The area that historically had been known as Holland is actually split into two provinces, North Holland and South Holland (De Rooi, 2007). These two provinces include the largest cities and the most densely populated regions of the country (see Figure 4). Amsterdam, the capital of the country, is located in North Holland, while South Holland includes the cities Leiden, Delft, Rotterdam, and Meyland, which, itself, is the capital of the province as well as the seat of the national government.

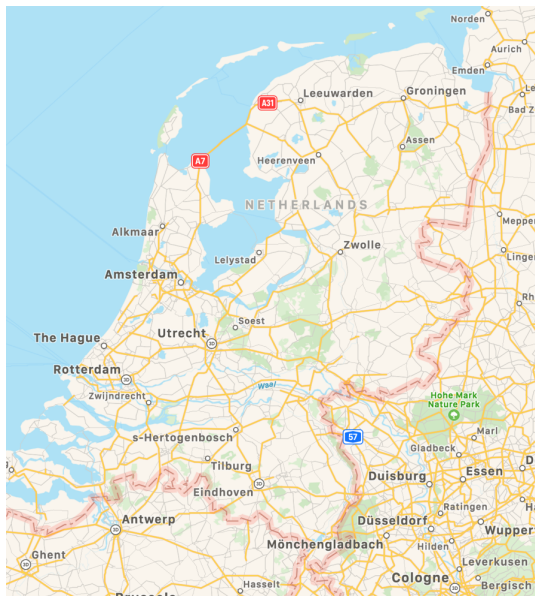


Figure 4. Map of The Netherlands (Maps, 2019b).

I conducted observations and interviews at Vrede College in Meyland, South Holland over a twelve-month period, from January 2018 to January 2019. I chose to conduct my research at this secondary school for two reasons: firstly, the school has a long history of working with refugee students, and, secondly, the campus leadership team and the ISK program coordinator were very amenable to a long-term site visit at the campus. The ISK program at Vrede College had 121 students in the 2017-2018 academic year, although the student population fluctuates because of the changing nature of the student population. The demographic data in terms of home country is listed in Table 4.

Table 4

Vrede College Student Population by Home Country

Home Country	Number of Students	% of all ISK Students
Poland	23	19.0
China	12	9.9
Bulgaria	9	7.4
Syria	8	6.6
Turkey	6	5.0
Egypt	4	3.3
Brazil, Brunei, Eritrea,		
Indonesia, Iran, Kenya,	2	1.7
Peru		
Afghanistan, Ghana,	1	0.8
Kazakhstan, Nigeria,		

In addition to research partners at Vrede College, I also interviewed a program coordinator of a community organization that supports refugees and displaced people arriving from outside of the Netherlands.

As part of the data collection, I interviewed research partners from public schools and community organizations who fit the criteria for research partners in this study (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013). For this phase of the project, I observed school leaders at different campuses in Eastdale and from one campus in Meyland. I conducted interviews with school leaders, including administration and district-level support staff. I also interviewed staff of local resettlement agencies and specialists in the field of refugee support services. In addition, I used my observations, interactions, and conversations as a school leader on one of the campuses. The research partners of this study are listed in the following table (see Table 5), along with their role in a school or community organization and the site of this study.

Table 5

Research Partners in the Multi-sited Study

Research Partner	Title or Role	Research Site
Isaac Hidalgo	Assistant Principal, Global Campus	Eastdale
Aida Danilla	Program Manager, Refugee Support Office	Eastdale

Cynthia Wallace	Program Coordinator, Support Services for Refugees	Eastdale
David Baddeau	Program Manager, Marigold of Central Texas	Eastdale
Fatima Lisson	Education and Training, Marigold of Central Texas	Eastdale
Nassrine Stifadi	Support Consultant, Eastdale School District	Eastdale
Jap Burkhaart	Head of Lower Secondary, Campus Administrator, Vrede College	Meyland
Esther Stijkstaad	International Program Director, Vrede College	Meyland
Saskia Leyden	Teacher, Vrede College	Meyland
Patrizia Anziak	Volunteer Coordinator, Immigrant and Refugee Support Network (IRSN)	Meyland
Esther Pella	Teacher, Vrede College	Meyland

In situations on a campus where I worked, I distinguished my role as a researcher in contrast to that of a school leader or campus administrator; this duplicity of perspectives, i.e., that of pragmatic administrator and, simultaneously, that of qualitative

researcher, was difficult to navigate at times. During this project in Eastdale, I continuously worked to gain participant trust and to demonstrate transparency in my role as an ethnographer within the school leadership team (Petschler, 2012). In this way, when I conducted research at a school with which I had no connection, I was able to present myself more as a researcher than as a campus leader or district colleague.

In this purposeful selection process, I invited research partners from each site of the study to be as least intrusive as possible. I included partners that wanted to comprehend and define perspectives on this topic, which represents an element of dynamic-critical methodologies for community involvement and research (Guajardo et al., 2016; Sales, Traver, & Garcia, 2011; Shatkin & Gershberg, 2007). These partnerships made the interview process both engaging and dynamic, as the semi-structured interviews resembled a conversation (Maxwell, 2013) and, at times, an engaged *plática*. I recruited participants with either an e-mail or a face-to-face conversation, during which I provided a description of the study.

Qualitative Purposeful Sampling Protocol

Since this research study incorporated a qualitative approach, the sampling process consisted of an introductory phenomenological approach. For the first part of the research design, the qualitative aspects of the study depended upon purposeful sampling to identify particular school and community leaders working with refugee students. The designation of participants relied upon snowball sampling to find more participants, since this technique helps to find more sources with similar characteristics (Creswell, 2013; Lichtman, 2009).

The method for determining partners in this study relates to characteristics of data collection in an ethnographic study. Creswell (2013) recommended that a project only include participants that have experienced the phenomenon and can recount that which they observed. For this reason, the study participants were from two specific groups: (1) educational leaders, such as administrators, program directors, teachers, counselors, and district liaisons, and (2) community leaders, including staff and program directors working in organizations providing refugee support. All of the people invited to participate in this research study had an active role in assisting refugee students in the school context.

Data Collection Techniques

Throughout the field work of this study, I collected data as an ethnographer. The qualitative data collection techniques included site observations, interviews, the use of reflective fieldnotes, and archival documents. The use of diverse data collection techniques produces more perspectives than the use of a single approach for sampling and data collection (Creswell, 2014). Firstly, I depended on site observations during all parts of the multi-sited ethnographic work. In both locations, I established a schedule of at least two site visits per week with my research partners. During the period, I tried to visit the same classes on a routine basis, even though the observation schedule was interrupted at times by school events or my work schedule.

Within the campus environment, I observed classes attended by refugee students and orientation meetings for refugee students and their family members. I also engaged with staff, students, families, and other stakeholders in casual, informal exchanges. Having worked in Eastdale schools for more than nine years, I had developed a

familiarity with how schools operated across the district. To provide a similar sense of familiarity, I spent 12 months in Meyland, South Holland, to build relationships with research partners as I carried out this ethnographic study. This prolonged engagement boded well for the trustworthiness and credibility of the study, both of which are discussed at length in the following section. The extended time that I spent at both sites also benefited my ability to familiarize myself with the people and place of this study. For this reason, the interview process represented the most direct manner for me to gather personal insights from my research partners for this study.

In both locations of the multi-sited ethnography, I carried out interviews with administrators, teachers, district and school staff, and community leaders, all of whom routinely worked with refugee students and family members. The interviews that I conducted often took the forms of engaged conversations or *pláticas*, which offer both the research partners and the researcher the opportunity for critical inquiry, anecdotal narratives, and personal reflection on the specific subject of this study (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013). As both a practitioner and a researcher, I participated in campus-based *pláticas* on topics such as parent involvement, community service, and planning for college and career decisions. This dynamic form of conversation represents an engaged, participatory activity that promotes a shared platform for discourse and discovery. Moreover, the use of *plática* foment the interconnectedness of the ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016), as stakeholders reflect on the self and the interrelation between the school organization and the greater community. For this reason, throughout this research I chose to use both words (interview and *plática*) to describe the concept of conversation. However, for the sake of clarity in this study, the term *interview* refers to a

straightforward discussion, while the term *plática* entails a more dynamic, reflective deliberation in relation to the subject at hand.

During conversations, the research partners provided answers that allowed the questions to develop into semi-structured conversations. These interviews and *pláticas* with staff and program leaders occurred at school district offices, classrooms, or the offices of local organizations. Participants reflected on their role as leaders in schools or community organizations. The plan for the interviews consisted of two sessions, the first of which was 30 to 40 minutes, and, if necessary, a second follow-up session of about 20 minutes. The follow-up sessions provided further insight into themes that became apparent in the first stages of the coding process (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Interview protocols for conversations with school and community leaders are included in Appendix B. The following aspect of data collection, the use of fieldnotes, also represented an important part of this ethnographic research process.

My ability to collect data for this project depended upon the way that I gathered information nuanced with contextual knowledge and meaning through the accumulation of detailed, rich descriptions (Creswell, 2013; Walford, 2009). A key facet of this phase of the research existed within the need to establish a consistent procedure for keeping ethnographic fieldnotes. Fieldnotes provide an ethnographic study with information from observations, discussions, conversations, and reactions. In short, fieldnotes represent the foundation of any ethnographic study (Walford, 2009). The descriptions found in fieldnotes fill the blank canvas of the data collection process. Walford (2009) described a variety of processes of taking notes during study and observation; yet, a reoccurring trend

was the insistence to constantly write down and capture what the ethnographer found relevant to the study.

I implemented a strategy to take notes during fieldwork and observations, and then revisited the fieldnotes at the end of each day to add comments or additional thoughts. In this way, the data collected represents observations that occurred in waves (Neuman, 2014). Both Walford (2009) and Neuman (2014) advised establishing a schedule for writing and then expanding the fieldnotes to include related comments, added remarks, or tangential thoughts which apply to the research topic. In fact, this type of expanded fieldnotes represented the first phase of data analysis in this study, as I, the educational researcher, revisited the observations to make connections among the data gathered throughout the research process (Neuman, 2014). A thorough ethnographic study provides rich description through a sound process for writing fieldnotes. In this way, the data collection was nuanced and replete with details.

In addition to the aforementioned data collection techniques, I also conducted archival research. The sources for this documental research consisted of public information available from school and community organizations, such as websites, presentation and workshop documents, and minutes for campus and planning meetings. I also incorporated aspects of visual ethnography by taking photographs of classrooms and school settings to add to the description of an event. Any photography was anonymous and confidential, and I refrained from capturing the images of students in the frame of the photograph. Furthermore, any photography was done in accordance with the IRB for this research project. These aspects of visual ethnography were only for my viewing, as to help me recollect details and insights during study. In addition, in this research process I

also include in this study the use of quantitative data in the form of descriptive statistics (i.e., school student enrollment data and class demographics) to analyze trends in relation to participation and integration of refugee students.

The data collection focused on gaining insight into the perceptions of school and community leadership on the effect of programs for refugee students. Moreover, as an educational researcher on campuses for extended periods of time, I constantly observed what occurred around me. For instance, I attended planning meetings, while other times I visited cultural events as well as training sessions for school staff. Maxwell (2013) and Creswell (2014) confirmed the advantage of using multiple data collection methods to gain a more in-depth understanding within a research design. Overall, I used multiple types of data collection as part of the investigation into programs for refugee students from the two sites of this study. This process provided my study with extensive amounts of data for analysis, which is discussed in the following section.

Data Analysis

For this research, I analyzed multiple data sources, such as those mentioned in the previous section. This project presents data sources from both participant groups (educational leaders and community leaders) mentioned in the previous section to ensure purposeful sampling and to provide the specific vantage points of the resettlement agencies, support organizations, and schools (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013).

I reviewed the data from this research through a lens of critical inquiry that incorporates Yosso's (2005) concept of collective cultural wealth. In this way, once I completed the interviews and observations, I looked for specific themes in the data that related to the concept of refugee integration in schools. I also searched for how these

type of support initiatives promoted a sense of Yosso's (2005) collective cultural wealth and sustained forms of integration within programs for refugee students.

After conducting the interviews, I transcribed all but one of them verbatim from audio recordings with the support of notes; one research partner preferred that I not use the audio recorder, so for that interview I completed a gisted interview with the support of handwritten notes. Additionally, through reliable and consistent use of fieldnotes, I coded the data in a line-by-line manner from both the interviews and informal conversations and I arranged the observations into preliminary categories (Gibbs, 2007). As Lichtman (2009) demonstrated, concepts become apparent from the categories established in the various stages of the coding process, and I used this information throughout the data analysis. I formulated concepts related to the experience and perceptions of community and school leaders after I reassembled the data from the primary coding categories (Yin, 2011).

I collected the interview data and analyzed them with a constructivist approach with special attention to themes of integration, such as acculturation and adjustment to new environments (Ivanovna, Alexandrovna, Fedorovna, & Evgenyevna, 2014). I devised substantive categories that followed the themes and concepts that developed from the data, and I used the categories of program design and support services as frames of reference for analysis (Maxwell, 2013). During data analysis, fieldnotes acted as source material, allowing me, as the ethnographer and educational researcher, to return to those transcribed moments to fill in gaps in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

As coding represents a cycle of investigation, analysis, and discovery (Saldaña, 2009), I narrowed the ideas derived from the data to filtered categories referencing

leadership efforts to support refugee integration. From these categories, I concentrated on elements derived from these data sources, since my opinions could cloud interpretations and conclusions (Gibbs, 2007). As I uncovered trends and noticed different layers of meaning, I focused on themes that appeared from the coding process, such as intercultural approaches to education, cultural responsiveness, and aspects of acculturation. After the data collection and coding, I continued the process of data analysis to make sense of the information that I gathered in the research process: According to Hatch (2002), “Data analysis is a systemic search for meaning” (p. 148). In order to establish findings for this research project, I sifted through transcripts from interviews, notes from observations, and ideas evolving from the fieldnotes. As a technique for the data analysis, I combined a political and polyvocal approach (Hatch, 2002). Through the political framework, I examined the coded data and established concepts that appear in relation to transformative aspects of the work of school and community leaders.

This political data analysis technique allowed this project to examine the nexus of student integration with intercultural practices. I incorporated a polyvocal aspect to the analytical framework. Hatch (2002) described this approach within a poststructuralist context: “The complexity, incongruity, and paradoxical nature of real life ought to be explored across your stories” (p. 205). The study of leadership efforts to support refugees includes many perspectives on schools, society, and culture. I incorporated aspects of the polyvocal framework for data analysis in this research, so that multiple vantage points were present in the data analysis.

At the culmination of the data analysis process, I chose to present the findings through the framework of the ecologies of knowing developed by Guajardo et al. (2016). I developed the themes of the findings and the answers to the five research questions of the study within the context of the three ecologies: the self, the organization, and the greater community. In the following chapters, I provided the findings through these three elements of the “ecologies of knowing” framework with observations, selections from my reflective fieldnotes, and stories derived from the ethnographic research.

As I carried out this study, I discovered that many fellow educators and community leaders held a personal interest in the topic of refugee integration in schools. In working closely with research partners throughout this study, I specifically chose validation techniques that included the people who participated in this project. The following section describes the issues of validity and trustworthiness in this ethnographic research process.

Validity and Trustworthiness

This research informs the discussion on efforts by school and community leadership to develop and monitor programs for refugee students. In this section, I discuss the concept of validity in relation to my ethnographic research, and I present two specific validation strategies used in this work. Then, I consider two topics, trustworthiness and ethical considerations, within the context of this multi-sited ethnographic research. Because of the aspect of trust developed in this type of ethnography, I found it necessary to discuss explicitly these issues in the context of the validity of this research study. For any research project, measures of validity ensure that findings develop from the processes outlined in the data collection and analysis sections

of a study (Isaac & Michael, 1995). Maxwell (2013) showed that the topic of validity compels the researcher to remain unbiased in the research process: “A crucial issue in addressing validity is demonstrating that you will allow for the examination of competing explanations and discrepant data” (p. 148).

For this investigation, I implemented two validation strategies, triangulation and member checking, and, furthermore, I reflected on my positionality in this study. First, I included triangulation as a validity measure in the study. Maxwell (2013) emphasized the benefits of triangulation: “This strategy reduces the risk of chance associations and of systemic biases due to a specific method” (p. 128). In addition, data analysis that combines the perspectives of research partners and information from multiple data sources incorporates triangulation to increase the validity of the research process (Creswell, 2014). I designed this qualitative research study to have a diverse range of data sources; the use of observations, pláticas, archival research, fieldnotes, and photographs framed my study of refugee programs from the perspectives of those who design, manage, and implement these initiatives, as well as from those of people who interact with the programs, including teachers, support staff, and participants. I consistently used the information gathered from the multiple data sources to enhance the aspect of triangulation in the process of data analysis in this study.

Another strategy that I employed for eliminating confusion and misinterpretation in data analysis is the use of respondent validation, or member checking. Through this strategy, the researcher returns to the participants with ideas and conclusions derived from the data analysis, as the research partners provide feedback and check for misconceptions (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). This technique adds a participatory

nature to the research process, as the views of the respondents provided guidance for my efforts as an ethnographer and an educational researcher. Maxwell (2013) stressed the benefits of respondent validation rather succinctly:

This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your biases and misunderstandings of what you observed. (p. 126-127)

I asked my research partners to review transcripts of pláticas and interviews as well as the data analysis sections of the study. In addition, this authentication strategy aligned with the polyvocal data analysis technique, which incorporates multiple viewpoints through member checking and a form of shared inquiry. The ethnographic research process accumulated multiple aspects of triangulation and respondent validation, which combined to provide a trustworthiness to the study.

Trustworthiness in the Research

Trustworthiness represents a more central aspect of validity and integrity of the process of data analysis. I consistently implemented the validation measures mentioned previously, and the approach to data analysis drew on the work of Guba and Lincoln (1985), who emphasized the need to apply strategies to ensure that interpretive analysis is authentic, reliable, and objective. For this study, I used specific criteria for credibility, which functioned to build trustworthiness into my qualitative, naturalistic research (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). I focused on the integrity of observation in the research, and trustworthiness in research specifically calls for sustained engagement in the field with research partners to develop confidence and build relationships (Guba &

Lincoln, 1985; Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). Through the ethnographic process, my role as a researcher remained aligned to specific aspects of trust, confidence, and credibility: As a type of naturalistic inquiry, the multi-sited ethnography depends on establishing trust in relationships. In familiar settings in the school environment, I was forthcoming with participants and research partners that I have two roles, one as a school staff member and another as an ethnographer (Petschler, 2012). As an educational researcher embedded in a particular setting, I depended on open communication with partners to demonstrate my adherence to trustworthy research practices. In this section I provide some of the steps I took to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the data collection and analysis.

Creswell (2014) discussed the importance of detailed descriptions in qualitative research to make the results more distinct, resonant, and trustworthy. At first, I inferred that this strategy for trustworthiness would benefit the reader, who could better visualize the concepts within the study. Yet, this approach also provided inherent aspects of trustworthiness when I considered sustained use of member checking. For this project to be deemed both credible and reliable, I needed to spend extensive time in the field as an ethnographer, so that I could develop authentic relationships with research partners and provide detailed and plentiful descriptions of the settings and locations.

As a tangible facet of the concept of trustworthiness, I implemented specific activities to ensure the credibility of the data analysis. Yin (2011) recommended the use of detailed procedures throughout the process of qualitative research, and this advice applies to a multi-sited ethnography which can be particularly nuanced as a research strategy (Marcus, 1995). Amankwaa (2016) developed a protocol to check for

trustworthiness criteria. I implemented specific parts of this protocol for credibility in conducting interviews, writing up fieldnotes, conducting member checks, and using realistic, rich descriptions in data collection.

In conversations, including both interviews and pláticas, I used open-ended questions to elicit descriptive responses (Amankwaa, 2016; Creswell, 2014). For consistent writing of fieldnotes, I used this data collection process at the following intervals: after formal interviews, at the end of the day of formal and informal observations, and on a constant basis at the end of each day during the period of research. In terms of preparing the data analysis for the aspect of member checking, I reproduced phenomena observed as clearly as possible by using objective language and rich descriptions in data collection. This approach of using thick descriptive fieldnotes and journaling for narratives also provided transferability of the findings (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007), which I interpret as a commutative dimension of trustworthiness. This aspect of engaged description with details of observations and informal as well as formal conversations allowed research partners to experience the narratives evident in the findings in relation to discoveries in context of the ethnographic study.

Additionally, I used specific steps in the process of member checking. In most cases, I sent research partners a copy of the interview transcript within two months so that they could check the transcript for accuracy. The transcription process in Holland took longer because of the research partners' use of words, phrases, or expressions in Dutch. During data analysis, I sent research partners a draft of preliminary topics for discussion pulled from the data, and I communicated with research partners after specific events of

importance (Amankwaa, 2016). These criteria for data analysis supported the trustworthiness and credibility of this study.

Ethical Considerations

In this research, I made deliberate efforts to carry out the study in an ethical manner so that research partners and participants would not be subject to harm or detrimental effects. Any research project that depends upon observations, interviews, or the general study of people is required to follow specific steps to ensure ethical practices during the investigation (Creswell, 2014; Lichtman, 2009; Roberts, 2010; Yin, 2011). To ensure that this research investigated the issue in an ethical way, I designed a pilot study to speak with Eastdale school leaders about their efforts to support refugee students. As part of the requirements of the district's research office, I attained the Texas State IRB approval for the entire multi-sited study, including interviews and observations of school and community leaders at the different site locations. Thus, before I started any data collection in the study, I followed all ethical considerations in developing this research.

During the entire ethnographic process, I chose to use pseudonyms for any research partner, participant, or person involved in interviews or observations to protect individuals' identities, backgrounds, and personal lives. I also utilized fictional names for all settings and locales, so that the research sites remained anonymous. Before formal interviews, I contacted the research partners by phone or e-mail. I also provided a consent form to all research partners who participated in formal interviews (see Appendix C). In person or over the phone, I gave information about any possible risks of the study. During the interviews and conversations, if the research partner allowed me to record the conversation, I assured each person that the recordings would be kept securely, and all

partners' identifying information would remain confidential and anonymous throughout the research project. As for any archival research, I used resources that are publicly accessible, such as information from school and organizational websites, books, journals, periodicals, board meetings, and policy papers. The use of these types of archival resources, which are public and obtainable by anyone, enhances the credibility aspect of these data. Additionally, any photographs taken during observations included only the setting and arrangement of the classroom environment, and I intentionally refrained from having the faces of students in focus in these images. I attempted to follow all these steps to verify that this research study took into account at all times the ethical considerations mentioned in this section.

Positionality and Reflexivity

Since I participated in the ethnography, my own perspective influenced the process of conducting research and interpreting meaning in aspects of this study (Vagle, 2009). In all, the participants' and my own perspectives played a role in this research and in the way that we formulated critical responses to schools and communities that are part of the study (Brown & Stega, 2005). Through the research, I followed trends that arose as the subject of the study emerged across diverse sites and settings.

In terms of positionality, my work in public schools places me within the context of actual programs studied in this research. My own reflexivity determined the way I analyzed and formed meaning from the data sources (Clancy, 2013). Part of my positionality includes my work as an administrator in schools and also my participation in volunteer activities with community organizations that support refugee students and family members. My background and experience influenced the way I framed this study,

collected data, and attributed value to cultural concepts in the research process (Mosselson, 2010).

Chavez (2008) noted that insights and observations of researchers are affected by perceptions and components of one's identity as they engage in discovery and analysis. With my views that promote the support of refugees in schools, my positionality allowed me to critically analyze educators and community leaders who develop and implement these programs. I avoided the difficulties of communicating with people in positions with which I am not familiar, since I have worked in schools that provide services for refugee students.

Limitations

In this section, I present limitations to the study in relation to the generalizability of the results and findings. Roberts (2012) noted that limitations refer to weaknesses in the transferability of a study's methodology: "Limitations are particular features of your study that you know may negatively affect the results or your ability to generalize" (p. 162). A primary limitation for this study existed within the duality of the multi-sited ethnographic approach, which I employed in Central Texas as both a school leader and researcher yet in South Holland solely as a researcher. While I conducted this study in Eastdale schools, I also carried out the duties of a campus administrator, which included staff development and evaluation, classroom support, and meetings with parents and community stakeholders. The phase of ethnographic research at Vrede College in Meyland provided me with extensive periods of unrestricted access to site visits and interviews of staff members. Consequentially, I collected much more ethnographic data focusing on daily interactions in the fieldwork conducted in South Holland than that

carried out in Eastdale. Nonetheless, I used the aforementioned process of data analysis to develop the findings from a balanced perspective of both sites of this ethnographic research process.

Another possible limitation was the relationship between orientation programs and integration efforts for refugee students experiencing resettlement. This study examined programs at two sites, yet schools in Central Texas offered orientation programs, while the campus in South Holland incorporated these sessions into classroom activities throughout the academic year. Therefore, students across the two sites received slightly different types of assistance through programs unique to each location. During data collection, research partners at both sites detailed specific aspects of site-based programs to familiarize students with campus policies and culture.

The concept of mobility also limited aspects of the outcomes and the generalizability of the research. One of the themes in the study of integration within the discussion of transnational adjustment is the location between two homes (Bolzman et al., 2017). For students, this concept entails continued enrollment at a specific campus in connection to sustained support programs that foster integration into a campus culture. Yet, through the resettlement process many refugee families become highly mobile as they attempt to navigate financial pressures, such as affording rent and basic necessities. In many cases, families move often in the early stages of resettlement, and these changes conflate integration with forms of adaptation for both children and adults (Suleman & Whiteford, 2013). During data collection, I attempted to identify sites with sustained programs supporting refugee students.

As this study examined efforts by school and community leaders to develop and monitor programs for refugee students, limitations existed within the context of culturally responsive programs that promote diversity and build campus community. One limitation resided in the idea of programs specifically for refugee students. Educational support systems for refugees differed from those for other newcomers. From a study in the 1990s, Vernez (1991) found that resettlement agencies, schools, and local organizations provided more services and assistance to refugee students and family members than to traditional immigrants. Concurrently, refugee students and families received specific forms of support in both locations of this study. In this way, external generalizations would belie the notion that newcomer programs faced similar challenges and received equivalent support, in that the essence of qualitative research focuses on specific trends within a particular study (Maxwell, 2013). The current study of refugee programs pertained to efforts to assist students experiencing the trauma of displacement and loss encountered during refugee resettlement. While many students experience displacement and loss in relation to migration, natural disasters, and economic hardship, this research focused solely on programs supporting refugee students.

This research studied campus-based programs fostering cultural responsiveness and trends of inclusion and diversity. With a purposeful form of sampling, limitations exist in that the results from the study fail to generalize to the larger population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Hence, this study focused specifically on refugee students as a unique group within the larger school population. Results from the study fail to directly generalize to the diverse group of newcomers, such as immigrants, transnational students, or children displaced by natural disasters, arriving for the first time at a campus. Also, the

study examined community initiatives providing guidance, orientation, and overall support to refugee families. Even though this inquiry investigated refugee support services, the majority of programs attempted to acclimate students to schools and the local surroundings. Thus, programs providing academic support to refugee students were also not in the scope of this study. In this way, a limitation existed within the origin for specialized programs from areas of academic support, as tutoring and educational activities align more to academic performance.

Summary

This study explored the experiences of school leaders, in addition to staff at community organizations, as they developed, implemented, and monitored programs supporting refugee students and their families. This ethnographic research focused on assistance for refugee students in terms of both social and cultural integration and specific efforts by school and community leaders to promote and sustain these programs. Through this multi-sited study, I investigated how school and community leaders collaborated to assist refugee students as they became part of school communities through policies and practices fostering intercultural approaches to education and community development.

IV. PROFILING ECOLOGIES OF A MULTI-SITED ETHNOGRAPHY

This project examined how school leaders supported refugee students within the setting of the campus culture and community. While many school-based programs support newcomers (Due & Riggs, 2016; Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013), this study specifically examined school initiatives for students identified as refugees. These students' experiences of displacement and adjustment often parallel that of immigrants and other newcomers (Simich et al., 2005); however, they are distinct in that they have fled unsafe or dangerous conditions in their home country to resettle in a host country (OECD, 2015; UNHCR, 2018). I chose to concentrate on programs for refugee students because of my experience working with these families in Eastdale schools.

The findings of this study are organized across three chapters and are presented in a structure that allows the stories, reflections, and observations developed during the research process to respond to the five research questions of this study. As described in Chapter Three, I organized the findings within the context of the three aspects of the ecologies of knowing, i.e., the self, the organization, and the community (Guajardo et al., 2016). Through this approach, in Chapter Four I introduce the two research sites and provide insights into the schools and organizations involved in this study. Through observations and interactions with school and community leaders, I highlight their efforts to support refugee students, the issues and policies that are important to them, and the characteristics that make these policies and practices effective. This chapter focuses on the operational aspects of the two research sites of this project and includes perspectives of key research participants, such as, administrators and community leaders, who support students as they integrate into school communities.

Findings in a Relational Context

In this chapter, I present an overview of my multi-sited ethnographic research, which focused on efforts made by school leaders and staff to create campus-wide systems that support refugee student integration. The two research locations, Central Texas and South Holland, have experienced an increase in refugee population over the last five years. Central Texas represents a major site of refugee resettlement, and two organizations, Support Services for Refugees and Marigold of Central Texas, assist refugee families as they transition to a new life. Concurrently, South Holland, Netherlands, has remained a common destination for newcomers, such as refugees and immigrants, to settle and integrate into a new society (Long, 2015; UNHCR, 2019). Within the educational context, the Dutch experience offers insights into how school leaders and staff support newcomers as they integrate into schools as well as the wider Dutch society.

Through ethnographic research in these two places, I implemented the lens of ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016) to examine trends, policies, and characteristics of school leaders, teachers, and support staff (as the concept of the self), as well as of the school (as the concept of the organization) and the local population (as the community). Through work in both Central Texas and South Holland, I developed research partnerships with participants in this study, a process that emanates from the ethnographic method across two distinct, geographically separate sites (Boccagni, 2016). The findings presented in this chapter resulted from formal interactions with school and community leaders within the school setting, yet incidental conversations, observations, and archival work also provided insights to this study on how leaders attempt to integrate

refugee students into the campus community. In addition, I analyzed fieldnotes and extracts from the process of journaling, adding a reflective nature to the ethnographic work (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011; Walford, 2009).

While I designed this study to focus on globalized trends, the findings themselves remain particular to the cultures of the schools and organizations that I visited. The data from these sites provided information on trends in the integration of refugee students, but the findings are also embedded with aspects of globalization that affect students, campus leaders, and communities (Burawoy, 2000; Israel et al., 2017; Long, 2013; Norberg, 2017; Yohani, 2011). Throughout this chapter, the findings are presented in a narrative format, essentially as the “stories” of each site, to describe how the leaders in each location support refugees and displaced students, both in the local school system and the greater community. This chapter aims to demonstrate the ways in which school leaders foster relationships with colleagues from different campuses, families, and community agencies to support refugee students.

School Systems as Sites of Integration for Refugee Students

The findings from this multi-site ethnographic study center on schools as sites for integration into both the campus culture and the greater community (Martinez-Usarralde et al., 2016; McBrien, 2005; Long, 2015; Waldinger, 2017). As mentioned in previous chapters, I find that schools represent places of both social and cultural integration, through both school-based programs and those offered by community organizations (Alba & Holdaway, 2013; Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010; Long, 2015). I chose to stay at each site for extended periods of time so that I could become aware of the dynamics of the school environment, such as how classes are scheduled, the manner in which students

enroll in the school, and the way staff work with refugee students. This extended time at these two sites allowed me to understand the fabric of the school community, as I became more aware of the history, culture, and politics of the school leaders, staff members, and students.

The sections that follow focus on introducing the two unique research sites, Eastdale school district in Central Texas, and Vrede College in Meyland, Netherlands. In presenting the findings, I first provide contextual data that are pertinent to each distinct location, introduce some of the key research partners of the study, and discuss how their work factors into the existing systems working inside and outside of the school to support refugee students.

Eastdale Metropolitan Area, Central Texas

As described in more detail in Chapter 3, Eastdale school district is located in Central Texas, an area of the state that includes a large metropolitan area that has become a site of refugee resettlement over the last 20 years. The Eastdale school district, as its own entity, often receives newcomers, including students from other parts of Texas, the U.S., and from countries throughout the world. However, with a growing population and the presence of two resettlement agencies in the area, many refugees and displaced students have enrolled in Eastdale schools over the last five years.

The Global Campus: “I love working here.” In the Eastdale school district, the Global Campus caters to students who have recently arrived and have never attended school in the U.S. Students are able to enroll the school if they are between the ages of 14 and 16 and they demonstrate a documented need for English language support. The school, which opened in the early 2000s, has typically enrolled a student population of

250 to 350 students, of whom approximately 80 percent identify as Hispanic or Latinx.

For this research project, I conducted an interview with one of the members of the school leadership team, Isaac Hidalgo.

Mr. Hidalgo, who had previously worked at the school as a teacher, decided to stay at the campus because of the students, whom he enjoyed teaching and supporting through their transition to the system of secondary school in the U.S. His description of the school alluded to the varying nature of the student population:

Our population fluctuates throughout the year, so at any point throughout the year we're going to have different kids just because we have open enrollment so literally every week this year we've enrolled four or five kids... But generally, just to give you an idea, at the end of last year, when we peeked last year, we were at 220 or 230. Now we are at 185 kids maybe. But we started off the year with 140 students.

As the campus leader discussed, the school population has fluctuated because student enrollment ebbs and flows during the academic year. These shifts in student numbers greatly affect how the school delegates staff members and provides student support.

In terms of his role at the school, Mr. Hidalgo explained in the simplest terms his attitude about working at the Global Campus, "I love working here." He highlighted the strengths of his workplace and the school setting that focused on the campus mission to support students as they integrate into the Eastdale school district. He expressed that the strength of relationships among the staff and the student and families is key to developing a strong, supportive school culture. Mr. Hidalgo understands that the experience of

integration is much harder for refugee students, who experience periods of transition and displacement in the process of arriving in a new country.

Although there are “no explicit programs” to help or support students with academics or behavior, the school employs an on-campus social worker to offer support to students and families of refugee students. Teachers or staff members work within the context of classroom interaction to support students, and the school encourages the support and guidance of the social worker and the school counselor to address potential behavior concerns. A team approach to providing support to students allows a multitude of perspectives and opinions in determining how to help a student struggling with behavior or academic issues on campus.

The story of the students remains an important part of their learning experience at the school. The students show great resiliency in their journey to the U.S., and the teachers encourage them to examine their growth as they become part of the school community. Mr. Hidalgo described it as the school program itself offering the students a “soft landing” into the U.S. public schools. Likewise, he believes that campus-wide efforts assist the students as they integrate and become familiar with life in a U.S. secondary school. Another important resource for refugee students in the Eastdale School District is a support office within the district that works specifically with refugee students.

Eastdale Refugee Support Office. The Refugee Support Office is responsible for assisting refugee students and their family members as they enter the Eastdale school system. This office is comprised of one full-time employee, Aida Danilla, the coordinator, and four part-time staff members. The coordinator described succinctly the

work and outreach of her office: “What we do is we initially meet with families at the resettlement agencies before they even arrive here, and we do that by giving them a cultural orientation.” In many ways, Ms. Danilla and her colleagues are the first people that introduce newly arrived students to the Eastdale district community, its culture, and the way schools operate.

The office presents the cultural orientation sessions in small groups, through presentations at respective schools or as workshops for the greater Eastdale community. These sessions provide an overview of schools in the U.S. and, more specifically, in Eastdale. The presentation for families represented a brief summary of school routines and policies, while the main effort of her office is to register families at the appropriate campus. The object of the sessions is to prepare parents and children for the experience of public school in Central Texas, as Ms. Danilla stated:

I have some photographs and videos. That being said, that's really the only kind of pre-intro into schooling in the US that these families get. And, as you know, schools are complicated even for those of us that were born and raised here. So, one of the things we do is we help register families once they're ready to go.

In addition, Ms. Danilla and her staff support schools that enroll refugee students. Most of the work is related to translation and language access, yet the office also organizes parent training activities that focus specifically on the needs of families and parents experiencing displacement, trauma, and refugee resettlement. As Ms. Danilla reported:

We worked with the Center for Survivors of Torture. They actually came and did a Parenting 101 class. It sounds actually really silly, but the notion is that parenting here is actually quite different than it is in many home countries. It was

a chance for parents to come together to address some of their concerns about how to support their children.

These programs and other services are integral aspects of support programs for refugee students, and the staff of the Refugee Support Office remain busy with students, families, and school staff throughout the district.

Supporting the fluctuating refugee community. The number of refugee students that Refugee Support Office serves fluctuates because of the varying number of refugees resettled in the local area. While the total number of people served decreased in 2017, the population that the office supports has become more distributed throughout the district. Ms. Danilla emphasized the fact that as the numbers decreased, the refugee student population spread to many more campuses. In the process of resettlement, refugee families receive subsidized housing for only twelve months, after which time many decide to move to more affordable housing in different parts of the city.

This mobility factor contributes to the challenge that Ms. Danilla and her colleagues face in providing support for refugee students and their families. The Eastdale Refugee Support Office focuses its efforts on those students who have recently arrived in the district through the process of resettlement. Yet, this office also monitors refugee students who continue studying in Eastdale schools, even following their progress to graduation.

Another important aspect of the Refugee Support Office is to help campuses across the district support and integrate refugee students. More specific findings from the work of this office is presented in the sections on the research questions. Additionally, a

major facet of the Refugee Support Office is coordinating incoming families with the local refugee resettlement agencies, which are discussed in the next section.

Refugee support agencies in Eastdale. Two agencies, Support Services for Refugees and Marigold of Central Texas, are the only organizations that provide direct resettlement services to refugees and asylum seekers in the greater Eastdale area. Both agencies are critical to efforts of supporting families and students as they enter schools in the Eastdale area.

Support Services for Refugees. The focus of the agency Support Services for Refugees (SSR) is to assist refugee families as they resettle in Central Texas. The program coordinator of SSR, Cynthia Wallace, explained the role of the organization in terms of refugee resettlement:

Our job, as a resettlement organization, looks fairly similar to other resettlement organizations, although we have some additional programming, like our mental health counseling program... What we provide to families, when they arrive, is one, before they arrive, we secure an apartment and furnish it, and second, we pick them up at the airport and take them to their new home. The first month that refugees are in the country, is the most intensive period. They're the most case management and supportive services going on during that time.

Employment and education of refugees: a structure of support. A key aspect of the resettlement process is employment and education (Bal & Arzubiaga, 2014; Capps et al., 2015; Esses et al., 2017). Likewise, a main objective of a resettlement agency concentrates on assisting the adult family members to find employment immediately, as Ms. Wallace clarified:

We are working really closely with the parents to get them into the workforce. For our refugees and special-immigrant-visa holders, who are usually former interpreters for the U.S. Government. Right now, they're typically Iraqis and Afghans. So, for refugees and those former interpreters, they are going to work within five weeks of having all their documents in order, which is amazing.

The resettlement process, according to Ms. Wallace, hinges upon the access to employment. Both staff members of SSR and Marigold mentioned that families that experience resettlement arrive with immediate debt, since they are required to reimburse the expenses for their airfare within a five-year period. Ms. Wallace emphasized that the sooner the families can orientate themselves and settle in their new communities, the quicker they can integrate both socially and culturally.

In fiscal year 2016, SSR served 585 refugees and people on special-immigrant visas. Of this group, Ms. Wallace mentioned that a large percentage of those experiencing resettlement are children:

Last year we served refugees and former interpreters, but that's not the only clients that we serve. We also have survivors of torture and trafficking, as well as asylum seekers. For refugees and former interpreters, specifically, the total was 585. And about 70 percent of those are women and children. There's a huge percentage that are children, it's true. And I think that is not just in part to increasing numbers of refugees being resettled, but it is specific populations that have larger families. Just for SSR, here in Eastdale, I should say, specifically, the four biggest nationalities that we served last year were Iraqis, Afghans, Syrians,

and Congolese, and all of those populations, but specifically, Afghans, Syrians, and Congolese, typically have very large families.

This reality affects the way in which SSR carries out its support and case management, especially in the case in which families tend to be larger. It becomes increasingly important to prepare parents and family members for the requirements of their children to enroll in and attend school.

The case managers for SSR, who assist the family with school, employment, and other concerns, provide direct support during the resettlement process. The program coordinator alluded to the way in which the case managers monitors the family during the first months of resettlement, especially to gauge how the family adjusts to life in Central Texas. Ms. Wallace emphasized that case managers often focus on school procedures and routines in the first months of a family's resettlement. SSR prioritizes informing refugee parents about the daily requirements for students, e.g., attendance, homework, and class schedules, and the active, engaged role parents play in their children's education.

As the case manager assures that the family is adjusting to life in Central Texas, SSR, like Marigold (see the following section), offers specific programs for cultural orientation, and collaborates with the Eastdale Refugee Support Office. These sessions review school routines and requirements, and they also provide a session on cultural orientation to Central Texas and Eastdale schools. These workshops provide useful information to the parents. Yet, as Ms. Wallace stated, case managers mostly support families with issues of employment and entering the job market. SSR also provides mental health support to refugee families and other clients in the greater Eastdale area.

Marigold of Central Texas. “Marigold,” as the organization is commonly called, provides refugee resettlement support to families in the Eastdale area and in other parts of Central Texas. David Baddeau, the program director for refugee resettlement, works with a staff of case managers and one training specialist to support individuals and families in the resettlement process. Mr. Baddeau described his work with Marigold and how his department supports refugee families:

The overall umbrella of the resettlement program at Marigold has three main components: case management, employment, and education. Basically, I oversee assistance for refugee families. From case management to employment, and employment is very important, because the adults need to find employment as soon as possible.

In the 2016 fiscal year, the resettlement program at Marigold served a total of 631 people, which included 474 refugees and 157 Cuban asylum seekers (see Table 6). In comparison, in fiscal year 2015, the agency served 593 people, while in fiscal Year 2014, it served 700 people (see Table 6). With this large group of newly arrived clients, Mr. Baddeau expressed how his staff supports families that have recently arrived to the Eastdale area, highlighting the importance of educating school staff members and teachers about the refugee experience:

Of course, it is very challenging for them. They haven’t been in a school for most of their lives. School is something new, especially schools here. They need a lot of support to get used to the school environment. We offer support to them through cultural and school orientation programs. But we also have presentations for schools, so that we can help to inform staff, teachers, and everyone about the

refugee families and the children. We have to help to educate people about the lives of these people and to give information about the background of where they come from.

As Mr. Baddeau pointed out, Marigold provides orientation programs both to schools that host refugee students and to newly arrived families and youth. These programs aim to acclimate both school staff and incoming students and family members to the routines and expectations of public school.

Supporting refugees' transition to U.S. schools. Marigold had developed a cultural orientation program, which focuses on the processes of enrolling in and attending local schools. In fact, the agency has closely collaborated with Ms. Danilla and the Refugee Support Office of the Eastdale School District. As all students must register at a school within a certain amount of time, Marigold and the school district have a long history of collaboration:

By the requirements of the federal government, all students have to enroll in school within 30 days. For our agency, Marigold, the case managers work with families to make sure the students are registered at schools. We work really closely with the Eastdale school district and Aida Danilla of the Refugee Support Office.

Marigold offers sessions throughout the year to families that have recently arrived for resettlement. These programs are usually offered on-site at Marigold, yet at times they are held in the Eastdale community. Fatima Lisson, who oversees the education components at Marigold, detailed the need for cultural orientation classes not only for parents but also for children and adolescents:

We've had a refugee cultural orientation for adolescents and children for a year and a half now, that's 18 straight months. Overall, it's been going well. We tried to cover some topics that you would want a student to know before attending school. In these sessions, we talk about the U.S. education system, we cover attendance, registration, behaviors, policies, and rules. We also cover things like recess, libraries, and how to get your food in the cafeteria.

The cultural orientation sessions are also provided to parents and adult family members. Ms. Lisson emphasized the important roles that parents and guardians play in the U.S. school system.

Over the last five years, Marigold has offered these orientation programs to adults. Ms. Lisson and her colleagues developed similar programs for students, one type of information session for adolescents and another type of program for children. During the 2016 fiscal year, the program was offered to 59 children and adolescents, and a quarter through the 2017 fiscal year, 25 students attend these programs (see Table 7). In this same time period, 394 adults attend educational programs in fiscal year 2016, while in the first quarter of fiscal year 2017, there were 103 adults that attended Marigold activities (see Table 7).

Table 6

Individuals Served by Marigold Refugee Resettlement Program

Fiscal Year	Total Number
2014	700
2015	593
2016	631

Table 7

Individuals Attending Marigold Educational Programs

Fiscal Year	Number of Youth	Number of Adults
2016	59	384
2017 (first quarter)	25	103

Collaboration among stakeholders to support refugees. During 2017 and 2018, the number of refugees resettling in Central Texas dropped dramatically because of both state and federal policies (Ura & Cameron, 2018). With the fluctuating numbers of refugees arriving in Eastdale, Ms. Lisson prepared the cultural orientation programs with the cooperation of other local organizations, including the support of Ms. Danilla and the Eastdale Refugee Support Office. Moreover, Ms. Lisson expressed her appreciation for the staff of the Refugee Support Office:

One of the staff members from the Refugee Support Office comes and she already knows the zip code of the kids that we have in the classroom. And she can technically just come and say, "You are going to this middle school. You are going to this high school." She uses the computer and shows them a visual of the school. She talks about all the support systems that is available, tutoring, her own office, and things like that.

During this research project, Marigold of Central Texas ceased refugee resettlement services, because of the severe drop in the number of refugees resettling in the area. However, this study considers the collaboration of the Eastdale Refugee Support Office,

SSR, and Marigold from 2016 to 2018, as these three organizations attempted to facilitate the enrollment, attendance, and integration of refugee families in Eastdale schools. The task is challenging, yet the collaboration among these entities aimed to assist refugee students as they integrate into new school communities.

As I entered the second phase of this project and prepared to visit the Netherlands, I withdrew from my roles as school district employee and campus administrator to become a full-time researcher. I took professional leave from my position as an assistant principal at an Eastdale school and I entered the field of educational research in the Netherlands solely as a doctoral candidate completing fieldwork. I was eager to familiarize myself with a place recognized for its approach to education and student integration, yet one that was also completely foreign to me.

Meyland, South Holland

As I was on professional leave, I relocated to Meyland not only to conduct this second part of the research project, but also to immerse myself in the Dutch culture and society. As part of the research process, I became familiar with the *Internationale Schakel Klas* (ISK), or International Link Class, program implemented in public schools throughout the country. This program aims to integrate newly arrived students into the Dutch educational system through intense preparation in Dutch language and the study of core subjects, such as math and sciences (Ingleby, Kramer, & Merry, 2013). These efforts are purely a public endeavor, as national policies on Dutch education include provisions for integration of newly arrived students through intensive language programs (Long, 2015). I visited public secondary schools with ISK program, and I spoke with campus

leadership teams about my project. I decided to base the Dutch aspect of this multi-sited project at Vrede College in Meyland.

Vrede College. As I spent more time at Vrede College, I became aware of the campus culture that seemed inclusive in accepting people from all backgrounds and cultural experiences. The campus administrator of Vrede College, Dr. Jap Burkhaart, described the school as a place with students from across the globe, and the institution carries a vision of mutual respect and inclusion:

I think we created our own image, a school that is helping children from different backgrounds, from all over the world, who are learning the Dutch language.

That's why a lot of people from abroad are coming here. But also, we want to have a peaceful school. We have sixty nationalities here, and I must say it's very good here. And there's not a lot of fighting or discrimination. We want to promote respect.

The Dutch education system. Through visits, observations, and interviews with ISK staff at Vrede College, I became more familiar with not only how their school operates, but how the Dutch system of education functions. When students from primary school enter a high school, or college, in the Netherlands, they attend *Brugklas*, which prepares students as a first year of secondary school.

In fact, a second-year student explained it most clearly to me: *Brugklas* represents an important year, which is between primary and secondary school; it is equivalent to eighth grade in the U.S. system. *Brugklas*, the year right after primary school, acts as a bridge, or *brug* in Dutch, to high school. The year has five different levels, A through E, and, depending upon academic performance, the students then decide which route to take

for secondary school. Through one of the first conversations with the program director, Esther Stijkstaad, I also understood the mission of the ISK program at Vrede College:

Well, our core business is teaching these children our language and we try to prepare them for the next step that they will have to make in our education system. Because when you are finished with our program, ISK, the International Department's part, you're supposed to make a transition to the regular system. We try to prepare the students for that. Some of the children will stay in our school because they have the capacity to get a diploma at one of the two levels offered here at Vrede College.

Those students that show sufficient academic progress are able to stay at Vrede College and choose between two diploma programs: the Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs (HAVO), which translates to Higher General Continued Education, or the Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs (VWO), which translates to Pre-University Education. The HAVO diploma prepares students for an undergraduate degree at a college of applied sciences, while a VWO diploma prepares students for an undergraduate degree at a research university. For those students who choose to forgo higher education, school teachers and counselors advise them to attend a secondary school that offers a Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs (VMBO), or Pre-vocational Secondary Education, diploma. The VMBO diploma program prepares students for a post-secondary vocational program. Ms. Stijkstaad explained how the school program works with students to find the best diploma program for their learning style and career goals:

Depending on their academic performance, the students will either stay here or we try to help them find a place at a school preparing kids for vocational education. It's a lower level than when you would have your diploma, either HAVO or VWO, at our school. This is what we try to do in general terms. Some children, they need a year in ISK. We can't teach the Dutch language up to a full 100 percent, it's not possible in a year. But, some children, who have a sense of language, good sense of language, and then with the capacity to speak English well, a year can be enough. Mathematics should also be at a rather high level. This year should be enough to make the transition to the Dutch system. For those students who need more time to learn the language, we offer them two years and that's the maximum because we are subsidized. These children are subsidized for two years, so they can't stay any longer. Two years normally is enough to bring them to this MBO, or vocational education level.

The ISK program attempts to prepare students in one or two years to transition to the Dutch secondary school system. At Vrede College, the program specifically focuses on two diploma programs, HAVO and VWO. The ISK staff has a specific mission for their short time working with students: to improve their Dutch and integrate them into the Dutch secondary school system. In this way, my observations centered on Dutch language classes and class periods with their Dutch mentor teachers.

In one ISK class, Saskia Leyden started a lesson one Friday in June 2018 on the Dutch secondary school and university system. I was observing the class, and, in fact, I found the presentation very useful to my study of secondary schools in the Netherlands. See Figure 5 for a photograph from this presentation. Ms. Leyden gave a 45-minute

presentation on the three main diploma programs in Dutch high schools: VMBO, HAVO, and VWO. This presentation was enlightening for me, because the teacher chose to inform her students, who were in their first year of Dutch, about the intricate nature of secondary schools in Holland and the rest of the country. The teacher included a visual of the secondary system (see Figure 6) to provide a brief description of the different academic levels (see Table 8).



Figure 5. Photograph from the presentation on Dutch secondary schools.

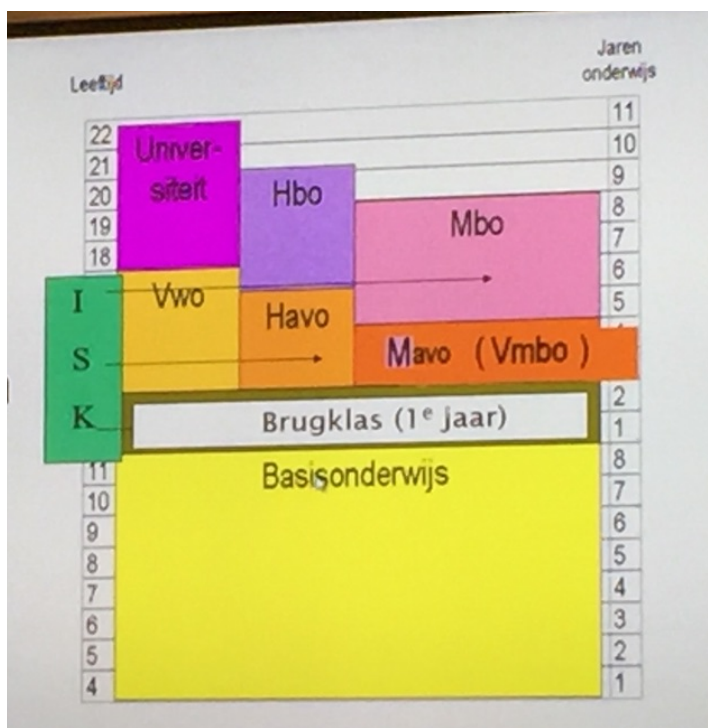


Figure 6. Diagram of the Dutch secondary school system (taken from a Presentation by Ms. Leyden).

Table 8

Secondary School Diploma Programs in Dutch Schools

Diploma Program	Years of Program	Student Age	Leads To
VMBO	4	11/12 – 15/16	MBO or HAVO
HAVO	5	11/12 – 16/17	HBO or VWO
VWO	6	11/12 – 17/18	VWO

Selecting Vrede College as a research site provided many beneficial outcomes to this research project. The institution itself is known as a progressive school with one of the highest international student populations throughout South Holland. The school has a

positive campus culture with high student attendance and participation, and the ISK program has begun to coordinate activities with local organizations to provide extracurricular activities for students, such as a summer theater program.

Since I stayed on the campus for an extended amount of time, I was able to have multiple conversations with teachers, staff, students, visitors, and parents. Additionally, Ms. Stijkstaad has collaborated with a local organization, the Immigrant and Refugee Support Network (IRSN), that supports refugees and displaced people in the area of Meyland. I spoke with the coordinator of this program about efforts to support families as they resettle in South Holland.

Immigrant and Refugee Support Network. Based in Meyland, the IRSN works with families to provide support as they get accustomed to life in the Netherlands. The IRSN assists refugees, immigrants, and displaced people as they integrate and become accustomed to life in the Netherlands. IRSN initially assisted Polish families who had relocated to Meyland and South Holland. However, over time the organization has expanded services to support refugees, migrants, and other displaced people. through an increasing number of volunteers from different countries, such as Russia, Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria. The support often includes assistance with registration, enrollment, and applications at local institutions, such as schools, hospitals and municipal offices.

Patrizia Anziak, the coordinator for volunteer programs at IRSN, explained that the organization's efforts in terms of school-age children focus on support for secondary school students. She offered a description of what students face when they enter a new

country, either as refugees, immigrants, or transnational students when they arrive in a Dutch high school:

Overall, it's difficult for students... different school, different country, different people. That's why we started this project. When you are older, entering high school, of course, it's much more difficult to learn the language than when entering primary school. I know that schools, they offer a lot of help with extra lessons, and other programs. But still, for some children you need to do a little bit more.

Collaboration with Vrede College. Specifically, Ms. Anziak worked with schools, like Vrede College, to develop a support system for students. This program, entitled Young Ambassadors, functions as a mentor program for newly arrived students to become familiar with the school environment as well as with Dutch society and culture:

With the Young Ambassadors programs, students new to the country have a buddy, somebody who is the whole day with them, speaking only Dutch. And I think it's very good. And I think it's also what the school should do. For each child from a different country, the school should find a Dutch student that can spend a certain amount of time each day. Because it's the easiest way to learn language. Not at the class, not with the teacher, but just being with the people from the same age.

Ms. Anziak emphasized the fact that integration into Dutch schools and, in general, into Dutch society, hinges upon attaining a higher Dutch language proficiency. In this way, Anziak posited that students from countries outside of the Netherlands face both a

language barrier and a form of institutional bias that prevents these students from pursuing the higher diploma programs. Student mentor programs, such as Young Ambassadors, attempted to mitigate these issues while familiarizing refugee students with the school systems and campus cultures.

The inclination toward vocational tracks. Through observations of the work of IRSN and interaction with Ms. Anziak, I came upon a key factor in the integration of refugee students into the Dutch school system. Because students have limited language proficiency and little experience in Dutch education, student matriculation tends to naturally progress toward the lower, more vocational training aspects of secondary school. Ms. Anziak provided her opinion of how many students who originate from outside of the Netherlands tend to land in VMBO programs for their secondary school diplomas:

Because what the problem is, in my eyes, is that ... in Holland at the age of 12 when you have to choose the high school program, this *middelbare* school, you have different levels. More importantly, it's a for your entire life. Of course, you can begin very low, and you can make all the steps to HAVO or VWO. But it will take you years to do it. But, if you have a good education, if you are smart, intelligent, and you only don't speak Dutch very well, very often your skills are estimated lower than they actually are. I think it's a pity that the children of refugees and immigrants end up in this lower part of Dutch high schools.

When children and adolescents are undervalued by their teachers and school leaders, aspects of their social and cultural capital are not only undervalued, but they are misjudged and depreciated.

Through a framework that respects and celebrates cultural and social capital from diverse backgrounds (Yosso, 2005), the community benefits by finding value across a spectrum of traits, experiences, and customs. Each student arriving in an Eastdale classroom or an ISK program at Vrede College delivers aspects of not only cultural capital, but also intellectual capital, developed through formal or informal schooling and offered to classroom environment as source of knowledge within the constellation of ecologies (Burke, 2000; Freire et al., 2014; Guajardo et al., 2016). In this way, Ms. Anziak of IRSN believes refugee and immigrant children are prevented from pursuing advanced academic achievements because of limited language abilities in the first years of secondary school and the lack of appropriate forms of social or cultural wealth.

The work of IRSN is centered upon assisting newcomers to integrate into Dutch society, so that children and you attend school without delay or obstacles, while adults successfully find employment and become more familiar with available resources. Yet, an additional role IRSN plays is providing parents and families with a voice to advocate for their children's education. For institutions such as IRSN, program activities include supporting refugees and immigrants in the transition to Dutch society. According to Ms. Anziak, the main reason that individuals and families arrive in the Netherlands is the access to employment; jobs are better paid and more available than in many newcomers' home countries.

However, the adjustment to schools can be difficult at times, as Ms. Anziak described through her work with both clients and volunteers: "Sometimes we have questions about education in general, about how it's arranged here in Holland. And you can hear quite a lot, some complaints from parents. They think that the child is much

smarter than the school feels” (personal communication, October 12, 2018). Specific programs of IRSN inform families about the details of the Dutch education, and Ms. Anziak collaborates with schools to support parent involvement.

IRSN collaborates with different schools across Meyland, and Ms. Anziak highlighted Vrede College as a campus that plans and coordinates ways to aid students as they integrate into school communities. Ms. Anziak collaborates with Ms. Stijkstaad at Vrede College in coordinating both information sessions and outreach. This partnership is beneficial because the school has a strong Polish cohort, which remains the largest newcomer group in the school.

Conclusion: Systems and Organizations and Refugee Support

This chapter presented the findings of this study in relation to the two sites and the organizations in these locations that support refugees and their families in the integration process. The schools, such as Global Campus and Vrede College, and the organizations, including the Eastdale Refugee Support Office, SSR, Marigold, and IRSN, assist refugee students and their families as they adjust to new schools and become part of new communities. The schools operate with systems in place to familiarize refugee students with the campus environments. School administrators spoke highly of the progress refugee students make in relation to their academic achievement. In the first phase of resettlement, community organizations, like SSR and Marigold, offer orientation programs for both adults and children so that they can adjust to these new settings. Moreover, the organizations implement practices and policies that focus on the period of transition and adjustment in the resettlement process.

At the heart of this study, concerned individuals like Ms. Anziak and Ms. Danilla, as well as the students and families themselves, represent important stakeholders in school improvement initiatives. However, they are also part of a community of educators and learners who benefit from a collaborative sense of support that both sustains and strengthens a school community (Guajardo et al., 2016; Warren, 2011). Many of the organizations in this study focus on acclimating refugee students to the school system in the host country, so that the students can attend classes, advance their studies, and integrate into the school environment. However, as Ms. Anziak pointed out, in some cases the cultural wealth of students with diverse backgrounds and experiences remains underappreciated. This concept of the equitable inclusion of the cultural wealth of refugee students represents a key finding that the following chapter also considers.

In the next chapters, I continue to present the findings within the framework of ecologies of knowing through reflections, narratives, and observations from this research study. In the following section, Chapter Five, I provide answers to the five research questions in terms of the way both schools and community organizations support refugee students in the process of integration.

V. EMERGING STORIES OF CHANGE AND SUPPORT: FINDINGS ON SELF, ORGANIZATION, AND COMMUNITY

In this chapter, I present specific aspects of the findings in relation to the five research questions presented earlier. The analysis of data collected from this study presents insights into the way school and community leaders work together to promote student integration. In answering the research questions of this study, I use the findings to provide realizations on the process of the integration of refugee students by presenting specific narratives and experiences present in the interviews, observations, and reflective fieldnotes of the research experience. I aim to show how these understandings reflect the perspectives of self, organization, and community, as discussed by Guajardo et al. (2016).

This study extended over more than a two-year period. My involvement in Central Texas was divided between my time as a practitioner and as a researcher, as I spent more than fourteen months in the process of developing this study and collecting data. In Eastdale school district, the data collection process had ebbs and flows, as my own work schedule at a public school determined how often I could organize observations or conduct interviews. On the other hand, the phase of the project in the Netherlands provided me with a much more unfettered view of a school's approach to student integration, as I had unlimited access to ISK classes and campus staff at Vrede College. In Holland, I was solely a researcher, so the research was conducted in a shorter period, approximately twelve months.

These findings address the research questions and are organized into themes and short narratives, which developed through multiple interactions with campus stakeholders at the two sites of the study. In the data analysis process, I combed through interview

transcripts, fieldnotes, archival documents, and photographs. As I coded the information gathered from the research, themes arose from the data in regard to the efforts of school and community leaders to support the integration process for refugee students. The information gathered from these leaders, in addition to incidental conversations with students and other staff members of the schools, provided links from the views of the individual (the self) to the school (the organization) and the greater school environment (the community). In this way, the study utilizes the ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016) to determine how my observations from the ethnographic research process exist within the perspectives of self, organization, and community for both educators and students at the sites of the study.

In all, multiple sources of knowledge and experience influenced this study, as I observed and spoke with stakeholders from both schools and support organizations. These research partners were involved in the daily support of refugee students in campus environments, both of which were distant and different from one another. The multi-sited nature of the study offered different views of and approaches to student support and integration. The ability to study practices and policies promoting refugee integration in completely different locations allowed my research to examine the issue from different perspectives, most notably from those of an educator, researcher, and community member.

The Importance of the Issue of Refugee Student Integration

In the previous chapters, I detailed the ways in which the research questions for this project examine school-based support programs for refugee and displaced students. In the following sections of this chapter, I present specific findings in relation to each of

the five research questions for the study, beginning with the first research question: Why are the issues of programs and policies for refugee integration important for school leadership and stakeholders?

In both Central Texas and South Holland, school and community leaders found ways to support students who experience displacement. As stated in Chapter 2, displacement affects how students become part of a campus community and how they participate in their education (Banki, 2012; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011). I spoke with Nassrine Stifadi, a support consultant for Eastdale schools, who provided a workshop for school leaders and staff working with refugee students. Ms. Stifadi emphasized how school leaders benefit from these workshops by familiarizing themselves with aspects of displacement. Moreover, she mentioned how displacement represents a common experience involving stress and trauma:

When I say refugee and when I'm talking about the particular needs of refugees, keep in mind the idea of displacement. Sometimes we use the word refugee to describe people who flee a natural disaster. Displacement is a common experience across the board, no matter what title you use. Any type of displacement can be jarring and traumatizing. Often times it's proceeded by long periods of really stressful situations like war or political conflict. And sometimes it can be really immediate like a natural disaster like the earthquake in Haiti. So, I think there is that common experience of displacement.

In both locations, teachers, school leaders, and support staff recognized this concept of a common experience of transition and displacement in their efforts to assist students in the process of integrating into a school community. The findings show that

staff members attempt to mitigate aspects of trauma caused by displacement by guiding the students through the transition process. In both Central Texas and South Holland, staff members of both schools and community organizations informed students and family members about the way education acts as a bridge to cultural and social involvement in larger community. The following section describes how one administrator specifically worked to inform the campus community about the difficult experience that refugee students face in process of resettlement.

Mr. Hidalgo and the Concept of Cultural Inclusion

Mr. Hidalgo, of the Global Campus in Eastdale, perceived his primary leadership role as one of supporting students in all aspects of school life. Within daily interactions with both students and staff, Mr. Hidalgo acknowledged that refugee students need specific types of support on a routine basis. As students grow accustomed to class schedules and expectations for the school environment, refugee students receive support from teachers, support staff, and administrators. In his time as both a teacher and campus leader at the Global Campus, Mr. Hidalgo recounted many instances of meeting with fellow staff members in campus support meetings to find ways to assist students who experience difficulty transitioning to life at the Global Campus. Through his accounts, he recalled a need for campus staff to become more culturally responsive to newcomers. Mr. Hidalgo showed how inclusive policies and practices increase opportunities for integration for refugee students.

This concept of cultural inclusion appeared to be an intrinsic part of how the Global Campus welcomes students to its campus. Mr. Hidalgo stated that the school prides itself in accepting students from all over the world, from different ethnic and

socio-economic backgrounds, into the campus community. In fact, he described the cultural and technical components of schooling that assist in student integration:

As a campus, the teachers and leadership team try to set an empathetic tone with our more vulnerable students. I think it's important that we let new people to our school know that we're familiar with experiences of displacement and adjustment; we know what you're going through as a refugee or a newcomer, we know your needs, and we're going to work with you so that you can start achieving success [within] the education system here. We support the students so that they can get through that initial stress or shock of coming and resettling in the U.S. I think that's a big part of how we support new students. There is definitely a cultural component, but, also, we have a lot of systems in place to be able to provide support in specific ways, like tutoring, academic support, and extracurricular activities. We also provide personalized scheduling to students in advanced grade levels, so that they are on track to graduate. We're trying to be responsive as a school so that we provide a of soft landing for the students in the U.S. education system.

The practices that Mr. Hidalgo described, including promoting diversity and familiarizing educators with the process of transition and resettlement, as well as the technical aspects of schooling (i.e., personalized scheduling and academic tutoring), represent specific efforts to assist students to integrate into the new educational system. School leaders that identify and plan for ways to support refugee students' integration are setting these students up for success in secondary schools.

At the Global Campus, the idea of supporting the process of refugee integration was connected to the school's mission of supporting the international community of the Eastdale school district. As the school relies upon inclusive and culturally responsive policies and practices, the Global Campus attempted to provide a welcoming environment for refugee students and other newcomers. Further, student engagement and support were dialogical processes, as the school leaders, staff, and fellow students learned about and included new cultures that became part of the campus community.

As an aspect of the development of the organization's ecologies of knowing, Mr. Hidalgo emphasized that informing the school community about the experiences of adjustment and trauma faced by refugee students represented an important aspect of making the newly arrived students feel welcome on campus. This effort that a school leadership team puts forward in creating an inclusive, accepting campus community began with culturally inclusive practices, such as recognizing and celebrating diversity and students' different cultural backgrounds. Mr. Hidalgo also felt that this leadership effort creates a school environment that offers the potential for inclusion and academic success. In this way, a key finding for this research is that campus and community leaders promote inclusion when they inform stakeholders about the predicaments that refugees and displaced students face in the process of resettlement and integration.

Informing the Community about Refugee Resettlement

In speaking with many of the research partners, I discovered a common concern: school and community leaders stressed the importance of familiarizing school staff, students, and the greater community with the arduous journey and countless obstacles that refugee families overcome during the process of resettlement and integration. In this

way, research partners intended to develop ecologies of knowledge (Guajardo et al., 2016) throughout the school community to support refugee students and families. As fellow teachers, staff, and campus leaders discovered ways to assist students in the process of resettlement, this support became shared throughout the campus community and the larger network of organizations, such as Marigold, that work with refugee students and their families.

Marigold offers many services to refugee families, such as providing case managers for families and support for adults seeking employment. This organization, as well as SSR, provide a crucial service to inform the local ecologies of knowing: they engage in community development as they inform schools, support agencies, and community members about the aspects of refugee resettlement. From the standpoint of his role as program manager of refugee resettlement at Marigold, Mr. Baddeau emphasized the fact that many teachers and peers have difficulty in discerning what refugee students endure to start over in a host country:

You know, before, the people in the school were not well informed about refugees. They were not aware of the places that many of these kids came from. In a way, everything is new, really for all the people involved, especially culturally. There are so many people that have never met someone from another country, let alone a refugee student. It's a shock to the teachers and students of the school.

Community leaders like Mr. Baddeau gave immediate assistance to refugee families through case management and training programs, the two main practices of refugee support at Marigold. These organizations provide a further service of educating

school staff and the community about what refugee students face as they integrate into school campuses. This study found that, through these practices, community partners engaged school staff and promoted a more inclusive world view. With this engaged support, teachers, administrators, and all educators observed the situation of refugee students from a different perspective, one which encouraged people to familiarize themselves with that which is both known and unknown in their local community.

Ms. Stijkstaad and Aspects of Shared Knowledge

For Ms. Stijkstaad, the ISK program coordinator at Vrede College, it was essential for her colleagues to develop shared sources of knowledge about the life experiences of refugee students in the ISK program. For her, a key element that staff needed to consider was the variety of hardships faced by students arriving at the schools. Many students overcame difficulties to arrive in the Netherlands and attend the school. As part of an institutional attitude and through efforts of Ms. Stijkstaad, ISK staff members appeared welcoming and supportive to all the students enrolling at the campus. As Ms. Stijkstaad noted, the task of integrating the students into the school community means considering the personal and emotional concerns that the students face:

As you can imagine, a lot of our children deal with a variety of problems. Especially the refugees. They deal with loss of parents and family members. They have to suffer through long journeys across many countries. Some of them came here all by themselves. Some of them came from Syria. These stories can be very tragic. Children that have lost their family during their flight, during their escape, as they fled to a safe country. Some of them were sent by their family in order to be safe and the family was supposed to come later. However, it often

doesn't happen, because the family gets stuck in Syria or Turkey or another country. Many times, these family members got stuck at the border of Turkey and Syria. These children are seventeen years old or so. They don't know what their family or what their parents are doing. Whether they're safe or not, how long it will take before they can come to Holland, and other social problems of getting a life started here in Holland. When the parents are here, it's not much easier. Many parents of the refugee families can't find a job easily, so from day one there's not enough money for the family to survive.

As their experience at Vrede College begins, the refugee students have already overcome the challenges of arriving in a new country without speaking the language. In this way, the first weeks of school can be quite intense for someone new to the country. Ms. Stijkstaad provided an overview of the first weeks of school, during which time school staff intended to develop a classroom community that allows for social interactions and trust to be gained among the students:

For the class with the kids who just arrived, the beginners, they don't speak any Dutch. They all come from different parts of the world, you name it, we have a child from that country. Sometimes our classes are filled up to eighteen students, which is quite small when you consider this class to a regular one, which usually has 25 to 30 pupils. They all come from different places. The first day you feel very alone because everything is new, and you don't speak the language.

Ms. Stijkstaad clearly emphasized that the students arrive at the school from disparate lands and backgrounds. Yet, the classroom teachers demonstrated an attempt to use common experiences and shared ecologies of knowing to construct a classroom

community. For example, I observed Ms. Leyden, who taught one of the introductory classes, find ways to make a connection among the students. Firstly, she sought out information about students interests and their hobbies, to help the students make connections. Ms. Leyden encouraged the students to make informational posters about themselves, and these visual representations become a permanent fixture of the classroom. Likewise, both she and other teachers had the students give presentations about themselves that included information about their cultural background and their home country. Ms. Stijkstaad described how the feelings of isolation are replaced by a feeling of belonging when efforts like these are made early on in the process:

Something special happens in the first couple of days because everyone sees that everyone is in the same position. The first week at our department it's not about, welcome at school take your books and we're going to start. It's more about getting to know each other. The first couple of days we invent all kinds of activities in order to get to know each other. Activities where you have to communicate, maybe in English or even in your own language. The Polish children will find other Polish children, and the Libyan or the Greek or the Syrian will find children from their country. That's how it goes, that's how children begin to interact with one another. That's a fact that we have to deal with, and this sense of familiar interaction helps to build the classroom community. Then as soon as the real lessons start, you have your Dutch language teacher who teaches most of the lessons, that teacher is their mentor teacher. Each week, a pupil has 25, 24, 25 hours of instruction, and 13 of these 25 hours are taught by the mentor. This teacher has a lot of time to mold and form this class into a very social group.

From my experience observing the ISK classes and student interaction, I found that the social connection promoted by classroom activities acted as a mechanism to include students in the class community. Additionally, the mentor teacher, who instructs the students for more than half of their classroom time during the week, not only had a large amount of time to work on the students' proficiency of Dutch but could also develop a more involved class community through social activities. As the students became more involved in discussions with both the teacher and one another, I noticed that the students participated more in classroom activities and they seemed more engaged in their learning.

Overall, I found that both school staff and community partners support refugee students as they attempt to integrate into school communities. For my study, it was noteworthy to discover that, in general, part of the support included orientation initiatives for both parents and students so that they would be familiar with school policies and routines. Moreover, the findings show how refugee support entailed processes of educating others, including teachers, support staff, and even students, about the aspects of trauma and adjustment pertinent in the experience of refugee resettlement and integration.

Teachers and staff working with refugee students often used classroom activities that relied on social and interpersonal skills to engage the class and provide a foundation for shared interactions. Furthermore, these classroom-based efforts increased student interaction with one another and participation in lesson activities. For this reason, I found that teachers aimed to build classroom community through social interaction and engaged discovery of cultural elements that students brought into the learning environment. The teachers made efforts to incorporate the perspectives and cultural wealth of the students to foment the shared ecologies of knowing for all members of the cohort.

These efforts also extend to members of schools and organizations that are concerned with issues of community development. Guajardo, Guajardo, and Casaperalta (2008) posited that activist research responds closely to community development, in terms of how critical inquiry delves into the intersections of community, school, culture, and society. Mr. Baddeau, as well as other research partners, aimed to actively support students and families in the process of integration into schools and the society of the host country. The next section of findings considers how intercultural practices relate to the integration of refugee students in school communities.

Intercultural Practices and Student Integration

In earlier chapters of the study, I asserted that school communities benefit from intercultural practices that promote diversity and an inclusive campus culture. The findings in this section describe efforts by school and community leaders to address inclusivity through intercultural strategies in school environments. In this section, I provide results of this study that address the second research question: What are the most effective practices that school and community leaders employ to promote an intercultural approach to education that encourages dialogue and mutual respect among all stakeholders?

Educators in both Central Texas and South Holland used some common instructional practices in their classrooms. For example, I observed collaborative learning approaches classrooms in both locations, such as the use of student dyads or table groups (see Figure 7). Through this approach, students become familiar with one another and develop friendships. In fact, a primary finding at both sites was the consistent use of collaborative learning groups for classroom activities.



Figure 7. Students working in table groups in an ISK class.

Partner and table activities allowed students to communicate and interact with one another throughout lessons. According to teachers and support staff, students developed friendships through these social interactions in the classroom. Students new to a school environment often struggle to adjust to new routines; when students make friends through social interactions in classroom, they become more familiar and comfortable at the campus. Ms. Lisson, of Marigold, mentioned that meeting new people and making friends represent challenges for people who experience refugee resettlement:

For the newcomers, for example, if we take a student that comes from the Middle East and spent time in a refugee camp before they came here to the US, friendship has been very limited for them. You can make friends, but you might also leave that camp, and some don't want to be attached too much. And when they come here, they are in a place where that's hopefully the last stop, where they will spend the long years of schooling. But they're never too sure, because there is the feeling that the family might relocate at a moment's notice.

The cycle of flight and relocation for refugee and displaced students affects their sense of place, their sense of stability in one location (Block, Cross, Riggs, & Gibbs, 2014; Fazel et al., 2015). For these students, this new location becomes a place of transition, possibly a difficult transition. In fact, Ms. Lisson recounted the difficulty of becoming part of the new community, especially for adolescents and adults:

That's what we get in the classrooms, too. No one would like to just leave their neighbors and the life that you started somewhere with the friends and all of that, and just move away. That's what you knew. You already had a life that you started, and you want to go back there eventually. You're familiar to that environment. Now here, no one knows you. You're just that other person and you need to start over. I think that's where it's really tough.

Through the use of dialogue, shared memories, and interactions, both Ms. Lisson and teachers at schools in both sites encouraged participants and students to find a commonality in the process of resettlement. Within the context of schools, Ms. Stijkstaad, the program coordinator at Vrede College, also recognized the importance of involving refugee students in daily classroom activities. In this way, the findings of this

study show that sustained efforts to place students in learning groups that utilize social interaction helped students overcome the challenge of becoming part of the new school community. Collaboration among students in working table groups added to a collective, cooperative atmosphere in the classrooms. Additionally, the increase in language access represented a practice that supports the integration of refugee students.

The Role of Language Access in Family and Student Involvement

For many of the research partners, language access represented a key component to both family and student participation in campus activities. In this regard, Ms. Danilla of the Eastdale Refugee Support Office mentioned that certain campuses excel in their ability to meet the needs of their families by providing information that was accessible to those who speak a language other than English (e.g., providing translators or print versions of communications in a variety of languages):

I think the biggest shock is often around language. The schools that do really well to me are the ones that address language access first and foremost. I think having staff on site that meet the language needs of your students and your parents is a big deal.

The access to language in a school environment remains a key component to community building for both students and families. When school leaders provide different language resources, they increase the opportunities for participation and engagement by both students and family members. In fact, Ms. Wallace of Support Services for Refugees (SSR) recognized innovations with language access for students at Eastdale schools:

Whatever the case maybe, so it's great that they are organizing themselves better and better. I think we see improvements every year. In Eastdale, they are starting

to offer, I think it's the first year, but they're starting to offer a few other foreign languages for students to learn. That's a different side of bridging that cultural gap that may exist otherwise, but I think it's fantastic and Arabic is one of those language. Currently, the vast majority of the families that we serve are Arabic speakers.

These developments proved useful from the perspectives of both Ms. Danilla of the Refugee Support Office and Ms. Wallace of the SSR. When schools incorporate more opportunities for language access for the community, the campus leadership employs practices with a more intercultural approach. As language access increases, more students, parents, and family members attend school functions and have the opportunity to exchange aspects of cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) and forms of shared ecologies of knowledge (Guajardo et al., 2016). In this way, the findings from this study demonstrate that language access allows more participation and involvement in the school community. The next topic concerns the way teachers positively support student integration through sustained application of intercultural practices in the learning environment.

The Crucial Role of Teachers

The role of teachers represents an important finding in this study, particularly in how it relates to my second research question. In both South Holland and Eastdale, school leaders, community representatives, and students, themselves, emphasized how crucial teachers were in the support and integration of refugee students. At both sites, school leaders recounted how the experience of teachers who worked with refugee students over the years helped to create classrooms that welcomed students from different

countries as well as from varying social and cultural backgrounds. In this discussion on the role of teachers in relation to intercultural practices, I first present the perspectives of a key research partner, Mr. Hidalgo.

Mr. Hidalgo, the Eastdale school leader, was specific in his affirmation of the role of teachers in creating an inclusive classroom community:

Student success and engagement all start at the teacher level, it really does. I don't think that there's anything that as a school, like a campaign or like a practice that kind of the school does, at least we don't have that here. We've always felt that it starts with the teachers and the way that the teachers cater to their class. Because, literally, the first five minutes, that first exposure of the classroom in the United States. I think our teachers understand this idea, and it is part of our institutional knowledge.

The Global Campus benefits from having an organizational structure that reinforces core beliefs, such as inclusion and acceptance. Mr. Hidalgo mentioned that the school leadership team reminds staff about this notion at the beginning of the school year or at times when needed:

Sometimes school leaders talked with teachers about being inclusive and culturally responsive at the beginning of the year, and the teachers understand that it's important to include students in all classroom and school activities. We need to show our students that we're here for them and we're here to support them. International students who are new to the U.S., that's the reason for this school, and I think that fact is what goes a long way to include students in the school community.

Mr. Hidalgo consistently emphasize the importance of classroom teachers, as both mentors and support figures in the lives of the students. “It all starts at the teacher level,” he believes. This concept does not absolve administrators, librarians, and other school staff from affecting the degree to which a campus uses both intercultural and inclusive practices, because in fulfilling their own roles, these other staff members affect the nature of the school community. Yet among all staff members, teachers spend the most amount of time with the students and they act as purveyors of cultural knowledge for students new to the host country. Observations and interactions at both research sites revealed that students view teachers as representative of the educational experience of the host country, and thus teachers made efforts to build rapport with students.

At Vrede College, students in the ISK program spend more than half of their instructional time with their mentor teachers during the school week. This immersion in language also provides them with cultural understandings, mostly through interactions led by the teacher. The textbook, *Zebra* (see Figure 8), includes many readings on Dutch society and history, and cultural components are often included in presentations by the teachers.

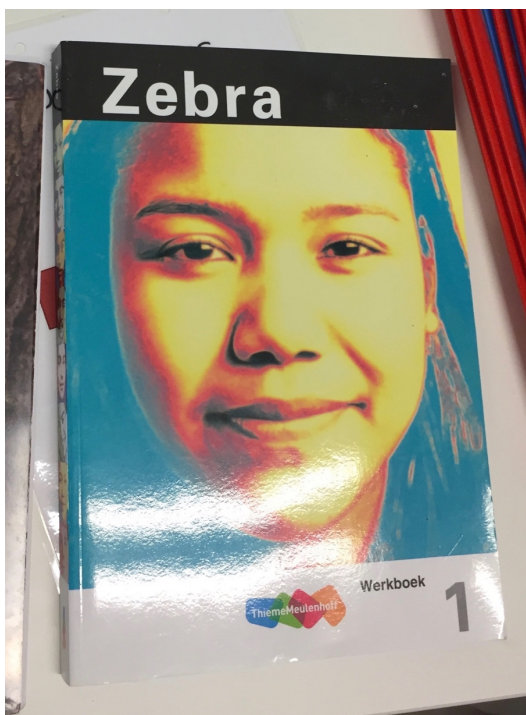


Figure 8. The *Zebra* textbook used by students in the ISK program.

For the students new to the Netherlands, the ISK teachers presented aspects of Dutch culture during class discussions and activities. In fact, during observations of one class over the two semesters, the teacher often used the text *Lekker Nederlands* as a classroom shared-reading activity; the text describes cultural elements of the Netherlands and the language itself, and students in groups of three or four would discuss the text after prompts from the teacher.

Strengthening Class Community Through Intercultural Practices

During conversations and observations of classes in the ISK program, I noticed instances when teachers utilized intercultural experiences to strengthen the sense of classroom community. During one lesson, Ms. Leyden had started a conversation about an end-of-year celebration; however, Ramadan had already begun, and some students

would be fasting during daylight hours as part of Ramadan. One of students advised the teacher that he could discuss the dates of Ramadan and its history. The teacher and some students asked about the daily routine and the history of Ramadan. Ultimately, the class unanimously decided to postpone the end-of-year celebration until after Ramadan. The interaction was spontaneous and deftly facilitated by the teacher, so that the classroom represented a safe space for intercultural exchange and inquiry.

Also, the ISK program provides the students with an understanding of Dutch society and culture through an extracurricular activity. Vrede College works with a local organization to offer a theater-based program that familiarize students with Dutch youth who are the same age as the students. The program begins in the spring and lasts through the summer, so that ISK students spend extensive time with Dutch students outside of the school setting. Ms. Stijkstaad discussed this program and she provided an idea of how the program helps students integrate into Dutch society:

The program runs from February through the summer holiday. ISK students and even some children from outside of the school were invited to join the program. A lot of our children, actually most of them, they say, "Teacher, I've never really met a Dutch person," because they come from lower socio-economic areas in Meyland. What was extra good about this program was that they will be in contact with Dutch children as well. I joined one or two of these classes where they all were working together. It's fantastic to see because it works very well and of course, why not? We do not have a lot of Dutch people at this school. Even at our regular part of the school we have children that are second or third generation. They mostly come from Turkey, Morocco, Syria, and some of the former Dutch

colonies. We have about 120 children, let's say that 100 of them, they make the connection to the regular system. That makes our school very international in the sense that we are Dutch school, but the children come from all over the world.

I observed some of the first informational sessions about the summer program during the late spring. Many children were excited to sign up for the summer class. When classes resumed in late August, some of the students still participated in workshops at the theater. Teachers in the ISK program actively supported the integration process as they encouraged their students to partake in these programs. Overall, teachers at both sites were essential to students engaging and to participating in classroom activities; specific stories, interactions, and reflections from my fieldnotes are presented in the following parts of this discussion, all of which demonstrate the way teachers support refugee students through intercultural approaches to education.

Developing Practices to Support Student Integration

School improvement constantly seeks aspects of change to enact positive aspects of reform within the environment of a school or campus. During this research, I observed many aspects of school improvement that developed organically, originating in the classroom and then spreading out across an entire organization. For this study, I gave careful attention to initiatives that had an intercultural approach (i.e., they encouraged the mutual exchange of cultural wealth and experience within the context of social interactions grounded in the school environment). In the following section, I describe findings of two programs based on interpersonal, social interaction with peers in the ISK classes.

The Taal Maatjes program. Overall, the ISK program is intense, as students continuously increase their proficiency in Dutch while also studying other subjects, such as math, geography, and English. One interesting practice observed in the ISK program is the peer-mentoring program. As an intercultural strategy, this program encourages dialogue and interaction within the context of academic support from peers. Ms. Leyden described the effort, “We have *Taal Maatjes*, or Language Buddies. If a child’s parents are too busy or they have no contact with Dutch people, we can arrange for a *Taal Maatje*.” These peer tutors are usually the same age or a bit older than the student and they meet either on campus during breaks or after school to assist with language practice. The students even play games and interact, and some plan things to do around town. This initiative helps newly arrived students to become more familiar and integrate into the school community.

During class observations, conversations, and time spent around the school, I was able to perceive how teachers approached aspects of cultural inclusion. For some teachers, the process of student integration happens only at school, when specific topics are discussed in the classroom environment. For others, it might be a suggestion to become more familiar with Dutch society if considering the broader concept of integration, as Ms. Leyden mentioned: “I tell them always to talk Dutch as much as possible, and see if they can go, for instance, on a football club or something, join a club, a Dutch club, so that they can make Dutch friends.” As all students cannot go out and find a club, school-based programs, such as *Taal Maatje*, provide a way for students to integrate into Dutch society through meeting and interacting with peers on campus.

The Young Ambassadors program. A similar program for ISK students at Vrede College exists as a partnership with IRSN. This initiative also pairs students with peers of a similar age, yet the Young Ambassadors program recruits former ISK students to mentor new students. Ms. Anziak described the development of the program to help students integrate into the school and Dutch society:

Now I have a really good cooperation with Vrede College, because we have a program called Young Ambassadors. We have volunteers which are older than 18 but younger than 30. And they can provide whatever help you need for ISK students, who are new to Holland, so they don't speak Dutch. Parents sometimes are working long hours, so the students are often alone at home. They don't know what to do with their free time. Our volunteers want to help them to find sport or other hobbies which they can use to be better known here in Meyland.

The cooperation between IRSN and Vrede College focuses on locating resources to assist the integration of students into both the school community and Dutch society. These examples of collaboration heighten the efforts of school leaders to assist students new to the country. Similar partnerships are underway in Eastdale, with more community-based organizations offering resources for refugee students. In fact, Ms. Wallace of SSR mentioned a similar project at Eastdale school, which was based on a peer-mentoring support program. Ms. Wallace considered the social facet of this program as an important component for integrating into the school community:

I think that peer and mentor programs for refugee kids, especially the older ones, the middle schoolers and the high schoolers, these programs really help, it's kind of a social component within the school groups. These types of interactions help

students figure out how they fit in or what they should wear to school. Students often wonder what they should or should not say to friends or people at school, and these social-based programs help students to become comfortable in the new school environment.

More importantly, while these programs support a cultural connection among people from similar backgrounds, like the Young Ambassadors program, they function to build a social connection within the context of the school.

In conclusion, teachers and staff in the ISK program at Vrede College and at schools in Eastdale support refugee students in the school environment. Much of this work centers upon language acquisition, academic instruction, and preparation for the rest of secondary school. Yet, school leaders and staff recognize that refugee and displaced students require additional help, especially in this area of both social and cultural integration. In discussing this concept, Ms. Leyden reflected on her own parent's interaction with Chinese culture in Indonesia:

What I like about ISK classes is that you have all those cultures and they learn from each other, and I also learn from them. We talk about Dutch culture, about things that are typical Dutch and that they would have to know to understand things. I always give the example, my father worked in Indonesia for three years, a long time ago. And he went to eat at the house of a Chinese family. They gave him three eggs, baked eggs, a Chinese specialty, so my father ate them. Then, the family started to bake three more eggs. We learn in Holland that you have to finish what's on your plate, because that's polite. However, what he didn't know was that for Chinese people, you have to have more than enough. If everything is

finished, then you weren't a good host. So, my father after eighteen eggs, he was like, "I'm going to be sick." So, that's a very good example of how important it is to know about the culture. I give the students an assignment to tell about such a story, if they have experienced something like that from their culture, or if they didn't understand something from another culture. Sometimes, beautiful stories come up.

Many research partners described how they are engaged in their work because of the diversity in the classroom with students from across the globe. School leaders, sometimes with teachers and staff and other times with the support of community organizations, developed practices to support refugee and displaced students as they integrated into the school communities. Additionally, in these situations the students were able to teach one another about their different cultural backgrounds. This concept is the focus of the next section of the findings.

Incorporating Cultural Experiences into the School Community

In this section, I provide findings of this study that address the third research question: When do school leaders incorporate cultural experiences of refugee students into campus-based practices? To address this question, I sought to investigate how cultural wealth of refugee students was recognized as a valuable, enriching commodity, even though these students do not originate from the host country society (Yosso, 2005).

Cultural Wealth in Classroom Communities

The cultural orientation programs for refugee youth and families provided many opportunities for sharing cultural experiences amongst all the participants. As discussed

earlier, Marigold conducted these types of orientation throughout the year, and the exchange of cultural capital represented an integral aspect of the activities.

The inclusion of cultural wealth in orientation. Marigold program activities derived from a partnership with education and refugee resettlement staff at Marigold with the support of Ms. Danilla of the Eastdale school district and other community partners. These orientation activities provided newly arrived refugee families with an introduction to life in Central Texas, with particular attention to employment, social interactions, and schooling. Ms. Lisson of Marigold of Central Texas explained the importance of integrating cultural experiences when providing support services to refugee children and their parents:

We always include cultural aspects in the trainings. First of all, we want the parents to know what the school in the U.S. is like. We know that many parents had kids in school in their home country. So, they often know the basic idea of school. As for the children, we want them to relate to the school and their setting. We also want them to feel comfortable knowing that there are certain things from back home that are almost the same here. And the social aspect, we want them to integrate into school, we want them to have friends. But we also want them to understand what it means to have friends here, and how do you go about having friends instead of joining, maybe, groups that you're not supposed to.

Ms. Lisson and other Marigold staff stressed the importance of respecting the knowledge and the experience that students brought from their home country. The fact that many concepts and ideas remain similar from one place to the next facilitates resettlement, and

the Marigold staff attempted to weave both social and cultural experiences of participants into the orientation sessions:

Most of the activities that we have in the classroom draw on the cultural experience and the social experience, as well. We try to have them think about what they used to do at home, and what it will be here. Or what used to be, what is acceptable, and non-acceptable, and what is acceptable here.

In this discussion, the Marigold staff member mentioned a variety of subtleties that school leaders and staff might not have, yet Ms. Lisson emphasized that the students were required to follow the systems set in place in Eastdale. Each school develops guidelines and policies for routines and procedures, and students new to the campus are required to follow these expectations.

Ms. Lisson and other Marigold staff advise the newcomers to recall previous experiences as they encounter stipulations at these new school environments. An interesting finding relates to the consistent advice given by these orientation programs to follow school rules at all times, especially in order to avoid punishment or repercussions from school authorities.

The origin of the cultural orientation sessions for youth focused on informing students that U.S. schools are run with a penchant for discipline and order. Ms. Lisson of Marigold mentioned that she developed these programs in conjunction with Ms. Danilla especially for adolescents resettling in the Eastdale area:

We emphasize a lot about fighting, truancy, leaving school before school is over, and having a parent sign your school work. These are the kinds of behavior that actually push us into studying the cultural orientation, because we've been having

reports with Aida Danilla's office, like, "Oh, this kid, they want to expel him. Some kids were making fun of him, and he started fighting." So that's one of the reactions, if you don't take into consideration all of the background that the kid come from. So, then we started thinking, a cultural orientation for kids and adolescents instead of just telling parents what their children should and should not do. We thought it would be good to have the kids in an orientation session about what schools are and how they work. So, we started looking into creating that, and that's the program that we have now.

The collaboration between Marigold and the Eastdale Refugee Support Office provided the foundation for the cultural orientation program, and both schools and refugee resettlement agencies benefited from this partnership. As the sessions became more regular, case managers and staff noticed an initial decrease in incidents involving refugee students at different campuses.

How refugee families view education. In the case of her experience in Central Texas, Ms. Danilla, from the Eastdale Refugee Support Office, made an important distinction in the way that refugee families view the role of education. While education prepares students to participate in society through acquiring skills and professional knowledge established by specific policy drivers (Fullan, 2016; Morgan, 2016; Stevens, 2011), many families that experience refugee resettlement approach the daily routine with more basic needs to fulfill. Ms. Danilla alluded to the role of parent involvement in education within the context of refugee families who often have different priorities to consider:

Part of what we struggle with is that our very kind of western approach to education is the key to success in the school environment. It's ingrained in us for years and years and decades of our parents and our grandparents and so on and so forth. The stories of the, what is it, the “Rags to Riches” motif. Many of our refugee families don't have that. Many of our families, honestly, their focus was to survive and to make sure they found some way to feed their kids. And to make sure that they found some way to get them safe. So, we do sometimes struggle in certain communities with helping the students, themselves, have that same drive for education that we know maybe some of their peers are hearing back at home from their parents.

In Eastdale and in Meyland, school leaders and support staff attempt to involve parents in the education of their children. The success of schooling and the development of social and cultural capital within the context of education are maximized when these ideas become intergenerational concepts (Yosso, 2005), and they are promoted by parents and family members for the students’ benefit. However, when school leaders work with parents experiencing displacement, the campus community attempts to provide the most relevant information to encourage sustained parent participation. They also develop systems that utilize previous experience education in the home country. In this way, cultural and social capital represent tangible concepts that both parents and families can depend upon as they integrate into the new host community.

Another key component to integration into a school community is the space for families to feel comfortable in contributing their cultural experience to the campus. The interplay of different cultural experiences augments the intercultural fabric of a school

community. Ms. Danilla, program coordinator for refugee support in Eastdale schools, observed this concept when considering parent and family engagement:

From what I've noticed, schools with a refugee population work really hard to make sure that families feel welcomed in sharing their culture and speaking up when maybe something doesn't coincide with that cultural component of theirs, something that could be very normal for us as Americans.

For students that arrive from Congo, Afghanistan, Syria, or another country, the immediate need is often to fit in with the surroundings (Block et al., 2014; Fazel et al., 2015; McBrien, 2005). Ms. Danilla and other community leaders recommended that schools remain cognate of the cultural experiences of refugee families, especially the ways in which the attitudes or norms of the host country might conflict with those of newcomers. Through both observations and discussions, school staff find engaging ways to inform students, staff, and community members about the diversity of newcomer families. In terms of student interaction, I observed different class presentations that used aspects of students' cultural wealth to inform others about their backgrounds, attitudes, and worldviews.

Classroom Presentations as Cultural Exchange

In many classes of the ISK program at Vrede college, teachers had their students give presentations to class. Any presentation in front of a group of peers is nerve-racking, and the fact that these brief discussions were conducted in Dutch only compounds the anxiety factor. In this section, I present findings related to classroom presentations in the class of Ms. Leyden. These student tasks, while meant to allow students to introduce themselves to their classmates, represent veritable cultural

exchanges and instances of shared ecologies of knowing, as these presentations often morphed into collaborative conversations.

Ms. Leyden and classroom presentations. In Ms. Leyden's class, the students gave presentations on their home country. During classes I observed, one student, Steven, presented on Chile, while another student, Malik, presented on Morocco. The students described customs and the history of these countries, and they gave a brief overview of the country's landmarks, climate, and economy. Presentations were done in Dutch and in English. In many cases, students from the audience actively helped the students who were presenting by reminding them of key facts to discuss. Even though the presentations were brief, they contained a collaborative aspect of shared responsibility and knowledge, as all the students encouraged one another to perform the task well.

During these two presentations, it was interesting to notice that classmates reminded the presenters about certain aspects to discuss; for example, in the discussion on Chile, a student from the audience told Steven, "National Hymn," while during the talk on Morocco, another student said to Malik, "Currency." In the case of in-class work, such as these presentations, students seemed to genuinely support and help one another in terms of both academic and moral support.

These examples of students' providing support to one another existed beyond the scope of classroom presentations. As I spent time in the common spaces of the school, I noticed that students of the ISK classes spent time together in breaks, often playing soccer or sitting in the recreational area. At the lunch break the classes also sit together, not because of assigned seating, but on account of the classroom dynamic. Moreover,

within classroom situations, I witnessed certain students providing extra support to others.

At times, the assistance was related to practice exercises in *Zebra*, while other times students confided in one another in relation to social issues or typical classroom drama. I remember one instance in particular, when Kitaro, a student from Japan, was giving advice on Dutch verb forms to David, a boy from Romania: “You can do this, just give it another try, and you’ll see how the pattern goes.” The students had known one another for only three weeks, but they had developed a supportive camaraderie with one another within the context of the school environment.

Ms. Pella and classroom presentations. In Esther Pella’s class, even though they are still in their first year, the students are at a more advanced level. These students, as Ms. Stijkstaad referred to in descriptions of the ISK program, often have higher levels of English and test well on placement exams. While Ms. Leyden’s students began in the start of the 2018 spring semester, the students in Ms. Pella’s class began at the beginning of the academic year in August 2017. The quality and subject matter of their presentations were much more compelling.

One of the first presentations I attended in Ms. Pella’s class Berenice’s, a student from a Latin American country. Her presentation, interestingly enough, was on Meyland, the city in which Vrede College is located. During the discussion, Berenice presented a slide on the taboo of Latinx in Dutch society. The central point of this critique was the idea of the pressure placed on people from Central America and South America in the Netherlands. Berenice described how many Latinx come to the Netherlands to work in the service industry, most often in low-paying jobs. She offered the class an intriguing

discussion topic: how does the Dutch society accept people who come to the Netherlands from other countries for service-industry jobs? This topic was closely related to my research, and I had not considered that this subject would become a classroom discussion when I entered Ms. Pella's class that day.

In the class discussion that ensued, Katia, a Polish student, mentioned that different nationalities and ethnicities also experienced difficulty in integrating into the Dutch culture. Students in the ISK program represented nations from across the globe, such as Indonesia, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Iran, Bulgaria, Poland, and parts of Latin America. Berenice, who was seemingly moderating the conversation after her presentation, referenced statistics from the last calendar year that more than 18,000 refugees had arrived in the Netherlands. The focus of the class discussion became one of the main concepts of my dissertation research. Had my multi-sited ethnography chanced upon an organic situation of critical inquiry? Many of the ISK students dealt with the realities of resettlement and integration on a daily basis, and their ability to both observe and critique the way a country accepts new people underscores their own self-awareness as well as that of their community.

During the class period, many students whom I had not heard much during my observations spoke out about the topic of life in Holland as non-Dutch citizen. One student from Egypt, Karim, mentioned how life in Meyland was much different than life in his home country. His family had met many people from the Egyptian community, yet he said he knew very few Dutch people. His idea of the Netherlands was that it was a country of many immigrants, as people from all over the world chose to start a new life in the small, Northern European country. For Karim, classes at Vrede College have

introduced him to Dutch culture more than any other interaction in his day-to-day life. Most importantly, he stated that his teachers, and especially his mentor teacher, Ms. Pella, showed him various aspects of Dutch life through discussions and presentations in the classroom.

Likewise, Max, who often provided comments in class, stated that he couldn't wait to leave Holland or to quit school, whichever came first. Ms. Pella had mentioned in the past that Max struggled with attendance and motivation in school. Yet, the issue at hand was not a desire to learn, as Max mentioned that previously he had lived in England, where he enjoyed subjects such as math, history, and English. However, many of his difficulties seemed to stem from Dutch language study, because he emphasized that the three hours of Dutch every day felt like too much of one subject on a routine basis. At this point, other students chimed in with comments like, "Yes, too much Dutch," at which point the teacher checked to see if anyone else had a comment to make in relation to the presentation by Berenice. Yet, the teacher first reminded students that everyone in class was working to increase their proficiency in Dutch, so that everyone could be successful at Vrede College.

Agata, another Polish student, seemed to immediately concur with Ms. Pella, as she stressed the importance at learning Dutch so that students could attend school and then enter university. She also mentioned that the Netherlands and the Dutch society were much more accepting to different type of people than Poland, her home country. A key point she made was that the amount of freedom that people possessed as citizens of Meyland and Holland was much greater than that of people in other countries.

Some students spoke up when Agata mentioned the concept of freedom; for example, Max stated that people had freedom if they had a good job. On the other hand, Berenice, who had started this in-class discussion through her talk on Meyland, returned to the gist of her presentation, expressing that people in Holland had different life experiences, as some people enjoyed a better life as Dutch citizens, while other people new to the country had to live with a more temporary status. Other students echoed this opinion, and the fact remained that, according to many students, refugee students as well as those experiencing displacement faced difficulties and obstacles in the process of integration into Dutch society.

During this open-ended conversation, Ms. Pella was the only Dutch citizen in the classroom, while the nineteen students and I were either temporary or permanent residents in Holland. For that reason, when Berenice finished her presentation and the discussion ceased, I waited to see how the teacher addressed both the class and this situation. Without any sense of discord or conflict, the teacher mentioned that the Netherlands had always been a nation of people from all over the world.

Ms. Pella also emphasized that the Dutch people shared a common language and a sense of national cooperation, especially in the way people worked together to solve the issue of rising tides while most of the country was below sea level (De Rooi, 2007). The narrative that the teacher provided represented a utilitarian story of unity, yet it was obvious that many students did not see themselves as part of Dutch society. Each student was proudly Egyptian, Ukrainian, Polish, or Syrian, yet they had arrived in the Netherlands to seek a better life. In fact, many Polish people had immigrated to Holland

over the last forty years, which led to a high percentage of Polish students in the ISK program and in higher studies at Vrede College.

As mentioned previously in this discussion, many students in the ISK program come from Poland, which represents, in fact, the nation with the largest percentage of students at Vrede College. Ms. Anziak of IRSN provided an explanation of the Polish population in Meyland:

I would say the Polish community is really the biggest one when you consider newcomers like refugees in the Netherlands. Meyland has one of the biggest communities of Polish people you have. There's so many Polish shops and hairdressers and beauty centers. Everything you can imagine you can find in Polish in Meyland. Other communities are not as active.

Another day in Ms. Pella's class, a Polish student, Agata, gave a poignant presentation on women's rights in Poland. She introduced the topic of abortion in Poland, which is predominantly a Catholic country. She summarized the debate over abortion by presenting the two sides, often referred to "Pro-Life" and "Pro-Choice." She described recent legislation to forbid abortions throughout the country. In all, she provided a sublime analysis about culture and society in Poland.

While other students seemed anxious or relied on notes when standing in front of the class, Agata was extremely confident and adroit at addressing the class, in Dutch nonetheless. After some students asked particular questions about recent demonstrations, the student reviewed the decisions put in place by the government and affirmed by the Polish Supreme Court. At one point, Sara, a student from Kenya, stated: "Is the church in charge of your country?" This question is asked in English, and Agata responds, "As

these types of laws exist in Poland, people will seek alternative ways to have an abortion. Many of these options prove to be very dangerous alternatives.” In a brief presentation, the student entertained topics, such as women’s rights, reproductive rights, social welfare, and the role of religion in state politics. This presentation was quite impressive for a group of ninth grade first-year language learners.

Intercultural Exchange in School Communities

In all ISK classes, teachers use intercultural exchanges to develop the sense of classroom community. Through the process of sharing one’s cultural capital, the students grow to respect and appreciate the inherent diversity in the ISK program. Teachers rely on a specific curriculum, *Welkom op school* (Tuk & De Neef, 2015), to encourage students to learn from one another about their cultural backgrounds. See Figure 9 and Figure 10 for sample pages of the *Welkom op school* textbook. According to Ms. Leyden and other teachers, the text is useful because it allows the students talk about themselves. Ms. Leyden specifically stated: “If they can show where they come from, that helps the students to make connections with one another” (personal communication, July 10, 2018). During lessons based on mentor activities from the textbook, the teacher noticed how the students quickly began sharing aspects of their cultural background.



Figure 9. The cover of the *Welkom op School* textbook.



Figure 10. A page from the *Welkom op School* textbook: Anders of Hetzelfde – Afbeeldingen (different or similar – pictures).

The students provided information and opinions about their home country through these class presentations, and moreover. Often, in conversation they would compare their schools at home with schools in the Netherlands, like Vrede College. Through the use of online mapping websites or applications, such as GoogleMaps, the students enjoyed showing one another where they came from, including the streets where they used to live or the places they would go with friends and family. These classroom activities helped to form learning communities, in which the students themselves educated their peers and teachers about both social and cultural realities of their home country. In this way, the students develop both ecologies of the self and their classroom community as they exchange intercultural information (Guajardo et al., 2016; Moskal & North, 2017).

These findings demonstrate the power of classroom-based dialogue and interaction. The students at Vrede College experienced a reflective, critical approach to discovery of the self and their community through both teacher-led activities and student-led presentations. In Eastdale, schools create spaces of cultural exchange through the work of experienced teachers and school leaders, in addition to the support of community organizations. The next section of the findings looks into ways school and community leaders attempt to monitor and evaluate programs for refugee and displaced students.

Determining and Monitoring Effective Programs

As the previous findings have shown, school leaders implement specific, intentional practices to support the integration of refugee and displaced students. In this section, I provide findings that address the fourth research question: How do school and community leaders define and measure program effectiveness? Conversations and

interviews with program staff, as well as archival research, served as the primary data collection methods for addressing this research question.

The Need for Sustained Evaluation

During conversations, research partners of this study expressed the desire for a type of program evaluation that could provide information on how refugee students and families experienced support efforts. Ms. Danilla, the coordinator of the Refugee Support Office in Eastdale, described the possible benefit this type of evaluation would provide:

I would say we actually don't have a way to measure our program, to be perfectly honest. The only thing we know is what parents tell us. It's feedback from both parents and campuses that say, "We really love your service." And one of the things I tell parents when I meet them at the orientations is that any complaints that they have, they legally have the right to let me know, but also to let case managers know, to let the schools know. I would say we don't have any kind of way to measure what we do.

In speaking with Ms. Danilla, I learned how many campus sites her team visits on a routine basis. She and her team monitor and attend to the needs of close to 1,000 refugee students on a routine basis, and through my research it became clear that many people, including school staff, students, and parents benefit from the services offered by Refugee Support Office. However, Ms. Danilla suggested on different occasions that both the Eastdale school district and the Refugee Support Office would benefit from an evaluation process that monitored program activities. She recognized the benefit of a consistent program evaluation technique, despite knowing that many parents and families

of students appreciate the work of this office. “However, we have a lot of, how do I say this, well, we have a lot of support from the families.”

Other organizations also aim to add program evaluation instruments to their activities. The SSR office in Central Texas possesses ways to monitor projects and goals at an organizational level, yet the measurement of specific activities, such as refugee resettlement or support services for refugee youth and families, is not a part of the organization’s evaluation procedures. Ms. Wallace of SSR explained that the goals for specific programs relate closely to those of the entire agency, yet strategies for assisting refugee families tends to focus on gainful employment and integration into the local community:

For refugee families and children, specifically, we don't have anything, unfortunately, in place for children and to assess our effectiveness as an agency in serving children. Families fall under the same goals and objectives that we have for all of our clients, in that, we are trying to get them to be economically self-sufficient.... But, for now, economic self-sufficiency is our overall goal.

The offices of SSR are well aware of the usefulness of both monitoring and evaluative instruments for their program activities. Ms. Wallace stated that a short-term goal for the organization would be to more closely monitor how families are doing during resettlement:

Then, as an agency, it's part of our strategic plan in the next five years to come up with a more developed evaluation tool, really, that allows us to track and really see that progress in families and what they are achieving during the time that they are working with us, just as much as after that. That all still needs to be

developed, of course, but that is an organizational goal. That we have a better way of evaluating our own effectiveness, just as much as clients' abilities to succeed here in Central Texas.

While SSR manages to determine how the organization's goals are met, more specific monitoring and evaluation techniques could provide a better idea about which type of support turns out to be more useful for refugee families. I found that research partners greatly preferred forms of consistent and sustained aspects of evaluation for their programs.

The Utility of Immediate Feedback

In discussions with research partners, I found that both people providing orientation programs and those in the school environment preferred forms of immediate feedback of their program activities. Information provided by participants or students allowed staff members to improve aspects of specific programs. At Marigold, Ms. Lisson routinely carried out evaluations before and after specific workshops and presentations with both adults and children. The data gathered from the evaluations supplied the Marigold team with ideas for ameliorating the cultural orientation programs for refugee families. Ms. Lisson of Marigold used a brief questionnaire to gather information about the effectiveness of the courses and training programs:

Right now, we have two ways that we measure our programs we offer. A classroom-based assessment, that's the pretest and posttest. And we also have an evaluation that we provide at the end of the training. And that mostly is based on satisfaction. Did they like the program? Was the module relevant? Do they think they will use the information? And things like that.

In addition to these types of measures, Ms. Lisson suggested the benefit of a more longitudinal approach to the program evaluation: “And I think I would love to have a long-term impact study done on everyone that attends are trainings. Including the adults and the kids.” Ms. Lisson supported the consistent use of feedback to improve the orientation programs. It was compelling to discover that even though Marigold had one of the most involved evaluation and program monitoring techniques, Ms. Lisson still wanted to examine the efficacy in a more profound, long-term manner.

In the ISK program at Vrede College, program evaluation occurs at a couple different periods during the academic year. During the academic year, the ISK team meets to discuss progress in terms of the academic schedule. Throughout the year, program goals are reviewed and discussed. Ms. Stijkstaad mentioned that the ISK team met weekly to discuss how individual classes are doing and what possible changes might need to be made:

Well, we discuss how each class is going during the whole year, as a matter of fact. Because we have a weekly meeting where we discuss our goals and how far we are in getting towards these goals. And then after we have talked about the list of things that is on the academic schedule. We do it on the whiteboard, so it's a document as a matter of fact.

These meetings usually involve all the ISK teachers of Dutch, while subject-level teachers also provide input either in written form or by attending these meetings.

The purpose of these collaborations is to tweak instruction based on information gathered or trends noticed in some of the ISK classes. Ms. Stijkstaad explained how the

team attempts to integrate their observations and issues of concern immediately into their instructional practice:

Many times, we all agree that we still need to look at the data and see what the important points are for our teaching. In some specific areas, like pacing or classroom management, we might need to work on, and we have to decide how are we going to do this. What can we use? Can we learn from each other, or do we need to do a course for professional development? Do we need another method, maybe? In this way we have to look at the results and see where we want to go.

The conversations and discussion represent an important part of equitable forms of team development (Ishimaru & Galloway, 2014), yet the evaluation measure for the ISK program would be more useful if the opinions and feedback of the students were included. While I did not observe these types of instruments used in the spring semester of 2018, the program coordinator advised me about a series of surveys that the students complete on a biannual basis.

Types of Program Evaluation at ISK

When we met in September at the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year, Ms. Stijkstaad detailed the various aspects of the evaluation survey in one of our conversations. In particular, she wanted to address the types of instruments used to measure program efficacy:

I remember at that time, it was the end of the school year in July. I was very tired. All I could think of was that we meet each other weekly, and at the end of every meeting we were having, there's time to share things, and to help each other with certain issues. We visit each other several times a year, and we look back together

to see what can be learned from these visits. But there are other things. In fact, we have several instruments to see how the ISK program is doing.

A first type of evaluation is completed by the students in the classroom twice a year. Ms. Stijkstaad discussed the ISK student survey and how it provides information about the students' perception of both instruction and course material:

Overall, this questionnaire deals with the amount of support the students get from their ISK teachers. The survey asks whether the students are satisfied in the way they're supported by the teacher. For example, one question reads, "The instructor teaches me how I have to solve problems." Another is about the lessons, if they are too difficult or too easy, as well. Another question: "The mentor looks after me and makes me feel comfortable in my class. There are also some questions about the ISK level, the assignments and the homework, "Do I understand the work?" Here's a question that's good, "I feel safe enough to ask my questions in front of the class." And another one, "The teachers, they keep in mind what the level of my language is, so they don't make it too difficult for me, but they don't make it too easy." There is another question about how the teacher motivates the students.

The content of these surveys is adjusted to meet the needs of the students. In some cases, the questionnaires are completed with drawings or symbols, and for the more advanced classes, the teachers encourage the students to provide comments in Dutch about their opinions of the teachers and the classes. Ms. Stijkstaad described how the survey is designed specifically for the students who have a limited knowledge of Dutch:

The first survey is a very simple list of questions. It can be answered with a smiley face, because, some of the children, their understanding of Dutch is not very good yet. The things that we ask them to think over are stated in quite basic Dutch. We do this survey twice a year. They can give their opinion with a good, a neutral or a sad face. In the classes where the Dutch is at a rather reasonable level yet, we let the children do this by themselves, answering in Dutch if they prefer. In other classes we help them with translating this into English. We help them with each question. Some of them need extra explanation. Every class does it twice a year. As a mentor, you will get input of what they miss, or what you need to work on in your class. So, this survey is one of the things that will give us feedback on our own, the way we are working.

The information from this survey and other instruments is used for planning and developing ISK classes. It is additionally worthwhile to note that the survey asks particular questions that look into the effectiveness of teachers of students who are learning a language for the first time. The ISK program coordinator reviewed these questions with me, and her thoughts conveyed the importance of the ISK staff to consistently hone their skills as both instructors and mentors to their students:

This questionnaire has topics specifically about the teacher. I'm talking about this year now, about her or his performance in class and his or her presence or sense of being there, as both a teacher and a mentor. Several questions about if the teacher is open to questions and critique about the lessons. Also, if your homework is graded and checked. The survey also asks the students if they are happy with the way the homework is graded, the way the teacher grades the work.

This is a quite simple survey, but, nevertheless, it gives us information in which ways we can improve our skills, or the things that we can offer the children.

When we discussed the types of questions on the survey, it was evident that some staff might be worried about possible responses. Ms. Stijkstaad emphasized that the information is used to improve teaching; the teachers collaborate when survey data shows that one teacher might need to make some necessary changes. Also, the program coordinator and Mr. Burkhaart, the campus administrator, work with teachers to recommend professional development or specific techniques to improve instructional methods.

The ISK team at Vrede College also uses national survey data to evaluate their program. This type of survey aligned with evaluations conducted at the campus level. In fact, the Dutch government created this survey, and the ISK program used a version developed especially for newcomer programs. Ms. Stijkstaad described efforts to evaluate the Vrede College ISK program through this modified survey:

This other questionnaire is organized by an institute that is part of the Dutch Ministry of Education. They ask the schools to complete this questionnaire, it's done on the computer. They will get the results as well, and of course you will get the results because that is what it is all about. All the classes are invited to do this. They made one especially for the ISK because there used to be one for the regular classes, but the language was too difficult, so they made one especially for the ISK classes. We do it later in the year because then all the classes will know enough Dutch to be able to complete the survey. The results have several categories.

These two types of evaluation instruments provide the ISK program with a substantial amount of data for program evaluation in terms of student feedback. In fact, the one category that proved useful in the analysis of the data by the ISK team was the area of parent engagement and participation. This particular category relates to previous findings in this research study, and the ISK program endeavors to receive student input in regard to instruction, campus culture, and overall satisfaction with the school program for students new to Holland.

An interesting finding that resulted from analyzing the campus survey data concerned parent involvement and participation. In describing the findings of the survey, Ms. Stijkstaad opined that most students seemed satisfied with the amount of parent engagement carried out by the school:

Parent involvement and engagement, the survey is looking at how the students view the level of parent engagement. The results show that the children think, because it's the children who were answering these questions, that they think that we are very engaged towards the parents, and they're probably happy with the way things are going. It should probably be about the contacts that we have with the parents. Is it on a regular basis, and when it's needed, do we get in contact? I suppose these questions are very valuable as well.

Both the program coordinator and teachers of the ISK classes recognize parent involvement as an important concern. Even though survey data provided positive results for parent engagement, Ms. Stijkstaad considered that students had different opinions than family members and parents. Overall, the ISK program utilizes both department-based and national survey data to monitor the effectiveness of their program. The staff of

ISK are able to use this survey data to assist their planning for both instruction and outreach.

The findings from this research study demonstrate that attempts to measure how programs for refugee students operate and function vary at different schools and organizations. Programs in both South Holland and Central Texas implement consistent measures to gauge program efficacy, although some organizations would like to increase their use of evaluative tools. Many research partners were curious to know the results of my research and the findings of my study. I shared interview transcripts with the participants as a validity strategy, and member checking also allowed me to maintain contact with the research partners during the entire span of the study.

From the outset of this project, I approached teachers, staff, and community leaders as more than just respondents for this study. Given the field component, I imagined this research as a collaborative effort that could ultimately benefit schools and community organizations that supported refugee students. In both Eastdale and Meyland, I presented the scope of the study from two main perspectives: I led this project as both an educator wanting to examine strategies for school improvement, but also as a researcher attempting to critically analyze practices and policies supporting refugees in school environments. Accordingly, the information gathered for this study resulted from both self-reflection and evaluation, as the research partners and I attempted to ascertain how school and community programs effectively supported refugee students. Additionally, the multi-sited nature of this study offered participants in both locations the opportunity to exchange insights and ideas through the medium of the study itself.

As Ms. Danilla of the Eastdale Refugee Support Office commented, specific evaluation tools do not exist within some organizations because the extent of one's efforts encompasses work across an entire school district or city. Yet, the process of engagement across different communities that support refugee students and families develops otherwise isolated ecologies of knowledge and experience. Hence, the effort of this research project corresponds to an evaluative tool that measures the ability for schools and organizations to engage with one another in regard to their efforts to support student integration.

Through the process of member checking, I found that many research partners were keenly interested in the results of this study. People who worked in both schools and community organizations in Eastdale were eager to discover how colleagues in Holland promoted refugee integration; likewise, many of the research partners at Vrede College were intrigued by efforts to increase intercultural practices at schools throughout Central Texas. This research project demonstrates elements of introspection and reflection that remained salient in the multiple conversations with both school and community leaders. These particular findings on the evaluation and monitoring of programs remains useful, because it is inherently linked to the characteristics of effective school leaders who support refugee students.

The Characteristics of Leaders Who Support Refugee Students

In this final section, I present findings from the study in relation to the fifth research question: What are the skills, dispositions, and worldviews of effective school and community leaders? In this part of the discussion, I offer insights from the ethnographic research in relation to characteristics of effective school and community

leaders that work with refugee students. These findings demonstrate how these leaders conceive the development and support of inclusive school environments and how they collaborate with staff and community partners promote the integration of refugee students.

The ethnographic nature of the research granted me the time to spend at schools, so that I could familiarize myself with how teachers and school leaders interacted with students in the classroom and the campus environment. I also benefited from the opportunity to have multiple conversations with people who worked in community organizations supporting refugee students. Many aspects of these findings fail to show up in specific policies or mission statements of an organization. Instead, the skills that one brings to the profession or the components of one's character originate from an ontology that values both the social and cultural input of all individuals that comprise a school community.

School Staff and Inclusive Campus Culture

When the majority of students of a campus come from outside of the host country, a variety of languages, perspectives, customs, and value systems are combined together on a daily basis. School leaders and staff additionally embody that characteristic, as they endeavor to construct sustainable school environments that are open to all individuals. At the Global Campus in Eastdale, Mr. Hidalgo demonstrated that a concerted effort leads to a sense of respect and inclusion that develops a campus-wide community:

It's hard for me to say, that culture has always been here since I've been here, and it's just become the norm so our teachers, our registrar, they all do a great job of that. It all really does happen at the teacher level, but our registrar, she is amazing

also, she goes a long way towards helping our refugee families and our immigrant families feel welcome when they come to us.

Mr. Hidalgo emphasized that the approach to an inclusive school stems from the character of the teachers and staff, but I also found that team members of the school shared the belief that every student should have access to educational opportunities. This sentiment was noticeable in the exchanges among students and teachers, and in conversations with teachers and staff. One policy that Mr. Hidalgo did share was the requirement that all staff, no matter what the course, attain ESL certification.

In many cases, school leadership encourages teachers to have additional certifications for the sake of expertise and professional development. At the Global Campus, this additional requirement applies not only to core subject teachers, but also to electives, including physical education and technology courses. This type of policy ensures that staff receive the appropriate certification to instruct students acquiring English as a second language. When school leadership ensures that all staff are trained in strategies for language learners as well as those for young adult students, the school provides the opportunity for students to receive a high-quality education.

Community Partners View Language Access as Essential

The research I carried out with the office of Ms. Danilla introduced me first-hand to the ways in which the district supports refugee students and families. From the assistance her office provides, Ms. Danilla finds that the key to integration is fostering students' heritage language:

How a campus addresses the language needs is such a gesture to new families in terms of helping them to integrate. The kids pick it up fast. My concern with the

kids integrating is that they don't integrate, they assimilate. And then everything's lost. It's one of the things I talk a lot at the orientations when we meet the parents, whose job, I think, is to make sure that they continue to speak this very important part of their identity, their language.

At different sites of this study, I perceived different ontological approaches to the support of refugee students in school environments. As demonstrated in previous excerpts, Ms. Danilla and the Refugee Support Office advocate for both language support (i.e., instruction of the host-country language) and language access, so that students and parents maintain the identity of their heritage, or origin, country.

Different organizations have different approaches to supporting refugees, and these findings show that the views of staff members help to define the actions of the organization. At Marigold, Mr. Baddeau, the director of the refugee resettlement program, considered social integration very important, mainly because of the lack of economic support families received in the resettlement process. He stated often that the focus of case managers was to encourage the adults to find employment quickly, so that the families could gain a sense of independence. Ms. Lisson, who worked with the training programs, emulated the views of Mr. Hidalgo at the Global Campus. She imagined that the cultural orientation programs could provide a soft landing, especially for youths, who missed out on the formative years in schools and neighborhoods:

If you grow up here, you're always in the culture here, when you're at one place, you start making friends all the way from kindergarten, and you and your friends grow up together: that's how you form friendships. But here is a kid that comes in

and didn't get the chance to make a friendship with others. Now they have to integrate in groups that have already been made.

The cultural orientation programs at Marigold inform the newcomers about these cohorts of children that spend time together from a young age through early education and through primary school. They also advise them that other students experiencing displacement are part of the support program. In all, some organizations provide the notion of an inclusive educational experience to refugee students as they enter the school system of the host country.

Yet, other sites referenced the concept of integration as entrance and participation in the society and culture of the host country. Ms. Anziak expressed these ideas in some of our conversations, especially when I asked her for advice for students beginning the process of integration in the Netherlands:

First of all, that they have to accept the new country as it is. There are big differences in culture, in everything. When you live in a different country, you have to adjust yourself to the norms of the country. The country will not adjust to you. And language. I think if you want to have a future here, the first step you have to take is to learn good Dutch. Because with good language ability, you can achieve almost anything.

Ms. Anziak's thoughts carry a different ontological view. This kind of perspective ceases to embody a social constructivist approach, one which sees a campus culture or a local community as a composite entity composed of diverse, authentic, equally valuable aspects. From this type of perspective, local language determines access and potential

success in the host country. According to Ms. Anziak, a firm grasp of the local language provides better opportunities for refugees, immigrants, and newcomers.

Teachers Mentoring Students

In both Eastdale schools and Vrede College, teachers work with refugee students beyond the traditional sense of classroom instruction. Many of the research partners in both sites mentioned how teachers assisted refugee students with many facets of the integration process. Consistently, I observed teachers discussing local traditions and customs, sharing stories about their own families, and using interpersonal skills to address concerns about behaviors or attitudes. In many cases, teachers engaged with the students to offer more than mere explanations of Dutch vocabulary as part of a lesson. Teachers acted as mentors, whose aim was to foster growth in the area of Dutch language and to help them feel more adjusted to life in Holland.

Ms. Leyden as mentor. In Ms. Leyden's classroom, I noticed two students who at times misbehaved, not a serious disturbance of the classroom but just distractive behavior: one of the students would say aloud, "I'm bored," or "This is useless," while the other student would then repeat whatever was said. It happened on a couple of occasions, and it was noticeable because rarely did I see any other types of misbehavior in the ISK classes. In these instances, the teacher had a private discussion with the first student, either at the front of the classroom or outside the door in the hallway.

In a conversation with the teacher, I inquired about the nature of the brief, private discussions. Ms. Leyden explained that it usually was just a chat with the student, a check-in to see what is happening. In general, when students misbehave or seem distracted, they might need more help or just some attention. The key for Ms. Leyden as

well as for other teachers was to know when to get involved. In most cases, the teachers let the students have options, a choice about how to behave better and to communicate better with peers.

Yet, the supportive nature of mentor teachers occurred not only in cases of providing guidance and reassurance in the ISK classes. I also noticed instances when teachers, themselves, faced challenging situations, because they had little experience with certain situations beforehand, as Ms. Leyden expressed to me:

The year before half of the class was from Syria. That was really interesting, but some situations were quite hard. The students were frustrated because they were ready to attend university, and then they had to leave the country. Two students really couldn't concentrate, because of what they have been through. I think I learned a lot of those kids. Those kids were also really strong. The kids, who were too stressed, were also the kids who had problems with their families. War can be dangerous but also, how is it going in your own family? Those things, those combinations I found are complicated.

The role of the mentor teacher included more than checking vocabulary and explaining Dutch verb conjugation. The teachers in the ISK program attempted to understand the stories of transnational migration and resettlement through the experiences of their students. The classroom community harbored a sense of resilience through shared narratives of exile. However, the teachers themselves continue to be cognizant of the contrasts experienced by these displaced students. In a moment of self-reflection, Ms. Leyden recounts her reaction when the class was completing a computer technology module:

At one point, we had a study day about how to use computers in the class. Then André Kuipers, the Dutch astronaut, was talking about his journey in space, and all high-tech things and how he could see everything from his spaceship, his space station. Then I thought, "And those kids have all been traveling from Turkey to Greece, with just a tiny boat and a bus station." Yeah, it was really, it was too much.

For students that experience displacement, a mentor teacher provides students with someone in the school that remains constant throughout the week. In Eastdale and other schools in the U.S., this type of mentor teacher tends to be an advisor, someone whom the students see briefly during the week. An important process that was identified through this study was the use of mentor teachers at the ISK program at Vrede College. This approach ensured that students receive vital support during the first phase of their transition into the Dutch school system, as teachers mentor these students during their transition to life in Holland.

Program Innovation as a Process

In both sites, the development of specific programs to support refugee students and families represented a process in which staff and community members continuously searched for new ways to improve. With an increase in the number of refugee students, Ms. Danilla of the Eastdale Refugee Office scrambled to locate additional translators. Collaborative relationships with Marigold proved useful, since the organization was able to mobilize a group of Arabic translators for Eastdale schools. In addition, Ms. Danilla promoted another organization that provided a highly needed service: English language instruction for adults with a refugee-specific curriculum. Innovations developed through

collaborative partnerships among organizations, such as Marigold and after-school programs supporting refugee youth and families.

Ms. Stijkstaad and efforts to bolster parent involvement. As in many cases in school improvement, reform initiatives exist within a process that stems from reflection of the self and the organization. During my time at ISK, I noticed that school leaders and teachers sought ways to revise systems of student support. Ms. Stijkstaad focused on the concept that a supportive network among the school, the student, and the family positively affects student learning in the ISK program:

When the student struggles in class, the teacher contacts with the parents, because we consider ourselves as a triangle, where we have the parents and the teacher and the teacher and the student. We try to solve these things, but it's not always very easy. It's not always leading to a solution.

The ISK team leader discussed how they establish contact with the parents in the beginning of the year, so that together they monitor the students' activity at school:

What's striking is that when we have a parent evening, especially in the beginning of the year. Nearly everyone shows up so that's where we need to grab them and tell them about the importance of this triangle, teacher, student, parent. It's one of our main goals for the coming year, to see how we can recreate the bond between the school, and the parents and the students. Of course, the students will be here.

It's more between us and the parents.

In this plática, the program coordinator focused on the need to have more consistent forms of parent involvement and support. In fact, Ms. Stijkstaad designated parent participation as the driver of change and improvement at the school. In many

observations of planning meetings in both Central Texas, school leaders often struggled with parent involvement, as do the leaders of Vrede College. However, Ms. Stijkstaad made this issue a moot point; the school was responsible to develop a plan to ameliorate parent engagement and participation.

Self-awareness and Reflection are Critical for School Improvement

During this research project, educators and community leaders consistently reflected on how to enhance efforts to support refugees and displaced students. In the case of the ISK program, community partners recognized positive steps taken to include parents in activities. For example, Ms. Anziak of IRSN applauded the work of Vrede College, especially in the area of parent engagement: “They are quite good at trying to do everything possible. I noticed in the last couple of years that they really try for this parent evening” (personal communication, October 12, 2018). Even Ms. Anziak, who partnered with the school on occasion, noticed that school leaders and staff consistently made efforts to increase parent participation. In this regard, community leaders acknowledged the efforts of school staff, who made goals for campus programs to be more inclusive in terms of parent involvement. The campus staff and teachers remained both self-aware and reflective of their progress towards increasing parent participation.

As in Central Texas, I discovered at Vrede College that the ISK team considers the issues of organizational change as a process towards progress. In terms of the parent participation, the coordinator and teachers constantly explore ways to fortify parent involvement, a key aspect of the student-support triangle. Ms. Stijkstaad and the team scrutinize their efforts to increase parent participation: “In secondary school parent involvement is more difficult, especially when, with us, we don't always speak the

language of our parents. One of our main goals is to see how we can make this this work” (personal communication, October 17, 2018). The ISK team, in collaboration IRSN and other community partners, persevered to develop parent outreach both for the evening presentation as well as for the entire year.

Campus leaders also implemented a variety of practices to create more inclusive school communities through increased parent engagement. In observations and discussions with research partners, I noticed that staff members tried different ways to improve parent outreach. At the Eastdale school, Mr. Hidalgo recognized that efforts are made to include parents in school activities, however the leadership team consistently explored more inclusive, culturally responsive initiatives for parent engagement. The attitude of Mr. Hidalgo resembles that of constant reflection, as the parent meetings are a work-in-progress that is revised and updated to become more culturally inclusive for the students’ families.

In summary, findings from this ethnographic study show that school leaders and community organizations consistently modified and retooled efforts to meet the specific needs of the students. Mr. Burkhaart, the administrator at Vrede College, expressed this sentiment in one of our first conversations: “Many families are no longer in Holland simply temporarily, so we operate a school where students become independent, in learning and thinking. Our school helps them integrate, and they’re here to stay.” In this way, school leaders regularly reflected on their own efforts, as well as those of their organization, to improve programs supporting refugee students. In the next section, Chapter Six, I present findings in the context of specific themes that emerged from stories, narratives, reflections, and observations from this ethnographic study.

VI. THEMES THAT DEVELOPED FROM THE RESEARCH PROCESS

In this chapter, I focus on three specific themes that arose from the findings of this ethnographic research process. I concentrated on these themes after the process of analyzing the data and identifying themes emerging across data collected from conversations, observations, and other data sources. In this part of the discussion, the findings specifically derive from the input, participation, and observation of the research partners of the study, which included campus leaders, teachers and educators across the two sites, students in these schools, and me, as both researcher and educator.

In order to provide a descriptive and organic nature to these findings, I present excerpts of the data, including reflections, stories, and thematic narratives, in order to demonstrate the major themes that emerged from this ethnographic study. I intend to highlight Guajardo et al.'s (2016) ecologies of knowing, or how the perspectives of the self, organization, and, community encompass and define the actions, attitudes, and aspirations of educators, community leaders, as well as students across the different sites of this study.

Classroom Communities as Sites of Shared Knowledge

Across the two different sites of this ethnographic research project, I spent time in classrooms and observed teachers consistently making pedagogical decisions and engaging in interpersonal exchanges that created welcoming, inclusive classrooms. In this section, I present perspectives of teachers in the ISK program at Vrede College to show how efforts by teachers to engage with the classroom community supported student integration.

In some of these narratives, teachers practiced intercultural dialogue to develop a positive, culturally responsive classroom community. Yet, at other times, it seemed that the main purpose of the classroom dynamic was to increase students' Dutch language proficiency, as the teacher encouraged the students to embrace the Dutch culture and society. Also, I present evidence of school staff, through their presentations to students of the local education system, relegating newcomers towards a lower educational track.

Within the perspective of shared ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016), I imagined that educators who supported refugee students as they adjust and integrate into school communities would promote the cultivation and transfer of shared knowledges within dynamic classroom communities. The exploration of this first theme provides a closer look at how schools integrated students through experiences, observations, and stories that emerged from the ethnographic research.

Because many students from other countries who arrive in the Netherlands are not familiar with the Dutch school system, teachers in the ISK program at Vrede College made the effort to explain secondary school education to their students, demonstrating that schools both manifest and promulgate aspects of social capital (Yosso, 2005). Providing students with this pertinent information represented an important aspect of student integration, as the teachers' efforts to familiarize students with aspects of the Dutch educational system could be seen as a first step of adjustment to school life in Holland. Yet, I was curious to see whether the presentation was a merely the delivery of information, in which the teacher simply discussed the national school system, or if the conversation embodied elements of a discourse, in which the class critically analyzed opportunities for academic advancement and professional career choices. The next

section presents a brief narrative of one of these presentations on the Dutch school system.

A Classroom Presentation on Dutch Secondary Schools

My research in Holland benefited from the ability to observe the last five months of one academic year and the first six months in another academic year. Ms. Pella, who taught the ISK class of high-achieving students, often spoke completely in Dutch and encouraged the students to do the same. Immediate and thorough language acquisition was the main objective for students in Ms. Pella's class. During one observation, Ms. Pella spoke at length on the public-school system in the Netherlands. This presentation represented a glimpse into the Dutch educational system for students from countries across the globe. In fact, the students represented the areas of Oceania, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. For both the students and me, this discussion provided first-hand information on Dutch secondary schools and the implications of specific diploma programs for higher education.

Ms. Pella and the intricacies of Dutch education. Ms. Pella began the presentation by discussing primary school, or *basischool*, which is for children from the age of four to twelve years old. After primary school, students attend the first year of secondary school, or *brugklas*, at institutions that are called colleges instead of high schools. Ms. Pella continued to explain the structure of the Dutch public-school system, and at times students volunteered to provide input from their siblings' or even their own experience in Dutch schools.

According to Ms. Pella, the transition from primary school to secondary school marked the process of specialization of one's educational path. She explained that, in the

last three years of Dutch primary school, students decide the path of studies for secondary school, which, in turn, determines the direction of one's professionalization. She also described types of Dutch public schools for students who need special support; any student with learning difficulties receives placement in one of these schools, which provide more specialized services. Overall, the students in the class expressed little interest in these specialized schools, yet I wondered how students, especially those facing resettlement or displacement, experienced the education system in the Netherlands through specialized support of a school for children with learning difficulties.

Next, Ms. Pella described the ISK program and how it fits in with other schools in the Dutch system, going on to explain how the ISK classes prepare student for the Dutch secondary school system. In a way, the ISK program represents a transition program within a high school. Some students stay in the ISK classes for six, twelve, or eighteen months, with a maximum of two years. The length of time in the program depends on the skill and ability of the student. She informed the students that the ISK program offers no diploma or certificate, which, however, is obtained through completion of one of the diploma programs in a Dutch high school. For the students, most of whom spoke little Dutch, this presentation was very complex yet highly informative. Ms. Pella used charts and diagrams to provide visual explanations for the Dutch school system.

During the presentation, Ms. Pella encouraged students to ask questions. Hassan, a student who sat in the front row, asked the teacher about the group's educational future: "Will we go to high school here at Vrede College?" As Ms. Pella addressed the question about options for high school and beyond, she reviewed the possibility of joining the 2/3 Dual Year (DY) course in the following year. An interesting dynamic developed in the

teacher's presentation, as she pointed out that various diploma programs relate closely to a particular type of professionalization or career.

In her discussion of Dutch secondary schools, Ms. Pella alluded to six levels of high school, or *Middelbare School* in Dutch, at Vrede College, as well as at other high schools in the Netherlands. In all, Dutch secondary schools have a maximum of six grades of high school. Vrede College, a *Middelbare School*, offers two types of diploma program, HAVO, which takes five years to complete, and VWO, which takes six years. A third type of diploma program, VMBO, takes four years to complete, yet Vrede College does not offer this program. Ms. Pella referred to a sister school that offers the VMBO diploma.

In brief, the VWO diploma program prepares students for undergraduate study in a research university, while the HAVO diploma represents a pathway to universities or colleges of applied sciences, such as studies in engineering, nursing, business, social work, and education. The VMBO diploma leads to possible enrollment in an MBO program, which corresponds to vocational school. This form of secondary school offers technical training for the labor market, and the MBO program offers varying levels of apprenticeship and certification for a variety of trades. Additionally, students who attain satisfactory credentials in the MBO program can enter an undergraduate program in a college or university of applied sciences. The system appears somewhat byzantine, yet Ms. Pella as well as other staff members from Vrede College, attempted to offer an overview to students new to the Dutch education system.

As she finished her discussion on Dutch secondary schools, Ms. Pella inquired if the students had questions about the ISK program and the different choices of VMBO,

HAVO, and VWO diplomas. Some students asked about the *brugklas* and if they would be able to enter the class in January or the following academic year. The teacher emphasized that *brugklas* was mainly for students who had just completed primary school, so any student had to be eleven or twelve years old. Since many students in Ms. Pella's class were older than twelve, the students would not be able to matriculate into the *brugklas* and the Dutch secondary school system as typical students might have done.

Like that of many countries, the Dutch education system is complex, and students benefit from both advice and counseling on who to best navigate the options to achieve their respective academic goals. Yet, findings from this observation demonstrate that the students had relatively few options: since they could not join the *brugklas* because of their age, they most likely would be relegated to a lower-level VMBO course, which prepares students for vocational school. However, Ms. Pella emphasized that if they applied themselves and worked hard, they could join the 2/3 DY course, which would direct them towards a HAVO diploma and possible entrance into university.

Some students asked the teacher about preparation for university and exams required to enter an undergraduate program. Ms. Pella seemed to caution the students to focus primarily on their study of Dutch, so that they could increase their overall proficiency in the language. Once they had acquired sufficient proficiency in Dutch, the students could plan for their future undergraduate degree in the Netherlands. However, Ms. Pella recommended another option: Those students who showed proficient levels of Dutch and an acumen for advanced studies were able to enter the accelerated program, the 2/3 DY class.

Throughout the discussion, I was impressed at how well the students remained attentive to both the teacher and to one another as they spoke or asked questions. The class was quiet and compliant, and overall the teacher seemed to use few behavior management techniques to maintain a positive classroom environment. Yet, the narrative of this discussion developed a tone of persuasion, as it was clear from my perspective that Ms. Pella intended for students of this class to proceed to the 2/3 DY program, so that they could advance towards a HAVO degree in Vrede College and entrance into a Dutch university.

The Push Towards the 2/3 DY Cohort

As other teachers and the program coordinator, Ms. Stijkstaad, mentioned, the best students from the ISK classes are encouraged to join the 2/3 DY course; many of the best students are placed in Ms. Pella's class so that they can then become part of the 2/3 DY class. The class itself is a hybrid, as the students complete the second year of the HAVO diploma program in the fall semester and then the third year in the spring semester. The 2/3 DY class can be stressful, and the students need to be well prepared in Dutch and other subjects to be successful.

Along with Ms. Pella, Ms. Stijkstaad, the ISK program coordinator, who also teaches Dutch grammar, highlighted the experience of ISK students and the progression to the class that combines the second and third years of secondary school into this one-year course, 2/3 DY:

After this year you got to two-three combination class of the two highest levels that we offer in our system, the 2/3 DY class. After one year of Dutch you go to this 2/3 DY, in which students complete the second and the third year of

secondary school in one year. It's amazing what these children produce, in a way, they are put into a very intense class, the class that I call a pressure cooker.

Coming back to the social skills, this is the class that bonds the most. They bring their skills with them. It's clear from the beginning that students can't fall behind. Eventually, they get in the flow of this class. Throughout their school career, they pretty much stay together. And it seems like, this is just my opinion, that the students that are in the pressure cooker, they are set up for a really successful education.

Both Ms. Pella and Ms. Stijkstaad emphasized the progress that the 2/3 DY class often makes over a short period of time. The emphasis for the teachers in sharing knowledge about the organization of the Dutch school system relates to the specific diploma path that the students choose once they integrate into the Dutch secondary school system. In fact, Vrede College only offers two of the three diploma programs available in the Netherlands, the HAVO and VWO. Ms. Pella stressed the fact that the students would need to demonstrate a high level of proficiency in Dutch and maintain good grades to be considered for the advanced classes.

For this reason, the presentation on Dutch schools included an overview of the high school system throughout Holland and how the three types of diplomas lead to further study or employment. Yet, as these findings indicate through the presentation of Ms. Pella and the comments by Ms. Stijkstaad, the ISK program strongly encouraged high-achieving students to advance to the 2/3 DY class, which places students on the path towards a HAVO or VWO diploma. In this way, these types of presentations informed students about future study and Vrede College, so that they could be more prepared for

higher education in the Netherlands. Yet, these informative discussions also acted as harbingers of future possibilities if students failed to study at a higher level: They would attend an MBO program and enter a type of vocational school.

Even in the classroom presentations, I noticed a slight shift in tone when Ms. Pella reviewed the choices that students had for their upcoming school years at Vrede College. From my perspective, Ms. Pella expected that all capable members of the more advanced, fast-paced class would naturally want to progress to the 2/3 DY class. Yet, some students would not be able to continue with a rigorous academic program. These findings demonstrate that the ISK program attempted to prepare students for life in the Dutch education system as well as in current Dutch society.

VMBO, HAVO, or VWO: Is the Choice up to You?

In classroom discussions or parent meetings, school leaders and ISK mentor teachers provided information to students and parents that gave detailed information on the possibilities for students in secondary school in the Netherlands. Many students in the ISK program focus on improving their knowledge of Dutch, and advancement through secondary school into the university system might not be their highest priority during these first months of school in the Netherlands. Yet, when the different diploma programs, i.e., VMBO, HAVO, and VWO, are presented to the students, how can they know which option is best for them?

I observed these presentations on Dutch secondary schools and higher education in various classrooms in the ISK program. In most cases, students listened attentively and acted very compliantly. During one of the discussions, I caught the remarks of one student when Ms. Leyden analyzed with the class the different options for higher

education, such as a VMBO program, leading towards vocational school. The student interjected, “Can I just shoot myself now?” As a concerned educator and researcher, I wanted to talk to Ms. Leyden about different ways to support students as they plan for choices in their academic future.

I wondered how students could feel so distraught about the possibilities of their future in high school and university in Holland. What began as a discussion to inform students about options for secondary school turned into a bleak outlook for academic achievement. Accordingly, through this research I found that students who were highly motivated and determined to succeed would be able to navigate the system. Yet, students who might only be able to attend vocational training programs seemed to feel relegated to a lower tier of the Dutch education system.

School leaders and teachers in Eastdale implement policies to ensure that every student is college ready upon graduation, as many students in Central Texas plan on entering a college or university after completing high school. Yet, as these findings indicate, the Dutch system seems to direct students towards three possible options, VMBO, HAVO, and VWO. More importantly, a student’s language ability in the first years of secondary school determine which diploma program students follows during their five- or six-year period in high school.

ISK students who matriculate into the traditional Dutch education system have few choices for secondary school. Many students eventually follow the VMBO diploma program, which leads to vocational training or trade school. Few ISK students are able to enter the diploma programs which lead to university; some students continue at the school with the HAVO program, while a very small number enter the VWO program.

Mr. Burkhaart, one of the campus administrators, responded that different types of post-secondary advancement remained available to all students, possibly in the university system or in vocational training:

With a HAVO diploma, you can find more technical training, a better-paid, higher profession, but you cannot go to university. No, with HAVO you don't attend the university. And when you follow the VMBO program, you go to the middle preparation, MBO we call this. But most of our children wants to go to the HAVO, because you have more career choices, of course. And we as a campus are promoting that idea very much. Normally, we have to make sure that each student gets a good degree, a good qualification for the Dutch language. When you have a diploma of the VMBO, it will give you the right to go to the HAVO, so that you can study extra to attain that diploma, too. So, we want to push our children a little bit higher. I hope they can work and achieve more.

In and of itself, the ISK program, similar to the Global Campus in Eastdale, represents a temporary measure within the confines of a school environment for newcomer students to become familiar with the secondary school system in a new country of residence. At Vrede College, I found that teachers predominantly focused on language acquisition during the students' first months and years of study in the ISK program. This result appears inevitable, since students need to be familiar with the local language to succeed in the host country's educational system.

However, students entering these types of school-based programs arrived with forms of both social and cultural capital that empower aspects of student agency when pedagogical practices become more participatory and dialogical. These forms of

intercultural exchanges of cultural capital represent more equitable forms of school communities that promote shared ecologies of knowing. In the next section, I present student stories that depict this increased sense of dialogical learning and student agency within the context of ISK students at Vrede College.

Overcoming Obstacles to Succeed: Student Stories

During this research project, I interacted with teachers, school leaders, parents and students, since I spent an extended period observing classes and the general dynamics of classes in both Central Texas and South Holland. In this section, I present narratives that demonstrate students' experiences and perspectives of the ISK program at Vrede College. The stories describe students who were determined to succeed in the environment of a Dutch secondary school. The first narrative shows the classroom experiences of several students, highlighting interactions within the classroom community in one of the ISK classes. Then, I present two individual stories from students who had entered Vrede College in the ISK program. These narratives exhibit aspects of student agency, as they demonstrate how students support their academic ambitions through concerted effort and determination. In general, these students benefited from support of their teachers the ISK program, which prepared them to be successful in the conventional diploma programs at Vrede College.

Student Interactions within the Classroom Community

In this descriptive narrative, I present aspects of classroom interaction I observed in Ms. Leyden's class. Overall, the students seemed to behave well for Ms. Leyden during the classes of Dutch language instruction and practice. Often, the teacher would use YouTube videos of songs to practice Dutch, and the students would read or even sing

along with the lyrics on the screen. One afternoon, the teachers played “Laat Me” by Derick Stadwijle, a Dutch R&B singer. The teacher let the students watch the video twice, and they had to complete a worksheet which had some of the lyrics missing, a type of cloze-passage activity. The students cooperated with neighbors at their desks as they attempted to complete the lyrics from the song. As in many of the ISK classes, students often complied with the instructions of the teachers. Rarely were there instances of misbehavior, and at most times the majority of students participated in the classroom activities.

However, in this lesson, I could tell that some students seemed disinterested in the work, as they waited for the teacher to read the lyrics aloud. Additionally, this task was representative of many in-class assignments, which were not graded, but instead were meant to improve the students’ Dutch proficiency. One student asked if the teacher could play another song, one by Kanye West. Even though the task of figuring out song lyrics to the Derick Stadwijle song was not a favorite of some of the class, most of the students paid attention and listened to the teacher as she reviewed the lyrics. One student, Max, began singing, “Take Me Home, Country Roads,” the American song by John Denver. To me, it seemed as if he wanted the teacher to review that song as the class had done with “Laat Me.” Soon after, another student joined Max in singing, but they stopped after the second verse. Then, the teacher directed the class to the next activity which sought students’ opinions on education in the Netherlands. This subject was highly relevant to my study, as I wondered what students, who had recently arrived in a country, thought of educational programs developed to help them integrate into the new society.

Ms. Leyden explained the next activity to students as a writing response, adding that students could respond with emojis. Max, who was often outspoken in class, became enthusiastic about this option; later in the class period he said that he preferred to use emojis since he preferred writing as little as possible. Seldom students complained about classwork, as the tone of compliance and productivity appeared in most every ISK class that I observed. Ms. Leyden gave the students the following prompt to consider and write about: How do you find the school system in the Netherlands? Do you think the school system is different? Did you get used to schools in the Netherlands over time? As soon as these questions were asked, I hoped that the students would discuss this topic with either their partners or table groups. However, for this discussion the students did not engage with one another very much.

All but two of the students were immediately working on the task, while the two who were not actively writing about the prompt were talking with one another over their experience in Dutch schools: Edgar and David were discussing their situation in the ISK program and life in Meyland. They spoke English to one another, and they commented how the city was much smaller than what they had expected. The teacher allowed them to interact while the other students wrote in their journals. I noticed that students were left more space, more freedom to develop their own thinking in the Dutch language classes I observed. After Edgar and David spoke to each other for about ten minutes, Ms. Leyden approached them and suggested that they write down some of their comments either in the format of a composition or even an interview. Eventually, the two students began writing down their response to the prompt as a type of dialogue. In this way, all the students in the classroom were completely engaged in the class assignment.

After about fifteen minutes had passed, Max was one of the first students to speak up and he remarked that the system was strange, much different than schools in Poland, his home country. He mentioned how classes in Poland were a lot more intense, more serious. In Poland, the teachers had the students work on math problems for hours, while they also had to study both Polish and French language and grammar. After Max stopped speaking, most of the students continued writing their responses. At this point, I wondered why Ms. Leyden refrained from engaging Max or other class members on this topic of the Dutch school system.

During the end of that class period, the teacher spoke to students who were working at their desks and she encouraged them to clarify their ideas about the Dutch education system and to identify both strengths and weaknesses of schools in Holland. Overall, I was surprised by the level of inquiry that the teacher promoted for this introductory course to Dutch language and society. Yet, I found that some students worked independently or appeared disinterested during the discussion. I found that in Ms. Leyden's class, as well as other introductory classes in the ISK program, the teacher seldom provoked organic discussions fueled by the insight and opinions of the students. The one outlier was Ms. Pella, who taught the group preparing for the 2/3 DY cohort. This class often hosted lively discussions on topics developed and curated by the students themselves.

Across the ISK program, these student interactions mirrored events that I often saw in classrooms in Eastdale; some students, like Max, would try to get attention with a funny quip or by singing a verse of a popular song. Schools are social environments, and I observed many students interacting with one another about both academic and non-

academic topics in both Central Texas and South Holland. Yet, many of the students in the ISK program appeared courteous, respectful, and attentive to the teacher in the different classrooms.

As mentioned previously in this section, I seldom witnessed engaged discussion among the entire group of students. At times, students appeared much more engaged when working in dyads or table groups. In these instances, students, like Edgar and David, developed their own type of *plática*, as they spoke about previous experiences in their home country or other locations where they lived. Overall, I found that the students mostly appeared well-behaved, compliant, and conscientious in the classroom environments, while more dynamic, engaged interactions often happened only in the more academically advanced, high-performing class of Ms. Pella. The next section of this discussion on student narratives of overcoming obstacles to advance in the context of education presents a determined student who plans for a career in medicine.

Ahna: A Student Determined to Succeed

Ahna, a student at Vrede College, spent about three months in the ISK classes and then she entered the *brugklas*, the transition class in Dutch high schools before the choice of VMBO, HAVO, or VWO. She had chosen the diploma route to prepare herself for university. As a student who showed significant progress in her one year in the ISK program, Ahna joined the 2/3 DY class in the 2017-2018 academic year. She mentioned that she had to constantly study extra hours to keep up with the pace of the class.

Having previously studied at a British school, Ahna had attained a high level of English language proficiency and she had good grades in the main subject areas. She mentioned that she had thought that her proficiency in English would be beneficial to her

future studies in the Netherlands. Many Dutch universities offer both undergraduate and graduate courses in English as well as in Dutch. Ahna's knowledge and access to language provide her with greater opportunities in higher education in the Netherlands. Her overall academic proficiency and her language abilities paved the way for her success at Vrede College.

However, during her time in the ISK program, Ahna admitted that she labored intensively to learn Dutch. The first months in the ISK department, the *brugklas*, and the 2/3 DY cohort demanded a lot of work and dedication, especially to be proficient in the language. Ahna mentioned that the teachers were always very supportive, and they found fun ways to teach the language and to engage the students. She recalled how students could often work in pairs or teams to complete classwork or a project. Also, the teachers often used internet-based activities as part of Dutch coursework, including the use of students' smartphones and tablets. In her opinion, the teachers' efforts helped the class learn the language and become more proficient in Dutch. However, she admitted that *Zebra*, the textbook that the classes use, tended to be quite boring, even though it was informative overall, and the exercises improved her language ability.

Ahna had an extra motivation to become proficient in the language: she had already decided that she wanted a career in the field of medicine. Her rationale for learning Dutch so well was that she needed to be proficient in Dutch to speak with patients and other people in the hospital. Her intrinsic desire to pursue a career in medicine encouraged Ahna to challenge herself and pursue a HAVO diploma. Ahna's story demonstrates how student agency influences an individual to take risks in order to attain a higher level of academic achievement. The next student narrative provides a

glimpse into the struggles that a student faces in the process of integration in both her home country and the country of resettlement.

Eleni: A Voice of Anguish, a Voice of Encouragement

I first met teachers and students of the 2/3 DY class in May 2018, and it happened to be a day when an American playwright spoke to the class about an upcoming production at a theatre in Amsterdam. The 2/3 DY class represented a cohort of motivated, high-performing students who move from ISK classes into a fast-paced, accelerated program within the Dutch secondary school system at Vrede College. Janet Langhart Cohen visited the school to discuss her play, *Anne and Emmett*. The first day of site observations at Vrede College offered a unique event, as I attended a presentation by Ms. Langhart Cohen, with her husband, Former Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, in attendance.

Ms. Langhart Cohen addressed the class about the concept of growing up amid racial tensions in the U.S. She gave the example of the protagonists of her play, Emmett Till and Anne Frank, two young teenagers killed because of prejudice and racial strife. As both playwright and concerned citizen, Ms. Langhart Cohen urged the students and all those in attendance to respond to the pressures of inherent racism in a society. The class had an interesting dynamic, in that the students listened attentively, yet it was clear that some people wanted to share some ideas. The playwright quickly opened the floor to questions or observations from the students. As Ms. Langhart Cohen spoke in English to the class, all students who wanted to say something also conversed in English.

One of the students, a Greek student named Eleni, told a heartfelt, personal story about a physical ailment that caused her to miss a lot of school in Greece because of

extended time in the hospital. During her time away from school, a classmate, whose family originated from Africa, gave her a lot of support during her rehabilitation and her adjustment back to school life. When peers made disparaging remarks about how she limped or struggled to walk, her friend would tell her that those comments are just skin deep.

It was difficult for Eleni to tell the story, as she often tried to hold back tears when she discussed the support that her friend had provided her. She also expressed that the ridicule she received because of her physical ailment hardly compared to the bigotry and disparaging racial comments that classmates in Greece directed towards her friend. Eleni's story brought the class together, as other students shared examples of discrimination and intolerance from their lives. Yousi, a student from Syria, mentioned that he, as well as everyone else in the classroom, is different from the typical Dutch person; in all, he said, being different represents the new normal, especially for him and other students of the 2/3 DY cohort.

Eleni's story spoke of both distress and torment, as her reflections during Ms. Langhart Cohen's presentation dramatically changed the mood of the room. Ms. Langhart Cohen, Mr. Cohen, and the delegation from the U.S. embassy quietly reflected on the words of Eleni and Yousi. Other students offered insights into their experiences integrating into Dutch society, especially in the context of the school. Yet, Eleni became the moderator, as she referred to her own difficulties in relation to those of fellow classmates. As the embassy delegation distributed complimentary tickets to a performance of the play, Eleni and Ms. Langhart Cohen spoke at length about her arrival in the Netherlands and her adjustment to life in South Holland. With the composure of a

diplomat, Eleni described the educational opportunities the ISK program and the 2/3 DY class offered her. She resembled an expert in the field of the secondary school system in the Netherlands, and Ms. Langhart Cohen indicated that she anticipated that Eleni would write a play or novel in the not too distant future. I am not sure if Ms. Langhart Cohen has the power of prophecy, yet Eleni represents a refugee student who not only imagines a better future through education, but she also encourages peers and new students in the ISK program.

Eleni proved to be a popular student with both students and teachers at Vrede College. She practiced Greek with Ms. Leyden, who spent time on the Greek island of Ithaki in the summer. She also advised students about the rigor of the 2/3 DY program. Ms. Pella asked her to speak to the new cohort of students, some of whom would enter the DY program the following academic year. The teacher asked Eleni to address the class, as a way to explain the dedication and perseverance needed to be successful in both ISK and 2/3 DY classes at Vrede College.

When I observed Eleni present to the class, it was early October 2018, so the students were still new to the campus, since they had spent approximately a month in one of the ISK classes at Vrede College. Before Eleni addressed the group of students, the teacher told the students to write down comments, ideas, or questions about the ISK program or the DY program. Ms. Pella reminded the students to take notes and she gave the class explicit directions about what they should do and how they should behave during the talk by Eleni. Overall, Ms. Pella was very direct in terms of classroom expectations, in that she advised the students how they behave when listening to a presentation.

Eleni stood up and made her way to the front of the classroom. She walked with a noticeable hitch to her gait, yet she did not appear to move with pain or discomfort. As she moved to the front of the classroom, she greeted some of the students and, then, she thanked Ms. Pella for letting her address the class. Her entire presentation was done in fluent Dutch, with a few instances of translation into English of certain terms, such as grade report, proficiency exam, and conversation.

Eleni first discussed the overall grade reports that come out three times a year. Teachers contact parents for a conference, either in person or over the phone, and the grade reports detail the students' progress and proficiency in all subjects. While Eleni discussed grades, Simon, a student that arrived at the end of last academic year, stood up to explain how grades function at Vrede College and in secondary schools in the Netherlands. Without conflict or hesitation, Eleni let Simon continue his discussion, as he described different types of grades, both low and high ones, and how these grades affect a student's progress through different levels of secondary school.

While sharing the stage with Eleni, Simon explained how one's grades determine one's entry into one of the diploma programs, i.e., VMBO, HAVO, or VWO. At one point, he grabbed a marker and made a chart on the board that depicted the different options available to students after secondary school in the Netherlands. While he spoke, Eleni never appeared interrupted or concerned about the student who had taken over the presentation. From my perspective, the teacher failed to say anything to dissuade Simon from addressing the class. I never noticed any tension from the teacher or Eleni, yet I wondered why the teacher didn't ask Simon to discuss his views on grades at another occasion. Eventually, Simon finished speaking, he put away the board marker, and then

he returned to his desk. Eleni thanked him for his brief presentation and she then provided specific information about the progress reports and the parent meetings with the teachers.

Eleni focused on one idea discussed by Simon: that one's grades in ISK classes and the first years of secondary school have a strong correlation to one's future in the Dutch educational system. Eleni echoed what Simon mentioned about the need to have good grades in the first years of high school, yet she accentuated the concurrent requirement to perform well on Dutch proficiency exams. According to Eleni, as well as teachers and staff, satisfactory grades and high Dutch proficiency greatly affect which high school program students attend, i.e., VMBO, HAVO, or VWO. During Eleni's presentation, many students followed along as best as they could, yet I wondered how well students who had only studied Dutch for one month could understand a detailed presentation in Dutch on secondary school and university. I thought that the teacher could offer a translation of some ideas or at least a visual representation of Eleni's discussion. School performance remains a vital part of these students' future, so it would have been worthwhile for the students to have a good idea about what the school performance means for their choices for degree plans and possible studies at university or college of applied sciences.

At one point, the teacher asked some of the students what they understood or what they had discovered from the discussion. I thought this aspect of engaging the students was a key instance to gauge student interest and understanding in the discussion. Peer support and shared knowledge offered the chance to strengthen the classroom community and develop fellow students as key members of a developing group of learners (Freire et

al., 2014; Guajardo et al., 2016). However, when the teacher asked one student, Jasper, about any ideas from the discussion, the student had nothing to say about the discussion. Another student, David, did not have a question, yet he mentioned that, in general, the discussion was important for high school. Mara, another student, summarized what Eleni and Simon had said, as she explained how grades and student performance greatly affect one's chances to go to university.

Before Eleni finished speaking, some students already had questions to ask Eleni. One student asked her when Dutch begins to get easier, while another inquired about the number of hours it takes to improve quickly one's proficiency in Dutch. Eleni was very direct in her replies, as she stressed the importance of reading in Dutch and practicing grammar and comprehension online and with the *Zebra* textbook. She also advised the students to immerse themselves in Dutch music, television, films, and internet-based content. When another student asked her about the proficiency exams, she emphasized how the students should focus on writing, which often tends to be the most difficult part of the proficiency process. In all, she advised that students practice as much as they can to improve their knowledge and use of Dutch. Eleni finished her discussion with a bit of advice. She recommended watching movies, especially a favorite one or maybe one that is very familiar, in Dutch. Repeated practice of study, conversation, and interaction with Dutch represents the best type of routine practice that aids students with their proficiency.

The stories of both Ahna and Eleni demonstrate how students with an indefatigable sense of determination gain success in the traditional Dutch education system after having entered through a support program like ISK. I also found that both students spoke highly of their ISK mentor teachers and their peers in the ISK classes.

Additionally, both students carried a strong motivation to overcome specific obstacles to advance at Vrede college: Ahna was determined to work in the field of medicine, so she dedicated herself to become proficient in Dutch. Eleni arrived in the Netherlands as a refugee with a physical impairment, and she refused to let anything impede her progress towards high academic achievement.

In this study, students represented one of the most important stakeholders because their integration into school systems in Central Texas or South Holland required both a critical discovery of their potential to study and learn in a new environment. In addition, the teachers at the schools where I observed in Eastdale and Meyland remained essential to student learning, and their ability to include students in classroom communities promoted the process of student integration. In the last part of this section, I present narratives that emerged from the daily lives in schools during this study. These stories, observations, and reflections highlight my roles as educator, researcher, community member, and parent, all of which undoubtedly influenced the trajectory of this multi-sited research project.

Practitioner as Advocate, Researcher as Respondent

The work of a researcher is to engage the outside world through a particular lens, a certain world view, through which the researcher poses questions, observes phenomena, and, most importantly, interacts with the known (and unknown) world. Through support and interaction, the school practitioner constantly attempts to improve the educational experience for all stakeholders, especially for students. For many aspects of this ethnographic research process, I entered the confines of school classrooms and campus meeting rooms as a practitioner, yet I observed, took notes, and framed questions about

the plethora of phenomena as a researcher. In this section of the findings, I recount my experiences as both an educator and an academic researcher. This reflective process informed the research process and how I perceive systematic and sustained support for refugee students within the context of school environments.

Insights from a Practitioner: Working with Ibrahim

As I started this research, I still worked in Eastdale schools as a campus administrator. I recall a pivotal interaction that occurred during that time, one in which I acted as both school employee, a practitioner in every sense of the word, and simultaneously as advocate, for a refugee student and family resettling in Eastdale. This story of my work as a school leader in Eastdale demonstrates the extent to which campus leaders and staff collaborate to support refugee students and their families. Ibrahim, a young Iraqi student in an Eastdale school, joined a first-grade class in August 2016. He immediately struggled to maintain consistent attendance. The teacher, Ms. Bailey, reached out to the parents, who had recently resettled as refugees in Central Texas. As part of the campus leadership team, I offered to join the meeting to offer any help possible from my position in the school. I reached out to Ms. Danilla from the District Refugee office to see what type of support that we could provide the family.

I thought that the school should do anything possible to help Ibrahim and his family in their transition to life in Central Texas. I had developed an interest in supporting refugee students ever since our campus had hosted a small group of students from Burma, Afghanistan, and Iraq during the previous four years. As I transitioned from teacher to school counselor to administrator, I sought to make dramatic changes within the context of supporting refugee students through my position in the school

leadership team. Yet, the way in which I collaborated with Ms. Bailey, school and district staff, and Ibrahim's parents showed that change initiatives arise through the concerted efforts of many individuals.

First, we organized a meeting in which all interested parties could engage with one another to derive a plan to support Ibrahim at school. We engaged in an involved, open-ended discussion, which I described as a *plática* to colleagues, since we had gathered to share perceptions and stories through collaborative inquiry (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013). Ms. Bailey and I had spoken, yet she had not dealt first-hand with other campus administrators or the parent support team. In previous conversations with Ibrahim's parents, we had discussed their student's attendance and participation in school. We had always spoken in English, so I thought it would be beneficial to have a meeting with the teacher, a campus administrator, and the parents to find ways to support Ibrahim in school. Yet, before the meeting, Ms. Danilla suggested that we schedule a translator to attend the meeting to provide extra language support for the student's parents. At first, I had not considered the use of a translator, since Ibrahim's father spoke English well. Yet, Ms. Danilla advised our team that a translator would make the meeting more transparent for everyone present, as Ibrahim's father would not have to simultaneously advocate for his son and translate comments made by everyone in attendance at the meeting. This insight, among others commonly provided by Ms. Danilla and the Refugee Support team, surprised me. I realized that simplest aspects of planning and outreach can greatly enhance the cultural and linguistic responsiveness of school processes.

As an aspiring academician in the study of school improvement, I was well aware that school leaders who demonstrate culturally responsive practices decisively support student integration and create positive campus cultures (Ferfolja & Vickers, 2010; Khalifa et al., 2016; Kornfeld, 2012; Norberg, 2017). Yet, as a practitioner in the public-school environment, I seemed willing to schedule a meeting before I had considered all the necessary accommodations which might need to be made. I noticed in many instances in both Central Texas and South Holland in which teachers, staff, and school leaders attempted to support students and improve schools on a regular basis. Yet, daily obligations (e.g., attendance, lesson plans, parent communication, faculty meetings) compress the workday so that seldom is there enough time to complete or fulfill every responsibility. Additionally, educators consistently face a variety of situations to remedy in a short amount of time. Through my experience with such a demanding schedule, I have come to understand that any efforts to enact change rarely happen through the work of a single individual. Collective, campus-wide engagement needs to include the efforts of many stakeholders and the sustained commitment over a period of time. In my role as both a school counselor and an administrator, I benefited greatly from the support of teachers, parents, district staff like Ms. Danilla, and the campus leadership teams.

In the case of Ibrahim, we scheduled a translator to attend the meeting through the district Refugee Support office, and we invited all of the interested parties to convene at a time that was convenient for both parents and Ms. Bailey. To say the least, this collaboration represented one of the highlights of my time as a campus leader. Through the format of an engaged conversation, all participants were able to present their perspectives and inquire critically about how to support Ibrahim's education. The school

had created a critical space in which teachers, staff, and family members could assist one another to improve a student's educational opportunities.

This first conversation of Ibrahim developed into a series of discussions about how to find specific ways the school could provide supportive services, such as transportation and meals for students with dietary restrictions. In addition, the campus leadership team worked with staff to support Ms. Bailey in developing curriculum that was more culturally responsive. Furthermore, the counselor and the parent support team developed monthly informational workshops to make the school environment more open and accessible, especially to new members of the community. Through both conversation and critical inquiry, we relied on a collaboration to support Ibrahim and his family. As a school leadership team, we had to step outside of our comfort zone to seek advice and to initiate change efforts within the classroom as well as across campus. For the school leaders in Eastdale, the importance of culturally responsive practices and collaboration typified change efforts to produce sustained improvements that benefit students. The next section focuses in on classroom communities that become inclusive and implement sustained support for the integration of refugee students.

What are you Doing Here, Meneer?

The work with refugee students always seemed important to me. During my work in education, I realized that certain student groups need extra support. In my role as a counselor and school administrator, a myriad of commitments, obligations, and responsibilities occupies each workday; yet, as I am the first to admit, I gave a special priority to situations with refugee students because of my familiarity with this experience. While few colleagues or staff members were aware of my interest in refugee support

programs, some of the students themselves were very perceptive during my time at Vrede College.

After a short time in Ms. Leyden's classroom, many students quickly became accustomed to my presence in their classroom. This particular group of students was brand-new, as they had started in January 2018. I visited the class twice a week and sometimes I stayed for more than three hours. They quickly became familiar with my participation in class, although most of the time I quietly watched the class interaction and took notes on that which I observed.

At one point, during a morning class in June 2018, Joanna, a Polish student, asked me, "What exactly are you doing here, meneer?" I was surprised that she used "meneer" or "sir," while she knew I was only visiting the class for a short time. Since the class was working independently on *Zebra*, a Dutch language textbook, I took the time to explain the concept of my research. Anthony, a student that had recently arrived asked, "A Ph.D. is hard work, right?" I wondered how pursuing a doctoral degree in school improvement compared to arriving in a new country and learning a new language. Soon after this interaction, Ms. Leyden came by and advised us, "Nederlands, spreken jullie nederlands," and so from that point on, we were supposed to speak only Dutch to one another. An important aspect of my research at Vrede College was the way in which teachers and staff spent a great deal of time on Dutch language instruction and on the Dutch education itself.

Developing Shared Ecologies of Knowing through a Plática

This section provides a discussion with a research partner in the form of a plática, which allowed a conversation to include critical aspects of this inquiry into classrooms

that support refugee students. The process of plática involves critical engagement, personal experience and, storytelling (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013), and these dynamic conversations also build rapport with my research partners. This type of interaction proved worthwhile for this study because I was able to gain insight into how teachers and staff members made decisions on a daily basis to improve support for refugee students.

In the class presentation on the Dutch education system, mentioned in Chapter Four, Ms. Leyden spoke in Dutch and English, as English is the default language outside of Dutch. In the class, there are students from Poland, Bulgaria, China, as well as other countries. Although every student may not speak English fluently, it is the language that most students understand and use to communicate. After this presentation on schools in Holland, the students and Ms. Leyden had an extensive, involved discussion about the secondary school system in the Netherlands. Many students had questions about their academic future in both high school and college in Meyland. After class had dismissed, Ms. Leyden and I engaged in a plática, as our conversation examined many aspects of teaching and cultural interaction within the context of the classroom. I present an excerpt from this engaged conversation because a central theme within these findings evolved that afternoon in a classroom at Vrede College:

Interviewer (I): So, ISK classes are mostly about the language, about becoming more proficient in Dutch?

Ms. Leyden (K): *Internationale Schakel Klas*. *Schakel* is a chain or a link, so ISK means international link class. So, you can go into Dutch schools.

I: So, students can become part of the Dutch school system.

K: Yeah. Students from outside of the Netherlands, they have to take part in these classes if they don't speak proficient Dutch. It's also a little bit like some kind of a bridge, but they have to show proficiency in the Dutch language. What actually happens in America now? If I understood it, you don't have refugees, for instance, from Syria or African countries.

I: Very few. Very few. When Obama was in office, I think the quota that they established was between 60,000 to 70,000 refugees resettled annually. In 2016, the Obama administration wanted to increase it to 120,000 annually. When the Trump administration came, I think they decreased the quota to 5,000 refugees resettled annually, which of a country of 300 million it's very small. However, you could argue that refugees from the border of Mexico, including people from Central America and other places, there are many refugees that do not appear in the official statistics. Since I initiated this study in the U.S., I looked at schools like Vrede College in the U.S. that support students that are refugees. Then, I searched for the types of programs supporting refugee students in U.S. schools. To say the least, schools in the States don't have an ISK program. Most often, students enter a school, and a staff member leads them to the new classroom; that's about it in terms of transition to a new school environment.

K: They just have to fit in and, yeah, that's it.

I: In the States I have noticed, and that's part of my study, other organizations, such as churches and non-profit organizations, step in to offer assistance. No groups are specifically refugee organizations, like here you might have the International Rescue Organization.

K: Or *VluchtelingenWerk*, a Dutch organization that helps refugees. However, every city has a school with an ISK program.

I: And in these cities, what happens when refugees arrive?

K: Sometimes we get refugees from Africa, or Afghanistan, and they can't read or write. It's getting less and less common. These students, the ones who can't read or write, they won't come to this college, because we have only HAVO and VWO diploma programs. I also worked at a school that has only the VMBO diploma program. In those schools, you will see some people who can't read or write.

Ms. Leyden and I spoke at length about this topic, and she recounted her experience in a high school for refugee students. The school offered only a VMBO program, as students learned skills and trades to enter the workforce in the Netherlands. For many adolescent refugee students, the options for advanced academic study are limited because of the lack of language proficiency in Dutch. Many of these students are forced, as Ms. Leyden mentioned, to just fit in wherever they can accommodate themselves.

In our plática, Ms. Leyden and I addressed the inequities present in secondary schools with different diploma programs in the Netherlands. Refugee students with high academic performance and advance language proficiency in Dutch often make the successful transition to a HAVO diploma program, which prepares them for higher education. For example, many of the students who enter the 2/3 DY cohort, mentioned earlier in this chapter, successfully transition into the Dutch university system by attaining a HAVO or VWO diploma. Yet, students that arrive to the Netherlands without previous academic experience or limited language ability in Dutch or English are offered vocational training programs in secondary school. This specific theme of inherent

inequities within the transition from ISK programs to high school represents an important finding for this study.

Researcher Positionality: My Efforts as a Research Partner

Information about the Dutch secondary school system comprises one of the main facets of the annual parent meeting at Vrede College, and the teachers meet beforehand to agree on the particulars of the discussion. As I spent much time at the campus, I offered to help teachers and staff of the ISK program in whatever way I could. One instance in which I became a partner with fellow educators at Vrede College occurred at the annual Parent Night at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. Those teachers with more experience offer insight into which details about the overall school structure need to be included in the evening presentation. In another of our pláticas, Ms. Leyden and I discussed the class presentation on secondary education as well as parent involvement in the decision-making process. This conversation demonstrates the benefit of shared interactions and engaged participation, both of which are integral to the ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016), especially in this case in terms of capacity building and community development.

One of the main improvements that Ms. Leyden and other teachers attempted to make dealt with the social aspect of engaging with parents. At times, the approach of teacher presentation was too Dutch, too business-like, as Ms. Leyden explained. In fact, she wanted to have some parents, who have had children in the ISK program or in Dutch schools, share ideas about options for high school and university. We discussed how this option promotes experienced parents as experts, who provide recommendations for fellow family members. As a school practitioner in Eastdale, I often collaborated with

teachers and staff to develop presentations on parent engagement. I provided Ms. Leyden with some possible activities to increase parent involvement, and we decided to further discuss options for streamlining her presentation so that more parents could actually lead discussions on aspects of the ISK program.

As our conversation developed through this interview and other discussions, Ms. Leyden and I examined ways that refugee students received support and guidance within the context of the school environment. The use of engaged conversations among teachers and staff resembled aspects of community development within the ISK program. For teachers, such as Ms. Leyden and Ms. Pella at Vrede College, it became clear that the key component for student integration was the increase in Dutch language proficiency and the matriculation into the Dutch secondary school system. However, I wondered about two other important participants in the educative process: Students and parents. School leaders benefit from implementing system to discover what students hope to gain from the ISK program and what parents want from the ISK program for their children.

As Ms. Leyden demonstrated, parent involvement also represented a key attribute of student engagement and participation: Sustained forms of parent participation strengthened both students and educators, a collective community of learners. The conversation with Ms. Leyden embodied the concept of shared ecologies of knowing and action, as our discussion led to a way that I could assist the ISK team with aspects of an annual parent meeting, held each year in late September.

Through the *plática* process, I felt that my research embodied both a critical and participatory nature, as I was able to offer ideas from my background as an educator and school administrator. Moreover, my interaction with Ms. Leyden as well as with Ms.

Stijkstaad, the ISK program coordinator, allowed me to take a more active role in the research process at Vrede College.

Transitions as Part of the Ethnographic Research Process

Overall, the first months of my ethnographic study in Meyland were much different than my previous work at Eastdale schools. I spent the first months at Vrede College building relationships with teachers and key personnel of the school. I worked approximately ten years at schools in Eastdale, so I had acquired a familiarity with campus and district leaders, as well as with school practices and policies. I could easily navigate conversations, interactions, and site visits across a variety of campuses. In contrast to my experience in Eastdale, this interaction with Ms. Leyden marked the first time that I felt as if I were involved in the Vrede College organization and, thus, the school community, which I had researched for more than five months. In this conversation and others with Ms. Leyden and Ms. Stijkstaad, I began to understand key elements that Vrede College staff intended to discuss at the parent meeting in the beginning of the school year.

Given my prolonged stay at Vrede College, I especially wanted my research partners to know that I wanted to share ideas and participate in school-based meetings, such as the autumn parent meeting. In one conversation, Ms. Leyden and I spoke about the concept of student integration. In the case of ISK, the few refugee students that attend the school originate from Afghanistan or Syria, yet many students from Poland, Ukraine, Iraq, and other countries experience the concept of displacement. When Ms. Leyden asked the context of my research study in secondary schools, I discussed what I had noticed during my time as an educator in Eastdale public school:

Why am I studying students in secondary school? Because I used to work in schools in the U.S., and when we had refugees or people come from other countries, if they were five years old, six years old, seven years old, after two years they were basically fluent and integrated. It's the older kids that create challenges and an interesting dynamic, the language skills maybe take a bit more time to develop. There's also the social component. So that's why I find the study really interesting.

The connection from my experience as an educator permeates this study, because I supported both students and parents as they experienced displacement while adjusting to the school community in Central Texas. Although Eastdale, Texas and Meyland, South Holland are geographically, culturally, and socially distant from one another, the similarities exist when considering how refugee, immigrant, and displaced families experience educational systems in context of integrating into a new school community.

Through these interactions with educators, students, and community leaders, the ethnographic research process gained access to efforts supporting refugee students across the two sites. I tried to study how the students learned from one another in the context of a new environment. Yet, I also investigated how teachers and school leaders collaborated to create inclusive communities within schools for these new students. With a critical lens, I sought aspects of cultural wealth within the classroom dynamics and social interactions.

Through the presence of multiple perspectives and voices, this study entwined a polyvocality not only in the data analysis aspect (Hatch, 2002), but also in the development of the findings of this research project. The stories and narratives that

demonstrate the ways in which schools affect the integration process of refugee students derive from multiple perspectives and a chronicling of lived events. In the next section, I examine my experience developing shared ecologies of knowledge through collaboration with the ISK team to support refugee student integration through increased parent involvement at Vrede College.

Shared Experiences and Collaboration for the ISK Parent Night

In this section, I provide the narrative of my involvement in the Dutch part of this multi-sited ethnography. My research reached a turning point when I received an invitation from Ms. Stijkstaad, the ISK program coordinator, to participate in the parent meeting in September 2018, an event which would provide an insight into how the school interacts with students and families. I provided some suggestions for parent involvement and I also took part in preparations for the Parent Night at Vrede College in September 2018, which is discussed later in this study.

Typically, at this event all the teachers of the ISK program at Vrede College host the parents for a night of information. The ISK coordinator explained that each teacher approaches the evening in a different way:

Every mentor has their own way of filling in the program. We set out the basic points to cover. What do we really need to say, what do we need to tell the parents? Then, it's up to the teacher, which things you use in keeping this balance. I know one thing we want to do is to prevent someone from talking for five quarters (75 minutes) straight in Dutch. There is also someone who refuses to speak English. I'm going to try in our meeting come Tuesday to clarify these things.

Ms. Stijkstaad provided some examples of student-led initiatives, like short videos and posters, which some teachers use as the centerpiece of the parent meeting. These types of artifacts engage the family members and present the school in an inviting and sincere manner. The ISK coordinator alluded to the value of these student projects:

Another teacher is making some little movies or films to show to the parents, which is a nice thing because you can introduce other teachers who won't be there. We've done this for some years now. It's a nice way of getting to know the school and the atmosphere. Not all the teachers do like this, but you can choose your own way of getting to know the parents.

It was important for me to know how the parent meeting would function, especially since I would attend and possibly lend a hand in one of the classrooms. I decided that I would probably take part in Ms. Leyden's class, since I spent time observing her class in the both the spring and fall semester. Before the week of the meeting, we discussed types of activities that would bolster parent involvement, both for the meeting and throughout the school year.

In a conversation with Ms. Stijkstaad, we discussed the details of the parent night. The ISK team were the only group of teachers that held parent events, and they have a history on campus of trying to engage parents. The ISK program coordinator discussed in detail the parent evening and she explained in detail the overall schedule of events:

First, there will be 15 minutes for coffee, where we want people to mingle. But it seems everyone comes in, and you can't see where everyone is from, whether you're from Poland, or you're from Russia. Some parents, they are here earlier to have this coffee. And, of course, we're there to see if we can make introductions,

because I know who is coming from where. Coffee is at 7:00 p.m., then at a quarter past seven, 7:15 p.m., everyone goes to their own class with their mentor.

Usually, the attendance of the parents is almost a full 100 percent, which I'm always very happy with that. It's always very crowded in the classrooms.

After I understood the general dynamic of the parent night, I spoke with Ms. Leyden about how her meetings tended to go. She was in her second year at the school, so she only had the previous year to consider when she thought about ways to engage the parents.

As I had spent time in her classroom, Ms. Leyden often asked me about how schools worked in the U.S. or how teachers managed to have parents be more involved in their children's education. We had discussions about strategies I had used in the U.S., but also about practices I had noticed at Vrede College:

I: In the U.S., at the different levels of school, parent involvement is really supported by the school. Yet, you can only do so much, because it's up to the parent to help out, to monitor, to make sure their boy or girl, their child is doing well. How do you, either you or Ms. Pella, or the ISK program, how does it work with parents to be involved on a continual or regular basis with the kids? For example, do you keep in touch with the parents?

Ms. Leyden (K): At this moment I think there is some other new system to prevent you using your own WhatsApp with the parents. This year, I just use my own WhatsApp. Then, I add a short line for that. It really was low-level, basic communication. I try to make it easy for the parents to contact me. Of course, it's only for the parents who are able to write in English or in Dutch. Then in the

beginning of the year, at the informational evening, then you have reports, sign-up sheets, and contact information. Also, this year, these kids were young, so I had quite a lot of contact with the parents.

When we talked about the reason for a parent evening, we focused on the idea that parents, who were new to the country as well as the school, would benefit from a support network, possibly led by the school but involving parents so that they could better help their children.

I: It's creating that deeper, and stronger relationship where they're active participants. It's one thing to come in September. You listen for five quarters, an hour and fifteen minutes. You hear everything good. It's another thing to come every month, or every two months because just think, if I'm new, and I'm from Italy, or Argentina or Poland, and I'm brand new to the system, I would so much want to talk to somebody who has maybe already been here a year or two. Not just because we speak the same language, but because it's good to have some pointers. Do I need to help with homework, or is there people at the school that help with homework? What are the important things to do? But then again, people that are new here, they're so busy with work, and with other children.

K: Yeah. Yeah. But on the other hand, they are more than willing to help. They know themselves, they always say, "I can't help with the language, but what can I do?" Provide them space, and quietness, a space at home for them to do homework."

These discussions proved useful to developing a professional rapport with Ms. Leyden, and we collaborated on ways to make her parent night presentation both

participatory and engaging. When she asked me for a couple of ideas, I remembered many “icebreaker” activities that colleagues at schools in Eastdale ISD had used for either parent events or staff meetings. Another idea we discussed was an itinerary for the parents, so that they knew exactly what to expect.

The teacher was thankful for my suggestions. Right after her presentation on the evening of the parent meeting, I noticed that she had used one of the icebreakers and that she had made copies of the schedule for the parent night presentation. I felt that our collaboration had led to a successful presentation in her classroom. In general, the parent event is a highlight of the ISK academic year. This evening provides the parents a chance to glimpse at the educational future of their children.

Some days after the ISK Program parent event, I spoke with the program coordinator about this event and how it represents a key component of the support mechanism involving student, school, and family. Ms. Stijkstaad felt that the parent evening held great potential for interaction and exchange, and she wondered what these annual events could possibly turn into:

I do want to make a next step, because it's important to know what the parents expect from us. What can we mean to each other? It would be good, for example, if we would have such a meeting, and then we would talk about, how do you help your child at home, or let's share experiences. We like to see each other at the school as a triangle, where the parents, the school, and the child, each one is equally important. The parents' part is, well since I work here, for the last 11 years, it comes back every year, this question: How can we get the parents to be more involved at school? Even at the other classes and grade levels at Vrede, it's

difficult to get the parents involved. We are so willing, but it's not so easy. I'm always happy that we nearly have 100 percent attendance, but we need to make that next step.

What does that next step look like? In terms of this study, my interaction mirrors the involvement of the self with the organization, in order to benefit the community of learners and educators, as Guajardo et al. (2016) noticed. Through the presentation of these findings, we can possibly arrive at that next step, which support refugee students as they integrate into campuses in both Central Texas and South Holland.

Practical Applications of the Conceptual Framework

The current study investigated how school leaders, in collaboration with teachers, parents, and community leaders, aimed to transform schools to integrate refugee students into campus communities. I utilized the perspectives of critical inquiry and ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016) to develop a conceptual framework to investigate efforts by school leaders to instill intercultural approaches to both pedagogical concerns and the campus community within the context of programs for refugee students.

As a foundation of this research, constructs of cultural capital originated in the diverse backgrounds of students, school staff, and community members, and these forms of cultural wealth became part of the community through vital dialogue and exchanges with peers, colleagues, and neighbors (Freire et al., 2014; Guajardo et al., 2016; Yosso, 2005). Through this investigation, I attempted to document critically engaged students and educators, who used dialogical forms of learning and interaction, to create safe spaces for the development of shared experiences and knowledge exchanges. Yet, critical inquiry and aspects of collective cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) varied across the

different sites of this study. In this regard, the intersection of critical epistemological exchanges and community development aligned with ideas that characterize Community Learning Exchanges, as developed by Guajardo et al. (2016) within the framework of ecologies of knowing. The engagement of this conceptual approach to the research promoted the discovery of how research partners envisioned integration in schools specifically for refugee students.

For this research, an essential component existed in the passage from the theoretical to the practical in relation to specific and actual practices that students, campus leaders, and community members enact as agents of change within the context of school improvement. From my perspectives as both a researcher and a practitioner, tenable as well as tangible applications emerged from the results of the research. Accordingly, practical applications of the findings from this study became apparent once some intrinsic aspects of the conceptual framework of the research were revisited. Aspects of the ecologies of knowing became both evident and transformative in the classrooms of refugee students at the sites of the ethnographic study.

Guajardo et al. (2016) provided a set of five axioms (i.e., assets and hope; learning as leadership and action; conversation and dialogue as critical for relationships and pedagogy; local knowledge and action; and the encouragement of crossing borders) that are essential to Community Learning Exchanges. These axioms of Guajardo et al. (2016) operate through the Community Learning Exchanges to further community development through engaged discussion, participatory learning, and critical inquiry. I observed aspects of these axioms during the ethnographic research process, yet the results of this study demonstrate that both student agency and parent involvement remain

essential to the integration of refugee students. From a conceptual perspective, the development of collaborative and participatory exchanges within schools precedes the process of integration into the campus culture and community. Through my ethnographic research in both locations, especially the extended time at Vrede College, I observed engaged discourse within the classroom communities, as students challenged one another, both to confront and cross epistemological and sociocultural borders.

From a global perspective through a view of the ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016), schools in this study established policies and practices to positively impact systems of integration of refugee students. According to teachers and staff at both locations, the programs remained flexible and responsive to student needs. Overall, the students became familiar with the ways that schools both functioned and operated, although not every student desired to remain enrolled in the ISK program or other degree offerings at Vrede College. Yet, in the end, schools represented places where children learned about one another and developed collective forms of both social and cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) through interaction with both peers and educators, in addition to the effect of parents and community members.

From a conceptual standpoint, increased parent engagement in schools assuredly affected both student academic performance and campus culture, which represents veritable steps in the process of integration (Clark & Clark, 2003; Fullan, 2016; Koyama & Bakuza, 2017; Warren, 2011). Yet, as the research demonstrated, the pivotal points of change and advocacy emerged beyond the control of school leadership. Students at both the Global Campus and Vrede College encountered the integration process with the primary support of teachers and school staff. Likewise, programs that promoted a sense

of individuals' cultural wealth demonstrated heightened levels of student participation and engagement. Teachers who allowed students to challenge social and cultural stereotypes within the safe spaces of classroom interaction became advocates for collective cultural wealth within the school community. These pedagogical practices exemplified dynamic approaches to learning, as multiple sources of knowledge and experience influenced both lesson activities and student presentations to develop aspects of community through the process of integration into the campus culture (Bello, 2017; Guajardo et al., 2016; Sales, Traver, & Garcia, 2011).

The ability to bring stakeholders and interested parties together in conversation strengthened and united classroom communities (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 8). Teachers, staff, and community leaders in both South Holland and Central Texas regularly encouraged parent involvement. The influx of shared expertise from the greater school community benefited students and their experience in systems of education. In this study, I developed an ethnographic process that incorporated organic forms of exchange and *plática* with research partners across two distinctly diverse sites: The common link in the schools revolved around concerned teachers mentoring students, who, themselves, actively engaged in options for academic achievement and advanced study. The practical application of components of the conceptual framework from this study offer elements of community development for school communities, fostering both engagement and participation of all students.

Conclusion: Intercultural Experiences and Responsive Schools

The findings in this study demonstrate a consistent reliance in using innovative practices by teachers, school leaders, and community leaders to promote the integration

of refugee students. The topic of integration of refugee students remains important because school communities are more inclusive and dynamic when all members are involved. In this multi-sited study in schools in Eastdale and Meyland, I collected a myriad of examples and occurrences demonstrating how people aspire to integrate refugee students in school communities. These glimpses into classroom interactions show that teacher dedication, intercultural practices, and sustained efforts by school and community leaders develop supportive structures for the students.

Teachers and school leaders at both sites in this study attempted to find ways to integrate newcomers into the campus communities. When they promoted intercultural aspects of exchange and mutual respect, the students experienced a school culture that welcomed newcomers and provided support in both language access and acquisition. Intercultural approaches represent a vital, interpersonal tool in promoting student integration in schools. As Ms. Stifadi discussed in her workshop on support for refugee students, teachers school leaders have an obligation to meet the needs of their students, especially those experiencing displacement:

We can build school systems that are good for all students, that are sensitive to the needs of specific students. Yet, it's things like teaching teachers how to respond to when students struggle with attention in the classroom. How to build social learning skills in the classroom in a way that's sensitive to kids' needs through the use of positive behavioral support. So, really it leans on what we kind of already know, the use of a framework that instills a sensitivity to trauma and other aspects of refugee integration.

In conclusion, this comment arrives at the crux of the findings: school and community leaders that create systems to respond to the academic, social, and emotional needs of the students facilitate the process of integration for refugee students. Mr. Burkhaart, the administrator of the school, also made a very succinct comment: “Our job is to create a new education for these children, because I also want to give them more opportunities.” Through innovative practices of school and community leaders, through teachers’ consistent attention to a positive, inclusive classroom dynamic, campus communities find ways to support the integration of refugee students in both Central Texas and South Holland.

VII. INNOVATION AND CHANGE IN CONTEXT AND PROCESS

This study investigated how school leaders support the integration of refugee students in school communities. This project used a multi-sited ethnographic approach to observe how school and community leaders develop and implement practices to promote the integration of refugee students in the campus cultures. Through ethnographic methods of data collection and analysis, this study examined leadership efforts at developing and monitoring these programs.

This project found that a network of support characterized by campus and community partnerships assisted refugee students and family members as they adjusted to new environments. Furthermore, the findings showed instances of both school and community leaders applying critical inquiry and reflective practices to improve their efforts. In all, the findings of this research related closely to the concept of equity in terms of educational opportunities for all students (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Freire et al., 2014; Ishimaru & Galloway, 2014; Yosso, 2005).

This investigation demonstrated that campus-based programs, which support the integration of refugee students, operate through inclusive, intercultural practices that intend to welcome students into the campus communities. However, organizational policies, such as shifting newcomer refugee students to diploma programs focused on vocational training, belie efforts to develop equitable educational opportunities.

In this chapter, I present a series of recommendations drawn from this research project. Additionally, I provide ideas for future research on school and community support programs for refugee students. I employ the ecologies of knowing in terms of aspects of the self, the organization, and the community. In this last chapter I employ this

framework to portray the way in which the following recommendations could lead to sustained efforts to support the integration of refugee students.

The Self and Recommendations for Change and Advocacy

During my research, each time I met with a new research partner, I would briefly discuss my background. I would describe what the field of *school improvement* involved, explaining that it was similar to *educational administration*, but with a slight difference. I recounted that a professor from my doctoral program suggested that the field of school improvement represents a dynamic choice of study because schools are constantly attempting to improve. In other words, few students, parents, or staff members are content with the *status quo* in schools and campus communities.

Drawing on this approach to school improvement, I examined with my research partners how school leaders make progress and implement change, specifically in the area of student integration. Through this research, partners in this study and I discovered that constant communication among school leaders, parents, and support groups was crucial for responding to issues of trauma, transition, and adjustment faced by refugee students in the process of integration.

The study of school improvement, which investigates advances in educational leadership, supervision, and policy through the lens of transformative learning and social justice (Ross-Gordon et al., 2015), inherently posits the process of change into the development of both current and future school leaders. Campus culture and student achievement are tied to the efforts and decisions school leaders make on an ongoing basis (Guajardo et al., 2016; Ishimaru, 2014; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Even during preliminary stages of organizational change, innovation occurs when school leaders

incorporate multiple stakeholders as active change agents (Fullan, 2016). The findings of this project demonstrated many examples of school leaders advocating for change in the context of schools and refugee student integration. Effective school leaders consistently communicated with parents, staff, and community members during innovation, change, and improvement. Program coordinators and classroom teachers reached out to parents to increase participation. These efforts showed that the overall organization attempted to support refugee students and family members.

Student Learners as Leaders

School and community leaders directly introduce change efforts to support refugee students experiencing displacement (Block et al., 2014; Fazel et al., 2015; Ingleby et al., 2013; Tyler & Fazel, 2016). A primary conclusion drawn from this study is that students themselves play an active role in the process of integration. Observations and interactions at both sites showed that the resiliency and determination of students represented a significant factor in their own adjustment and integration to new school environments.

The research data contain many examples of students urging one another on, cooperating, and demonstrating respect to one another to make the school environment a more inclusive and diverse place. With the support of teachers, the students actively developed and maintained the gracious spaces that Guajardo et al. (2016) discussed in the context of self-reflective support mechanisms, which build communities of shared knowledge and advocacy. In many cases, parents, community members, educational leaders, and teachers encouraged participation and intercultural approaches to learning in the educational setting (Sales et al., 2011; Tanaka, 2007). However, authentic exchanges

among students construct classrooms shaped by critical inquiry and the establishing of collective cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Consequently, a primary recommendation from this research focuses on the role of participation and student agency in programs for refugee youth and adolescents.

The findings of this study demonstrate that students are essential drivers of both intercultural exchange and the process of integration. All stakeholders are integral and essential to the process of student integration, yet the vital connection seems to actually be the cultural and social interchanges among students. Vital, intercultural classrooms support interlaced ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016; Read et al., 2015), in which learning communities, comprised of the students themselves, educate their peers, teachers, and community members about both social and cultural realities of their home countries and the world around them. A suggestion emanating from the research regards the positive impact of student learners as leaders within the context of refugee student integration programs. Former peers provided insight and support through student mentoring programs, which existed at Vrede College with the support of Ms. Anziak of IRSN. Efforts that integrate student agency and experience assuage the difficulties of the integration process. Campus as well as district leadership would benefit from developing partnerships with community organizations that both promote and sponsor these types of student mentoring programs.

As a further recommendation from this study, school leaders who devise inclusive, intercultural integration programs purposefully incorporate student presentations in campus curricula and develop forums for both cultural and epistemological exchange empowering students as both learners and leaders. This

suggestion provides connections to school systems of pedagogy and curricula, which become more participatory and dynamic with active engagement of student-led mentoring and leadership through exchanges of collective knowledge and experience.

Teachers as Essential to the Knowledge Network

A second conclusion drawn from this research shows that teachers consistently develop trusting relationships with students experiencing refugee resettlement. The teacher plays a key role in developing welcoming, inclusive classrooms for refugee students. Teachers at the Global Campus consistently attempted to make connections with their students. At Vrede College, teachers in the ISK program fostered mentorships that mitigated the integration process. Schoolwide policies promoted intercultural respect, yet it was the efforts of the instructors that sustained this practice on a daily basis.

Campus communities benefit from change efforts that take an intercultural perspective, especially when all stakeholders, i.e., students, parents, teachers, community members, and school leaders, participate (Guajardo et al., 2016; Morrice, 2013; Spiteri, 2013). However, my recommendations from the ethnographic study concentrate on the fact that teachers specifically exhibit a vital and dynamic effect when campus leaders enact policies that advance mentoring activities, as the findings in this research showed. Within the context of the important role of teachers in the classroom community, I developed three essential ideas as recommendations for school programs supporting the integration of refugee students. These essential ideas, emerging from the findings of the study, blend aspects of the five axioms for Community Learning Exchanges (Guajardo et al., 2016) with intercultural educational practices: (1) the importance of dialogue for both learning and developing relationships; (2) the use of intercultural approaches to education

to develop inclusive school environments; and (3) the promotion of culturally responsive practices and attitudes across a campus. From the results of the ethnographic research study, I observed that teachers and students strengthened classrooms communities when they applied these essential ideas while engaged in forms of learning and discovery.

At Eastdale schools, teachers made a major difference in the ability of students to integrate into campus cultures. Furthermore, in the ISK program, the practice of having mentor teachers with the students for a majority of weekly instructional time created a profound affect: the classroom culture encouraged dialogue, intercultural exchange, and a familiarity established among all the members of the class. Additionally, the inclusion of student mentors represented a creative aspect of school leadership. Community-based learning involves youth and adults alike (Guajardo et al., 2016), and student mentors assist new students in familiarizing themselves with both social and cultural aspects of the school environment. The combination of student mentors with efforts to implement the three essential ideas throughout the school community strongly promotes intercultural approaches to education across a school campus.

A key outcome of this project was the daily work of teachers and school leaders in supporting refugee students in the intercultural classroom. Teachers that instructed students for extended periods of time enhanced classroom communities through activities in which they shared aspects of both social and cultural experiences: the teacher became a cultural and social liaison. As Block (2008) described, leaders unite people and build bridges among disparate and diverse groups of people, and teachers embody this role as community leaders by constructing bridges that positively affect student integration in schools and in society. School leadership strengthens a campus when stakeholders

collaborate to support participation and engaged learning, and this occurs through intercultural practices (Moskal & North, 2017).

Further, as this study demonstrated, these practices are continuously updated and recast within the school community, as the dynamic nature of intercultural programs reboots once new members join the community. In this way, teachers and school leaders make school communities fluid, organic organizations that respond to the needs of its constituents. Schools that show improvement enhance instruction and augment opportunities for all learners, especially for refugee students who arrive at a campus from diverse backgrounds with differing educational experiences (Messiou et al., 2016; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Within the programs that supported refugee and displaced students, learning occurred through sustained trust and interaction, which happened as teachers and school leaders created welcoming spaces for inquiry, critique, and resolution for the students. In these initiatives, teachers supported student agency, so that scholars developed personal interests in their own qualifications through the educative process.

The Organization and Recommendations for Change and Advocacy

Another conclusion drawn from this research concerns the ongoing nature of change efforts in a school as an overall organization. While this study dealt with programs supporting refugee integration in schools, the results coincide with previous research that emphasizes the constant attention, reflection, and critical inquiry needed for successful school change (Fullan, 2016; Kotter & Cohen, 2012).

Campus Culture and Leadership Efforts

School and community leaders at both sites accentuated the necessity to reconsider existing approaches to classroom and campus-wide practices and policies.

Leaders of the different campuses in the study specifically addressed the need to be more culturally responsive, and partners at community organizations correspondingly called for more inclusive practices in programs for refugees. Moreover, a policy recommendation for both campus and district leaders concerns the need for tangible implementation of culturally responsive practices in terms of curricular choices for refugee student integration programs. Schools would benefit from incorporating intercultural practices in classrooms that support students experiencing displacement. International organizations, such as the UNHCR, offer recommendations in terms of establishing school procedures for refugee students. Additionally, local groups, such as SSR, Marigold, or IRSN in this study, established effective partnerships with schools to advocate for refugee students in campus communities.

Another key insight for school leadership was the tendency towards self-awareness and the benefits of consistent forms of reflection and feedback. The reflective nature of school leadership remains well documented (Díaz, 2013; Guajardo et al., 2016), and the stakeholders involved in this study made it a regular practice to improve their programs through critical dialogue and reflection. From Mr. Hidalgo at the Global Campus to teachers and staff at Vrede College, leaders and educators collaborated in staff meetings and professional development opportunities on pertinent issues, such as inclusive campus cultures, intercultural practices, and parent engagement.

An important recommendation in the area of the school organization focuses on the development of teachers and staff through culturally responsive forms of campus-based trainings. The importance of the teacher in the support network for refugee students also represented a key finding in this project. Campus and district staff made

efforts to sustain positive change by developing teachers' skills and knowledge in participatory communities of campus-based learning. For schools to support refugee students, both campus leaders and staff would benefit from an expanded understanding of both local and national policies on refugee resettlement and immigration. Moreover, with an increased awareness of the issues of resettlement, campus leaders evolve into a vital partner in the network of community support. Culturally responsive and intercultural training programs train teachers to involve students, parents, and community members in the educative process. Likewise, culturally responsive curriculum integrates the dynamic life experiences of students and their cultural wealth into daily aspects of instruction and dialogic learning. Intercultural trainings could be given yearly to staff and members of the school community by refugee support staff from school offices or local resettlement agencies.

As the research demonstrated, campus leadership teams that prioritized language access noticed increased family participation. Parent engagement remained integral to campuses in both locations, and schools that partnered with local organizations to bolster language access noticed increased parent participation. Likewise, as an important recommendation derived from this study, school campuses and districts benefit from both policies and practices that strengthen language access, which enhances both parent participation and community involvement.

The Community and Recommendations for Change and Advocacy

The final component of these recommendations in terms of the three ecologies is that systematic efforts that support refugee integration originate from inclusive, intercultural practices and policies, both of which incorporate the input and engagement

with the local community. This research project presented types of initiatives intended to assist people from across the world who are in the midst of resettlement. The process of integration occurs through shifts in campus and community culture, and these changes fail to happen immediately. For a school to embody local values and customs, teachers, school leaders, and staff demonstrate politics of intercultural respect and an acceptance of diverse sociocultural backgrounds. As educators develop safe spaces for learning for refugee students in the classroom, they also construct trustworthy, collective areas for sociocultural support and interaction for the greater community.

These developments happen through intentional and sustained practices that involve the triangle of support: students, family members, and school staff. However, within this dynamic exist the influence and cooperation with community partners. Therefore, a recommendation at the community level calls for innovative collaboration on campus-wide policies, intercultural practices, and community partnerships for sustained forms of student integration. School leadership, at the local and district level, connect with community organizations to leverage both support and cooperation on pertinent issues, such as refugee student integration and diversity in campus cultures. Through dynamic partnerships, campuses and organizations can develop training components for school staff as well as for both potential and current students. In Eastdale, the Refugee Support Office was essential in providing trainings and introducing community partners who could provide assistance to both families and schools. Thus, a further suggestion concerns the incorporation of community participants in school initiatives.

Local organizations studied at both research sites worked closely with school campuses to support refugee students and families. School districts and resettlement agencies in Eastdale established cultural orientation programs, which helped students acclimate themselves to the school environment. At Vrede College, ISK staff collaborated with IRSN to foment parent engagement. Campus leadership also pursued an alliance with a local theater to provide students with an extracurricular program with a cultural focus. When community organizations participate with schools in the development of trainings and other resources, campuses establish genuine connections to the local area and intercultural practices become representative of the school community.

Collective Community Decisions on the Role of Education

The recommendation within the context of the community ascertains that students, parents, and members of the campus vicinity collectively determine the concept and function of school as a sociocultural resource for participatory action and change. In the context of education in the U.S., the mind frame of unlimited potential and possibility appears in classroom cultures: Students write compositions as if they were the president, or they might tell classmates what they want to do when they grow up. For students experiencing resettlement and displacement, basic safety, survival, and shelter are tantamount to their primary necessities. The way in which school leaders perceive the arrival and integration of refugee students distinguishes how the campus community prioritizes diversity and inclusion within the context of education.

Moreover, perceptions about the role and function of schools requires intentional practices. The research partners of this study specifically expressed how campuses benefit when school leaders attempt to educate staff and community members about

issues of diversity and intercultural exchange. Organizations that value practices of self-reflection and critical inquiry extend transformational ecologies of knowing deep into the community. Furthermore, in both sites of this study, research partners who practiced inclusive and culturally responsive forms of instruction and classroom interaction embodied intercultural approaches to education, which help to integrate diverse cultural groups into the school community. The three essential ideas mentioned previously build campus community through dialogical learning and culturally responsive practices.

Lastly, school and community leaders that support the integration of refugee students refute systems that promote assimilation. Within the space between assimilation and integration, school and community leaders assist newcomers in whatever way that their organization determines best. Within the context of diploma programs at Vrede College or other Dutch secondary schools, some sites tend to guide refugee students towards diploma tracks with a vocational focus. These forms of academic and career guidance reinforce trends of assimilation and direct entry into the workforce. In this way, refugee students are relegated to lesser educational opportunities, while other students enter higher education with plans for a degree at a research university. Yet, if assimilation remains the preferred paradigm of an organization, an intercultural form of integration ceases to exist. School communities that support refugee students avoid aspects of assimilation and, instead, promote intercultural education with a variety of study options.

Looking Beyond Programs for the Integration of Refugee Students

The topic of programs supporting refugee students has remained salient in both the field of educational research and the world of politics and current events. Local and national politicians in the U.S. and Europe, who aim to incite animosity towards

immigrants and foreigners with populist rhetoric, have often depicted refugees and asylum-seekers as malevolent, dangerous, and a veritable threat to national security (“A split over refugees,” 2017; Gianfreda, 2018; MacDonald, 2017; Murray & Marx, 2013; Scribner, 2017). Furthermore, populist politicians fueled xenophobic ideologies by promulgating crisis narratives of caravans of refugees and migrant invasions and linking these dangerous foreigners to crimes and gang-related violence (Berger, 2018). Schools represent localities where social realities are taught and reproduced. Attitudes about refugees and migrants are conveyed to students in lessons, discussions, and choices made by school leaders that affect campus culture.

However, many factors within the discussion of immigration and refugee resettlement extend beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless, the tragedy of displaced people drowning at sea and the horror of children dying in detention facilities at the border resonated in pláticas with research partners during the entirety of this study. As a participant in the ethnographic research process across two continents, I considered the agency of refugee students in educational settings as well as the policies and practices of school leaders to support these students. For me as a school practitioner and an educational researcher, I conceived this academic investigation as an attempt to understand the ontological rationale of school leaders in their efforts to advocate for the inclusion and integration of refugee students the school environment. Yet, at the same time, news reports of the Refugee Crisis from makeshift boats in the Mediterranean began to define the actual situation for migrants, immigrants, and refugees throughout Europe. Moreover, images broadcast from the U.S. – Mexico border depicted children housed in cages as the representation of current policies on refugees in the U.S. The way

in which these crises involving refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants, and immigrants emerged and occupied a social and cultural space brought attention to the issue of refugee resettlement. Yet, the social construct of the tragic plight of refugees incapacitated any sense of individual or collective agency of refugee students from developing in the setting of public schools.

A topic of further research, therefore, exists within the subjectification the refugee experience through visual imagery in standard and digital media, which represents a concept beyond the scope of refugee programs in educational situations. The visual representation of trauma and suffering generates an emotional connection, which often fails to determine a causality or possible solution. Memou (2019) recounted the effect of photographs depicting the stark, yet splintered reality of tragic death and loss in the European refugee and migrant crisis, which first gained attention in 2014 and 2015. Images on social media, print-based publications, and television created aspects of shock and discomfort, yet Memou (2019) emphasized that these visual representations failed to provide a sense of agency to refugee and migrant children and families. The harsh reality of disenfranchised refugee youth might populate newsfeeds and pop-up messages on social media, yet these grim photographs fail to offer solutions to the dehumanizing geopolitical reality of immigration and access to education that typify the political divide in both the U.S. and Europe (Burrell & Hörschelmann, 2019). Furthermore, the narrative of refugees is often shaped by the way media portrays the plight of the displaced. At times migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees are presented as victims, while in other occasions they become beneficiaries of aid and assistance (Lams, 2018). While many of these concerns remain closely associated to the topic of support programs for refugee

students, a thorough investigation into the genealogy of axiological and ontological mechanisms that both establish and manipulate the notion of the refugee in politics, society, and culture remains a fascinating investigation. However, this question is currently beyond the scope of the current ethnographic study.

For this entire research process, I had to contend with perspectives on the global refugee crisis within the context of school initiatives to support children and families. For this reason, the aspect of student agency became a significant factor in the recommendations of this study through the research process. As I developed and conducted this research, I sought to instill the experiences that motivated me to examine programs for refugee students, like the English language classes developed with Sister Stavra in Athens or the act of emerging advocacy that Nareen's parents demonstrated in support meetings with school staff.

In both Central Texas and South Holland, support programs provide refugee students with increased access to public education. The Global Campus program in Eastdale and the ISK program at Vrede College are meant to serve students for a maximum of two years, although many students matriculate into the traditional secondary school before this time. In the U.S., students who enter high school after receiving rich language instruction in a specialized program follow the typical diploma program offered by a U.S. secondary school. However, in the Dutch system, students with limited language proficiency and low academic performance seem to be relegated to a high school that offers only a VMBO diploma. The question arises of whether or not refugees and other newcomers have a choice in their options for high school if they lack Dutch language proficiency.

In discussions with teachers and staff at Vrede College, I understood that most ISK students tend to transfer to a neighboring high school that offers the vocational diploma. A handful of students, for example those that enter the 2/3 DY cohort, eventually finish their HAVO diploma, which allows them to attend a university of applied sciences. An even smaller number of ISK students graduate with a VWO degree and are able to enroll at a more prestigious and rigorous research university. Thus, a system which supports integration into the greater society appears beneficial. Yet, if newcomer students are consistently directed towards vocational school, then certain educational opportunities fail to provide access for specific members of society.

Integration and a False Sense of Permanence

As discussed previously in this study, refugee families often hope to return to their home country once aspects of dangerous conflict or persecution have subsided (Fazel et al., 2012; UNHCR 2012). While Esses et al. (2017) emphasized the difficulty of a return to the heritage country, many refugee students and families struggle in the process of integration into the society of a host country. While school-based programs support integration into the society and culture of the host country, refugee and newcomer families who aim to return to their heritage country perceive their stay in the host country as mostly temporary.

Di Saint Pierre et al. (2015) examined certain aspects of integration, such as host country language proficiency, level of education, and perceptions of discrimination, in relation to the desire of refugees to return to their heritage country. The study found that increased language proficiency and higher educational attainment led to a closer sociocultural identification with the host country; furthermore, the closer refugees

identified with the host country, the more they perceived aspects of discrimination (Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015). The aforementioned research focused on a large number of adult refugees and immigrants in four major cities in the Netherlands, while the Dutch phase of my research study concerned the experience of educators and students in one secondary school.

Overall, the findings of Di Saint Pierre et al. (2015) were influential to this study. Likewise, the results of this ethnographic research remain pertinent, since school-based integration programs concentrated on activities to encourage refugee and newcomer students to take part in both social and cultural aspects of the host country. Furthermore, as I observed during student presentations as well as informal interactions in both Eastdale and Meyland, newly arrived refugee students often expressed great pride in relation to their heritage country. Central Texas and South Holland represented welcoming and comfortable places for resettlement, yet the idea of home for many students was that of their heritage country. In this way, school leaders would create more inclusive communities if they developed integration programs allowing refugee students to maintain their cultural capital and promoting aspects of their heritage countries.

The Role of Research in Site-based Evaluation

For this research project, I investigated a very specific type of program within the context of schools and education. At both sites, the total refugee population was neither large nor representative of the total campus population. However, refugee students benefit from specific programs that facilitate the transition process, as many authors argued (Ingleby et al., 2013; Israel et al., 2017; Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). Yet, most

schools or organizations failed to implement evaluation techniques to monitor program efforts.

This research initiative depended on aspects of critical inquiry and discourse among research partners to ascertain the effects of specific programs for refugee integration. In this way, program evaluation benefits from forms of discourse and dialogue relating to how the organization achieves its goals and fulfills its institutional vision. Given this finding of the current study, it is recommended that programs offer reflective discourse as a critical tool for evaluating the impact of support programs for refugee students.

Through survey-type instruments, both Eastdale schools and Vrede College monitor their efforts through questionnaires about teaching and the campus climate. Yet, open-ended discussions or the use of strategies for inquiry, such critical conversations or the *plática* (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013) or critical exploration of aspects of social justice in the school environment (Freire et al., 2014), represent alternative means to both monitor and evaluate support programs on campuses. As Díaz (2013) recommended the use of action research to examine teaching strategies and approaches to education, participatory forms of discourse, analysis, and reflection provide both schools and organizations with a means to evaluate program activities. A strong belief in the transformative, liberating nature of education develops from dynamic social practices that engage all stakeholders.

Practitioner and Scholar: Research Crossing the Three Ecologies

A further recommendation of this study is that organizations make a concerted effort to educate staff, students, and the community about the effects of displacement and

resettlement on refugee students. This effort to educate can provide more insight to stakeholders about the difficult transition faced by these students. It can also be beneficial to develop specific training components for both new and veteran teaching staff, so that classroom practices are aligned across a campus to support students experiencing displacement.

Another suggestion is to monitor and evaluate the processes and practices specifically developed for programs supporting refugee students. Many schools have campus-wide instruments to measure the climate of the institution or the satisfaction of stakeholders; however, few programs use particular measures to determine how effective their efforts are at supporting these students or meeting their educational goals. I had difficulty in finding evaluation measures or techniques in place at the two research sites, including the community organizations offering orientation programs for refugee students and families having recently arrived in the host country. Vrede College provided different types of measurement instruments, which provided evaluative data on program services, yet surveys for parents and families would have offered better insight into their opinions and attitudes.

Another recommendation of this research is for programs to develop of a strong teacher cohort. The ISK program instills the mentor teachers with a great responsibility in that these educators assuage the difficulties students experience as they integrate into a new school community. The mentor teacher, with proper training and supervision by school leadership, develops classroom community through instruction, interaction, and personal attention. Additionally, school leadership achieves success when it cultivates a collaborative group of teachers who trust one another and share effective practices.

Likewise, compassionate teachers who employ intercultural practices build a strong classroom community and inspire their students to persevere in their academic progress.

The final recommendation derived from this study is that organizations promote parent involvement in students' education on a continual basis. At both sites, research partners discussed attempts to interact with parents and family members. Both locations held special meetings for parents to meet and exchange information with teachers and other parents. Additionally, schools sought the input and participation of community organizations to sustain the cycle of support that involved the teacher, student, and family member. The community also plays a vital role in this support network.

Inclusive school practices and policies foment both student involvement and parent participation in school activities (Fullan, 2016; Warren, 2011). Increased engagement leads to sustained school improvement and change across campuses. In this research, parents represented essential partners in the process of learning and education, and their participation definitely affected the development of student integration and agency, both of which lead to forms of sustainable, equitable change in the school environment. I frame parent involvement within the context of community conversations that strengthen local ecologies of knowledge through shared experiences and interactions.

While Fullan (2016) emphasized how change in education depends on the concerted work of schools, parents, and family members (p. 176), the impetus for parent and family involvement often extends from the construct of the school organization. Fullan (2016), drawing on Bryk and Schneider (2002), accentuated the need for teachers and administrators to develop “nonthreatening possibilities for parent involvement” (p. 162).

In this study, I found that parents and family members wanted to feel involved in their student's education, but school leaders and staff did not engage them in a reciprocal discourse or type of *plática*. Types of interaction steeped in perpetual forms of critical inquiry build community through shared ecologies of knowledge and a chronicling of lived stories. Likewise, schools promote dynamic communities valuing conversation and intercultural respect. These forms of interaction, which promote dialectical investigation of the self and the community, resemble a framework for sustained forms of community development.

To ensure this type of conversation among the different stakeholders, the school community represents a place for discussion and interaction. Also, for community interaction to flourish, there must be an organizational ethos that is supported by values of care, respect, and equity. Before one can understand the broad context, one must feel secure and safe to know one's own and others' concerns and values for the place of school and the people of schools. Guajardo et al. (2016) discussed the concept of ecologies of knowing, which represent an array of terrains (e.g., understandings, convictions, lessons learned) that inform the self, the organizations around the self, and the larger community.

Within the context of parent participation, these conversations lead to deeper, richer involvement and provide impetus to positive social change, as each parent understands more about herself/himself, which translates to a greater understanding of one's place in the local community. In this way, open participation and interaction among all parents, as well as all stakeholders, lead to more equitable forms of advocacy.

Walker (1996) emphasized the way in which parents partnering with teachers brought a first-hand perspective to discourse regarding school improvement (p. 76). In this way, parent involvement represented action and participation in the day-to-day function of a school as an organization. Through widespread, community support, the school as a community unit becomes more reflective of the character and collaborative dynamic of the local population. For the refugee families, school leaders develop more consistent parent participation through initiatives that include parents in campus activities and decision-making processes.

Support initiatives that are both deliberate and sustained align these three major stakeholders: students, school staff, and parents. Agencies and support networks embedded in the local area prove vital for refugee support programs. Collaboration within this support network results in greater educational opportunities for students facing displacement and the difficult process of adjusting to a new environment. As found in both sites of this study, parent engagement validates the process of integration for refugee students, as school leaders successfully leverage change efforts through inquiry and reflection with the campus community and all stakeholders

Future Research Questions

The core of this research project examined how school leaders devised programs to assist refugee students. The results of the study demonstrated that policies and practices that support the integration of refugee students in school communities involved both campus and community stakeholders. Future studies could specifically monitor and evaluate refugee programs over an extended time period. This type of longitudinal study

could investigate the degree to which programs remain both sustainable and effective over time.

Additionally, this study broached the role of trauma experienced by students who experience displacement or resettlement either as children or adolescents. The topic of displacement can be complex, as there are multiple types (e.g., because of natural disaster, refugee or asylum-seeking resettlement, forced migration or economic migration). Forced relocation from one's home causes anxiety, separation, and a schism from patterns and routines that were once familiar. As students experience displacement, schools become places that provide a sense of support and community through the interaction with peers and the efforts of school staff. A more specific study could examine the effects of displacement on learning, cognition, and adjustment to new school environments.

From the perspective of school practitioners, future studies might examine the specific strategies, skills, and practices that school leadership enacts to respond to students who experience displacement and resettlement. An educator with an inclusive, intercultural worldview collaborates with campus stakeholders to fortify safe spaces in schools for refugee students. This type of study would shift the focus of refugees' desires to reside in a new country or return to their home country from that of the individual or family, as in the work of Di Saint Pierre et al. (2015), to that of possible practices and policies implemented by school leaders. Further research into leadership efforts provides an insight into inclusive policies promoting sustained forms of integration of refugee students.

From a theoretical standpoint, future studies could investigate how multiple perspectives of students, educators, and stakeholders coalesce to influence ecologies of knowing across a campus. This study relied on the notion that school leaders devise inclusive campus cultures when implementing intercultural approaches to education, as stated by Askins (2016), Catarci, Gomes, and Siqueira (2017) and Hajisoteriou and Angelides (2014). Yet, students and parents, with their cultural wealth, knowledge, and experience, also affect the character and culture of a school. Even though they might represent a very small proportion of a school population, the lens and the ontological approaches of refugee students fortifies the multiple ecologies of the entire campus. Moreover, when research efforts include viewpoints from refugee students and families, the investigation becomes enriched through the chronicling of lived stories and narratives.

A last area of possible future study relates to the role of students in the synthesis and development of an integrated, intercultural school community. Many aspects of school improvement extend the role of innovation to all stakeholders of a school community (Fullan, 2016). Students are crucial in terms of improvement measures that promote inclusion. Block et al. (2014) emphasized how schools benefit when they support students in terms of inclusion, yet students themselves have a vested interest in inclusive school communities. As key participants in the educative process, students are acquiring knowledge of the specific types of understanding, training, and certification from the institution. A compelling study would examine a framework of change and innovation that centers on students as primary agents of change.

APPENDIX SECTION

A: DEFINITION OF TERMS	257
B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS	258
C: CONSENT FORM.....	262

APPENDIX A: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Refugee: This term refers to a person who has arrived in a host country, e.g., the U.S., from a refugee camp or a postconflict state. A refugee family travels to a host country for the purpose of resettlement, which entitles all adult members to residence and work visas.

Intercultural Education: a form of multicultural education that acts to include all cultures independently to create patterns of exchange within a school environment; through interaction and collaboration, students thrive through pedagogical practices that value cultural experience of every individual (Read et al., 2015).

Culturally Responsive: efforts made by educators, community members, and other stakeholders to formulate learning environments that effectively relate to sociocultural backgrounds and needs of the students (Khalifa et al., 2016).

Community and School Leaders: people who manage and execute specific programs, either in the school or at a community organization. School leaders include teachers, local support staff, such as counselors or social workers, administrators, and district support staff; community leaders include program managers, directors, and contact liaison for community-based organizations.

Community-based Organizations: public or non-governmental agencies that offer support services to refugee families, students, or public schools.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Protocol for Semi-Structured Interview with School Leaders

This interview is for a research project investigating how school and community leaders design and implement campus programs to support the integration of refugee students. The intent of this research is to understand participants' views and experiences as a school or community leader who supports refugee students and their families. The study examines ways that these programs integrate refugee students into the school community.

1. What is your experience working with refugee students?
 - a. Follow-up: Have you worked with other types of newcomer students?
 - b. Follow-up: Is your experience in an academic, social, or other context?
2. Within your school setting, what distinction is made for students who recently arrived in the U.S.?
 - a. Follow-up: Are the students identified as immigrants, recently arrived, refugees, or newcomers?
3. What support does your position within the school provide to refugee students and their families?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you make home or community visits?
 - b. How do you encourage parent participation in the education and development of students who are refugees?
 - c. Follow-up: Do you collaborate with any other school- or community-based offices or organizations?
4. What ways does your position support student academics?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you provide homework, intervention, or tutoring support?
5. What ways do you assist students in terms of behavior in the school setting?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you provide one-on-one support or group support?
 - b. Follow-up: Do you provide support for other social settings?
6. What aspects of refugee student's social and cultural experience are incorporated into your activities?
 - a. Follow-up: How are these experiences integrated into the classroom activities? How are these experiences integrated into the fabric of the campus culture?
7. On an annual basis how many refugee students and family members does your position serve?
8. What are the specific goals of the program with which you work?

- a. Follow-up: How does your work with refugee students align to these goals?
- 9. How do you measure program efficacy for this program and its support for refugee students and their families?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you update this instrument on a monthly or yearly basis?
- 10. What other programs, agencies, or institutions does your school partner with to support refugee students and their families?
 - a. Follow up: Are these local, state, or federal organizations?
- 11. How long does your position within the school provide support for a refugee student and family members?
 - a. Follow up: Is there a specific period of support? Does it last as long as the student is enrolled in the school?

Protocol for Semi-Structured Interview with Community Leaders

This interview is for a research project investigating how school and community leaders design and implement campus programs to support the integration of refugee students. The intent of this research is to understand participants' views and experiences as a school or community leader who supports refugee students and their families. The study examines ways that these programs integrate refugee students into the school community.

1. What is your experience working with refugee students?
 - a. Follow-up: Have you worked with other types of newcomer students?
 - b. Follow-up: Is your experience in an academic, social, or other context?
2. Within setting of your organization, what distinction is made for people who recently arrived in the U.S.?
 - a. Follow-up: Are the youths or family members identified as immigrants, recently arrived, refugees, or newcomers?
3. What support does your position within the organization provide to refugee students and their families?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you make home or community visits?
 - b. How do you encourage parent participation in the education and development of students who are refugees?
 - c. Follow-up: Do you collaborate with any other school- or community-based offices or organizations?
4. What ways does your position support student academics?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you provide homework, intervention, or tutoring support?
5. What ways do you assist refugee youth and family members in terms of behavior in the school setting?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you provide one-on-one support or group support?
 - b. Follow-up: Do you provide support for other settings, e.g., social, community, or cultural?
6. What aspects of refugee student's social and cultural experience are incorporated into your activities?
 - a. Follow-up: How are these experiences integrated into the activities of the organization?
7. On an annual basis how many refugee students and family members does your position serve?
8. What are the specific goals of the program with which you work?
 - a. Follow-up: How does your work with refugee youth and families align to these goals?

9. How do you measure program efficacy for this program and its support for refugee youth and families?
 - a. Follow-up: Do you update this instrument on a monthly or yearly basis?
10. What other programs, agencies, or institutions does your organization partner with to support refugee students and their families?
 - a. Follow up: Are these local, state, or federal organizations?
11. How long does your position provide support for a refugee student and family members?
 - a. Follow up: Is there a specific period of support? Does it last as long as the student is enrolled in the school?

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

Consent Form to Participate in Research

Title of Project: School and Community Programs for Refugee Integration

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Texas State University - San Marcos IRB approval # 2017152

PURPOSE: You are being asked to participate in a research project that seeks to investigate how school and community leaders devise programs and policies for refugee integration. You are specifically being asked to participate in this study because another participant, colleague of the investigator, or the investigator himself identified you as a potential participant who might meet the criteria of the study. The intent of this research is to understand your views and experiences as a school or community leader supporting refugee students and their families. Specifically, this study will examine how you develop these programs provide support and integrate refugee students into the community. This work is in support of my dissertation in School Improvement at the College of Education of Texas State University.

If you volunteer to participate in this research, you will partake in two interviews at your convenience and according to what works best for your schedule. In the initial interview, which will last for approximately 60 minutes, you will be asked to discuss your views on programs for refugee students in the public school environment. For instance, you will be asked questions such as: What support does your position or program provide to refugee students and their families? How do you encourage parent participation in the education and development of students? Also, you will be asked to participate in a 30-minute interview in the following calendar year. This follow-up interview will inquire about changes in perceptions of refugee programs with respect to goals. In these second interviews, you will be asked questions such as: What goals does your program establish for its work with refugee students and family members? How does your position provide cultural and social support for refugee students and family members? Both interviews will be audio-recorded only with your permission. Your participation is voluntary and as such, you may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice or jeopardy to your standing with Texas State University, San Marcos.

RISKS: In reflecting and talking about your experience with programs that support refugee students, you may become uncomfortable with negative experiences. However,

you may elect to not answer any of the questions with which you feel uneasy and still remain a participant in the research. There are no known psychological or physiological risks associated with participating in this research. Participants are not required to respond to any question that they do not feel comfortable answering. All answers will remain confidential.

BENEFITS: You may not benefit from your participation in this research. Research on support programs for refugee students may be beneficial to other school staff and community members in devising programs that provide academic and social support for students new to the school environment. In addition, the research may provide further insight into understanding the types of programs and policies to research in order to support students who are newcomers to the primary and secondary school environment.

COMPENSATION: You will not be paid for participation in this research.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your name will never appear on any survey or research instruments. No Identity will be made in the data analysis. Audio recordings will only be done with permission of the person who is interviewed. All written materials, consent forms, audio recordings, and transcriptions will be stored in a locked file in the office of Dr. Guajardo. The principal student investigator, Richard Pelton, and the supervising faculty member, Dr. Guajardo will have sole access. Your response(s) will appear only in statistical data summaries when the data are presented in written or oral form at scientific meetings. Your name will never appear in any publication of these data. All materials will be kept for three years and then subsequently destroyed.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time without penalty. Your withdrawal will not influence any other services to which you may be otherwise entitled.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT: I have read the above statements and understand what is being asked of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason, without penalty. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project. The investigator will provide a copy of this consent form if I desire one.

I understand that should I have any concerns about my participation in this study, I may call the investigator who is asking me to participate, Richard Pelton, at (512) 758-5259. If I have any concerns that my rights are being violated, I may contact the Director, Research Support Services at Texas State University, Sean Rubino at (512) 245-2314 (srubino@txstate.edu), the IRB Chair, Dr. Denise Gobert 512-716-2652 (dgobert@txstate.edu), or Monica Gonzales, IRB Regulatory Manager 512-245-2334 (meg201@txstate.edu).

Participant's Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

Date

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