

**A Place to Be, A Place to Become:
An Insiders' Report on Youth Integration
Programs in the Lower Mainland**

by

Colin Joseph Cuthbert

B.A. Sociology, Mount Royal University, 2014

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the

Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Colin Joseph Cuthbert 2017

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2017

All rights reserved.

However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for Fair Dealing. Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, education, satire, parody, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

Approval

Name: Colin Joseph Cuthbert
Degree: Master of Arts
Title: *A Place to Be, A Place to Become:
An Insiders' Report on Immigrant Youth Integration
Programs in the Lower Mainland*
Examining Committee: **Chair:** Dara Culhane
Professor

Wendy Chan

Senior Supervisor
Professor

Roumiana Ilieva

Supervisor
Associate Professor

Wanda Cassidy

External Examiner
Associate Professor
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Date Defended/Approved: June 06, 2017

Ethics Statement



The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

- a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics

or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

or has conducted the research

- c. as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed with the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Update Spring 2016

Abstract

Immigrant youth face a myriad of complex and interrelated challenges during their settlement and integration into Canadian society. In Canada, there are a number settlement services available to support this process. In the past, these services have focused on adults; however, they are increasingly responding to the needs of youth. Youth integration programs, in particular, represent one of the most common settlement services available to immigrant youth, yet little research has been conducted on such programs and even less from the perspective of the participants. This qualitative study explores the role of youth integration programs in the lives of twelve young newcomers through in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus groups. My findings reveal that such programs represent a powerful resource for newcomers, with participants describing these programs as spaces where they can develop meaningful relationships, strengthening their communication skills, and improve their overall sense of self. This research confirms, challenges, and extends earlier research on this topic, while also demonstrating the importance of engaging with the subjective experiences of newcomers.

Keywords: Immigrant Youth; Identity Formation; Cultural Negotiation; Cultural Hybridity; Immigrant Youth Settlement Services; Youth Integration Programs

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family – my incredibly supportive parents Colette and Kirk Cuthbert, my partner and rock Samantha Svay and my mentor and best friend Eddy Butin, for their constant belief and encouragement. In addition, this thesis is dedicated to the participants of this study. Thank you all so, so much for sharing your stories with me.

Acknowledgements

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples on whose traditional territories we are privileged to live, work and play.

I would like to thank all of the participants of this study for taking the time to share their stories with me. Your insight has been humbling, teaching me much about human spirit, resilience and the incredible capacity of people to overcome the obstacles they encounter. I would like to give a special thanks to Starr for providing me with the wonderful opportunity to volunteer with the youth and allowing me to conduct my research on your program. Your patience, creativity, and commitment to helping youth newcomers are second to none.

I would also like to thank my supervisor Dr. Wendy Chan for her support and guidance throughout this process. I've had many questions along the way, none of which Dr. Chan was willing to readily provide the answer. Thank you for pushing me to think critically about the issues of which I was writing and helping me *discover* the answers to the many questions I came to you with.

Thank you also to Dr. Roumiana Ilieva for providing feedback and guidance as part of my supervisory committee, to Dr. Wanda Cassidy for acting as the external examiner, and to Dr. Dara Culhane for Chairing the thesis defense.

To the Sociology and Anthropology Department staff, particularly Chantelle Ryerson, thank you for your care, support, and prompt responses in moments of need.

To my colleagues, professors, and the many wonderful people I've encountered along this journey, thank you for challenging me and helping me to develop a stronger critical perspective. You have inspired and provoked me in so many ways which have undoubtedly contributed to this project. It truly does take a village to write a thesis.

Finally, thank you to my friends and family for all your support, belief, and interest in my progress. This work would not have been possible without you.

Table of Contents

Approval	ii
Ethics Statement	iii
Abstract	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	vii
 Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
Research Question	3
Organization of Thesis.....	4
 Chapter 2. Literature Review.....	6
Introduction	6
Settlement and Integration in Canada	7
Immigrant Youth Research in Canada	8
Issues Affecting Youth Settlement and Integration	9
Language Development and Proficiency	10
Cultural Negotiation and Identity Construction	13
Friends and Friendship Formation.....	16
Immigrant Youth Settlement Services	18
Summary	20
 Chapter 3. Theory and Methods	22
Introduction	22
Theoretical Framework	23
A New Sociology of Childhood	23
Structuration Theory	24
Cultural Hybridity, Identity, and the Third Space	29
Research Methods	32
Methodology	32
Narrative Analysis and the Hermeneutics of Restoration	33
Situating Myself as Researcher.....	34
Methods	36
Recruitment	36
Data Collection	37
Data Analysis.....	38
Ethical Considerations	39
Summary	40
 Chapter 4. Insider Knowledge.....	41
Introduction	41
The Youth Integration Program	42
Insider Knowledge about the Challenges	44

The Migration Process	44
The Settlement and Integration Process	46
Insider Knowledge about the Youth Program	50
Joining the Program	50
Developing Meaningful Relationships	51
Strengthening Communication Skills	55
Improving One's Sense of Self	59
Program Challenges: Funding, Outreach, and Accessibility	62
Funding	62
Outreach and Accessibility	64
Summary	65
 Chapter 5. A Place to Be, A Place to Become	67
Introduction	67
Identity Formation in Youth	67
Identity Formation in Immigrant Youth	69
Cultural Negotiation and Identity Formation	70
The Changing Self	72
Becoming Canadian But Not Too Canadian	75
Identity Management Through Self-Presentation	79
A Place to Be, A Place to Become	83
Summary	86
 Chapter 6. Conclusion	88
Summary	88
Implications for Research and Service Provision	90
Limitations of the Project	91
Future Research	92
Concluding Remarks	93
 References	95
 Appendix A. Source Countries of Immigrants to British Columbia	107
Appendix B. Summary of Major Issues Facing Immigrant Youth	108
Appendix C. The Orb Web Model of Social Reproduction	109
Appendix D. The Stratification Model of the Agent	110

Chapter 1. Introduction

Since 2006, Canada has welcomed the highest sustained levels of immigration in Canadian history (Citizenship and Immigration, 2016). Significantly, a large number of newcomers to Canada are youth. On average, 35,000 immigrant and refugee youth between the ages of 15 and 24 settle in Canada every year, representing roughly 15% of the permanent residents that come to Canada annually (Statistics Canada, 2007). Today, immigrant youth have established a strong presence in Canadian society. Not only do newcomers constitute a large share of Canada's youth population, but they also represent a significant portion of Canada's future adult population. Consequently, the economic and social future of Canada greatly depends on the successful settlement and integration of this population into Canadian society (Masten, Liebkind, and Hernandez, 2012).

However, there are a number of challenges newcomers encounter throughout the processes of migration, and settlement and integration. In addition to facing the developmental issues specific to adolescence, immigrant youth must also start a new socialization process; learn new cultural expectations; gain acceptance into new peer groups; and develop new kinds of social competence (Seat and Richards, 1998). Moreover, this (re)socialization often includes encountering community values that conflict with those at home and exposure to subtle and overt forms of discrimination. Significantly, these difficulties are often faced without adequate social support (Suarez-Orozco and Todorova, 2003). Immigration not only leads to the loss of important social networks, but upon arrival many immigrant youth also experience alienation and isolation, difficulties in forming cross-ethnic friendships, and limited access to positive role models and mentors (Ngo and Schleifer, 2005). For youth who have recently migrated to another country, these realities disrupt their settlement and integration, while also posing serious identity formation challenges.

The development of a strong and stable sense of self is widely considered to be one of the central tasks of adolescence (Erikson, 1968). The transition from adolescence to young adulthood in particular exposes young people to new roles and relations and during this time they are confronted with a new sense of autonomy and self-understanding (Damon and Hart, 1988). Significantly, immigrant youth generally belong to two different cultural groups and managing this experience poses unique challenges related to identity construction. Immigrant youth face the challenge of integrating different sets of cultural demands and messages, must manage conflicting interpersonal expectations, and may also deal with the potential threats of minority status and discrimination (Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee and Morrise, 2002). Developing a coherent sense of self is, thus, often more complex for immigrant youth who are seeking to belong to both their heritage ethnic group and also groups within the mainstream culture.

Research shows that youth who are secure about their ethnic identity and are at the same time comfortable with a larger Canadian identity are the most likely to have positive settlement and integration experiences (Beisier et al., 1999). Such identity formation relies on the re-forging of relationships that contribute to a positive understanding of one's ethnic culture and connections that can provide insight into the expectations and practices of the mainstream culture. However, these worlds are often conflicting, with positive understandings of one's cultural identity largely restricted to family and ethnic community settings and access to a more mainstream Canadian identity existing at school (Paterson and Hakim-Larson, 2012). Finding spaces outside the family and ethnic community setting where immigrant youth can share and celebrate their ethnic identity, while also developing relationships with others who can provide information and assistance regarding mainstream expectations and practices is, thus, important and beneficial to both positive identity formation and immigrant youth's settlement and integration.

According to some research, immigrant youth development programs have the potential to address these issues. By providing access to like-minded peers in a structured setting and through the support of non-parental adults, youth integration programs represent a powerful resource for helping immigrant youth manage the settlement and integration experience (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003; Roffman, Suarez-

Orozco, and Rhodes, 2003). Others, however, have challenged this perspective, suggesting that these services do not adequately address the issues confronting immigrant youth (Ngo 2009; Francis and Yan 2016).

These conflicting perspectives raise important questions regarding the value of such programs while also highlighting an apparent paucity of research on this topic. Youth integration programs represent one of the most common settlement services available to immigrant youth, yet little research has been conducted on such programs, and even less from the perspective of the youth who participate in them. Immigrant youth are experts in their own sociocultural realities and have much to contribute to the academic literature written about them and to the development of culturally responsive and youth-relevant services. Such research should be seen as imperative to the expansion of knowledge and betterment of policy and services directed towards this population. There is both a space and need for research that gives prominence to the perspectives of immigrant youth engaged in such programs. The aim of this study is to add to the literature by providing space for immigrant youth to share their experiences participating in such programs, while paying particular attention to how such experiences relate to cultural negotiation and the identity formation process.

Research Question

The central question guiding this project is: ***What are the experiences of immigrant youth participating in youth integration programs?*** This question informs the following sub-questions:

1. How does participating in a youth integration program influence the settlement and integration experience of newcomers?
 - a. In what ways is the provision of these services challenged?
2. How does participating in a youth integration program influence the cultural negotiation process of newcomers?
3. How does participating in a youth integration program influence the identity formation process of newcomers?

This study addresses these questions through a qualitative approach, employing a hermeneutics of restoration (Ricoeur, 1991) to co-construct the immigrant youth experience as program participant through their narratives. It seemed appropriate to use this methodology in a study concerned with the subjective experiences of immigrant youth as qualitative research pays particular attention to the subjective nature of the human experience and attempts to understand the meaning of these experiences for the individuals involved (Silverman, 2016).

Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized into the following chapters. Chapter Two provides a comprehensive literature review on the settlement and integration of immigrant youth into Canadian society. While providing an overview of the research conducted on this topic, this chapter focuses primarily on Canadian scholarly literature related to the issues of language development and proficiency, cultural negotiation and identity construction, and friends and friendship formation.

Chapter Three examines the theoretical framework and research methods used in this study. In doing so, it situates this project within the emergent paradigm of a *new* sociology of childhood, provides a comprehensive review of Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, and engages with Bhabha's (1994) concepts of *cultural hybridity* and *the third space*. Collectively these perspectives form the theoretical framework through which the settlement and integration experiences of the participants are understood. This chapter also examines the methodology and research methods used in this study. The employment of a qualitative approach to answering the research questions is justified and the methods of interviews and focus groups for data collection are also described. In addition, the chapter provides insight regarding a hermeneutics of restoration – the analysis framework I used to interpret the data.

Chapter Four gives voice to the participants of this study by engaging with the narratives co-constructed with the youth. It offers insight regarding their settlement and integration experiences, the challenges they have and continue to face, and their perceived value of participating in a youth integration program. It provides an overview of

the youth integration program and addresses the most salient settlement and integration challenges brought forth by the youth including language and culture, discrimination, and friendship development. The chapter then considers the youth's perceived value of the youth integration program, exploring the themes of meaningful friendship development, strengthening communication skills, and improving one's sense of self, while also considering some of the challenges the program faces regarding service provision.

Chapter Five examines identity formation among the participants, exploring how they manage cultural negotiation while paying particular attention to the ways in which participating in a youth integration program influences their sense of self. This chapter builds on the youth's perceived value of the youth integration program, while also considering the youth program in relation to the other dominant spaces the youth inhabit: the home and school environments. The chapter draws attention to the role cultural negotiation plays in the identity formation process of young newcomers, engaging with themes related to the youth's changing self, the idea of becoming Canadian but not too Canadian, and identity management through self-presentation. Each theme is considered in relation to both the home and school environment. Finally, the chapter examines how the youth integration program facilitates cultural negotiation and identity formation by providing a unique space in the youth's lives where they can be themselves, but also a space where they can effectively become something different.

Chapter Six provides the summary and conclusion of this thesis. It summarizes the findings, discusses the implications for research and service provision, identifies the project's limitations, and considers future research on this topic. This study concludes that, while not without their challenges, youth integration programs are an important resource for newcomers. Such programs support the settlement and integration of newcomers into Canadian society, while also aiding immigrant youth cultural negotiation and identity formation.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction

Canadian researchers have long taken an interest in immigration, with particular attention being given to the process of settlement and integration. However, until quite recently, research in this area has focused predominantly on the needs and concerns of immigrant adults. This chapter offers a review of the literature on the settlement and integration of immigrant youth in Canada. The settlement and integration of newcomer youth into Canadian society is a multifaceted process involving numerous different factors. An initial review of the literature provided a sense of the major issues confronting this demographic related to their settlement and integration while also revealing a shortage of research which considers the role of immigrant youth services in addressing these issues. This chapter focuses primarily on Canadian scholarly literature related to the issues of language development and proficiency, cultural negotiation and identity construction, and friends and friendship formation. Research from outside Canada, including work done in the United States and Britain, has also been included to offer a more in-depth understanding of the immigrant youth experience related to these topics.

This chapter begins by considering the process of settlement and integration within the Canadian context. It then provides an overview of the settlement and integration literature conducted on immigrant youth in Canada, while paying particular attention to research involving language development and proficiency, cultural negotiation and identity construction, and friends and friendship formation. Finally, this chapter reviews the literature related to programs and services that are offered to immigrant youth within Canada.

Settlement and Integration in Canada

Since 2006, Canada has welcomed the highest sustained levels of immigration in Canadian history. For the tenth consecutive year, Canada will maintain an annual overall admission range of between 240,000 and 285,000 new permanent residents (Citizenship and Immigration, 2016). According to Statistics Canada projections, by 2031 nearly half of all Canadians aged 15 and older could be foreign born or have at least one foreign-born parent (Statistics Canada, 2013). As these statistics reveal, immigration is fundamental to the fabric of Canadian society and to Canada's national identity, culture and future economy. Canada has long been thought of as a *land of immigrants*¹, and strives to be a world leader at maximizing its benefits. The realization of this goal is largely predicated on the social inclusion of newcomers – the successful settlement and integration of the immigrant population into Canadian society. But what exactly does this mean within the Canadian context?

Canada is unique in that it largely remains an immigrant welcoming country, with a legislated multicultural policy. This multicultural legislation forms the basis of the Canadian model of settlement and integration. Within this model, integration is often described as a 'two-way street,' requiring accommodations and adjustment, and rights and responsibilities, on the part of both the immigrant and the host society (Biles and Winnemore, 2006). However, despite such notions of reciprocity, research has revealed that settlement and integration requires much more from newcomers and is thought to be a *lifelong journey* extending from initial selection, settlement and adaptation through to and beyond formal attainment of citizenship and social inclusion (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003). Along this continuum, settlement and integration represent different stages. Settlement refers to the short-term transitional issues faced by newcomers to Canada, while integration is the long-term, multi-dimensional process through which an immigrant becomes a member of the receiving society (Tossutti, 2012).

¹ This idea has been used in scholarly work, mainstream media, and by government officials throughout Canadian history in reference to the important and defined role immigration has played in the formation and growth of Canada as a nation.

Understanding the Canadian model of settlement and integration as a continuum and within the context of multiculturalism is important when considering the settlement and integration experiences of immigrant youth and how such experiences relate to service provision. For immigrant youth coming to Canada, migration presents considerable life changes in their physical environment, socio-cultural community and interpersonal affiliations, and in many cases can be extraordinarily intense, stressful, and even traumatic (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003). In order to provide effective service provision, the programs and services available to immigrant youth need to clearly understand the relationship between the myriad of issues confronting youth newcomers and their relationship to settlement and integration. This chapter will now, in more detail, explore immigrant youth research in Canada, with a focus on the issues affecting settlement and integration.

Immigrant Youth Research in Canada

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the number of immigrants entering Canada more than doubled with a significant portion of these newcomers being children and youth². In addition to this increase in overall immigrant intake, important changes regarding the pattern of migration were also taking place; namely, a sharp increase in the number of immigrant and refugee applicants arriving from conflict-ridden countries (Cole, 1998). Researchers started to ask questions regarding the economic, social, and psychological well being of this demographic (Hicks, Lalonde and Pepler, 1993; Beiser and Edwards 1994; and Beiser, Dion, Gotowiec, Huymam, and Vu 1995) and began examining a number of issues related to their settlement and integration experiences.

Today, immigrant youth have established a strong presence in Canadian society (Ngo and Schleifer, 2005), reflected by a growing and diverse body of academic literature. This body of literature is multidisciplinary and comprises a range of interrelated areas of interest including cultural adjustment, social support and belonging, language,

² According to Statistics Canada, the number of immigrant intake increased from 99,400 in 1986 to 152,100 in 1987 and then to 256,600 in 1993 (see <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2016006-eng.htm>)

education, identity, employment, family and gender relations, civic and political participation, social networks, access to services, crime and deviance, racism and discrimination, and resilience.

Significantly, this field of research has and continues to be closely connected to the cultural and ethnic realities of the source countries that newcomers are migrating from. In 2011, 82.4% of newcomers to Canada came from Asian (including the Middle East), the Caribbean and Central South America, Africa and Oceania and other regions, representing an increase among visible minority immigrants arriving in Canada compared to previous decades (Statistics Canada NHS, 2011). Between 2000 and 2015, immigrants to British Columbia came from 170 different countries with China, India, the Philippines, and South Korea (See Appendix A) representing the top source countries and accounting for over half of all immigrant arrivals (Citizenship and Immigration, 2016). Consequently, approximately 80% of the youth who settle in Canada every year are from racialized 'visible minority' backgrounds and are English language learners. This diversity in newcomers strongly informs the types of issues affecting their settlement and integration and, as a result, research surrounding immigrant youth in Canada has focused largely on issues related to cultural and linguistic diversity.

Issues Affecting Youth Settlement and Integration

Research on the issues affecting youth settlement and integration reveals that young newcomers face a number of complex linguistic, acculturative, psychological and socioeconomic challenges throughout this process. In one of the most comprehensive and well-organized considerations of the diverse challenges confronting immigrant youth, Ngo and Schleifer (2005) provide a detailed overview of their interconnected and diverse needs with respect to various social arenas and connect them to the contexts in which these needs and issues arise. In their analysis, the needs of immigrant youth are organized according to social services, health, education, and justice and understood as individual issues, issues related to the home environment, to the school environment, and issues related to the community environment (See Appendix B). Their examination of the challenges confronting immigrant youth as interrelated and context-based is valuable in not only providing somewhat of a compendium of research of immigrant

youth in Canada, but also in that it emphasizes the inter-relational characteristics of such challenges, many of which have often been considered as isolated phenomena. From this analysis and other Canadian scholarly research conducted around the issues affecting the settlement and integration of immigrant youth, it is apparent that certain issues are foundational and more central in influencing this process. In particular, a scan of the literature on this topic revealed language development and proficiency, cultural negotiation and identity construction, and friends and friendship formation as three prominent areas that influence immigrant youth's settlement and integration experiences.

Language Development and Proficiency

The ability to communicate in one of the official languages of Canada greatly affects the settlement and integration of newcomers. This should come as no surprise, as language represents the central means through which most social interaction takes place. Significantly, the large majority of immigrants coming to Canada do not speak either of the official languages as their mother tongue³ – the 2011 National Household Survey revealed that nearly 75% of the immigrant population reported a mother tongue other than English or French (Statistics Canada, NHS 2011). The importance of this component of the settlement and integration process has long been recognized in Canadian scholarly literature on immigration and is also evident in the allocation of funding and administration of settlement services situated around language training. Although language training is not obligatory for newcomers, it is one of the strongest funded settlement services in Canada and reaches a significant number of immigrants each year (Seidle, 2013).

For immigrant youth, language development and lack of language proficiency have often been identified as key challenges affecting their settlement and integration. In fact, newcomer youth, their parents, and service providers participating in *The*

³ Mother tongue refers to the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the person at the time the data was collected. If the person no longer understands the first language learned, the mother tongue is the second language learned. For a person who learned two languages at the same time in early childhood, the mother tongue is the language this person spoke most often at home before starting school (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Newcomer Youth Mental Health Project – a large-scale study conducted on immigrant youth in the Greater-Toronto area – identified linguistic barriers as one of the *greatest* challenges in the settlement process (2010). The findings of this study suggest that having no or low English language proficiency generates and amplifies a number of the other challenges that immigrant youth face during the settlement and integration process including friendship development, academic performance, and experiences related to bullying and discrimination (Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves, 2010). In turn, youth lacking English language proficiency are less likely to interact with English speaking youth (Shih, 1998), struggle to understand teachers and curriculum – often leading to poor academic outcomes and feeling silenced in the classroom (Costigan, Hua, and Su, 2010), and experience low self-esteem and feelings of stress and anxiety.

Beyond these challenges, research also suggests that immigrant youth experience significant challenges related to the language learning process. There appears to be consensus regarding the idea that immigrant youth learn new languages and adapt to cultural expectations more easily than adults (Hiebert, 1998). However, the relative aptitude that immigrant youth display in language acquisition compared to adult newcomers should not minimize the challenges they encounter throughout this process. Not only are immigrant youth in a new school environment learning new routines, responsibilities, and norms, but English language learners also require both structured language instruction from qualified teachers and explicit language support for content classes (Cummins, 1994). Immigrant youth require between 2 and 5 years of language instruction to develop basic communication skills and between 5 and 7 years to develop academic language proficiency (Collier, 1989). Furthermore, research suggests that age of arrival plays an important role in language acquisition (Corak, 2011), with many newcomers who arrive in Canada during adolescence requiring English language learning (ELL) support well into their post-secondary years. This is complicated by the reality that many of the educators who work with English language learners have had little training to prepare them to teach effectively in contexts where linguistic and cultural diversity is the norm (Cummins, Mirza, and Saskia, 2012).

In addition to the technical challenges related to language acquisition, Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves' (2010) work on the mental health of newcomer youth suggests

that there may also be stigma associated with being an ELL student. As noted by one of the service providers interviewed in their study, “[w]ith the ESL, many think that because you don’t have English, then you don’t have the intelligence so the material that is being taught is like kindergarten material” (99). Consequently, immigrant youth who might already experience discrimination based on their status as a visible minority or immigrant⁴ may be further marginalized under this designation. The result of such marginalization has been documented to negatively impact academic performance, educational attainment, and overall wellbeing (Anisef and Bunch 1994; Derwing, DeCorby, Ichikawa, and Jamieson, 1999; and Costigan, Hua, and Su, 2010). Thus, while structured language learning programs are considered essential for language development and provide a safe space for English language learners to develop their language skills, it appears they may also serve to further stigmatize immigrant youth. However, as noted by Talmy (2009) in his work on this topic, despite this idea being widely referenced, little research has addressed stigma associated with ELL designation head-on.

Finally, when considering the importance of language and language acquisition for newcomers, it is also necessary to consider the relationship between language and identity. It is a common held belief in language and identity studies that identity constructs and is constructed by language. As suggested by Leung, Harris, and Rampton, “language use and notions of ethnicity and social identity are inextricably linked” (1997, 544), with mother tongue proficiency and use often recognized as important factors for maintaining one’s ethnic identity (Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder, 2006). However, host society language acquisition often comes at a cost for immigrant youth. In the process of learning the dominant language, many immigrant youth experience first language loss (Guardado, 2006). Such a reality not only has the ability to negatively impact parent-youth relations, but as “a necessary social resource for

⁴ According to the Ethnic Diversity Study conducted by Statistics Canada and Canadian Heritage, one in five members of visible minority groups reported at least one experience with discrimination because of ethnicity, culture, skin colour, language, accent or religion (Statistics Canada, NHS, 2011).

maintaining cultural tradition and ethnic identity⁵” (Schechter and Bayley, 2002, 79), it can also challenge the identity formation process and immigrant youth’s sense of self.

Cultural Negotiation and Identity Construction

The development of a strong and stable sense of self is widely considered to be one of the central tasks of adolescence.⁶ The transition from adolescence to young adulthood in particular exposes young people to new roles and relations and during this time youth are confronted with a new sense of autonomy and self-understanding (Damon and Hart, 1988). Appropriately, a vast amount of literature exists on identity and identity formation amongst immigrant youth with researchers drawing attention to the fact that, in addition to facing the intensive developmental issues specific to adolescence, immigrant youth must also start a new socialization process, learn and manage new cultural expectations, and develop new kinds of social competence (Seat and Richards, 1998). Significantly, immigrant youth generally belong to at least two different cultural groups and managing this experience is suggested to pose particular challenges related to identity construction. Immigrant youth face the challenge of integrating different sets of cultural demands and messages, must manage conflicting interpersonal expectations, and may also deal with the potential threats of minority status and discrimination (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee and Morrise, 2002). Developing a coherent sense of self is thus suggested to be more complex for immigrant youth who are often seeking to belong to both their heritage ethnic group and also groups within the mainstream culture.

According to Ngo and Schleifer (2005), during their cultural adjustment immigrant youth often experience cognitive and emotional changes due to their changing environment and “many struggle to achieve a positive cultural identity as they deal with community values that may conflict with those at home” (29). Moreover, they suggest that the development of cultural identity in Canada may be further complicated by internalized racism resulting from exposure to pervasive negative stereotypes of ethnic

⁵ Phinney (1996) describes ethnic identity as a construct that includes a “commitment and sense of belonging to one’s ethnic group, positive evaluation of the group, interest in and knowledge about the group, and involvement in activities and traditions of the group” (145).

minorities (Ngo and Schleifer, 2005). In one study on ethnic identity and immigrant youth, Tsang et al. (2003) revealed a multiplicity of ways ethnic identity is negotiated by young people ranging from essentialist approaches in which the youth saw their ethnic identity as something that was self-evident and non-problematic, to differentiation approaches in which the youth recognized a changing self as a result of migration – seeing this as neither negative or positive, to confusion approaches in which the youth expressed being unsure of what they were. Significantly, having a connection at some level to one's ethnic identity is often associated with more positive settlement and integration experiences (Phinney, 2006). Studies of immigrant youth in Canada have identified that youth who are securely embedded in their ethnic culture experience better health outcomes, greater academic success, and are less likely to engage in negative behaviour (Beiser et al. 1999). In contrast, those who feel disenfranchised from their ethnic background are at higher risk for delinquency and school failure (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003).

Research has revealed that within the school setting, immigrant youth experience significant pressure to align with the dominant culture. This often means learning to communicate in English and taking on certain aspects of the dominant culture including clothing, music, social attitudes and the use of language (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003). At the same time, they are also under pressure from their families in the home setting to maintain their heritage culture (Li, 2009). These various contexts create a complex web of expectations that the youth must navigate. Discussing the negotiation of these expectations, Hoeder, Hébert, and Schmitt (2005) suggest immigrant youth select between many choices but are also constrained by various social structures:

Between the many demands imposed on them, the choices offered, the plans they have for their future, they constantly negotiate compromises and engage in processes of transculturation that permit lives embedded in relationships, with families, friends and school with its distinct social structures (24).

As this study suggests, newcomers are not simply passive recipients of imposed identities; rather, they are adapting, adopting, and negotiating their identities across the various contexts they exist within. Similarly, in a study conducted on South Asian immigrant youth in the Greater Toronto Area, Desai and Subramanian (2003) discovered

that many immigrant youth are constantly balancing the dual needs of cultural conformity and resistance without having to negate their cultural identity. Youth in this study came across as having agency derived from a dual consciousness – a sense of an active and conscious role in creating a new culture that encompasses select aspects of both ‘competing’ cultures.

More recent work surrounding the identity construction of immigrant youth has attempted to move away from conventional understandings of identity as static and notions of the immigrant experience as the result of an either-or paradigm, towards an understanding of the *in-between* (Ngo, 2008). Such an understanding conceptualizes identity as flexible, shifting, and negotiated, with *in-between* referring to the space that opens up for negotiation and change to occur.⁷ That being said, there is also a body of literature demonstrating how the spaces immigrant youth occupy present them with competing cultural messages, with researchers particularly interested in how such experiences impact identity construction and the settlement and integration process.

Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban (1999) suggest that youth occupy two major areas in their lives: the private sphere, which includes family and home life, and the public sphere, which includes schools, friends, and community life. Based on this distinction, a study conducted with Arab Canadian youth determined that a positive Arab cultural orientation was related to greater life satisfaction within the private sphere, and a positive mainstream Canadian cultural orientation was related to greater life satisfaction within the public sphere (Paterson and Hakim-Larson, 2012). These results align with expectations given that private life satisfaction, within the family domain, is likely to be most influenced by the degree to which youth maintain their cultural heritage, and public life satisfaction, within the school domain, to be most influenced by the extent to which youth are engaged with the host culture. As this study suggests, migrant youth are confronted with the task of creatively fusing aspects of both cultures – the parental tradition and the new culture. However because of the often-significant differences

⁷ Homi Bhabha calls the space that opens up for negotiation and change the third space, ambivalent space, or *in-between*. He maintains that, “we should remember that it is the ‘inter’ – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space –that carries the burden of the meaning of culture” (Bhabha, 1994, 38).

between the heritage and dominant cultures, immigrant youth can face additional challenges in constructing a coherent sense of self.

According to Weeks (1990), identity is about belonging and intimately connected to one's social relationships and complex involvements with others. Adolescence, for all youth, is often understood as a time for the creation of new allegiances with peers and, simultaneously, a move away from parents. During this time, friendships are among the most prominent features of the social landscape (Hartup, 1993). They play a significant role in helping young people navigate the challenges and obstacles they face and have the ability to greatly inform one's sense of self. However, the re-forging and development of these relationships represents a major challenge for newcomers.

Friends and Friendship Formation

Knowledge about immigrant youth's social networks is often embedded in ethnic identity, assimilation and integration, and social support literature from anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Research on this topic identifies various sources for such networks including peers and friends, parents and family, and non-parental adults and mentors. As research relates to peers and friends, the general consensus suggests that friendship development and peer group integration are important and beneficial for immigrant youth's settlement and integration.

Developing relationships with host peers in particular is often identified as essential to the settlement and integration process. Horenczyk and Tatar (1998) suggest that through their host peers, "immigrants become acquainted with – and eventually learn – the social and cultural messages concerning the behavioural norms and social roles expected of them" (70). Subsequently, the formation of these friendships helps to facilitate the newcomers' integration into their new society and culture. Quite often, host peers are able to provide youth newcomers with important information as well as the social and institutional contacts which can help to alleviate their sense of estrangement

and acculturative stress⁸ and improve their personal, social, and academic adjustment (Horenczyk and Tatar, 1998). Similarly noted in a study conducted by Chan and Birman on the friendship development of 153 Vietnamese immigrant adolescents in the United States, “[i]mmigrant adolescents can learn about the cultural norms and values of the host culture from their friends who are not immigrants and who have more knowledge about the host culture” (2009, 314).

However, the development of such relationships represents a major challenge for many newcomers. While some research suggests that immigrant youth actively choose to only socialize with friends of their own ethnicity (Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban, 1999; Phinney et al. 2006), others have identified this phenomenon as less of a choice and more of an outcome. Shih (1998) suggests that such ethnic preference in the friendships of immigrant youth may have to do with the newcomer’s inability to effectively communicate and function socially in the mainstream culture. As a result, immigrant youth gravitate toward people who can better understand them and with whom they can confirm their values and beliefs. Similarly, Hébert’s (2006) three-year study on the identity formation of sixty immigrant youth in Calgary demonstrated that, especially during the early stages of settlement, immigrant youth “tend to turn to friends within the same ethnic group, for sharing the same language and the same culture enhances their sense of security and identity in a new setting” (122). While recognizing that close friends, generally from the same ethnic group, provide important and necessary resources to help immigrant youth cope with the difficulties that confront them, Hébert (2006) suggests that they are not sufficient to assure successful integration. Rather, she contests that the successful social integration of immigrant youth is contingent on the development of weak ties⁹ between different ethno-cultural and mainstream groups. Importantly, this depends not only on the willingness of immigrant youth to engage *with* the host society, but also on the attitudes held towards them *by* the host society.

⁸ Acculturative stress is a stress reaction to life events that are rooted in the experience of acculturation (Berry, 2005). This term is employed instead of using the term culture shock, which carries only negative connotations. As noted by Berry (2005), because acculturation has both positive (e.g., new opportunities) and negative (e.g., discrimination) aspects, the stress conceptualization better matches the range of affect experienced during acculturation.

⁹ Weak ties refer to the relationships with people who exist outside of one’s tight-knit group of close and personal friends and family. See Granovetter (1973).

In a qualitative study conducted on immigrant youth in the Waterloo region of South Western Ontario, peer relationships were identified as one of the most popular topics among the youth interviewed (Janzen and Ochocka, 2003). Not only did participants express contempt surrounding the reality of leaving behind their friends in their home countries, but many also identified making new friends in Canada as particularly challenging. Stories about immigrant youth feeling accepted by Canadian-born peers were extremely limited. Rather, visible distinctions and more subtle cultural expectations, as well as a general apathy and, at times, open hostility of Canadian-born peers, were reported as barriers to acceptance (Janzen and Ochocka, 2003). In a similar vein, Tsai (2006) identified racism and xenophobia as salient contextual factors contributing to the types of peer relations and friendships immigrant youth form. Consequently, the youth keep at a distance from potential host peers to avoid discrimination. Ethnic communities, on the other hand, act as an important source for the development of friends and peer relations which serve to protect the psychosocial development of newcomers, particularly during the early resettlement phase (Tsai, 2006). Taken together, these challenges in relating to Canadian-born peers leave many immigrant youth feeling caught between two cultures: wanting to be accepted by others and conform to mainstream expectations and practices on the one hand, and also wanting to maintain and affirm their own personal and ethnic identity on the other (Janzen and Ochocka, 2003).

Immigrant Youth Settlement Services

The settlement and integration of immigrants into Canadian society depend upon a significant commitment from the various organizations serving this demographic. Canada is distinct in that a major portion of its settlement services are provided by *third sector agencies*¹⁰ with funding from all three levels of government, as well as community charities and public and private foundations (Richmond and Shields, 2005). Thus, while

¹⁰ The *third sector* in Canada is very broadly conceived, embracing service-providing organizations that supplement or complement public services in such areas as health, education, social welfare, and culture, and organizations that offer mechanisms through which individuals can join together to address community needs, participate in political life, and pursue individual and group interests.

immigration and settlement policy takes place at the national level, settlement and integration is a process that takes place at the sub-national level with locally based non-government organizations taking the lead. The goal of settlement services is to support immigrants' short and longer-term needs – experienced at the various stages of the process – to assist their transition towards being able to fully participate in Canadian society (ibid). Such services in Canada are focused in the areas of language acquisition and proficiency, employment, housing, and information workshops and settlement counselling services (Evans and Shields, 2014).

In the past, programs offered by service providers have tended to focus on adult newcomers; however, it has become increasingly important for these organizations to respond to the needs and concerns of immigrant youth. While there has been limited research examining the settlement services available to young newcomers, there appears to be some consensus within the study of immigration regarding the value of immigrant serving organizations. According to Anisef and Kilbride, “the strength of these organizations lies both in the potential they have for the adoption of a diversity of approaches to program development and in their roots in the community” (2003, 30). Similarly, the Canadian Council for Refugees (1998), identified a number of strengths associated with settlement services in Canada including settlement workers who are highly experienced and knowledgeable; a commitment to cost-effective programs that work; accountability to the communities they serve; and a holistic approach through which the range of needs of individuals and the community as a whole are considered.

With regard to immigrant youth and the particular challenges they encounter, Roffman, Suarez-Orozco, and Rhodes (2003) contend that immigrant youth development programs have the potential to address these issues. They suggest that access to like-minded peers in a structured setting and the support of non-parental adults, through community youth-serving agencies, “can prove invaluable in minimizing the risks associated with the stresses of acculturation as well as in facilitating the identity formation process” (99). This final point is particularly important, as the literature review revealed identity formation as a major challenge confronting immigrant youth. Accordingly, this is accomplished by programs that emphasize the positive attributes and assets that youth possess and provide adequate support and encouragement to help

participants achieve their goals and realize their potential (Roffman, Suarez-Orozco, and Rhodes, 2003). However, beyond such anecdotal evidence, little is known about how such programs facilitate this process. Furthermore, the little research that has been conducted around such programs in Canada has painted a markedly different picture.

According to research on settlement services for youth, there are a number of flaws in the provision of services for immigrant youth in Canada including a lack of coordination among service providers, uneven distribution of resources, and claims of a scarcity of programs targeting immigrant youth populations (Morland, Duncan, Hoebing, Kirschke, and Schmidt, 2005; Ngo 2009; Shields, Rahi, and Scholtz 2006). According to some research, these shortcomings have resulted in inadequate services. As put forth by Ngo (2009) – when examining the scope of services provided by youth integration programs in three major Canadian cities – such programs do not adequately attend to issues related to cultural identity, acculturative stress, and racism and discrimination. Further, Ngo (2009) suggests that the programs are delivered without an explicit effort to connect immigrant youth to the wider community, which risks reinforcing over-reliance of immigrant youth on intra-ethnic relations and immigrant networks. Similarly, in an investigation of access to formal support services among young African immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver, Francis and Yan (2016) identified a number of gaps between young African immigrants and refugees and “the resources they need to thrive” (98). Within this study, discussions with key informants and immigrant youth revealed that, for African immigrants and refugees, service provision lacked accessibility, important and appropriate information, and ethno-specific resources. As these studies reveal, there are conflicting perspectives within the literature regarding the value of such programs.

Summary

Immigrant youth are confronted with a myriad of complex and interrelated challenges throughout the process of settlement and integration. Importantly, as highlighted in the work of Ngo and Schliefer (2005), these challenges are related to various arenas including social services, health, education and justice and are connect to the home, school, and community contexts in which they arise. Of these challenges,

language development and proficiency, cultural negotiation and identity construction, and friendship formation resonated as some of the most pressing issues. The literature revealed immigrant youth as young people working towards a coherent sense of self through the reconciliation of two separate cultural existences – negotiating the social norms and behaviours of the host society while also attempting to maintain aspects of their heritage culture. Moreover, immigrant-serving organizations have the potential to facilitate this process and play an important and necessary role in the settlement and integration experiences of newcomers. However, the limited research conducted on such services in Canada revealed a number of shortcomings. These conflicting perspectives concerning youth integration services and programs raise important questions regarding the value of such programs, while also highlighting an apparent paucity of research on the topic. This study aims to address this gap in the literature by asking immigrant youth about their experiences participating in a youth integration program, while paying particular attention to how program participation impacts the processes of cultural negotiation and identity formation.

Chapter 3. Theory and Methods

Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework and research methods that underline the findings of this research. This study endeavours to more clearly understand the relationship between structure and agency in the lives of immigrant youth through cultural negotiation and the identity formation process, paying particular attention to the role of youth integration programs. In order to effectively examine the interplay of structure and agency as it relates to cultural negotiation and the identity formation process, this study employs Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, which suggests that human agency and social structure are in an intimate relationship with each other, and invokes Bhabha's (1991) notions of *cultural hybridity* and the *third space*. Furthermore, this project has been formulated to align with suppositions put forth by a *new* sociology of childhood (Prout and James, 1997). This approach to studying young people stresses youth agency, regarding them as actors in their own right, while also recognizing the ways in which various social structures contribute to the youth experience.

This chapter begins by situating this study within the context of a resurgent interest in children and youth in society and sociology known as the *new* sociology of childhood. Next, it provides a detailed overview of Giddens' and Bhabha's theories and considers their application to the study of immigrant youth in Canada. The final section of this chapter offers insight into the methodology and research methods used for this project.

Theoretical Framework

A New Sociology of Childhood

The *new* sociology of childhood emerged over 20 years ago out of a strong critique of the then dominant child development and family studies' paradigm. Before its emergence, sociology paid limited attention to children and childhood – with children generally viewed through a forward-looking lens, as future adults, and largely understood as the result of adult socialization (Ambert, 1986). Research tended to center on areas where children interacted with adults, such as within the family or school setting, and focused predominantly on the potential of children and youth. However, new ways of conceptualizing young people in sociology, inspired by the rise of constructivist and interpretive theoretical perspectives, have challenged this convention by emphasizing the agency of children and youth and exploring the various ways through which their interactions with adults and each other produce, reproduce, challenge and transform the nature of childhood and society (Leonard, 2005). Such a view identifies socialization as not only a matter of adaptation and internalization of adult skills and knowledge, but also a process of appropriation, reinvention, and reproduction (Corsaro, 2005).

Corsaro (2005) refers to this process as *interpretive reproduction*, with the concept *interpretive* referring to the innovative and creative elements of youth's participation in society, and *reproduction* referring to the idea that youth are not simply internalizing society and culture, but are actively adding to it. While emphasizing youth agency, this process also implies that youth are, "by their very participation in society, constrained by the existing social structure and by societal reproduction" (Corsaro, 2005, 19). That is, young people *affect* and are *affected by* the societies and cultures to which they belong. Through language and cultural routines youth gain access to cultural membership. These elements are fundamental to the socialization process, providing youth with "the security and shared understanding of belonging to a social group" (ibid, 19). It is within these elements that social structure is most evident; however, youth do not merely replicate or internalize the world around them, they also actively participate in it. Corsaro (2005) presents this model of interpretive reproduction as a "spider web" (See

Appendix C), which helps to demonstrate the socialization process of young people as a collective, productive-reproductive process, resulting from the youth's participation in a number of embedded adult and peer cultures. Within this model, the radii on the web represent the various institutional fields or locales that the youth engage with including cultural, economic, religious, community, family, education, and political fields and the spirals represent the make-up or age diversity of the various groups youth interact with ranging from preschool outward to adulthood (Corsaro, 2005). Accordingly, the collective, productive, and innovative features of children's adult and peer cultures are represented in the features of spiralling and embeddedness in the web. This model challenges previous linear understandings of childhood socialization by capturing the complexity of children's evolving membership amongst these groups and through their engagements with the various institutional structures, and encapsulates the major tenants of the *new* sociology of childhood.

This approach to understanding and studying the experiences of young people focuses on childhood as a social construct resulting from the collective actions of young people with adults and, importantly, each other (Prout, 2011). They are situated as social agents who are simultaneously acted upon by the structural forces they encounter, while also actively contributing to the reproduction of society and culture through their negotiations with adults and through their creative production of peer cultures with other youth (Corsaro, 2005). This understanding of young people challenges structuralist assumptions about social life by revealing interdependence between structure and agency. Thus, rather than understanding society as an assembly of external forces acting upon the individual – who is more or less unconscious of these forces – this paradigm is predicated on a greater emphasis on the active and reflexive character of human action.

Structuration Theory

According to Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration, human agency and social structure are in an intimate relationship with each other, and it is the repetition of the acts of individual agents that reproduces the structure. This means that there is a social structure encompassing traditions, institutions, moral codes, and established ways of

doing things, but it also means that these can be changed when people start to ignore them, replace them, or reproduce them differently (ibid). According to Tucker Jr. (1998), such a view is not contradictory to structuralism; rather, it is meant to synthesize that framework with interpretive threads of social thought in order to gain a more cohesive understanding of social phenomena. Thus, structuration theory addresses the relationship between individual action and the societal structure, with a focus on how individual actors reproduce the structures that define and give meaning to their actions (Giddens, 1984). This framework has much relevance regarding the situation of immigrant youth as they navigate their arrival in a new culture, providing a powerful tool for identifying and expanding upon the agency of newcomers in the identity formation process, while also capturing the ways in which their experiences are shaped by various social structures.

Within this theory, structure refers to “the properties which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them ‘systemic’ form” (Giddens, 1984, 17). More distinctly, structure is described as both the rules and resources involved in the process of social production – the institutionalized forces of social systems that result in permanent or stable patterns of structural properties. Rules are characterized as the normative elements or codes that signify expected behaviour and resources as either authoritative as they relate to the coordination of human activity or as allocated material resources (ibid, 1984). Importantly, Giddens suggests “structures exist only as memory traces, the organic basis of human knowledgeability, and as instantiated in human action”(1984, 377). This implies that while rules patterned in social structure can and do act upon the agent, they aren’t necessarily fixed. To know a rule is to implicitly know what one is supposed to do in particular situations, but “all social rules (codes and norms) are transformational” (Giddens, 1979, 104), meaning rules can be altered, used in varying contexts, and applied to new situations. However, rules are widely used and *sanctioned* which makes them inseparable from the exercise of social power. Rules are closely attached with penalties for improper social behaviour, which in turn, “draw upon modes of domination structured in social systems” (ibid, 83). As such, social action is shaped, not only by rule-following conduct, but also by the differences in power and the resources that people have at their disposal.

The fundamental domain of study within structuration theory is not the experience of the individual actor or the existence of the societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time (Giddens, 1984, 2). It is in and through these social practices, whereby people express themselves as actors, that agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible. In contrast to preceding social theory – which has minimized or disregarded the agent's awareness, structuration theory suggests that there is an important human knowledgeability in the recursive ordering of social practice. As such, "to be human is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons"(ibid, 3). As purposive agents, actors continuously self-monitor their actions, the actions of others, and the social environments they occupy. This reflexive process (See Appendix D) depends upon the motivation of action, the rationalization of action, and the reflexive monitoring of action (ibid, 5). Giddens observes that the reproduction of society is based primarily on practical activities which are motivated by routinization – the habitual, taken-for-granted character of the large majority of the activities of day-to-day social life (ibid, 376). Thus, social order is not a given but must be reconstituted, largely through the routinization of many aspects of social interaction. This routinization is particularly important for social reproduction and works to establish the seeming "fixity" or structure of institutions (Giddens, 1979).

Situated on an understanding of actors as reflexive, with the ability to monitor experiences and provide reasons for actions, Giddens' (1984) conception of agency is founded in reasoning and knowledge and postulates the agent's capacity to act *otherwise*. Agency refers not to the intentions actors have for doing things, but in their capacity to do them (ibid). Accordingly, "agency concerns events of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently" (Giddens, 1984, 9). To be able to 'act differently' suggests being able to intervene in the world or to refrain from intervention, with the effect of imposing some form of influence. This presumes that to be an agent one must be able to employ some range of causal powers or what Giddens refers to as "transformative capacity" (1984, 15). This capacity is anchored in the notion of knowledgeability. Giddens understands social activities as continually reproduced by people's actions, which then serve as the very means by which they express

themselves, arguing that people invariably develop knowledge regarding why they engage in particular practices (ibid). However, the ability to express the motives for one's actions is but one aspect of his understanding of agency. Giddens distinguishes between discursive and practical consciousness when examining agency, with discursive consciousness referring to the conscious reasons that people give to explain their motivations and practical consciousness referring to what actors know or believe about social conditions but cannot necessarily express (Giddens, 1984). Taken together, these notions of consciousness point to the knowledgeability of the individual and emphasize the idea that "the knowledge they possess is not incidental to the persistent patterning of social life but is integral to it" (Giddens, 1984, p.26). It is the knowledgeable activities of situated actors who draw upon rules and resources in diverse contexts that produce and reproduce social practices.

According to Giddens (1984), this is *the duality of structure*, which proposes that agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, as in a dualism, but rather a duality. Within this duality, structure is not 'external' to the individual, nor is it equated with constraint but is always both "constraining and enabling" (ibid, 169). Giddens explains the significance of this duality in relation to social production quite succinctly:

The duality of structure is always the main grounding of continuities in social reproduction across time-space. It in turn presupposes the reflexive monitoring of agents in, and as constituting, the *durée* of daily social activity. But human knowledgeability is always bounded. The flow of action continually produces consequences which are unintended by actors, and these unintended consequences also may form unacknowledged conditions of action in a feedback fashion. (1984, 27)

Thus, human actors – through their actions – reproduce the conditions that form the structure of the society they live in and it is through these structures that those very actions gain meaning. It is within this duality that social reproduction occurs. However, the social systems and interactions are unfixed and, consequently, subject to change, even if such change is not the intended consequences of the individual agent. From such an understanding it can be discerned that these systems and interactions, including the institutionalized elements of structure (i.e. rules and resources), are not so limiting as to restrict meaningful action.

Giddens' theory of structuration provides a powerful framework for examining the experiences of immigrant youth as it acknowledges the intimate relationship between structure and agency in their lives. Thus, while recognizing the position of structure as a determinant in the lives of young newcomers, it also allows for the expansion of their individual agency. This agency, as put forth by Giddens, is closely connected to the actor's knowledgeability. As stated, "all human beings are knowledgeable agents. That is to say, all social actors know a great deal about the conditions and consequences of what they do in their day-to-day lives" (Giddens, 1984, 281). It is this idea of knowledgeability which informs my approach to the participants in this study, recognizing that immigrant youth are not simply passive individuals being acted upon by the structural forces they encounter. Rather, they are knowledgeable agents who understand and assess their circumstances and act in such a way as to achieve desired outcomes within the framework of their conditions. In doing so, they both reproduce social practices and patterns which give meaning to their actions, while also being able to challenge and transform them.

As the previous chapter revealed, for many young people coming to Canada the line between maintaining cultural affinity and conforming to the dominant culture is blurred. Immigrant youth experience certain cultural rules and expectations within the household and, often, face very different cultural rules and expectations in the public sphere (Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban, 1999). Thus, adapting to life in Canada is far more complex than simply moving away from the heritage culture or towards the dominant culture. Rather, the adaption process can include both a move towards and away from the heritage culture and, similarly, towards and away from the dominant culture (Yeh et al. 2005). Through this process, youth express agency by creating new ways of being which incorporate aspects of both or the many cultures they belong to. This involves engaging with and reproducing social practices and rules, but also altering them. This blending of cultural beliefs, values, and practices is referred to as cultural hybridization (Ackermann, 2012).

Cultural Hybridity, Identity, and the Third Space

Since the 1980s, cultural hybridity has become an increasingly popular and influential concept in a broad range of cultural and social theories. The growing importance and influence of this idea can be connected to an increased awareness of global cultural influences and interdependencies, and is closely related to the larger epistemological shift which occurred in the social sciences during this time (Ackermann, 2012). The term hybridity has numerous different meanings depending on the field it is used in. In the context of culture, hybridity is used to refer to the borrowing, mixture, or translating of culture, or different aspects of it, such as race, language, and ethnicity (Kraidy, 2005). Theorizing cultural hybridity has provided an innovative way of conceptualizing difference, while also undermining essentialist ideas of cultural boundedness and notions of identity as fixed and constant.

Within post-colonial studies, there is widespread consensus that hybridity resulted from the culturally internalized interactions between the *colonizer* and the *colonized* – referring specifically to the integration of cultural practices between these groups (Yazdih, 2010). Bhabha developed his concept of hybridity to describe the creation of culture and identity within the conditions of colonial antagonism, asserting that the colonizer and the colonized are mutually dependent in constructing a shared culture (1994). Thus, in post-colonial studies, hybridity represents the process by which the colonizer attempts to translate the cultural identity of the colonized to reproduce the dominant culture. However, according to Bhabha, the colonizers failed at this task and rather than producing something familiar, this process produced “something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation” (Rutherford, 1991, p.211). Such an understanding of the construction of culture and identity has not only worked to challenge the validity of essentialist understandings of culture, but it also draws attention to the ‘in-between’ spaces, where new cultural identities are formed, reformed and exist in a constant state of becoming.

For Bhabha, it is the indeterminate spaces in between subject-positions that represent the locale of the disruption and displacement of hegemonic colonial narratives of cultural structures and practices (Bhabha, 1994). He posits hybridity as such a form of liminal space, where the “cutting edge of translation and negotiation” occurs (Bhabha,

1996). This is a 'third space,' and Bhabha is inherently critical of essentialist standings on identity and culture. Underpinning this theory of hybridity is the notion that there is no 'essence' to cultures because culture is interpreted and performed:

The 'original' is never finished or complete in itself. The 'originary' is always open to translation so that it can never be said to have a totalized prior moment of being or meaning – an essence. What this really means is that cultures are only constituted in relation to that otherness internal to their own symbol-forming activity which makes them decentred structures – through that displacement or liminality opens up the possibility of articulating different, even incommensurable cultural practices and priorities. (Rutherford, 1991, p. 211)

Thus, the value of hybridity lies in not being able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges; rather, that hybridity is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. This interstitial space acts as a mode of articulation, a constructive space that challenges the limitations of existing cultural boundaries and allows for new possibilities. According to Bhabha, the third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no "primordial unity or fixity" (1994). That being said, hybridity does bear the traces of the cultural feelings and practices which inform it, putting together the traces of certain other meanings or discourses: the same cultural practice or custom placed in a different context acquires new meaning while still echoing old ones (ibid). As such, hybridity represents a form of incipient critique – it does not come as a force from 'outside' to impose an alternative. Rather, it works with, *and within*, the cultural design of the present to reshape understandings of the interstices that link signs of cultural sameness with emergent signifiers of alterity (Werbner, Modood, & Bhabha, 2015, p.ix).

Although Bhabha's theory on hybridity was constructed within the context of colonialism, his concepts of cultural hybridity and the third space have often been used in considering the experiences of immigrants (Fine and Sirin, 2007). This materiality in the study of immigrants could be argued to be the result of certain similarities between the processes of colonialism and immigration resulting in shared experiences between the colonized and the immigrant. Colonialism brings into its orbit a variety of groups, which it oppresses, exploits, and coerces in differing ways and to differing degrees (Blauner, 1987). The result of this is a complex structure of power relations predicated

on racial and ethnic division which has a significant bearing on the life experiences of the individual and the groups they belong to. In a similar vein, immigration too results in a complex structure of power relations relating to race and ethnicity, which greatly inform the immigrant's life experience (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003), and is accompanied by certain pressures enacted on the immigrant to align with the dominant culture.

Within Canada, successful integration requires change on the part of the newcomer and Canadian society, suggesting that integration is not assimilation – as immigrant populations can maintain their cultural differences under official policy. However, despite the seemingly equitable language surrounding immigration, Canada also upholds the importance of shared values and compliance to the 'Canadian standard' as necessary to successful integration (Li, 2003). The idea that immigrants must respect the core values of Canada is often applied as a limited understanding of racial and cultural differences. Within this application, there is a tendency to focus on specific cultural and racial differences and to represent them as threats – despite the rhetorical commitment to multiculturalism (ibid, 2003). Furthermore, as argued by Richmond and Shields (2005), there is an obvious contradiction between official inclusion policies and the systemic social exclusion of Canadian immigrants in the economic sphere and in social and public life more generally. Accordingly, the social and economic inclusion of immigrants into Canadian society is limited by the realities of systemic racism. Significantly, the vast majority of recent newcomers to Canada are non-European “visible minorities” experiencing these systemic barriers of exclusion (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003). Thus, while the situation of immigrant minorities in Canada is by no means the same as that of the nations and people who suffered under White European rule through colonization, there are a number of parallels between their experiences, particularly, those associated with power relations, economic and social marginalization, and cultural coercion.

In an attempt to understand the interplay of structure and agency as it relates to the processes of cultural negotiation and identity formation amongst immigrant youth, Bhabha's theory of hybridity provides a necessary foundation. As demonstrated, this theory situates culture and identity within a continuous process of change and negotiation, taking into account the dynamic, contested, and messy nature of these

concepts. As immigrant youth traverse the new cultural landscape they find themselves a part of, they are acted upon by various forces – both at home and in the public sphere – and must make decisions about how to act and behave. As part of one or more heritage cultures and as a new member of the dominant culture, expectations from others regarding who one is or should be may conflict with one another, and with how the youth want to identify themselves. Within this contestation, youth forge new ways of being through the acceptance and rejection of aspects of both the heritage culture(s) and the dominant culture. Bhabha's theory of hybridity provides the conceptual framework to effectively examine and understand this liminal space that young newcomers occupy.

Research Methods

Methodology

The resurgence of interest in youth in sociology has resulted in numerous studies on adolescences involving a variety of methods. As noted by Corsaro (2005), a general trend in this research over the past 20 years has been a move away from research *on* youth, and towards research *with* youth. This trend has worked to relocate young people as subjects, rather than objects of research and reflects the fundamental intentions of a *new* sociology of childhood – to better capture youth's voices and perspectives. Central to this project is a shared interest with a *new* sociology of childhood: to provide space for immigrant youth to share their settlement and integration experiences. Accordingly, this project elected to use a qualitative approach to capture youth's experiences as participants in the worlds to which they belong. It seemed appropriate to use this methodology in a study concerned with the subjective experiences of immigrant youth as they negotiate their settlement and integration into Canadian society.

Qualitative research provides detailed description and analysis of the substance of human experience and is known for accessing "insider knowledge" that is deep, rich, and contextual (Dalton et al., 2001). Qualitative researchers pay particular attention to the subjective nature of the human experience and attempt to understand the meaning of these experiences for the individuals involved. As noted earlier, conflicting

assessments exist regarding the value of youth integration programs. Interestingly, the perspectives of immigrant youth in this evaluation have been largely absent. A qualitative approach to this topic provides an opportunity to involve these missing voices. Through the analysis of immigrant youth narratives co-constructed during in-depth interviews and focus groups, this project worked to generate data from such perspectives.

Narrative Analysis and the Hermeneutics of Restoration

Narrativity is a defining feature of the human condition and a powerful tool in the sharing of knowledge (Bruner, 1987). We live in a world where people often discuss and understand their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours within the framework of a narrative, with such stories revealing much about how people make sense of their life experiences. For these reasons, examining narrative is considered particularly well suited for the study of subjectivity and the influence of culture and identity on the human condition (Josselson, 2004). Within the social sciences, narrative analysis aims to appreciate human experience as a form of text construction, situated on the belief that people understand their lives through an autobiographical process similar to producing a story (Erol Işık, 2015). By examining this process, we are able to look beyond the material ‘facts’ of a life and focus in on the “particular meaningful shape that emerges from selected inner and outer experiences” (Josselson, 2004, p.2). Importantly, while the person narrating his or her life is interpreting experience in constructing the account, the researchers’ role is also interpretive and (re)constructive.

Ricoeur (1991), in his efforts to intertwine phenomenological description with the practice of hermeneutics, distinguishes between two forms of hermeneutics: a hermeneutics of faith and a hermeneutics of suspicion. The first form aims at the *restoration* of meaning to a text and is informed by a willingness to listen, to absorb the message in its given form, and to respect the symbol – understood as a cultural mechanism for one’s comprehension of reality (Josselson, 2004). By contrast, the hermeneutics of suspicion attempts to decode meanings that are concealed, and is characterized by a distrust of the narrative as a dissimulation of reality (ibid.). As this suggests, the specific activity of hermeneutic research – the mode of inquiry, the nature

of reflexivity and considerations regarding ethics, are contingent on the stance one adopts.

From the standpoint of a hermeneutics of restoration, I believe that the participants in this project are sharing, as best they can, a true sense of their subjective experience and my interpretation focuses on examining the messages inherent in the interview and focus group text. Such positionality requires maintaining a humanistic attitude, and for this reason is suggested to be particularly valuable for research engaging with marginalized or oppressed groups (Josselson, 2004). Through this, meanings are co-constructed through consensus to accurately represent the subjective world of the participants. This, in part, is dependent on creating an authentic and honest personal encounter between the researcher and the participant which presupposes trust on the part of the participant and reflexivity on the part of the researcher.

Situating Myself as Researcher

My interest in working with newcomers to Canada came about quite unexpectedly in the final year of my undergraduate degree. In September of 2013 a colleague approached me with the wonderful opportunity to volunteer with an immigrant youth outreach program in Calgary. When the program decided to initiate a book club – aware of my advocacy for reading – my friend and program coordinator asked if I would be interested in facilitating; I jumped at the opportunity. Despite the book club's popularity among the youth, it also exposed inherent challenges. As newcomers struggling to adjust to the academic changes in their lives, they were forced to decide whether to spend two hours Saturday afternoon reading for fun or using that time with volunteers like myself to address issues regarding their school work. The reality was that the youth needed to spend that time on their schoolwork. This experience made me think long and hard about the unique challenges confronting youth newcomers, the services that are in place to help address these challenges and the potential gaps that exist within these services – ultimately leading me to the sociology graduate program at Simon Fraser University.

Upon arriving in Vancouver, I began volunteering with a similar youth integration program. One reason for this was to continue to volunteer my time in a meaningful

manner and, in some respect, to fill a void that had been created when I moved. I had grown quite attached to the program and many of the youth that I worked with in Calgary and moving away reified the importance of these relationships. Another factor influencing my decision to continue volunteering with immigrant youth was this project. I had learned during my previous volunteer experience that candid and meaningful relationships with youth require a certain level of trust which isn't simply handed out. Understandably, youth newcomers maintain some reservations towards 'letting people in' – particularly when the person requesting access is a privileged white researcher. I knew that in order to meaningfully access the experiences of youth newcomers for this project, I would need to be more than just a researcher. In this respect, I believe my prior relationship as a volunteer with the youth program helped to develop a certain level of trust between the youth and myself and led to the willingness of the participants to more openly share their stories with me. In addition, engaging with participants across race and resources has required maintaining awareness towards my power and privilege as well as the historical and current realities surrounding discrimination, colonialism, and our economic differences.

Qualitative research involves a continuous process of self-reflection that examines both oneself as researcher and the nature of the research relationship. Taking into account the relations of authority and power between the researcher and participant at every step of the study is essential to building trust and respect on the path to collective discovery (Guruge and Khanlou, 2004). Through the process of self-reflection, a researcher is able to 'bracket' their prejudice and biases in an attempt to be as open and receptive as possible (Hein and Austin, 2001). This is particularly important in research from a position of the hermeneutics of restoration, as the interpretation of the intended meanings is an inherently relational activity. Working with the youth program as a volunteer for nearly a year before engaging in research allowed me to develop trust and rapport, to demonstrate my worthiness and, most importantly, to better situate myself to be *able* to modestly and sincerely understand the meanings inherent in the texts co-produced through the interviews and focus groups.

Methods

The methods employed for this project included a purposive sampling technique in conjunction with a snowball sampling method to select and contact interview participants and semi-structured and open-ended interviews and focus groups to co-construct narratives with the youth about their settlement and integration experiences. Given the focused, yet flexible and informal nature of semi-structure interviews, this method of data collection allowed for themes and ideas to emerge and be followed up on, as well as permitted a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives (Mason, 2006). Focus groups, in addition, presented a valuable approach for sharing and confirming preliminary findings while also eliciting new information. Eder and Fingerson (2002) contend that using focus groups with youth is one of the strongest methods of exploring their own interpretations of their lives. Accordingly, 'group conversations' provide youth with a shared sense of security and allow for participants to engage in discussion comparable to their own 'natural' conversations (Corsaro, 2005). Used together, these methods provided a powerful and informative window into the personal and social realities of the participants.

Recruitment

Recruitment for this project began during October 2015. To recruit participants for the project, I utilized an existing relationship with a supervisor and youth program coordinator from a well-established and reputable settlement organization operating in the lower mainland. The project was advertised at the youth program where the youth were given the opportunity to add their name to a contact list if they were interested in learning more about what the project entailed. Due to my position as a volunteer with this program, my role in the project was not initially advertised. Once the youth had expressed interest, they were contacted and given more information about the study and also encouraged to inform friends and family who had previously participated in the youth integration program. This led to the involvement of 12 first-generation immigrant youth between the ages of thirteen and seventeen and one youth integration program coordinator.

The group of youth participants for this study provides equal representation of gender and embodies a broad range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, effectively mirroring the ethno-cultural realities of immigration in Canada and the clientele that settlement service agencies serve. Table 1 provides further insight into the age, gender, and ethno-cultural background of each participant, as well as the length of time they have been in Canada.

Table 1: Participant Information

Name	Age	Gender	Country of Origin	Years in Canada
Joeski	17	Male	Congo	1
Christel	16	Female	Philippines	1.5
Addy	17	Male	India	2
Lebron	14	Male	Libya	2
Jake	14	Male	Syria	2.5
Christina	15	Female	Iraq	3
Ms. Pirate	17	Female	Afghanistan	3
Ronaldo	14	Male	Iraq	4
Curry	14	Male	Laos	5
Sasha	14	Female	Thailand	6
Erza	14	Female	Iraq	6.5
AA	13	Male	Thailand	8

Note: The names used in this table are pseudonyms

Data Collection

Data collection occurred between October 2015 and January 2016 and adhered to the guidelines for ethical research as presented by the Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Board. For my primary data, I conducted one to one and a half hour open-ended, semi-structured interviews with the youth participants and the program coordinator. In addition, the youth also participated in one of two six-person focus groups (see Appendix F for focus group guide) which ran approximately one hour in length. All the interviews and focus groups were conducted at a public library and participants involved in this project selected pseudonyms in order to protect their confidentiality. It is important to note that by recruiting from a single youth program and employing focus groups, I was unable to guarantee confidentiality amongst the participants. To manage

this, participants were informed of the importance of confidentiality and safe in-group discussion.

For the interviews and focus groups, a general interview guide was used (see Appendix E for interview guide and Appendix F for focus group guide) with questions regarding various aspects of the youth's settlement and integration experience including the process of immigration, life at home and school, participation in the youth integration program, and questions surrounding cultural negotiation and identity formation. However, the conversation-like interviews were not limited to the questions on the guide. In this respect, the guide was used as a framework to address the relevant themes, but space was provided for the youth to elaborate on topics of interest, provide detailed narration, and discuss ideas and experiences which they deemed important. In addition, I also actively participated in the interviews with comments and insight in order to promote a more in-depth discussion. This type of *active* interview is collaborative in nature, allowing for the co-construction of narrative (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995), and aligns with the methodology informing this study.

Data Analysis

All interviews and focus groups were recorded and supplemented by field notes during the data collection. These field notes included commenting on the youth's demeanour during the interviews, as well as my own personal thoughts and questions evoked by the participant's responses. The generated data was then digitalized and uploaded into NVivo – a qualitative data analysis program. This software is a useful tool for organizing and managing qualitative data and allowed me to engage with the data in a much more efficient way. During the transcription process, I began identifying the dominant themes across the interviews. The data was then coded during a more comprehensive analysis according to the predetermined and emergent themes. The predetermined themes were informed by the literature review and included references to language and language acquisition, friends and friendship formation, and cultural negotiation and identity development. It is important to note that despite the wide variation in social characteristics amongst the youth (including cultural and ethnic background, age, gender, and length of time in Canada), this project speaks about the participants as one group. The rationale behind this decision was planned, yet also

intuitive. Firstly, with a sample size of only twelve, making generalization based on the responses of two or three participants from a 'shared social group' simply isn't very meaningful. In addition, despite the social differences throughout the sample, the commonality of their responses necessitated discussion about their experiences as a group. To this effect, the finds of this research suggest that, regardless of the variation in observable social characteristics, the settlement and integration experiences of immigrant youth in the lower mainland are more similar than different. That being said, in a project with a larger sample size it could be of value to extrapolate on how various social characteristics impact immigrant youth settlement and integration.

Ethical Considerations

One of the greatest ethical dilemmas in the hermeneutics of restoration involves representation – being faithful to the meanings of the interviewee. As outlined earlier, the intention behind utilizing this method was to explore, understand, and, ultimately, represent the subjective world of the participants. Conducting research with English language learners required a heightened awareness to the possibility of misunderstanding on my behalf and necessitated a continuous process of validation regarding my supposed understandings. In this respect, I worked with the participants to confirm my understanding of their narratives. This involved not only confirming that they understood the questions being asked, but then also reiterating their responses to the questions and probing for additional insight to confirm the answers.

Beyond the issues regarding representation, conducting research with immigrant youth also presented institutional review board (IRB) implications. In recent times, research with human subjects has undergone a tightening of standards, and research with youth has endured even greater scrutiny (Corsaro, 2005). One important feature for research with youth across review boards in Canada is the requirement of active parental consent. For this project, all participants were required to have their parents/guardians sign a consent form, which, in addition to guarantees of privacy, provided details regarding the research plan and contact information for the Simon Fraser University Review Board and myself.

Summary

This chapter examined the theoretical framework and methodology used in this study. It provided a detailed overview of Giddens' structuration theory and Bhabha's concepts of *cultural hybridity* and the *third space* to demonstrate how such theoretical understandings may be used to investigate the interplay of structure and agency as it relates to the processes of cultural negotiation and identity formation amongst immigrant youth in Canada. Furthermore, this study has been situated within the emergence of a *new* sociology of childhood – focusing on the ways young people produce, reproduce, challenge, and transform the nature of childhood and society (Leonard, 2005). Collectively, these theoretical underpinnings provide a powerful framework for understanding and examining how immigrant youth both *affect* and are *affected by* the worlds they live in.

This chapter also discussed the methodology and research methods that have been employed. This included outlining the theoretical and intuitive value of qualitative research methods for this study and emphasizing the importance of employing methods that allowed for the co-construction of data from the participant's perspective. As discussed, a hermeneutics of restoration was used to interpret the narratives of the participants, co-constructed through *active* interviews and group conversations. This chapter worked to effectively connect the theory and methods used in this study and to demonstrate the applicability of such theory and methods to the study of immigrant youth in Canada. The following chapters provide detailed insight into the immigrant youth experience in Canada, presenting and analyzing the data and situating the findings within the theoretical framework outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 4. Insider Knowledge

Introduction

Research on immigrant youth, particularly as it relates to settlement services, has largely assumed a 'top-down' assessment, with the perspectives of the youth involved in such services surprisingly absent. Immigrant youth are experts in their own socio-cultural realities and, as put forth by Giddens (1984), are *knowledgeable agents* who can discursively explain their motives, decisions, and experiences. Within the theory of structuration, 'discursive consciousness' refers specifically to "what actors are able to say, or to give verbal expression to, about social conditions, including especially the conditions of their own action" (374). To this end, immigrant youth possess firsthand, material knowledge of their social realities – invaluable insider knowledge about the immigrant youth experience. Engaging with this insider knowledge provides a means of accessing the perspectives and nuances of their everyday life experiences in a more intuitive and meaningful manner.

This chapter gives voice to the participants of this study by engaging with the narratives co-constructed with the youth. It offers insight regarding their settlement and integration experiences, the challenges they have and continue to face, and their perceived value of participating in a youth integration program. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the youth integration program. Next, it addresses the most salient settlement and integration challenges brought forth by the youth including language and culture, discrimination, and friendship development. Finally, this chapter considers the youth's perceived value of the youth integration program, exploring the themes of meaningful friendship development, strengthening communication skills, and improving one's sense of self, while also considering some of the challenges the program faces regarding service provision.

The Youth Integration Program

The youth integration program is one of many services provided to immigrant and refugee youth by the settlement service organization it operates within. To protect the confidentiality of the youth, the program and settlement organization will not be disclosed. The organization is one of the 'big four'¹¹ non-profit immigrant serving agencies (ISA) operating in metropolitan Vancouver, offering a wide range of services and programs to the culturally diverse communities of the lower mainland. Within the faculty of services for children and youth, programs range from early childhood outreach to adolescent and young adult programs.

The youth integration program is designed for youth between the ages of thirteen and eighteen and attracts a culturally diverse group. The program consists of three courses, each made up of eight sessions, which run Friday evenings out of an easy-to-access public library. Each session includes between 15 and 30 participants, one program coordinator, and three to four volunteers. The courses provide training in areas such as cross-cultural communication, resume building and interview skills, volunteer experience and leadership workshops, as well as recreational activities and field trips. Guest speakers, staff, and volunteers work together under the guidance of the program coordinator to deliver interactive workshops geared towards the settlement needs of the youth, allowing for participants to develop fundamental skills, meet new people, and gain knowledge about local resources for youth and life in Canada. Beyond this, the program also provides the youth with a certificate upon completion of 8 weeks, a reference letter, and the opportunity to complete their Secondary School designated volunteer hours¹².

¹¹ DIVERSEcity, ISSofBC, MOSAIC, and SUCCESS are considered the 'big four' non-profit immigrant serving agencies (ISAs) in metropolitan Vancouver. While there are dozens of non-profit ISAs in the metropolitan area, these four stand out as particularly comprehensive and significant, receiving a large majority of Federal and Provincial funding, possessing extensive volunteer networks, and housing multiple service sites in the Vancouver region and other parts of British Columbia (Hiebert & Sherrell, 2009)

¹² In British Columbia, Graduation Transitions is a required component of the Graduation Program, and requires students to complete at least 30 hours of work experience and/or volunteer/community service (British Columbia Education and Training, 2016).

Despite these objectives, research on the value of youth integration programs for participants suggests that such programs do not adequately meet the needs of their clients (Ngo 2009). While this 'top-down' analysis of the programs and services available to immigrant youth in Canada provides valuable expert opinion, the work does little to engage with the participants of such services and, consequently, presents a limited and markedly pessimistic assessment. Questions regarding how the program participants understand and evaluate their experiences are completely absent; yet, each week immigrant youth frequent these programs – some for the first time and many as returning clients. Starr, the program coordinator, interprets the eagerness and commitment of the youth attending her program as a clear indication of the program's value:

I think that the biggest tell that they do enjoy the program and that they are getting something from it is the fact that it is supposed to run for eight weeks and shut-down and then start again in 4 to 5 weeks, but that never seems to happen. They always send me messages saying, 'can we come to the library?' I think that is a big thing: it tells me that they are gaining something from this and that they enjoy being in the group.

As the program coordinator's observations suggest, the youths' commitment to the program indicates that the program has some value to them. However, little is known about their subjective experiences within these programs.

The accounts of those on the receiving end of such services are critical to any discussion regarding their value or effectiveness. Such consideration may be even more important within the study of child and youth services, a field of study where the voices and insights of young people have long been undervalued and often overlooked. The *new* sociology of childhood has worked to challenge such deficiencies by emphasizing the importance of engaging more meaningfully with young people through research. A central tenant of this emergent paradigm has been that young people's "social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right, and not just in respect to their social construction by adults" (James and Prout, 1997, 4). This means that children must be understood as actively involved in the construction of their own lives, the lives of their peers, and society at large and necessitates research which allows young people a more direct voice in the production of knowledge concerning them. In alignment with this paradigm, the remainder of this chapter explores the accounts of immigrant youth as

they relate to the challenges they face and their experiences participating in a youth integration program in an attempt to understand their perspectives regarding the value of such programs.

Insider Knowledge about the Challenges

The challenges and obstacles immigrant youth confront are well documented in scholarly literature. By any measure, immigration is one of the most stressful experiences an individual and family can undergo. Immigrants must learn new cultural expectations and a new language, and are required to leave behind material belongings and meaningful social relationships. Immigrant youth, in particular, have little control over their family's decision to immigrate and often leave their relatives, friends, and other significant social ties behind (Suarez-Orozco and Todorova, 2003). Upon arrival, the youth must start a new socialization process; learn new cultural expectations; gain acceptance into new peer groups; and develop new kinds of social competence (Seat and Richards, 1998). Two key challenges are the process of migration as well as the process of settlement and integration.

The Migration Process

Discussing the process of migration with the youth provided an opportunity for the participants to reflect on the experience of leaving home and coming to a new country. Participants responded to questions that explored their thoughts and expectations about what life in Canada would be like. These conversations revealed much about this process from the perspective of the young people involved, exposing the simultaneity of both positive and negative feelings. This ambivalence points to the contradictions, uncertainty, and precariousness experienced by the youth. While many of them described this process as one of opportunity and a largely positive experience they also suggested that it was filled with sacrifice and instability. When asked why their parents decided to come to Canada – and whether or not they wanted to move here – there was consensus around the belief that Canada offered opportunities and, as described by one male participant from Thailand, “a brighter future.” Addy, a seventeen-year-old immigrant from India echoed this notion stating, “it’s a better place to live, a

peaceful country and we can see our future better.” However, this positive outlook was often shared in concert with realizations surrounding the necessity to move and the accompanying sacrifices.

For many of the youth, the process of migration was just as much about *leaving* their home country, as it was about *coming* to Canada. Peyton, a young girl from Afghanistan, explained that her family, “had to kind of run from [their] country,” suggesting that they were “escaping not coming.” This sentiment was shared by more than half of the youth, in particularly those emigrating from places such as Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Rwanda – regions and countries which have and are continuing to deal with conflict as well as social and political unrest. The youth coming from these locales were very much aware of the risks and dangers associated with staying, and took this into consideration when discussing the sacrifices their family made and whether or not they wanted to emigrate. Discussing the sacrifices her parents made, Christina, a fifteen year-old Iraqi immigrant, suggested that, “they made sacrifices but it’s beneficial and non-beneficial. It’s beneficial because there is war and there is danger. But, it’s also non-beneficial because that is where my grandparents live and where we have our house.” Her statement highlights the ambivalence of the migration process for immigrant youth.

All of the youth in this study mentioned the loss of family, friends, and material belongings as a result of migration. When asked if they thought their families made any sacrifices to come to Canada, all of the youth recalled friends and family members who had been left behind, reflecting on family events, dinners, festivals and celebrations spent with those people. Others pointed to the sacrifices their parents made in giving up belongings, jobs, and family businesses. One participant from Iraq suggested that his family “had to give up everything,” and only brought their “clothes to move to Canada because of what happened – what’s happening right now in Syria.” The simultaneity of opportunity and loss inherent in the process of migration, as expressed by the youth, highlights the emotional complexity of this process for young people and the potential for stress and trauma. As noted by Wiese (2010), migration, whether voluntary or forced, independent of its motivation, should be understood as a “stressful and even eventually traumatic event, especially for children and adolescents” (146).

The Settlement and Integration Process

While connected to the process of migration, the challenges and obstacles youth face throughout the settlement and integration process are markedly different. Immigration not only leads to the loss of belongings and important social networks, but upon arrival many immigrant youth also experience alienation and isolation, difficulties in forming cross-ethnic friendships, and limited access to positive role models and mentors (Ngo and Schleifer, 2005). Moreover, this process of (re)socialization often includes encountering societal values that conflict with those at home and exposure to both subtle and overt forms of discrimination. Discussing the obstacles and challenges that the participants have faced since coming to Canada reified these claims, with the youth identifying language and culture, friendship development and discrimination as the most salient issues.

Language and culture are incredibly important aspects of our daily lives. Culture is a product of the human mind and it is defined, propagated, and sustained through language (Kramsch, 1998). Language not only encodes the values and norms in any given society, but it is also the currency through which most social interaction takes place (Fishman, 1972). It should come as no surprise that the youth in this project identified language and, more specifically, language acquisition as one of the greatest obstacles they face. Significantly, all the participants in this study are English language learners, and while 9 of the 12 participants shared received English language training before coming to Canada, none described their English skills as strong or even adequate upon arrival. Further, the youth very much recognized the intimate relationship between language and culture. Christel, a sixteen year-old female from the Philippines explained, “it’s hard to communicate, because you have different languages and different cultures,” drawing attention to the fact that she and other immigrants “grew up in a different country and so when we talk to them [Canadian youth] we don’t really know what they are talking *about*.” Her response highlights the fact that while learning the syntax and semantics of the language is important; it is but one aspect in developing the ability to effectively communicate in a new culture.

Another significant challenge identified by all of the youth was making friends. Developmental psychologists and life-course sociologists have long argued that humans

are social beings driven by a fundamental need to connect with other people. Especially for youth, much importance is attached to belonging, particularly as it relates to peers and functioning peer relationships (Weeks, 1990). However, as mentioned above, the loss of these important relationships is a key sacrifice of migration. When asked about the challenges she has faced since arriving in Canada, Peyton candidly discussed the impact of this loss on her ability to forge new relationships:

The first thing is that I lost my old friends and classmates and relatives. And I didn't get to see them so I was like, I couldn't really recover and I couldn't really make friends. I'm kind of like, when I talk to new people sometimes I feel really shy even just talking to them. Like I see them and they have been together since they were young and they are so together and so into each other – like they have a group.

Peyton's response draws attention to the ways in which, particularly during the settlement period, the loss of friends and family can be debilitating for a newcomer. Her experience of shyness and feeling like an outsider was a common theme mentioned by participants. A number of the youth conceded that the major barrier to making friends in Canada is that Canadian youth already have their friends and aren't interested in "building new ones" (Christina). Christina went on to explain that "it's really complicated and hard to be with people who have known each other ever since elementary and like you just came here."

These feelings of being an outsider – compounded by a lack of confidence in one's ability to speak the language and understand the culture, underline the challenge of making friends for newcomers and often resulted in feelings of diffidence and isolation for participants. Erza, a fourteen year-old immigrant from Iraq, explained how "during the first year I was completely isolated – like no friends at all. Cause I didn't know how to talk to them and I didn't know how they live their lives." Such a statement reinforces the interwoven relationships between language and culture, and demonstrates the significance of language proficiency and cultural understanding for forging new relationships. This lack of knowing the *how* and the *what* forced many of the youth in this study, particularly during the early stages of settlement, to turn inwards, feeling insecure and unwilling to take the risk to talk to and meet new people. As noted by Peyton, "you don't know if you should speak; you don't know if people will laugh at you, you just don't

know. So, I was really shy at first.” She went on to explain that immigrants “really have to think before [they] speak because you never know if you’re saying something wrong and then everyone starts laughing.” The youth’s fear of being laughed at and made fun of because of their inadequate language skills highlights the reality of and desire to avoid experiences of bullying and discrimination.

All of the youth in this study talked about experiencing or witnessing bullying or discrimination after coming to Canada. In research on these topics, bullying and discrimination are often defined differently, where bullying refers to a specific type of physical or emotional aggression intended to harm, occurring repeatedly, and involving an imbalance of power (Nansel, et al., 2001, 2004). Whereas discrimination refers to the differential treatment that individuals receive due to their racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds (Zeman and Bressan, 2006). As these definitions suggest, there are a number of parallels that can be drawn between the experiences of bullying and discrimination. In particular, the notion of an imbalance of power is considered to be integral in both instances. In an examination of Chinese American youths’ perceptions of their non-Asian peers’ views and behaviours towards them, Liang and colleagues (2007) found that non-immigrant youth “discriminate against immigrant youth, who are considered perpetually powerless outsiders” (199). This understanding of power relations is particularly important when considering how immigrant youth navigate their settlement and integration experience – likening their experiences after arrival in some ways to the experiences of the colonized, and as will be elaborated on in chapter 5, is a defining feature of the process of cultural negotiation for newcomers. Hybridity, as explained by Bhabha (1994), is not only a result of these power relations, but also works to subvert the narratives of colonial power or, in this instance, the dominant culture. In this sense, hybridity can be seen as a counter-narrative, providing those occupying this liminal space with a means to defy their powerless status.

For many of the youth, discrimination was most often identified in the form of bullying related to poor language skills and their racial and religious background. Interestingly, despite demonstrating a clear understanding of the concepts of discrimination and racism, the youth were less likely to refer to these experiences as acts of discrimination or racism. Instead, they referred to their experiences involving

discrimination motivated by their ethnicity or immigrant status as bullying. When asked about experiences related to bullying, Christina shared that “a lot of people made fun of my English because it was really horrible and I couldn’t pronounce things right.” Erza too explained that she was bullied because of her inability to speak English, reflecting, “I didn’t know what they were talking about until I got older and then I remember what they were calling me.” Some youth also stated that because of their poor language skills and accents, peers made assumptions about their intelligence. Discussing his experiences as an English language learner at school, Ronaldo, a fourteen year-old male from Iraq, shared that “they make fun of us and say that you are stupid because you are taking ELL. They tell us to go speak more English, to go write and go read.”

More explicit experiences of discrimination as well as an awareness of the systemic social exclusion of the youth and their ethnic communities were also shared by a number of the participants. During one of the focus groups, Joeski, a seventeen year-old boy who emigrated from Rwanda, shared a story involving one of his Muslim friends who wears the hijab, explaining how some of the girls at their school “were telling her that she was ugly and that she should take that [explicit] off.” Another participant recalled a situation where her friend’s locker was vandalized, saying, “some people just wrote on her locker, they scratched the locker saying you are a terrorist, go back.” Sadly, these experiences were quite common for the participants, supporting the assertion that immigrant youth are more likely to be exposed to ethnic and racial discrimination (Zeman and Bressan, 2006). Such experiences are often associated with negative psychological and psychosocial outcomes including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and poor academic outcomes (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003).

Experiences of isolation and discrimination can impact immigrant youth’s perceptions of the new country they find themselves in, as well as create insecurities surrounding their own ethnic identity. While discussing ethnic identity, Christina explained that her mother advised her that “if someone asks, don’t tell them that you are from Iraq or people would say, you know, she’s from that country where there is bad people and ISIS.” Such a statement draws attention to the complex nature of navigating one’s ethnic identity in a country where experiences of discrimination and racism are common. Yet, research shows that youth who are secure about their ethnic identity and

are at the same time comfortable with a larger Canadian identity are the most likely to have positive settlement and integration experiences (Beisier et al. 1999). Such identity formation relies on experiences and relationships that contribute to a positive understanding of one's ethnic culture, and experiences and relationships that also provided insight into the expectations and practices of the dominant culture. However, as the youth identified, the challenges and obstacles they encounter through the processes of migration, and settlement and integration complicate this. Finding spaces where immigrant youth can share and celebrate their ethnic identity and strengthen their understanding of the dominant culture is, thus, important and beneficial for positive cultural negotiation and identity formation, and the settlement and integration process more generally. According to Roffman, Suarez-Orozco and Rhodes (2003), immigrant youth development programs are one such space, and represent an important resource for assisting newcomer's settlement and integration experiences.

Insider Knowledge about the Youth Program

After discussing the challenges the youth have faced through migration and settlement and integration, they were then asked about their experiences participating in the youth integration program. The participants were asked about how they learned about the program, why they decided to join, what they liked and disliked about the program, and how the program influenced their settlement and integration experience. Several major themes emerged through analysis of the individual interviews and focus groups with the youth program being viewed in an overwhelmingly positive light. The themes that surfaced through the analysis included the program's ability to help the youth develop meaningful relationships, strengthen communication skills, and improve their overall sense of self. The following section first discusses how the youth learned about the program and their reasons for joining, followed by a more detailed examination of each of the major themes.

Joining the Program

Of the twelve youth interviewed, all but two made the decision to join the program on their own. For the two that did not, one was made to join by his parents and another

by her peers who were already attending the program. Both suggested that they did not want to join the program at first, but were now happy that they did. For the youth who had made the decision to join on their own, they discovered the program through a number of avenues. The most common avenues for discovery were through family, friends, and their English Language Learning classes at school, where Starr, the program coordinator, through a process she referred to as “pavement pounding,” gained access to the classes and provide a short information session about the program. She explained that the selling point for the program in these information sessions is very much situated around “explaining to the youth how the program can benefit them” in terms of meeting new people, developing important skills, and earning their volunteer hours towards their graduation. Beyond this, Starr conceded that the “other major selling point is the fun stuff – the food and the field trips.”

In response to questions regarding why they decided to join the program, all of the participants discussed the desire to “make new friends” and “meet new people.” Jake, a young boy from Syria, explained how he saw the program as “a really good chance to meet some new people” and that he was “happy to see some new people in [his] life.” This is not surprising given the fact that all of the youth in this study discussed making friends as a major obstacle. Other reasons for joining the program included the free food, having fun, learning about Canada, and developing a portfolio for work and university.

Developing Meaningful Relationships

The idea that the youth program facilitates the process of developing meaningful relationships was by far the most recognizable perceived value by the participants. This is one of the major goals set forth by the program and the driving force behind why most of the youth joined. Within this theme, the notion of *real friends* presented itself as particularly important. For all of the youth, there was a clear distinction made between the types of friends one can have. According to Joeski, “there are friends, best friends, and buddies. And these are all different.” Christina elaborated on this idea, explaining, “there are friends you just say hi to and what’s up, and then there are best friends who

we always tell about what's happening in our lives, we always share our secrets, and who we would do anything for.”

This distinction between the types of friendships one can have is particularly important when considering the challenges associated with forging new friendships. Some of the youth were reluctant to say that they couldn't make friends or that they didn't have friends. In fact, three quarters of the youth suggested that they had many friends and that making friends had become easier for them, particularly as their English skills developed. When asking Jake if making friends was difficult, he said, “not really. Like when I first came to Canada it was like that because I didn't speak English. But when I started to speak English better it wasn't hard for me to find new friends.” However, ‘real friendships’ were more difficult to forge for participants, even after strengthening their English and the initial settlement period.

The most meaningful relationships for participants were described using terms such as best friends, true friends, and real friends. The defining features of this type of friendship for the youth – as outlined by Christina above – included trust, support, disclosure, and reciprocity. This involved the needing to be able to trust, be supported by, and listened to, while also needing to be trusted by, relied upon, and confided in for the relationship to be truly meaningful. Trust, in particular, was identified as the most important aspect of any meaningful friendship. When talking about the friends the youth had made at school, 10 of the 12 participants expressed an uncertainty around trusting their peers:

Well my friends from school – to be honest, to be straight up – I don't trust any of them. (Sasha)

My two best friends are probably the only best friends that I have so far, because I don't really trust in anybody ... because since I came to Canada I made some new friends, but then they – one year later – I talked to them and they said ‘who are you?’ (Erza)

In each of these cases, this lack of trust led to a reluctance to develop meaningful relationships with Canadian-born peers. In contrast, trust was more easily found in other immigrants, and all of the participants identified having meaningful relationships with youth who had also immigrated. When asked about this, the youth

suggested that it was the result of a common understanding through shared experiences. Sasha, a fourteen year-old female from Thailand, provided an explanation of the importance of this shared understanding for the development of meaningful relationships:

From school, like they don't really know what you've been through. So, for me, if I tell my best friend, then we would understand each other more. But if I tell the people from my school – even though they are my friends – they wouldn't really understand. They don't understand the situation you are going through and they don't see what you see. But [other immigrants], we are new here; we've both been through those experiences.

Accordingly, the youth expressed feeling safer and more trusting when making friends with other immigrants who could more readily understand their experiences. In addition, as noted by Curry, a male immigrant from Laos, the youth also articulated a desire and obligation “to protect each other.” Such a statement makes sense when considering that one common experience shared by all the newcomers in this project was that of being bullied and discriminated against. This realization aligns with findings put forth by Tsai (2006), in which she discovered that due to experiences of racism and discrimination, immigrant youth were much more likely to develop meaningful relationships with peers who shared similar racial and ethnic backgrounds. Significantly, by attending the multicultural youth program the youth in this project weren't limited to only finding solace within their racial and ethnic communities. Rather, they were able to forge meaningful relationships with youth from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Access to culturally diverse friends through the youth program was identified by nearly three quarters of the participants as an important aspect of their experience in the program.

Within the study of immigrant youth there is a common argument that successful settlement and integration is often impeded by an over-reliance on support from peers with similar cultural backgrounds (James 1997; Hébert 2006; Ngo 2009). This argument suggests that while intra-ethnic peers are an important resource for helping immigrant youth cope with the challenges they face, these relationships do not afford the youth with important information about the expectations and practices of the dominant culture (Hébert, 2006). This understanding, to some degree, was also expressed by the youth in this study. When discussing the youth program, Christel explained the importance of

moving beyond one's ethnic community for successful integration and highlighted the role the program played in facilitating this:

You have to meet people who are different and who you don't know, and you just have to talk to them. That's what the program does; you get to meet new people. I came here and didn't know anyone and there wasn't even one Filipino person. I was so shy at first, but then I just started to talk to other people and most of them were shy too at first. But it got easier, cause you know those people who are in the program are like the same as you coming from different countries – so you know how they feel in a way.

Her argument encapsulates the perceived value of the program as it relates to meeting new people and developing meaningful relationships.

As the youths' responses suggest, the value of the program for them isn't simply that it facilitates meeting new people; rather, they are able to meet people with common experiences and a shared sense of dislocation and, importantly, people from a wide range of racial and cultural backgrounds. Such relationships not only work to provide youth with the necessary support to adapt, but also, as the youth described, expose them to the multicultural realities of Canada, resulting in a more open-minded understanding of racial and cultural differences. Peyton described how this exposure to a diversity of cultures influenced her:

When I got here I realized that it is more of a multicultural country and I started respecting all the different religions... I want to be a multicultural person. I don't want to say that I am just this culture or that you cannot teach me anything from your culture. I want to be multicultural. I want to learn about every religion and culture and every country and the program does that.

Furthermore, this exposure to cultural diversity within the program and the meaningful intercultural relationships that resulted also seemed to have a positive influence on the youth's perceptions of their own cultural and ethnic identity. This appeared to be the result of participating in a space where ethnic and cultural diversity was expressed and celebrated, rather than a basis for discrimination or bullying.

Strengthening Communication Skills

Communication is arguably the most important skill for new immigrants, and the ability to effectively communicate is a major determinant of successful settlement and integration. Within this theme, the youth submitted that communication is more than just words, suggesting that without a certain amount of cultural knowledge one's understanding of how to speak the language is limited. The participants identified the youth program as a fruitful space to learn about Canadian youth culture, a safe space to learn and practice their English without fear of judgment, and a space to share *their* story. The following section provides insight into each of these aspects regarding how the youth program helps its participants strengthen their communication skills.

The importance of communication for successful settlement and integration, and more specifically language training, is evident in the number of language-based resources available to newcomers. The most prominent resources for language skills and communication development for immigrant youth are managed by the Provincial government and located within the K-12 school system. British Columbia schools have provided English Language Learning (ELL) services for many years, with these services growing in magnitude and complexity over the past three decades to match the increasing numbers of students and shifts in immigration patterns (Lee, 2014). ELL services in British Columbia are designed and implemented to “enable students whose primary language, or languages of the home, are other than English to develop their individual potential within British Columbia’s school system” (BC Government, 2009). The purpose of these services is to assist students to become proficient in English and to achieve the learning outcomes set forth in the provincial curriculum. Depending on the individual’s test-determined language needs, various levels of English language courses are available.¹³ In addition to English specific course, ELL courses for math, social

¹³ For a student to be identified as an English language learner an initial assessment of language proficiency is carried out with subsequent annual assessments being used to ensure the student is receiving the appropriate training. In British Columbia, language course levels include: preliterate, primary, intermediate, and secondary. Each of these levels informs course structure and material in an attempt to best facilitate the language learning process (BC Government, English Language Learning Standards, 2001).

studies, and the sciences are also offered to English language learners in British Columbia.

All of the participants in this study participated in ELL classes, with most still attending language-learning courses in some capacity. Many of the youth shared positive stories regarding their experiences in ELL classes at school, suggesting that these classes were helpful for further developing language proficiency and an important and integral part of their settlement experience. However, the youth noted that language classes alone were not sufficient for strengthening their ability to effectively communicate. Research suggests that this shortcoming is largely the result of ELL curriculum's focus on academic skills development, at the expense of cultural knowledge, the opportunity to use daily spoken English and engagement with English speaking peers (Lee, 2014). The youth's narratives surrounding their ELL experience supports this existing research.

While discussing language acquisition, the youth talked in detail about the idea that communication is *more than words*. In this regard, the youth drew attention to the importance of content and cultural knowledge for effective communication, suggesting that knowing *how* to speak English also requires knowing *what* to talk about. When asked about the challenge of language, Christel explained:

It's not just words; it's hard to know what to talk about too. Like with television for example, like everything that they [Canadian youth] have experienced here in Canada is so different from what we have experienced in our countries. So it's hard to talk about things to them cause we know different things.

For the youth, the integration program provided an opportunity to grow their knowledge about the dominant culture and to learn the nuances of the language of everyday life in Canada. As noted by the program coordinator, exposing the clients to Canadian youth culture and providing them with insight into the practices and expectations of the dominant culture is one of the major objectives of the youth integration program. This was accomplished through content-based instruction which is an approach to learning that contextualizes material through the use of subject matter and various media (including music, video, games, etc.) (Grabe and Stoller, 1997). When asked about what aspects of the youth program were most beneficial, Erza suggested, "talking to the

people in it – the conversations – and learning how to live in Canada with videos and stuff to show us how to blend in.” Content-based learning and being able to engage in simple conversations was reported by 8 of the 12 youth to be important aspects of their youth program experience and integral to strengthening their communication skills. As noted by Peyton, “by communicating I feel like I learn more than just communicating. Like I learn more in conversations rather than just studying and reading books – it’s easier by conversation to learn.” Such statements highlight the importance of content-based language learning and suggest that the process of strengthening one’s communication skills upon arrival in Canada requires engagement in conversations beyond the classroom – which better simulate the reality of language use in everyday life.

However, finding opportunities to engage in such conversations, as already expressed, is difficult for immigrant youth. As many of the youth in this study shared, there is a fear associated with saying something wrong and then being bullied or made fun of because of it. Experiences of this kind were common amongst the participants and resulted in at least half of them choosing silence over the potential risk of making a mistake. Unfortunately, this limited the youth’s engagement in these ever-important conversations. Christel, discussing her friends who do not attend the program, explained that, “they are not able to improve their English because they are scared to talk to people who speak English because they don’t want to be judged.” She went on to assert that joining the youth program helped her become more comfortable speaking with other people: “I was able to be confident with my English, to practice it, to improve it, just by being able to talk to more people.”

Many of the youth offered similar narratives, suggesting that the youth program provides a safe space to converse without fear of judgment. Socializing with other youth, volunteers, and the program coordinator provided the youth with the opportunity to simultaneously deepen their knowledge and understanding of the dominant culture in Canada, while also allowing them to strengthen their English skills. Being in a space where the youth felt safe and comfortable to speak provided more opportunities for them to *share their story*. It has long been argued that the self-disclosure of important personal experiences serves as a basic human motive (Jourard, 1971). For more than

two decades, researchers have been exploring the power of narrative as a therapeutic agent, as well as examining the consequences associated with not talking about important personal life events. This research suggests that holding back or inhibiting one's thoughts and emotions about such experiences, particularly when they are adverse or traumatic, is a form of physiological work that can result in negative physical, emotional, and psychosocial outcomes (Niederhoffer and Pennebaker, 2009). In contrast, being able to communicate these personal experiences through the construction of stories and narratives has been discovered to have remarkable potential in alleviating such effects. Accordingly, disclosing adverse or traumatic events by sharing one's story allows the individual to stop "inhibiting their thoughts and feelings, to begin organizing their thoughts and perhaps finding meaning in their traumas" (ibid, 581). For immigrant youth, talking about the stress and trauma associated with the migration and settlement and integration experience is, thus, an important tool for managing and overcoming these challenges.

The opportunities immigrant youth have to talk about the negative and traumatic experiences borne through the processes of migration and settlement and integration are limited by a lack of meaningful relationships and their English language competence. The youth program provides access to a safe space, creating the possibility for them to share their story. Speaking about the value of the program and the people she has met by attending, Sasha explained:

When I met them and they started to talk to me it was easy to get close and we started being ourselves and telling each other our life stories. And now, it just keeps on happening and going around in circles... I just like the way they, you know, respect me and treat me – the way they show their true selves to me.

Such a statement underlines the importance of being able to share one's story, to reveal their true selves and exposes the ways in which the program is able to facilitate the formation of meaningful relationships.

Improving One's Sense of Self

The final major theme advanced by the youth regarding their perceived value of the youth integration program was the ability of the youth program to improve their overall sense of self through the development of self-confidence and self-esteem. For the purpose of this analysis, sense of one's self includes both self-confidence – the degree to which one values their abilities (Lenney, 1977), and self-esteem – one's inner sense of self-worth (Rosenberg, 1989). While the measurable relationship between self-confidence and self-esteem is somewhat ambiguous, it is clear that both concepts meaningfully contribute to one's overall sense of self¹⁴ and are intimately connected to the challenges immigrant youth face. Self-confidence and self-esteem are recognized as important aspects of youth wellbeing and, for immigrant youth, have been associated with positive settlement and integration experiences (Khanlou, Shakya, Islam, and Oudeh, 2014).

Similar to the findings put forth by Khanlou et al. (2014), the youth in this study also highlighted the importance of self-confidence and a positive sense of self for successful settlement and integration. In fact, three quarters of the participants identified self-confidence as the single most important factor influencing this process. When asked about what advice the youth have for other newcomers, a common response was the need for self-confidence and self-esteem. Some of the responses to this question included:

You have to be confident in this country. Don't feel like you're different... Take on opportunities. Don't be scared to meet new people. Don't be scared to be exposed to different environments. (Christel)

Be comfortable, be proud of yourself. Don't be nervous or shy when you meet people, just go for it. (Lebron)

Don't be afraid, don't be nervous. Just be free ... it's a free country – it's multicultural and open-minded. You don't need to be afraid; you don't need to hide what religion you are. Be confident. (Peyton)

¹⁴ According to Rosenberg (1989), one's overall sense of self or *self-concept* represents the totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings with reference to the self as an object, including self-esteem and self-efficacy.

For many of these participants, they recognized the importance and value of confidence and self-worth due to their own lack of confidence after arrival. All of the participants in this study, to varying degrees, reported experiencing feelings of diffidence and a diminished sense of self as a result of migration. This loss resulted from experiences related to language competency, lack of cultural knowledge and understanding, and a general sense of dislocation through encountering societal values that conflicted with those at home. Further, exposure to both subtle and overt forms of discrimination also negatively affected the youth's sense of self. As noted by Peera (2003), discrimination in particular can have a debilitating effect on immigrant youth and a tremendous impact on their self-perception and self-esteem.

Several youths observed how after they arrived in Canada they became more shy and lost confidence in themselves. As noted by Peyton,

Before I wasn't really shy, but then when I came to Canada I was totally different. I was a completely different person. I was really quiet, sitting in the corner of the class – really shy – and I wouldn't really talk.

Others shared similar experiences, highlighting the important of self-confidence. Being confident is particularly important for developing meaningful relationships and strengthening communication skills. On the other hand, lack of confidence could lead to shyness, which could impede the ability to make friends and strengthen their language skills. As noted by Christel, "you can't be shy here or you won't meet anyone." Similarly, Peyton suggested, "you can't be too shy to say something," reflecting that when she first arrived, "I was too shy to say something and so I didn't meet anyone." Erza explained that her lack of confidence was closely related to her command of the language and limited cultural knowledge: "I wasn't so confident because I was scared that if I say something wrong maybe people will think bad of me." She went on to explain that "in the program everybody was saying the wrong things and so it wasn't as scary if I said something weird – we could laugh together."

It is clear that the youth program not only strengthened the youth's communication skills, but also aided in confidence building and improving the youth's overall sense of self. Importantly, according to half of the participants, this improved

sense of self extended beyond the program, allowing them to be confident in other areas and aspects of their life. During Sasha's interview, she shared a poignant story about an experience in English class where the students were taking turns reading parts of a book. She explained that when it was her turn she decided to "stand in the middle of the classroom" instead of just reading her story sitting down like everyone else. She attributed the confidence required to do this to the program:

The program helps me to be who I am and to just stand up. I got used to that in here and now I've started using it in different places. I used to be alone and so quiet, I used to be isolated, but now I'm outside of the box because of the program. It really helps me and I think that's why now I'm so open and I think that's why I just went up in the middle and started reading.

Sasha's narrative highlights the ways in which the youth program improved her self-confidence, and how this improved sense of self transcended the program.

A number of the participants stated that self-confidence is intimately attached to their sense of self as an ethnic minority. Ethnic identity has long been recognized as a crucial component to the self-concept and well being of ethnic group members (Phinney, 1990). For immigrant youth, successful settlement and integration depends on newcomers feeling secure about their ethnic identity (Besier et al., 1999). Accordingly, the more secure adolescents feel about their ethnic identity, "the more they are able to empathize with peers whose ethnic backgrounds differ from their own, the more likely they are to initiate interethnic contact and the greater their academic achievement" (ibid, 23). However, as the youth in this project have observed, being comfortable and secure about one's ethnic identity in the face of racism, discrimination, and marginalization can be challenging. Erikson (1968), in his seminal book on adolescent identity, pointed out the likelihood that members of an "oppressed and exploited minority" (303), are at risk of internalizing the negative views of the dominant society, and suggested that this could result in negative understandings of their ethnic identity and diminished self-worth. According to the youth, being involved in the program provides temporary relief from some of these more harmful experiences, whilst also working to counteract the impact these experiences may have on the youth's self-concept by improving their self-confidence, self-esteem, and overall sense of self. To this effect, the youth recognized

the program as a safe and positive space where they could connect with other ethnic youth and engage with and explore their ethnic identity.

Program Challenges: Funding, Outreach, and Accessibility

Despite the many benefits identified by the youth regarding the youth integration program, the program is not without its challenges. Discussions with the program coordinator and youth participants regarding these challenges corroborated some of the findings in other research, revealing program funding, and program outreach and accessibility as major obstacles to effective service provision.

Funding

While the organization the youth program operates within is structured like a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), similar to many other major ISAs, it is greatly dependent on funding from the Federal Government. This funding is distributed through a competitive process where the government issues a request for proposals and then ranks the submissions by quality and economic efficiency (Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, 2016). Supplementing this, charity and community foundations including the United Way, the Vancouver Foundation, the Surrey Foundation, and the Red Cross also provide a significant amount of funding for immigrant serving agencies in British Columbia (Hiebert and Sherrell, 2011). Many of these agencies, including the organization engaged with for this project, describe themselves as more knowledgeable, independent, and connected to the community than government organizations (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003). According to the youth program coordinator, government organizations “are out of touch with the reality of what [the clients] are experiencing – the real struggles they are going through.” Unsurprisingly, ISA’s claim to be more effective at providing services to the individuals and communities they serve. However, with funder mandates and highly competitive short-term funding applications, the notion of independence seems dubious. When discussing the influence of funding on organization and program operations, Starr suggested that the organization’s major funders – the Federal Government and United Way – have “their key areas that they want to fund and so the organization kind of has to fix their programs to fit those if they want to receive

that funding.” Such a statement draws attention to the somewhat awkward position that ISAs occupy between government policy and immigrant needs, and the challenges surrounding informed service provision.

Within the Canadian model of settlement services, the Federal Government regulates immigration in a way that necessitates NGO service provision. However, the financial dependency and funding protocols in place effectively situate ISAs as pseudo-subsidiaries of governmental organizations. As noted by Richmond and Shields (2005), one consequence of this framework has been the fostering of a more dependent, contractually based relationship between government funders and community-based organizations. Another consequence, and maybe more concerning, is that this framework requires ISAs to design their services in accordance to government and private funder mandates, rather than with their frontline, community-based knowledge of immigrant needs. According to Ngo (2009), this has resulted in inadequate service provision for immigrant youth. In his study of ISAs and their youth-oriented programs in Vancouver, Toronto, and Calgary, Ngo (2009) revealed that programs for immigrant youth play a small role in service organizations overall service delivery strategy, largely as a result of funding priorities set by the Federal Government. Starr echoed these concerns in her interview, stating that within the organization she works for, the youth program is “looked at as sort of an appendage – it’s just an add-on [and] not very significant.”

Consequently, the funding being directed towards youth services and the youth integration program is limited and as pointed out by Starr, “we can only give them what the money allows us to do.” She went on to explain that while the program does its best to maximize the benefits for those it serves, the current funding does limit the scope of possibilities. As such, funding limitations impact the types of activities and field trips the program can engage with, the supplies and food the program provides, and the amount of time those involved with the program can invest into program development, outreach, and program evaluation.

Outreach and Accessibility

Another major challenge for the youth integration program was that of outreach and program accessibility. When asked how the organization accesses and informs potential clients about the program, Starr revealed an arduous and time-consuming process which often involves encountering a number of barriers. Starr explained that,

Sometimes I have to visit a school 10 to 15 times before they will allow me to talk to one class. I will go there and introduce myself to the Principal and the Vice-Principal and then I will ask to meet with the SWIS (Settlement Workers in Schools) teachers. That's when the gate comes down and they don't want you to go any further.

Accordingly, the schools are hesitant to allow representatives from settlement organizations access to their immigrant students because the schools also offer similar integration programs and would prefer their students to use those services. Starr suggested that, "when someone like myself goes into the schools to inform the youth about the programs we offer, they view me as trying to snatch their clients away because they also have targets to meet." Such a statement corroborates findings in other research which identifies a lack of cooperation and coordination on behalf of the many service providers involved in the lives of immigrant youth (Ngo 2009; Francis and Yan 2016). As revealed by Francis and Yan (2016), a major barrier in service provider cooperation is the competitive request for proposal process. Consequently, this competitive, short-term funding system pits service providers against each other effectively discouraging information-sharing and client referrals and, ultimately, impacts the accessibility of these types of programs for newcomers.

A central hub for immigrant youth is the school system. The school is not only the principal resource for providing direct and indirect support for immigrant youth, but also has the potential to access large numbers of youth newcomers and provide them with information about the various resources available to them within their communities and beyond. Starr highlights this potential, stating, "I have been very lucky, blessed, that I am able to eventually get into some schools. Cause when you get into schools, you're speaking to 20-30 students at a time." Starr explained this to be the most effective way for settlement organization youth programs to engage in outreach. Yet, the competitive

nature of the current funding system greatly limits the possibility of youth learning about these types of programs within the school setting.

Discussing program accessibility with the youth revealed that while three quarters of the youth attending the program learned about the program through the program's school-oriented outreach, a number of the participants also identified knowing friends and other newcomers who did not know about the program. As noted by Erza, "people who are coming to Canada should join these programs, but I think that most of the people haven't heard of them." Christel too suggested that, "the program needs to find ways to tell more people about it. I know lots of new people who will come to the program, but they need to learn about it too." Being new, it is challenging for young people and their support groups (such as parents, family members, and family friends) to know where and how to access these resources. Having a system of service provision that promotes cooperation and information sharing amongst service providers could lead to these types of services and programs being more accessible. However, this needs to start with services being funded better and in a way that facilitates cooperation, rather than competition, amongst service providers.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed overview of the youth integration program examined in this study and the organization it operates within. It also offered insight into the challenges and obstacles immigrant youth confront through the processes of migration and settlement and integration, connecting the youth's narratives to the literature and drawing attention to ways in which these processes are related, but also unique with regard to the challenges and obstacles they effectuate. Finally, this chapter allowed for the youth in this study to share their experiences of joining and participating in the youth integration program to demonstrate the youth are social actors who are capable of making sense of their experiences and their social worlds. This revealed much about the value of the youth integration program for the user and, in doing so, also demonstrated the importance of including the insider knowledge of program participants when conducting research seeking to evaluate such services.

Participating in an integration program aided the youths' settlement and integration experiences in a number of significant and interconnected ways which directly challenge some expert claims regarding these services. The perceived value of the youth program as presented by the participants included the program's ability to help them develop meaningful relationship, strengthen their communications skills, and improve their overall sense of self. By participating in the program, the youth were connected to a diverse group of new people who were dealing with many of the same challenges and obstacles. These shared experiences and common understandings provided the foundation for the development of trust and, subsequently, meaningful relationships. Significantly, the intercultural aspect of the program provided the youth with the opportunity to connect to and engage with individuals outside of their own cultural and ethnic group – a feature of the program which not only engendered open-mindedness towards cultural diversity, but one that also helped the participants feel secure and comfortable with their own ethnic identity. The participants also identified the youth program as an effective space to learn about Canadian youth culture, a safe space to learn and practice their English and a space to share their story – an important and therapeutic element for dealing with and overcoming the traumas associate with immigration. Finally, the youth revealed that participating in the youth program improved their overall sense of self. To this effect, being in a space that allowed them to connect meaningfully to others, strengthen their language skills and cultural knowledge, and celebrate their ethnic identity supported the development of self-confidence and self-esteem. Importantly, the youth shared that this improved sense of self extended beyond the youth program, allowing them to be confident and self-assured in other areas and aspects of their lives.

Chapter 5. A Place to Be, A Place to Become

Introduction

This chapter examines identity formation among the participants, exploring how they manage cultural negotiation while paying particular attention to the ways in which participating in a youth integration program influences their sense of self. Such an analysis requires building on the youth's perceived value of the youth integration program, while also considering the youth program in relation to the other dominant spaces the youth inhabit: the home and school environments.

The chapter begins by providing an understanding of the identity formation process of youth and considers how this differs for newcomers. Then it explores the idea of cultural negotiation, engaging with themes related to the youth's changing self, the idea of becoming Canadian but not too Canadian, and identity management through self-presentation. Each theme is considered in relation to both the school and home environments. Finally, the chapter examines how the youth integration program facilitates cultural negotiation and identity formation, drawing attention to the idea that the youth program provides a space where the youth can be themselves, but also a space where the youth, through positive engagement with all aspects of their changing identities, can effectively become something else. To this effect, the youth described the program as a space that helps to cultivate their hybrid identities by allowing them to explore and express the significant aspects of both their heritage culture and the dominant culture which together inform their changing sense of self.

Identity Formation in Youth

According to Erikson's (1968) theory of psychosocial development, identity is the "more or less actually attained but forever to be revised sense of self within social reality"

(221). While recognizing that the identity process is a life-long undertaking, Erikson (1968) emphasizes the development of a sense of identity as the key task of what he describes as the 'crisis of adolescence.' It is during this time in one's life when the dilemmas of independence, sexuality, and the future take on new meaning, and young people make choices and realizations which begin to form a sense of their inner core – an identity that is distinct from that of parents, backgrounds and ascribed roles but in other ways also includes them (Goodenow and Espin, 1993). A successful resolution of the identity formation period results in a coherent sense of self which includes those aspects subjectively felt to be important and one which makes sense and fits into the larger society (Erikson, 1968). While identity provides one with a stable core to their individuality, it is also about "belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others" and "social relationships, your complex involvements with others" (Weeks, 1990, 88). However, as put forth by Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001), the formulation of an identity that 'makes sense' and 'fits into' the larger society can be problematic when considering what this means in an increasingly heterogeneous world.

In Canada, where pluralism is enshrined in state policy and difference has come to be considered inherently valuable (Hébert, 2006), youth undertake the task of identity formation amidst multiple social and cultural contexts¹⁵. Research that accounts for the influence of social, cultural and environmental contexts on identity development is described by Swanson, Spencer, and Petersen (1998) as the ecological perspective and situates "individuals as active agents in a series of interrelated systems" (21). Accordingly, identity development is the result of behaviours and beliefs that reflect an active, selective, and structuring orientation toward the various contexts one encounters. Ecological factors that influence identity formation can include ethnicity and cultural stereotypes; family and home life; and school experiences and peer relations. As this implies, consideration of prevailing belief systems is also crucial for understanding the interaction between an individual and the environment (ibid).

¹⁵ Such a statement does not dispute the reality that a dominant culture is present – even within the diversity found across Canada there are shared-in-common and mutually endorsed expectations; rather, that a plurality of social and cultural contexts can and do inform the identity formation process.

For immigrant youth who come to Canada from countries with markedly different belief systems, the ecological perspective to understanding identity development seems appropriately modeled to best understand and explain their experiences. Such a perspective reveals the ways in which the environmental context or “social structures and conditions” (Swanson, Spencer, and Petersen, 1998, 21) provides relevant experiences that interact with the individual to produce unique behaviour, revealing that the individual has the ability to select, modify and reconstruct the environment. This understanding signifies the interplay between structure and agency and closely aligns with Giddens’ notion of the ‘duality of structure’ (1984), which submits that social structures are always both constraining and enabling. Furthermore, the idea that the individual is capable of ‘producing *unique* behaviour’ supports the possibility of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994) – the forging of new ways of being through the acceptance and rejections of aspects of both the heritage culture(s) and the dominant culture.

Identity Formation in Immigrant Youth

It has long been recognized that the processes of migration, and settlement and integration affect the inner world of the immigrant, greatly influencing their sense of self and the identity formation process (Zubida, Lavi, Harper, Nakash and Shoshani, 2013). Immigrant youth, by definition, exist between the margins of two (or more) cultures (Suarez-Orozco, 2000). They are a product of the cultural influences which inform their beliefs, values and behaviours before migration and, as members of the host country, they are also influenced by the social and cultural contexts they encounter in their new home. Consequently, the task of identity formation may be more challenging for them. In conjunction with the usual challenges of adolescence, immigrant youth face the challenge of integrating different sets of cultural demands, must manage conflicting interpersonal expectations, and deal with marginalization and discrimination (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee and Morrise, 2002). Therefore, developing a coherent sense of self is more complex for immigrant youth – many of whom are often seeking to belong both to their own ethnic group and to groups within the dominant culture (Rumbaut, 2005). According to Ngo and Schleifer (2005), during their cultural adjustment, immigrant youth often experience cognitive and emotional changes due to their changing environments and “many struggle to achieve a positive cultural identity as they deal with community

values that may conflict with those at home” (29). This final point draws attention to the complex and often contentious nature surrounding the dominant spaces immigrant youth occupy.

Research suggests that immigrant youth have two major areas in their lives: the private sphere, which includes family and home life, and the public sphere, which includes school, friends, and community life (Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban, 1999). Within the private sphere, they develop and are socialized into familial and ethnic communities through the language, values and norms from the country of origin. However, at the same time their experiences in the public sphere emphasize the language, values and norms of the dominant culture which can include negative attitudes about their ethnic or cultural identity (see discussion in previous chapter). For immigrant youth these conflicting social contexts form the landscape in which they attempt to develop a meaningful sense of self.

Situated within at least two cultural worlds, immigrant youth define themselves in relation to these competing reference groups, drawing on and incorporating aspects of both the host and heritage contexts (Rumbaut, 1994). Engaging with the narratives of the youth in this study revealed that the youth have agency in this process derived from what Desai and Subramanian (2003) identify as “a dual consciousness” – a sense of an active and conscious role in creating a new culture that encompasses select aspects of the competing cultures. Within this liminal space, *the third space* (Bhabha, 1994), immigrant youth move towards and away from the heritage culture and, similarly, towards and away from the dominant culture – a process of cultural negotiation which allows for the development of hybrid identities through the construction of new forms of cultural meaning and representation.

Cultural Negotiation and Identity Formation

The culture in which one lives plays a significant role in shaping their sense of self, since it is the “system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artifacts that members of a [shared culture] use to cope with one another and with their world” (Bates and Plog, 1990, 466). A major facet of the individual’s self-identity is that they

belong to a certain cultural group and this provides the structure for relationships among members while simultaneously helping them to make meaning of the physical world (Lewis and Ippen, 2004). When individuals move from one culture to another many aspects of their identity are forced into question and, consequently, modified to accommodate the practices and expectations of the new culture they encounter. This process, generally referred to as *acculturation*¹⁶, involves changes that take place as a result of continuous and direct contact between individuals having different cultural backgrounds and may be observed in one's attitudes, behaviours, values, and their overall sense of identity (Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus, 2000).

Historically, researchers have understood acculturation through uni-dimensional models based on the assumption that change in cultural identity happens along a single continuum. Accordingly, individuals were thought to relinquish the attitudes, values, and behaviours of their heritage culture while simultaneously adopting those of the new dominant culture (ibid). More recently, it has become apparent that acculturation can be better understood when heritage and dominant cultural identities are seen as being relatively independent of one another (Berry, 1997). Individuals may adopt certain aspects of the dominant culture while rejecting others, while simultaneously maintaining and rejecting certain aspects of their heritage culture. Thus, the process of acculturation for newcomers requires the individual to negotiate which aspects to retain and value, which to modify and which to leave behind. Discussing the challenges immigrant youth face, Starr emphasized this struggle as “the internal pull and push that they are feeling with being, staying true to their home culture and also staying true to the Canadian culture, and finding their own voice and being able to express themselves.” As this suggests, the youth adapt, adopt, and negotiate their identities amidst a number of contextual factors which influence this process including: family and home life, school experiences, and peer relations.

¹⁶ Acculturation was first defined by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) as “those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups” (149). However, while acculturation is considered a neutral term in principle, as noted by Berry (1990), in practice acculturation tends to induce more changes in one of the groups than the other.

Three major themes emerged in this study through analysis of the youth narratives regarding cultural negotiation and identity formation. These include the youth's sense of a changing self, the idea of becoming Canadian but not too Canadian, and recognition of the need for identity management through self-presentation. Each of these themes will now be considered in relation to the contextual factors of family and home life, school experiences, and peer relations which are so instrumental to the processes of cultural negotiation and identity formation.

The Changing Self

All of the participants in this study identified feeling as though they had changed and were continuing to change as a result of migration. This is unsurprising as the participants represent a diverse group coming from countries that are markedly different from Canada. In all cases, the youth suggested that their country of origin and Canada were significantly different, drawing attention to changes in nearly all facets of life. As noted collectively by the youth during one of the focus groups, "everything in Canada is different."

For the youth, encountering cultural difference mainly occurred in the public sphere and school environment. Working to 'fit in' to their new school environments, the participants emphasized the obstacle of learning to communicate in a new language, but also pointed to the challenges of learning and taking on certain aspects of the dominant culture including clothing, music preferences, everyday uses of language, and social attitudes towards matters such as cultural diversity, authority figures, and gender relations. Christina, discussing her astonishment and disbelief when she first saw a boy and girl hugging at school, encapsulates the magnitude of these changes: "I was like oh my god, are they serious. They shouldn't do that, and at school!" She went on to explain that while growing up in Iraq and Syria behaviour such as that was unthinkable. The exposure to these seemingly mundane, yet often-drastic cultural differences through daily interactions with teachers, counsellors, and peers within the school environment was noted by the youth as a powerful force behind their changing selves. Christel drew attention to this, suggesting, "it's hard when you're at school, not to be influenced by the people who are born here and who are already influenced by the Canadian culture." As

Christel's statement highlights, the school environment has the potential to exert a strong influence on immigrant youth as they spend a significant amount of time in this setting engaging with the dominant culture. The youth also noted that this 'influence-through-exposure' was compounded by parental pressure to succeed academically and their own desire to fit in.

Immigrant youth are often pressured to succeed academically, with parents placing emphasis on the sacrifices they have made to safeguard the success of the next generation (Horton, 2008) – a reality many of the youth in this project were aware of. The youth's ability to be successful at school and to achieve their academic and future goals is, in many ways, dependent on their engagement with the dominant Canadian culture:

It is helpful for some things and it will be really helpful for the future – to be able to understand. Cause I'm going to take something in the Sciences at university. So, this means that I have to communicate with more people, which means communicating with people of the Canadian culture. (Christel)

Half of the participants in this study provided similar narratives regarding their parent's desire for them to perform well at school, with most also suggesting that their ability to perform well academically was dependent on their ability to align their attitudes and behaviours with the dominant culture. This claim by the youth corroborates findings in the literature which suggest that the Canadian school system has and continues to struggle to accommodate their differences and needs (Anisef and Kilbride, 2003).

Beyond needing to change one's self in order to succeed academically, the youth also acknowledged changing themselves to fit in. The importance of fitting in or belonging has long been recognized as an integral aspect of the youth experience and, more recently, has emerged as a central issue in the immigrant youth experience (Yuval-Davis, 2006). According to Tilleczek (2011), "belonging is a fundamental social process having to do with fitting in, finding one's sense of place, and feeling some sense of integration into the social worlds that are important to young people" (144). As this suggests, aspirations for belonging are fundamentally social and lead to a sense of inclusion or exclusion (Wainwright and Marandet, 2011). Within the school setting, this

means that not ascribing to the norms, practices, and expectations of the dominant culture can lead to exclusion and hinder full participation in this realm. Equally, engaging with and taking on certain aspects of the dominant culture can act as an important bridge to inclusion. As Erza explains:

Most people coming into Canada, they're really attached to what they were, but then they see people who are very different from them. So, then they try to do what the other people are doing by copying them, so they can fit in. This makes it easier to be a part of it.

Her response suggests youth are forced to make decisions about what aspects of their heritage culture to downplay or reject and what aspects of the dominant culture to take on. Christina also drew attention to this process, stating, "I definitely tried to fit in by acting like them [Canadian youth]." For her, this meant speaking English and using Canadian youth slang, hanging out with certain people, and listening to the *right* music and wearing the *right* clothes. As these narratives indicate, the youth have a desire to fit in, but also encounter peer pressure and fears of being socially excluded if they do not conform. For the large majority of the youth, making these changes towards the dominant culture allowed them to meet new people, helped them feel more comfortable and included at school, and supported their academic success. These findings align with research which suggests that a positive mainstream Canadian cultural orientation is related to greater life satisfaction for immigrant youth within the public sphere (Paterson & Hakim-Larson, 2012).

However, while these changes help to cultivate a sense of belonging at school, the youth also recognize that certain changes in themselves could have adverse effects within the home environment. As noted by Christel, this is the result of changes that challenge or contradict the practices and expectations of the heritage culture:

We are expected to actually be able to live within the Canadian culture, but that's actually making it hard for us to maintain our own culture. Like being obedient to my mom is getting lesser and lesser. I am being one of those Canadians who actually answers back to their parents, which is a problem for me because I wasn't like that before. I was really sweet to my parents and I couldn't ever be disobedient.

Changes to the self as a result of exposure to the dominant Canadian youth culture can create problems in other areas of the youth's lives. For 9 of the 12 participants, this resulted in conflict with parents at home regarding autonomy and authority, and strained parent-child relations. This was expressed by the youth as the result of a clash between the heritage and dominant cultures being played out in the home setting. These differences in cultural practices and expectations at school and home pose unique challenges for immigrant youth as they navigate culture negotiation and identity formation. Starr, the program coordinator, provided insight on this issue during her interview:

I know that [the youth] have identified the idea of trying to embrace the Canadian culture and also still staying true to their original culture, their home culture. There is a lot of difficulty there because when they act Canadian [in quotation marks], their parents are looking at it as them being a sell-out. But, they feel they need to be homogenous with the rest of the youth and then at home they are trying to maintain their culture, but of course they are learning new things and they are bringing these new things home – and their parents are not liking it.

Starr's statement sheds light on the ways in which the youth receive mixed and often contentious messages regarding how they are supposed to behave. Immigrant youth are required to take on aspects of the dominant culture in order to fit in at school, develop a sense of belonging, avoid exclusion, and to succeed academically. However, as Starr notes, acculturation towards the dominant culture can disrupt and challenge parent-child relations at home – where they are often expected to acculturate, but only to a certain extent.

Becoming Canadian But Not Too Canadian

Discussing the participant's experiences in the school setting revealed how this space is a potent force for acculturation towards the dominant culture. Conversely, the home is where cultural affinity is strongly reinforced. The youth were encouraged by their parents to engage with Canadian culture *as necessary* in the public sphere, while simultaneously expected to continue adhering to the cultural expectations and practices of their heritage culture. Sasha's insight regarding these expectations highlights this point: "my parents, they just want us to be successful and to succeed, but not to become

too Canadian.” Similarly, Christel stated, “my mom said she doesn’t want us to *really* get the Canadian culture, she wants us to maintain the Filipino culture in ourselves.” Thus, while accepting that Canada was their new home, the majority of the youth’s parents – according to the youth – felt that their children should retain their cultural heritage.

The continued socialization of immigrant youth into the values, beliefs, and behaviours of the heritage culture is a process referred to as *enculturation* and, according to Paterson and Hakim-Larson (2011), is important for the development of one’s ethnic identity. The significance of enculturation within the home environment for the development of one’s ethnic identity is even more apparent when considering the ethnic identity challenges present at school. As noted previously, all of the participants in this study encountered racism and discrimination at school. According to Suarez-Orozco (2000), negative attitudes of the host culture towards the immigrant can take the form of ethnic identity threats. These experiences can be embodied by immigrant youth through processes of negative social mirroring¹⁷, resulting in a suppressed ethnic identity or despondent attitudes towards one’s heritage culture. As suggested by Suarez-Orozco (2000), “[w]hen the reflection is generally negative, it is extremely difficult to maintain an unblemished sense of self-worth” (213). Significantly, the idea of negative social mirroring indicates that for youth, their sense of self is greatly shaped by the reflections mirrored to them by significant others. Thus, cultural maintenance within the home setting serves an important function in counteracting the negative social attitudes the youth confront outside of the home. Cultural affinity was maintained at home through the use of the heritage language(s), engagement with cultural practices and expectations, and involvement with cultural and ethnic networks.

For all of the participants their heritage language was the primary language used at home, with nearly half sharing that they weren’t allowed to speak English. As noted by Christel, “at home we can’t speak English, we have to speak our language.” Ronaldo too explained that, “my parents don’t want me to speak English at home.” When asked why

¹⁷ Social mirroring is the process by which humans depend upon the reflection of themselves mirrored back to them by others to develop a sense of self (see Cooley’s *The Looking Glass Self*) (McIntyre 2006). Negative social mirroring involves being exposed to negative perceptions of one’s self by others and internalizing these messages.

this was the case, the majority of the youth recognized the connection between the use of heritage language and maintenance of culture, drawing attention to their parent's concerns around the potential loss of heritage language and culture. Discussing this with AA, he explained "it's been difficult for my parents because my younger brothers are losing the Burmese language, and my parents don't speak English very well." In fact, half of the youth commented that a major reason why they are required to speak their native language at home is because of their parent's lack of English language proficiency. Of the twelve participants interviewed, less than one third described their parent's English skills as strong, with most disclosing that their parents, while being able to understand some English, struggle to converse fluently.

Enculturation also occurred in the home setting through engagement with cultural practices and expectations and involvement with the cultural community. Music, dance, clothing, movies, television, food, faith, and the celebration of cultural festivals were various means by which the youth engage with the heritage culture at home. Their parents continue to hold the youth to the cultural values, norms, and expectations that defined their lives before coming to Canada. These expectations were situated around being conservative in dress and demeanour, respecting authority figures and elders, and maintaining a strong affinity to one's faith. Christel acknowledged that being conservative, religious, and respectful of one's elders are important aspects of her Filipino culture and explained how her mother maintains these expectations within the home setting:

She said you can't wear those clothes that are too exposing, she said you have to eat rice, you have to eat the food that is of our tradition. You have to be able to respect your elders. You can't be rude to them. Even though we speak English, we have to speak Tagalog at home and with our elders. We can't choose and even if we speak in English we have to say Oh or Bo.

Her comments illustrate how the expectations of the heritage culture are maintained, while also highlighting the possibility for conflict. As outline earlier, certain aspects of the dominant youth culture directly challenge these heritage culture expectations.

Being involved with their cultural community is also an important means of enculturation. Going to cultural events, attending culturally sited Faith Centres, and celebrating important cultural festivals were some of the activities the youth mentioned:

Because we are Muslim we have the Eid celebration. So, we celebrate it here – we go to restaurants, we buy new clothes. We basically do what people do in Muslim countries, but we do it here. And we have other family friends that are also Muslim, so sometimes we visit each other. We would visit the families that we know in Eid. (Erza)

According to Tummala-Narra (2015), these spaces provide immigrant youth with the opportunity for *refuelling* – “the ability to access physical and psychological spaces where [they] can comfortably speak the heritage language and engage in heritage customs and traditions” (p.224). For Ronaldo, being able to interact with other Iraqi youth at such events was important for him. He notes, “when I speak to them I feel really happy because they are my only friends who speak Arabic ... so I feel really open about it, like ok finally someone who speaks the same as me and it’s not my parents.” Thus, while negative messages about the heritage culture can result in internalizing these attitudes about one’s self and their heritage culture regular interaction with one’s ethnic community can have the opposite effect, helping to development and maintain a positive ethnic identity.

The idea of becoming Canadian but not too Canadian reveals how complex cultural negotiation can be for immigrant youth. It draws attention to the very culturally distinct and often contentious practices and expectations which are maintained in the home environment. The process of enculturation within the home setting is an important tool for protecting the youth’s self-worth and promoting a positive cultural identity, but it can also present unique challenges as the youth begin to take on various aspects of the dominant culture that contradict their heritage culture. Acculturation towards the dominant culture was identified by many of the youth as a source of tension with their parents. While many of the youth’s parents encouraged them to understand and adopt certain aspects of the dominant culture, they also expressed concern with the idea of their children becoming too Canadian.

For the youth, the maintenance of their heritage culture was very important to them but engagement with the dominant culture was also a welcomed and necessary reality. As noted earlier, failure to conform to the dominant culture could result in academic difficulty and exclusion in the school environment. Yet, this move towards the dominant culture could also be a source of friction in the home setting if parents interpreted the youth's changes in thinking and practices as becoming too Western. In the face of these contradictory and often combative experiences, the youth in this project expressed devising self-presentation strategies in order to cope with and live up to their parent's expectations in the home environment, whilst also employing certain strategies within the school environment to manage the expectations placed on them by the dominant culture.

Identity Management Through Self-Presentation

Self-presentation is behaviour that attempts to communicate information about oneself or some image of oneself to others (Goffman, 1959). More specifically, self-presentation refers to the way in which individuals influence the perception of their image and is most often employed during face-to-face interaction. According to Baumeister and Hutton (1987), these behaviours are driven by motivations that depend on situational factors and are "activated by the evaluative presence of other people and by others' (even potential) knowledge of one's behaviour" (71). Thus, while motivations are considered, in part, established dispositions of individuals, they are also largely predicated on the audience being engaged. As this suggests, self-presentational motivations can be the result of wanting to please the audience or a process of self-construction. Self-construction refers to matching one's self-presentation to one's own ideal self. Conversely, pleasing the audience refers to behaviours which match one's self-presentation to the audience's expectations and preferences (ibid). As such, through various self-presentation strategies an individual is able to reveal or conceal certain aspects of their self in an attempt to manage other's perceptions of their identity. These behaviours are likely to vary across different contexts given that the composition of the audience and their preferences shape the individual's choices (ibid, 72).

For immigrant youth, the key tensions they must manage are the different cultural practices and expectations in the home and school. In both contexts, the youth's inability or inhibition to successfully align with the expectations of those around them could result in negative consequences. Many youth employed self-presentation strategies as a means of mitigating and minimizing the potential consequences of not conforming. Joeski comments, "It depends where I am. If I am home, I can't behave how I behave at school. If I'm at school, then I will act more Canadian. But if I'm home I have a way to act too." In order to please their audiences, immigrant youth will manage their identities to achieve this outcome. The youth identified employing a number of self-presentation strategies including self-disclosure, managing appearance and actions, and ingratiation.

Self-disclosure refers to revealing or concealing information about one's self and was a strategy most often employed by the youth in the school setting. For example, half the youth did not reveal their immigration status to the people they encountered at school. As noted by AA, "I never do." Sasha too explained, "no – well I wait until I know the person," and Joeski added, "it depends, if you are interested and I can see it in your eyes, then I can tell you anything, but it depends on the person." For these youth, concealing their immigration status highlights their acknowledgement that there may be risks associated with sharing this information. Their experiences of bullying and discrimination associated with their 'otherness' as an immigrant have taught them the need to avoid the potential consequences of revealing too much at school. Beyond their immigration status, the youth also withhold other information about themselves and their backgrounds at school. Sasha provided insight as to why:

They [Canadian youth] don't know how it feels to come from – maybe they grew up in a lovely place where they have enough love to share, but we didn't and then if you even tell them that then they will start thinking about it. Then somebody will say like I feel sad for her or she needs help.

Fear that their peers may not understand their experiences as an immigrant and lead to an unwanted perception about their circumstance influence how much information the youth are prepared to share.

Another strategy that the youth employ to manage their self-presentation involves changing their physical appearance and engaging with behaviour that conforms to the audience's expectations. Many of the youth will change their style of dress and behaviours as a means of fitting in at school, while also trying to minimize conflicts at home. Starr recalls a conversation with one of the male participants regarding his choice of clothing:

And I remember one boy in particular who asked me, 'why don't my parents understand that I can't wear the long Muslim-style dress when I'm at school and going out with my friends because they will laugh at me? When I tell my parents they will laugh at me they think I'm trying to not be Muslim – but that's not the way young people dress here.'

Managing these competing expectations involved the young boy wearing the Muslim-style dress at home to appease his parents, and often changing out of the traditional dress once he had left the home to better fit in at school. While not all the youth indicated they engaged in this form of self-presentation management, all of the participants did share having to alter – in some capacity – their dress and behaviour in each environment in order to fit in.

Finally, the youth also acknowledged employing ingratiation¹⁸ as another important self-presentation strategy. Broadly, this involves conforming one's values, beliefs, and ideals to the expectations of others, and is particularly important when considering cultural negotiation and cultural tensions as the cultures the youth exist across have varying values, beliefs and ideals. More specifically, the youth referred to conforming with the values of the dominant youth culture at school and the values of the heritage culture at home even when privately, their own beliefs and values were undergoing a process of change and no longer neatly aligned with those at home or school. As such, more than half of the youth revealed that they were culturally "different people" in each space. As noted by Sasha, "I feel like I have two personalities – like one

¹⁸ Ingratiation was first conceptualized by social psychologist Edward E. Jones (1964) as a psychological technique in which an individual attempts to influence, manipulate or control another by becoming more attractive or likeable to their target. Within self-presentation theory, this involves individuals emphasizing their own attitudes and behaviours which align with those of target individual or audience.

that's in school and one that is when I'm at home." At home, the youth would limit their discussions about dating culture, changes regarding their faith and, more generally, changes involving autonomy and individuality, to avoid conflict and please their parents. Christel explained,

At home, I feel like I'm not myself. It's like I'm acting as a different person. I feel like I'm acting more at home 'cause it's like I have to be this perfect person and follow all these rules at home and then I also can't tell them how I always feel. Cause they don't know right – it's different to be a teen here than in the Philippines.

This statement highlights the need to "act" a certain way at home to meet their parent's cultural expectations – expectations which the youth identified as out of touch and at odds with the dominant Canadian culture.

Similarly, a number of the youth also remarked that a similar strategy took place at school. For one participant from Iraq, this meant playing along with the 'terrorist stereotype.' He shared, "I just wanna take the joke from them right. If I don't play along with the joke then I will feel bad about myself. But, if I go along with it then people will laugh and think I like this guy and I like his jokes." He went on to explain that those types of jokes used to upset him, but that being upset "didn't do anything." In order to mitigate and minimize the potential tensions associated with being an Iraqi immigrant in the Western world, this youth employed a strategy of aligning his attitude – or at least creating the perception of alignment – with that of the audience in the school setting. Such findings substantiate research which submits that individuals often use different identity management strategies to cope with threatened identities (Niens and Cairns, 2002).

Exploring the ways in which immigrant youth manage their identities through various self-presentation strategies is significant for this project for two reasons. First, revealing the ways in which the participants manage their identities across varying contexts reifies the idea that identities are fluid, articulated, and negotiated aspects of the individual. There is a certain amount of flexibility in the youth's self-presentation, exemplified through how they chose to perform their identities in various spaces. This understanding of identity is an important precursor for the possibility of cultural hybridity

and recognizes the interplay between structure and agency in the lives of the actors. Identities are not simply imposed on and located within the individual, but are negotiated and articulated in social interactions that take form in cultural spaces. Hall (1995) refers to these spaces as 'cultural fields,' and uses this notion to stress the situational aspect of identities:

The practices in a cultural field both reproduce and create cultural expectations for bodily gestures and dress, for appropriate manners and signs of respect between the generations and sexes, as well as the cultural knowledge people use to interpret social interactions. (253)

Accordingly, the shift in practices and expectations from one social context to the next allows immigrant youth to 'play' with their cultural identities while they negotiate which aspects of each culture are most important to them, and which are most important to those they are interacting with.

Secondly, the need for self-presentation strategies also suggests that within both the school and home environments the youth are forced to conceal and suppress certain and important aspects of their changing cultural *selves*. In neither space do the youth feel as though they can express the full range of their changing cultural identities. Yet, they are creating a new sense of self – hybrid identities which encompass aspects of both the dominant and heritage cultures. One of the few spaces available to the youth to enact all aspects of their changing cultural selves is in the youth integration program. The youth described the youth program as a space where they could *be* themselves, but also a space where they could effectively *become* something different.

A Place to Be, A Place to Become

Immigrant youth, like other youth, live their everyday lives *being* who they are now. Yet, they are also engaged in an ongoing process of *becoming*. The process of being one's self in everyday life consists of "living in the moment of time and living outside or across time into the future" (Tilleczek, 2011, 11). Tilleczek (2011) explains that *being* involves forging identities through daily negotiations at school, home, community, and in the company of friends and significant others. In addition, the state of

being is also a representation of one's past. The current state one occupies is necessarily and intimately connected to their history and life experiences leading up to present time. Young people need to be valued and understood for who they are *now* and "require places to simply be and belong" (ibid,11). For immigrant youth, this means being able to express and engage with the aspects of their *selves* which defined their lives before migration, but also being able to engage with the aspects of their *selves* which have become significant since their arrival in Canada. As this suggests, immigrant youth are also in a state of *becoming*. This sense of becoming is not in reference to the process of becoming a young adult or a more biologically mature self, although like all adolescents, immigrant youth also experience these changes. Rather, this state of *becoming* refers to the significant cultural changes occurring in their lives and in their *selves*, as a result of the process of cultural negotiation.

Upon arriving in Canada, immigrant youth are confronted with the task of negotiating what aspects of the dominant culture they wish to accept and take on and, simultaneously, must make decisions about what aspects of the heritage culture they wish to maintain and which they wish to reject. It is through this cultural negotiation that immigrant youth forge their new cultural hybrid identities, effectively *becoming* something different from when they arrived. Importantly, the youth are not making these decisions in a vacuum. As highlighted throughout the youth's narratives regarding the different spaces they frequent, context and the resulting interactions have the potential to greatly influence the cultural negotiation process. In addition, the tensions experienced in these spaces also required the youth to manage and abate various aspects of their changing selves. This task of managing one's cultural identity across these spaces was recognized by the youth as not only inconvenient at times, but also quite cumbersome. As noted by Peyton,

The thing is you have to kind of act like this and that. Like at school, you get judged right. Like I have lots of friends there and people like me, but it still happens. And then at home your parents are always kind of watching you. It can be exhausting.

Her comments regarding the task of identity management highlights the involvedness of this process for immigrant youth, while also revealing that within these spaces the youth lack the opportunity to be what they envisage as their true selves. As shared by Christel,

“me doing that made me realize that I feel like I’m not myself, it’s like I’m acting as a different person.”

Significantly, when asking the youth where in their lives they felt they could truly be themselves, an overwhelming majority cited the youth integration program. Peyton adds, “when you come here [the youth program] it’s different... you can just come to the program and kind of be yourself.” Christel concurs:

At home you have to talk in your language and you can’t really tell your parents everything. And then at school you have to kind of act another way too. Like you can’t really act like you act at home right. But then at the program, like no one is going to judge you here. You can make mistakes and no one really cares.

The youth program is unique insofar as it provides a safe space where the participants are able to simultaneously engage with the aspects of both the dominant and heritage culture that are important to them and their changing sense of self. Such an environment is important not only because it provides relief from the other settings which require constant identity management, but also in that it fosters the development of the youth’s changing hybrid identities. As Starr observes,

I think [the program] gives the children a space where they can actually be themselves. And themselves, in that they no longer have to walk that mid-line. They can be themselves in expressing the aspects of the Canadian culture that they have absorbed and they can be themselves in expressing the culture of origin that is still important to them and that they still subscribe to. And I think that a space like this youth program allows them to do that mainly because they come here and realize that they are not the only one who is dealing with this. There are other people dealing with this and that gives them permission to express both cultures without being judged and without feeling judged because everybody at the program is dealing with it.

Being in a setting with others who are experiencing similar challenges is important for immigrant youth. It allows them to connect to others with shared experiences and a common understanding of what it is like to be an immigrant in Canada and this shared understanding, as revealed in the previous chapter, provides the foundation for the development of meaningful relationships and self-confidence. Thus, the youth program

plays an important role in helping to develop positive immigrant youth identities by acting as a space where the youth can *be*, but also a space where they can *become*.

Summary

Immigration has significant effects on identity formation in youth. For immigrant youth, identity formation is an active process that involves the assessment of both the new culture and the one left behind, the selective adoption of aspects of each culture, and mourning for what has been lost (Goodenow and Espin, 1993). This process requires the youth to make choices about which aspects of each culture to retain and value, which to modify or discard, and requires that they manage these aspects across varying contexts. Accordingly, the most constructive view of immigrant youth identities “must admit both the ideological reality of categories and the flexibility of identities... to demonstrate how youth negotiate cultural identities in a variety of contexts” (Bucholtz, 2002, 544). Such an understanding of identity, while building on Erikson’s (1968) psychosocial model, goes beyond this model by emphasizing the youth experience as more than developmental. Doing so reveals the nuances and intricacies of being a ‘youth,’ while also bringing attention to the ways in which young people’s experiences and social and cultural practices shape their worlds.

Speaking with the participants revealed that the youth participate in and create different cultural forms as they move towards and away from certain aspects of the dominant culture, and simultaneously towards and away from certain aspects of the heritage culture. This ‘double movement’ produces identities that are “never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices, and positions” (Hall, 1996, 4). As revealed by the youth, various structural forces influenced and impressed their process of cultural negotiation. However, the youth also expressed a certain amount of ‘flexibility’ regarding the significance of such forces. To this effect, the youth made active choices regarding which aspects of each culture they wished to align with and managed these aspects of their identity depending on the context in which they were situated. According to Bhabha (1994), this understanding of identity allows for sites to continuously open for re-expression, negotiation and, ultimately, cultural change resulting in new hybrid identities. These

identities, encompassing select aspects of the youth's cultural experiences, are "*neither One nor the Other but something else besides, which contests the terms and territories of both*" (Bhabha, 1994, 41). Significantly, within the youth integration program – a space the youth described as one where they could be themselves – these hybrid identities were encouraged and, as a result, better cultivated.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

This final section provides a summary of the findings, discusses the implications for research and service provision, identifies the project's limitations, and considers future research on this topic. I conclude that youth integration programs, while not without their challenges, are an important resource for youth newcomers. Such programs provide a strong support for the settlement and integration of newcomers, while also aiding in immigrant youths' cultural negotiation and identity formation.

Summary

Immigrant youth are confronted with a myriad of complex and interrelated challenges throughout the processes of migration and settlement and integration. Of these challenges, the youth in this study identified language and culture, discrimination, and friendship development as the most salient issues. Beyond this, the youth also acknowledged being confronted with the challenge of negotiating their cultural identity. This research project highlights immigrant youth's efforts at working towards a coherent sense of self through the reconciliation of two separate cultural existences – negotiating the social norms and behaviours of the dominant culture in Canada while also attempting to maintain aspects of their heritage culture. This process involved managing their attitudes and behaviours with the expectations of family and community members as well as their peers and teachers at school. A variety of self-presentation strategies were used by the youth to help mitigating and minimizing the potential conflicts. At times, doing so involved concealing and suppressing certain and important aspects of their changing cultural selves.

There were many advantages for the youth participating in the youth integration program. First, it was a place where they could be themselves. They described the program as a space where they could develop meaningful relationships, strengthen their

communication skills, and improve their overall sense of self. Second, the program allowed them to connect to a diverse group of new people who were dealing with many of the same challenges and obstacles. These shared experiences and common understandings provided the foundation for the development of trust and, subsequently, meaningful relationships. Moreover, program participants came from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and gave the youth an opportunity to learn about new cultures while also building confidence in their own ethnic identity. Finally, the participants also identified the youth program as an effective space to learn about Canadian youth culture, to practice their English language skills and a space to share their stories of immigration and settlement.

This research began with the question: what are the experiences of immigrant youth participating in youth integration programs? Although I could have approached this question in a variety of ways, I chose to do so through a qualitative analysis, employing *active* semi-structured interviews and group conversations with the program participants as a means of capturing their narratives. This method of collection allowed for themes and ideas to emerge and be followed up upon, as well as permitted a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives. In doing so, this project provided access to the subjective experiences of those on the receiving end of such services, while also demonstrating the interplay of structure and agency within their lives, particularly as it relates to cultural negotiation. This revealed that immigrant youth are not simply passive individuals being acted upon by the structural forces they encounter. Rather, they are knowledgeable agents who understand and assess their circumstances and act in such a way as to achieve desired outcomes within the framework of their conditions. As such, they both reproduce social practices and patterns which give meaning to their actions, while also being able to challenge and transform them. Their ability to challenge and transform the social practices and patterns in their lives was evident in their creation of hybrid cultural identities – identities informed by the self-perceived significant aspects of both their heritage culture and the dominant culture they are now a part of.

Implications for Research and Service Provision

Youth integration programs represent one of the most common services available to young newcomers in Canada, yet little research has been conducted, particularly where the voices of youth are included. Evaluations of these programs that have foregone the inclusion of youth opinions have resulted in predominantly negative assessments. According to Ngo (2009), when examining the scope of services provided by youth-oriented programs in Canada, such programs do not adequately “pay attention to deeper issues, such as formation of cultural identity, acculturative gaps, and trauma,” or “help immigrant youth to deal with racism and discrimination,” and “fail to support young immigrants to develop critical insights into their politically, socially, and culturally situated realities” (p.89). The findings of this research challenge these negative evaluations by demonstrating the value of these programs. It also reinforces the knowledge gap that exists due to the lack of scholarly research on programming for immigrant youth. However, this research does support previous studies highlighting the shortfalls of service delivery for immigrant youth. In particular, issues involving funding, outreach, and program accessibility were all identified as major challenges confronting service provision.

Recommendations

It is evident that in order to maximize the benefits of youth services for newcomers these services need to be better funded and in a way that facilitates cooperation amongst service providers. This would require funders to provide resources that facilitate co-operative approaches amongst organizations, rather than a zero-sum approach. This could promote better coordination and information sharing amongst service providers and, ultimately, a more integrated and instrumental system of services to meet the multifaceted needs of immigrant youth in Canada. Services and programs could become more accessible for young newcomers as service providers would be working together to ensure the best possible outcomes. Furthermore, this collaboration needs to extend beyond settlement service organizations to include government and the education system. As revealed in this work, all of these institutions impact and influence the lives of immigrant youth. As such, they engage in a shared responsibility in assisting

young newcomer's settlement and integration. The more collaboration which occurs across these institutions, the greater the likelihood of positive settlement and integration experiences.

With regard to the function of youth integration programs, the findings of this study suggest that such services should consult with their clients on regular and ongoing basis to better understand the client's needs and to address service provision shortcomings. By seeking consultation, service providers can access an up-to-date, appropriate, and well-defined understanding of the perceived needs of their clients, while also engaging in an ongoing evaluation of their ability to meet those needs. Through this consultation, service providers could supplement their knowledge and understanding of their client's needs with client expertise. Such a methodology could support the development of more effective services, while also helping service providers avoid *prescribing* needs and services to newcomers.

Limitations of the Project

As with all research, there were limitations to this project. In particular, the nature of sampling and engagement with only one youth integration program affected the reliability and generalizability of the findings. Immigrant youth are a diverse group, and settlement organizations and youth integration programs, while sharing similar general objectives, vary in how they provide their services. For these reasons, drawing on such a small sample of youth, all of whom participated in the same youth integration program raises important questions regarding whether or not – and to what extent – these findings would be replicated with different youth participating in different youth programs.

In addition to these more general limitations, this study also encountered more specific challenges. This study involved conducting cross-cultural research with participants who lacked fluent English language skills. Doing cross-cultural research necessitates the acquisition of cultural knowledge of the social group(s) that one wishes to learn from (Laimputtong, 2010) and, with the employment of interviews and focus groups, careful consideration regarding *how* questions are asked. Dunbar et al. (2003)

states that researchers must not only ask culturally sensitive questions, but must also “ask questions in a culturally relevant and explicit manner” (146). Questions must be formulated in such a way as to allow for participants to fully understand and appreciate them and even then participants may have difficulty articulating their experiences in English. Throughout the data collection process words and ideas needed to be clarified often and the final point regarding articulation became most apparent when asking questions about identity. Although great care and consideration went into planning the interview and focus group questions, this lack of understanding on behalf of the participants did present itself. Further, the cultural and linguistic challenges also impacted my own understanding, raising important ethical questions regarding collection and interpretation of the data. Yet, while there were these limitations, much was learned in this process – both in terms of the research findings and in terms of the methodology.

Future Research

There are several areas of research that can be developed from this thesis. As noted, there is limited research examining youth settlement service and, more specifically, youth integration programs. Research targeting these services and programs can provide important insight into the immigrant youth experience in Canada, while also contributing to the development of culturally responsive and youth-relevant services. Extending from this study, research involving interviews, case studies, and focus groups which engage all stakeholders (policy-makers, funders, service agency management, program coordinators, volunteers, parents and youth), could offer a more comprehensive understanding of immigrant youth service provision.

Future research can also consider conducting a similar study which employs methods of data collection that minimize cultural and linguistic challenges. Tilleczeck (2011) notes art-based, biographical, and narrative methods of data collection as effective tools for exploring the identity and subjective experience of young people. Art-based methods in particular may offer an effective means to accessing the experiences of immigrant youth who may lack the language skills necessary to fully express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

Finally, future research can consider a comparative approach by examining multiple youth programs operating within the same region or across regions. Through a comparative analysis at the regional level, research could provide important insight into the systems and applications which either promote or limit effective service provision. At the interregional level, a comparative analysis could work to illuminate the varying challenges confronting youth and youth service provision across Canada's diverse social landscape, while also drawing attention to the role of provincial policy in immigrant youth settlement service provision.

Concluding Remarks

Immigration is fundamental to the fabric of Canadian society and to the development of Canada's national identity, culture, and future economy. Canada has long been thought of as a *land of immigrants*, and strives to be a world leader at maximizing its benefits. The realization of this goal is largely predicated on the successful settlement and integration of the immigrant population into Canadian society. For young newcomers, this means having a clear and comprehensive understanding of the issues and challenges confronting them and employing this understanding to develop and provide relevant and effective services. Such an understanding necessitates the inclusion of young peoples voices.

This project set out with the aim of providing space in the literature for immigrant youth to share their settlement and integration experiences. In doing so, this study confirmed, challenged, and extended earlier research on the settlement and integration experiences of immigrant youth to Canada. In particular, it demonstrated the importance of engaging with the subjective experiences of service users when examining the value of immigrant services. In the case of immigrant youth integration programs, these services have generally received negative assessments in the limited research which has been conducted on them. However, as the findings in this study indicate, youth integration programs are an important and powerful resource aiding immigrant youth settlement and integration even though these programs are not without their flaws. There is a need for more attention to be placed on immigrant youth services and

programs with the intention of developing a better understanding of the benefits and shortcomings of these vital resources.

References

- Abu-Laban, Sharon M., and Baha Abu-Laban. (1999). Teens Between: The Public and Private Spheres of Arab-Canadian Adolescents. In Suleiman, Michael W. (Ed.) *Arabs in America: Building a New Future* (pp.113-128). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Ackermann, Andreas. (2012). Cultural Hybridity: Between Metaphor and Empiricism. In Stockhammer, Philipp Wolfgang (Ed.) *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach* (pp.5-23). Heidelberg: Springer.
- Ambert, Ann-Marie. (1986). Sociology of Sociology: The Place of Children in North American Sociology. In Adler, Patricia and Paul Adler (Eds.) *Sociological Studies of Child Development* Vol.1 (pp.11-31). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Anisef, Paul and Mary Bunch. (1994). *Learning and Sociological Profiles of Canadian High School Students, An overview of 15 to 18 Year Olds and the Educational Policy Implications for Dropouts, Exceptional Students, Employed Students and Native Youth*. Lewiston: The Edward Mellon Press.
- Anisef, Paul and Kenise Murphy Kilbride. (2003). *Managing Two Worlds: The Experiences & Concerns of Immigrant Youth in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.
- Bates, Daniel G., and Fred Plog (1990). *Cultural Anthropology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Baumeister, Roy F., and Debra G. Hutton. (1987). "Self-Presentation Theory: Self-construction and Audience Pleasing." In Mullen, Brian, and George R. Goethals (Eds.) *Theories of Group Behavior* (pp.71-87). New York: Springer.
- Beiser, Morton, Angela Shik, and Monika Curyk. (1999). *New Canadian Children and Youth Study: Literature Review*. Toronto: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS).
http://canada.metropolis.net/pdfs/CI_article_e.pdf
- Beiser, Morton and Gary Edwards. (1994). "Mental Health of Immigrants and Refugees." *New Directions for Mental Health Services* 61 Spring 1994: 73-86.
- Beiser, Morton, Dion R, Gotowiec A, Hyman I, and Vu N. (1995). "Immigrant and Refugee Children in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 40(2): 67-72.

[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1558-4453](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1558-4453)

- Benet-Martínez, Verónica, Janxin Ley, Fiona Lee, and Michael W. Morris. (2002). "Negotiating Biculturalism Cultural Frame Switching in Biculturals with Oppositional versus Compatible Cultural Identities." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 33 (5): 492-516
- Berry, John W. (1990). Acculturation and Adaptation: A General Framework. In Holtzman, Wayne H. and Thomas H. Bornemann (Eds.) *Mental Health of Immigrants and Refugees* (pp.90-102). Austin, TX: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health.
- Berry, John W. (1997). "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation." *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 46: 5-68.
- Berry, John W. (2005). "Acculturation: Living Successfully in two Cultures." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29: 697-712.
- Berry, John W., Jean S. Phinney, David L. Sam, and Paul Vedder. (2006). "Immigrant Youth: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation." *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 55(3): 303-332.
- Bhabha, Homi K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Bhabha, Homi K. (1996). Culture's In-between. In Hall, Stuart and Paul Du Gay (Eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp.53-60). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Biles, John, and Lara Winnemore. (2006). "Canada's Two-Way Street Integration Model Without Its Stains, Strains and Growing Pains." *Canadian Diversity/ Diversité Canadienne* 5 (1) Winter 2006: 47-66.
- Blauner, Robert. (1987). Colonized and Immigrant Minorities. In Takaki, Ronald (Ed.) *From Different Shores: Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America* (pp.149-160). London: Oxford University Press.
- British Columbia Education and Training. (2016). *Work Experience or Community Service Requirement for Graduation*.
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/work-experience-or-community-service-requirement-for-graduation> (January 4, 2017).
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2001). *English Language Learning Standards*.
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/english-language-learners/standards.pdf> (January 4, 2017)

- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2009). *English as a Second Language: Policy and Guidelines*. <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/esl/policy/guidelines.pdf> (January 4, 2017)
- Bruner, Jerome. (1987). "Life as Narrative." *Social Research* 54(1): 11-32.
- Bucholtz, Mary. (2002). "Youth and Cultural Practices." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31: 525-552.
- Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR). (1998). *Best Settlement Practices: Settlement Services for Refugees and Immigrants in Canada*. Ottawa: CCR.
- Chan, Wing Yi., and Dina Birman. (2009). "Cross-and Same-race Friendships of Vietnamese Immigrant Adolescents: A Focus on Acculturation and School Diversity." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33:313-324.
- Citizenship and Immigration. (2016). *Report on Plans and Priorities 2016-2017*. Ottawa. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/rpp/2016-2017/> (October 11, 2016).
- Citizenship and Immigration. (2016). *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada*. Ottawa. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.cfm> (October 8, 2016).
- Collier, Patricia V. (1989). "How Long? A Synthesis of Research on Academic Achievement in a Second Language." *TESOL Quarterly* 23(3): 509-531.
- Corak, Miles. (2011). Age at Immigration and the Education Outcomes of Children. Analytical Studies Branch: *Statistics Canada*. Ottawa.
- Corsaro, William A. (2005). *The Sociology of Childhood*. California: Pine Forge Press.
- Costigan, Catherine L., Josephine M. Hua, and Tina F. Su. (2010). "Living Up to Expectations: The Strength and Challenges Experienced by Chinese Canadian Students." *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 25(3): 223-245.
- Cummins, Jim. (1994). Knowledge, Power and Identity in Teaching English as a Second Language. In F. Genesee (Ed.), *Educating Second Language Children*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Cummins, Jim, Rania Mirza, and Saskai Stille. (2012). "English Language Learners in Canadian Schools: Emerging Directions for School Based Policies." *TESL Canadian Journal/Revue TESL Du Canada* 29(6): 25-48.

- Dalton, James H., Maurice J. Elias, and Abraham Wandersman. (2001). *Community Psychology: Linking Individuals and Communities*. Belmont, C.A.: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Damon, William, and Daniel Hart. (1988). *Self-Understanding in Childhood and Adolescence*. Cambridge University Press.
- Derwing, Tracey, Emilie DeCroy, Julia Ichikawa, and Kama Jamieson. (1999). "Some Factors That Affect the Success of ESL High School Students." *Canadian Modern Language Review* 55(4): 532-547.
- Desai, Sabra and Sangeeta Subramanian. (2003). Color, Culture, and Dual Consciousness: Issued Identified by South Asian Immigrant Youth in the Greater Toronto Area. In Anisef, Paul and Kenise Murphy Kilbride (Eds.) *Managing Two Worlds: The Experiences & Concerns of Immigrant Youth in Ontario* (pp.118-161). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.
- Dunbar Jr., Christopher, Dalia Rodriguez, and Laurence Parker. (2003). "Race, Subjective and the Interview Process." In Holstein, James and Jaber F. Gubrium (Eds.) *The Inside Interviewing: New Lenses, New Concerns* (pp.111-130). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Eder, Donna, and Laura Fingerson. (2002). "Interviewing Children and Adolescents." *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method* 1: 181-203.
- Erikson, Erik H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Erol Işık, Nuran. (2015). "The Role of Narrative Methods in Sociology: Stories as a Powerful Tool to Understand Individual and Society." *Journal of Sociological Research* 18(1): 103-125.
- Evans, Bryan, and John Shields. (2014). "Nonprofit Engagement with Provincial Policy Officials: The Case of NGO Policy Voice in Canadian Immigrant Settlement Services." *Policy and Society* 33: 117-127.
- Fine, Michelle, and Selcuk R. Sirin. (2007). "Theorizing Hyphenated Selves: Researching Youth Development In and Across Contentious Political Contexts." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 1(1): 16-38.
- Fishman, Joshua A. (1972). *Language in Sociocultural Change*. Vol. 6. Stanford University Press.
- Francis, Jenny, and Miu-Chung Yan. (2016). "Bridging the Gaps: Access to Formal Support Services among Young African Immigrants and Refugees in Metro Vancouver." *Canadian Ethnic Studies/ Études ethniques au Canada* 48 (1): 77-100

- Giddens, Anthony. (1979). *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (Vol. 241). University of California Press.
- Giddens, Anthony. (1984). *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. University of California Press.
- Goffman, Erving. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Every Day Life*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Goodenow, Carol, and Oliva M. Espin. (1993). "Identity Choices in Immigrant Adolescent Females." *Adolescence* 28(109): 173-184.
- Grabe, William, and Fredricka L. Stoller. (1997). Content-based Instruction: Research Foundations. In Stryker, Stephen B., and Betty Lou Learer (Eds.) *Content-based Instruction in Foreign Language Education* (pp.5-21). Georgetown University Press.
- Granovetter, Mark S. (1973). "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78: 1360-1380.
- Guardado, Martin. (2006). "Engaging Language and Cultural Spaces: Latin American Parents' Reflections on Language Loss and Maintenance in Vancouver." *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics (CJAL)* 9(1): 51-72.
- Guruge, Sepali, and Nazilla Khanlou. 2004. "Intersectionalities of Influence: Researching the Health of Immigrant and Refugee Women." *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research (CJNR)* 36(3): 32-47.
- Hall, Kathleen. (1995). There's a Time to Act English and a Time to Act Indian: The Politics of Identity Among British-Sikh Teenagers. In Stephens, Sharon (Ed.) *Children and the Politics of Culture* (pp.243-264). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hall, Stuart. (1996). Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'? In Hall, Stuart and Paul du Gay (Eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp.1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hartup, Willard W. (1993). "Adolescents and their Friends." *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 60: 3-22.
- Hébert, Yvonne. (2006). Transculturalism among Canadian Youth: Focus on Strategic Competence and Social Capital. In Hoerder, Dirk, Yvonne Hébert, and Irina Schmitt (Eds) *Negotiating Transcultural Lives: Belonging and Social Capital among Youth in Comparative Perspective* (pp.103-128). Toronto: University of Toronto Press Inc.

- Hein, Serge F., and Wendy J. Austin. 2001. "Empirical and Hermeneutic Approaches to Phenomenological Research in Psychology: A Comparison." *Psychological Methods* 6(1): 3-17.
- Hicks, Ruthann, Richard N. Lalonde and Debra Pepler. (1993). "Psychosocial Considerations in the Mental Health of Immigrant and Refugee Children." *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health* 12(2): 71-87.
- Hiebert, Daniel. (1998). The Changing Social Geography of Immigrant Settlement in Vancouver. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM)*.
- Hiebert, Daniel, and Kathy Sherrell. (2009). *The Integration and Inclusion of Newcomers in British Columbia*. Metropolis British Columbia, Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity.
- Hoerder, Dirk, Yvonne Hébert, and Irina Schmitt (Eds). (2006). *Negotiating Transcultural Lives: Belonging and Social Capital among Youth in Comparative Perspective*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press Inc.
- Holstein, James A., and Jaber F. Gubrium. (1995). *The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications.
- Horenczyk, Gabriel, and Moshe Tatar. (1998). "Friendship Expectations among Immigrant Adolescents and their Host Peers." *Journal of Adolescence* 21(1): 69-82.
- Horton, Sarah. (2008). "Consuming Childhood: "Lost" and "Ideal" Childhoods as a Motivation for Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 81(4): 925-943.
- Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada. (2016). Settlement Services Funding. Ottawa. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/grants-contributions-funding/> (January 25, 2017).
- Janzen, Rick and Joanna Ochocka. (2003). Immigrant Youth in Waterloo Region. In Anisef, Paul and Kenise Murphy Kilbride (Eds.) *Managing Two Worlds: The Experiences & Concerns of Immigrant Youth in Ontario* (pp.37-68). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.
- Jones, Edward E. (1964). *Ingratiation: A Social Psychological Analysis*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Josselson, Ruthellen. (2004). "The Hermeneutics of Faith and The Hermeneutics of Suspicion." *Narrative Inquiry* 14(1): 1-28.
- Jourard, Sidney M. (1971). *Self-disclosure: An Experimental Analysis of the Transparent Self*. New York: Wiley-Interscience.

- Khanlou, Nazilla, Yogendra B. Shakya, Farah Islam, and Emma Oudeh. (2014). "Newcomer Youth Self-Esteem: A Community-Based Mixed Methods Study of Afghan, Columbian, Sudanese and Tamil Youth in Toronto, Canada." In Simich, Laura and Lisa Andermann (Eds.) *Refuge and Resilience* (pp. 109-129). Netherlands: Springer.
- Kraidy, Marwan. (2005). *Hybridity or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Temple University Press.
- Kramsch, Claire. (1998). *Language and Culture*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, Yeonjung (Judy). (2012). "The Absence of ESL Students' Voices in Education." *SFU Educational Review* 1(1): 1-15.
- Lenney, Ellen. (1977). "Women's Self-Confidence in Achievement Settings." *Psychological Bulletin* 84(1): 1-13.
- Leonard, Madeleine. (2005). "Children, Childhood and Social Capital: Exploring the Links." *Sociology* 39(4): 605-622.
- Leung, Constant, Roxy Harris, and Ben Rampton. (1997). "The Idealised Native Speaker, Reified Ethnicities, and Classroom Realities." *TESOL Quarterly* 31(3), Language and Identity, Autumn 1997: 543-560.
- Lewis, Marva L., and Chandra Ghosh Ippen. (2004). Rainbows of Tears, Souls Full of Hope: Cultural Issues Related to Young Children and Trauma. In Osofsky, Joy D. (Ed.) *Young Children and Trauma: Intervention and Treatment* (pp.11-46). Guilford Press.
- Li, Jun. (2009). Forging the Future Between Two Different Worlds: Recent Chinese Immigrant Adolescents Tell their Cross-Cultural Experiences. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 24(4): 477-504
- Li, Peter S. (2003). *Destination Canada: Immigration Debates and Issues*. Oxford University Press.
- Liamputtong, Pranee. (2010). *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*. Cambridge University Press.
- Liang, Belle, Jennifer M. Grossman, and Makiko Deguchi. (2007). "Chinese American Middle School Youths' Experiences of Discrimination and Stereotyping." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 4(1-2): 187-205.
- Mason, Jennifer. (2006). *Qualitative Research* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications.

- Masten, Ann S., Karmela Liebkind, and Donald J. Hernandez. (2012). *Realizing the Potential of Immigrant Youth*. Cambridge University Press.
- McIntyre, Lisa. (2006). *The Practical Skeptic: Core Concepts in Sociology*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Morland, Lyn, Julianne Duncan, Joyce Hoebing, Juanita Kirschke, and Laura Schmidt. (2005). "Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services: A Case of Cross-Service Training." *Child Welfare* 134(5): 791-812.
- Nansel, Tonja R., Mary Overpeck, Ramani S. Pilla, W. June Ruan, Bruce Simons-Morton, and Peter Scheidt. (2001). "Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment." *Jama* 285(16): 2094-2100.
- Niederhoffer, Kate G., and James W. Pennebaker. (2009). Sharing One's Story: On the Benefits of Writing or Talking about Emotional Experience. In Lopez, Shane J. and C.R. Snyder (Eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology II* (pp.621-632). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Niens, Ulrike, and Ed Cairns. (2002). "Identity Management Strategies in Northern Ireland." *The Journal of Social Psychology* 142(3): 371-380.
- Ngo, Bic. (2008). "Beyond "Culture Clash" Understandings of Immigrant Experiences." *Theory into Practice* 47(1): 4-11.
- Ngo, Hieu Van. (2009). "Patchwork, Sidelining, and Marginalization: Services for Immigrant Youth." *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* 7 (1): 82-100.
- Ngo, Hieu Van, and Barbara Schleifer. (2005). "Immigrant Children and Youth in Focus." *Canadian Issues*. Spring 2005: 29-33.
- Omidvar, Ratna, and Ted Richmond. (2003). *Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion in Canada*. Toronto: The Laidlaw Foundation.
- Paterson, Ashley, D., and Julie Hakim-Larson. (2012). "Arab Youth in Canada: Acculturation, Enculturation, Social Support and Life Satisfaction." *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* 40 (4): 206-215.
- Peera, Rishma. (2003). Employment Needs of Newcomer Youth in West End Ottawa. In Anisef, Paul and Kenise Murphy Kilbride (Eds.) *Managing Two Worlds: The Experiences and Concerns of Immigrant Youth in Ontario* (pp.65-95). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Phinney, Jean S. (1990). "Ethnic identity in Adolescents and Adults: Review of Research." *Psychological Bulletin* 108(3): 499-514.

- Phinney, Jean S. (1996). "Understanding Ethnic Diversity: The Role of Ethnic Identity." *American Behavioral Scientist* 40(2):143-152.
- Phinney, Jean S. (2006). Ethnic Identity Exploration in Emerging Adulthood. In Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen and Jennifer Lynn Tanner (Eds.) *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century* (pp.117-134). Washington: American Psychological Association.
- Prout, Alan. (2011). "Taking a Step Away from Modernity: reconsidering the new sociology of childhood." *Global Studies of Childhood* 1(1): 4-14.
- Prout, Alan, and Allison James. (1997). "A New Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood? Provenance, Promise and Problems." *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood* 2. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Redfield, Robert, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits. (1936). Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation. *American Anthropologist* 38: 149-152.
- Richmond, Ted, and John Shields. (2005). "NGO-Government Relations and Immigrant Services: Contradictions and Challenges." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 6(3/4): 513-526.
- Ricoeur, Paul. (1991). *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II* (K. Blamey & JB Thompson, Trans.). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Roffman, Jennifer G., Carola Suarez-Orozco, and Jean E. Rhodes. (2003). Facilitating positive development in immigrant youth. In Perkins, Borden, Keith, Hoppe-Rooney & Villarruel (Eds.) *Community Youth Development: Programs, Policies, and Practices* (pp.90-117). London: Sage Publications.
- Rosenberg, Morris. (1989). *Society and the Adolescent Self-Image*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Rumbaut, Ruben G. (1994). "The Crucible Within: Ethnic Identity, Self-Esteem, and Segmented Assimilation among Children of Immigrants." *International Migration Review* 28(4): 748-794.
- Rumbaut, Ruben G. (2005). "Turning Points in the Transition to Adulthood: Determinants of Educational Attainment, Incarceration, and Early Childbearing among Children of Immigrants." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(6): 1041-1086.
- Rutherford, Jonathan (1990). *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

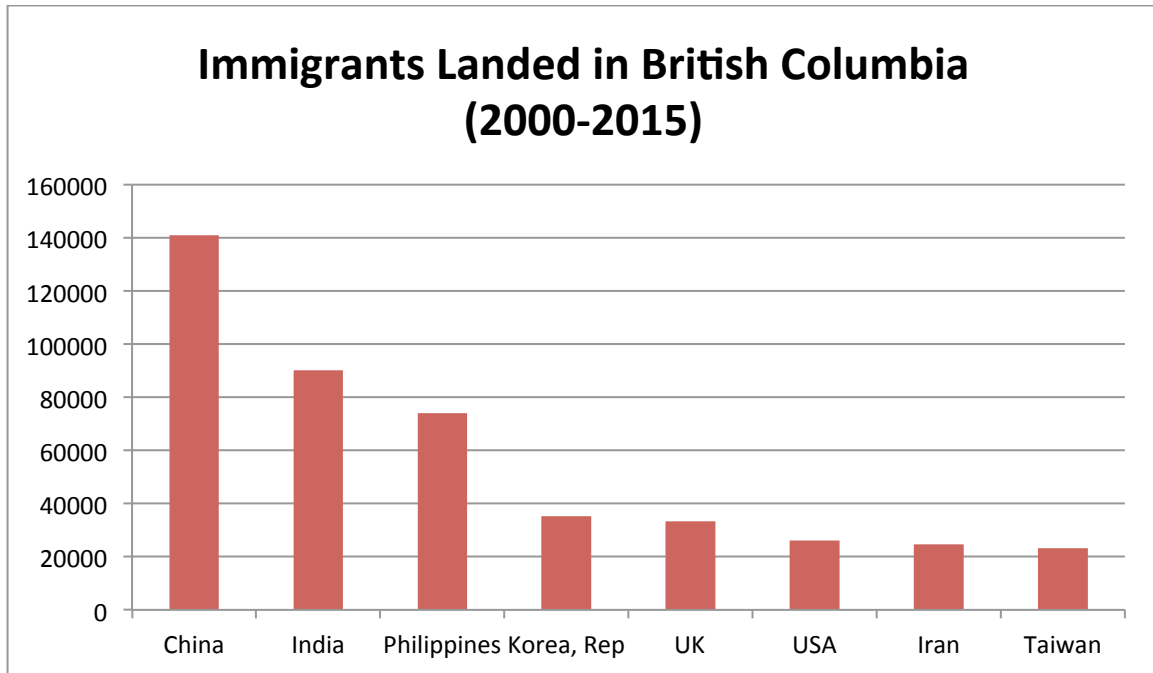
- Ryder, Andrew G., Lynn E. Alden, and Delroy L. Paulhus. (2000). "Is acculturation Unidimensional or Bidimensional? A Head-to-Head Comparison in the Prediction of Personality, Self-identity, and Adjustment." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79(1): 49-65.
- Schechter, Sandra R., and Robert Bayley. (2002). *Language as Cultural Practice: Mexicanos en El Norte*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Seat, Rajko, and Richards, S. (1998). *Children at Risk*. Toronto: Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) Professional Development Conference.
- Seidle, Leslie. (2013). "Immigrant Integration in Federal Countries: Language Skills, Civic Knowledge and Identity." *Canadian Issues*. Spring 2013: 61-66.
- Shakya, Yogendra B., Nazilla Khanlou, and Tahira Gonsalves. (2010). "Determinants of Mental health for Newcomer Youth: Policy and Service Implications." *Canadian Issues*. Summer 2010: 98-102.
- Shields, John, Kahn Rahi, and Antonie Scholtz. (2006). *Voices from the Margins: Visible-Minority Immigrant and Refugee Youth Experiences with Employment Exclusion in Toronto*. Toronto: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement.
- Shih, Tzimei Alexasia. (1998). "Finding The Niche: Friendship Formation of Immigrant Adolescents." *Youth & Society* 30(2): 209-240.
- Silverman, David. (2016). *Qualitative Research*. New York: Sage Publications.
- Statistics Canada. (2007). *2006 Census: Immigration and Citizenship*. Ottawa.
- Statistics Canada. (2013). *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada, 2011 National Household Survey*. Ottawa.
- Suárez-Orozco, Carola. (2000). 7 Identities Under Siege: Immigration Stress and Social Mirroring Among the Children of Immigrants. In Robben, Antonius and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (Eds.) *Cultures Under Siege: Collective Violence and Trauma* (pp.194-226). Cambridge University Press.
- Suárez-Orozco, Carola, and Irina LG Todorova. (2003). "The Social Worlds of Immigrant Youth." *New Directions for Youth Development* 100: 15-24.
- Suárez-Orozco, Carola, and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco. (2001). *Children of Immigration*. Harvard University Press.

- Swanson, Dena Phillips, Margaret Beale Spencer, and Anne Petersen. (1998). Identity Formation in Adolescence. In Borman, Kathryn and Barbara Schneider (Eds.) *The Adolescent Years: Social Influences and Educational Challenges* (pp.18-41). Chicago: The National Society for the Study of Education.
- Talmy, Steven. (2009). "A Very Important Lesson: Respect and the Socialization of Order(s) in High School ESL." *Linguistics and Education* 20: 235-253.
- Tilleczek, Kate. (2011). *Approaching Youth Studies: Being, Becoming, and Belonging*. Oxford University Press.
- Tossutti, Livianna S. (2012). "Municipal Roles in Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity." *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique* 45 (3): 607-633.
- Tsai, Jenny Hsin-Chun. (2006). "Xenophobia, Ethnic Community, and Immigrant Youths' Friendship Network Formation." *Adolescence* 41: 285-298.
- Tsang, Ka Tat A., Howard Irving, Ramona Alaggia, Shirley B. Y Chau, and Michael Benjamin. (2003). "Negotiating Ethnic Identity in Canada: The Case of the 'Satellite Children'." *Youth & Society* 34(3): 359-384.
- Tucker Jr., Kenneth H. (1998). *Anthony Giddens and Modern Social Theory*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Tummala-Narra, Pratyusha. (2015). "Cultural Competence as a Core Emphasis of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy." *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 32(2): 275-292.
- Wainwright, Emma, and Elodie Marandet. (2011). "Geographies of Family Learning and Aspirations of Belonging." *Children's Geographies* 9(1): 95-109.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. (1990). The Value of Difference. In Rutherford, Jonathan (Ed.) *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (pp. 88 - 100). London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Wiese, Elizabeth Batista-Pinto. (2010). "Culture and Migration: Psychological Trauma in Children and Adolescents." *Traumatology* 16(4): 142-152.
- Werbner, Pnina, Tariqu Modood, and Homi K. Bhabha. (2015). *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multicultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Yazdiha, Haj. (2010). "Conceptualizing Hybridity: Deconstructing Boundaries through the Hybrid." *Formations* 1(1): 31-38.

- Yeh, Christine J., Pei-Wen Ma, Anivta Madan-Bahel, Carla D. Hunter, Sunna Jung, Angela B. Kim, Kyoko Akitaya and Kiyoko Sasaki. (2005). "The Cultural Negotiations of Korean Immigrant Youth." *Journal of Counseling & Development* 83(2): 172-182.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. (2006). "Belonging and the Politics of Belonging." *Patterns of Prejudice* 40(3): 197-214.
- Zeman, Klarka, and Angela Bressan. (2006). Crime and Justice Research Paper Series Factors Associated with Youth Delinquency and Victimization in Toronto. Ottawa: *Statistics Canada*.
- Zubida, Hani, Liron Lavi, Robin. A. Harper, Ora Nakash, and Anat Shoshani. (2013). "Home and Away: Hybrid Perspective on Identity Formation in 1.5 and Second Generation Adolescent Immigrants in Israel." *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics and Innovation*: 1-28.

Appendix A.

Source Countries of Immigrants to British Columbia



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2016)

Appendix B.

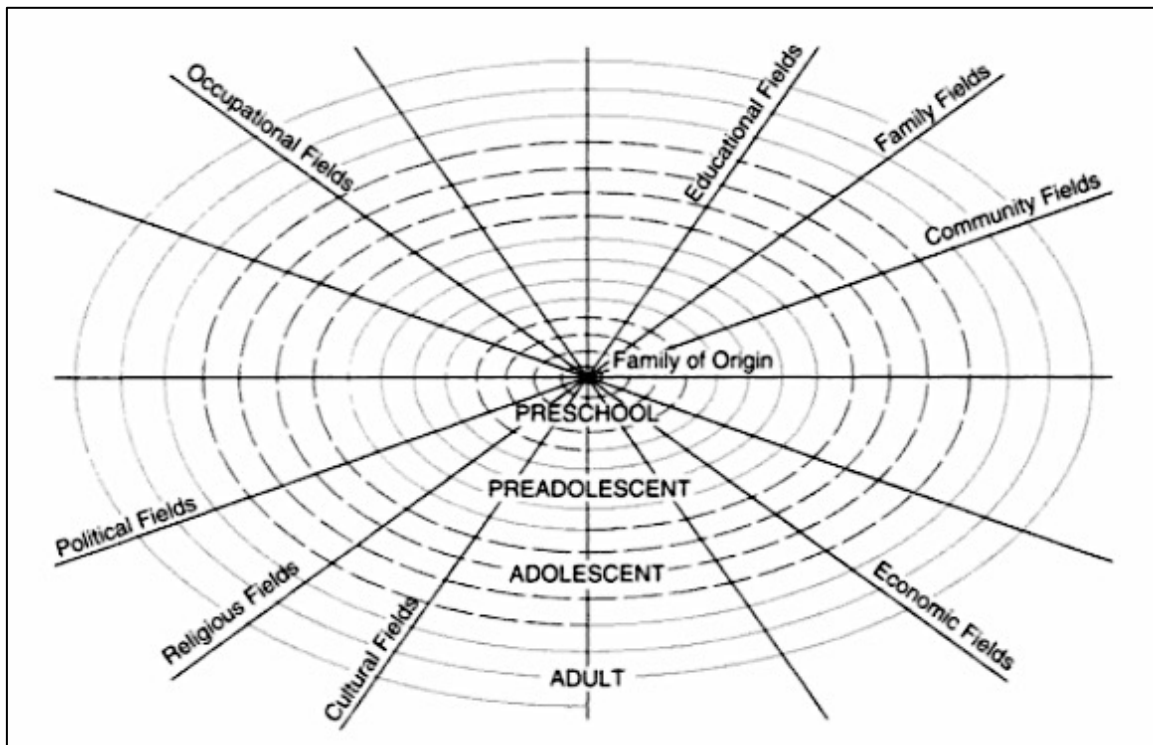
Summary of Major Issues Facing Immigrant Youth

	Social Services	Health	Education	Justice
Individual Issues	Cultural adjustment Social support and belonging Cultural identity Sexual identity Gender roles Internalized racism Employment	Nutrition Communicable diseases Sexual and reproductive health Chronic health conditions Mental Health problems Pre-migration and migration trauma	Unfamiliarity with schooling in Canada Appropriate assessments ESL instruction Support in content classrooms Support for students with special needs Support for heritage languages	Transitions Criminal gangs and violence Substance abuse Prostitution Issues in youth justice process
Home Environment	Basic needs Language and adult literacy Social networks and support Family violence		Employment Family literacy Incongruent rates of acculturation Civic participation	
School Community Environment	Access to systemic, culturally competent support Belonging and participation in school activities Racism and discrimination		Parental involvement Interaction with peers and staff	
Community Environment	Belonging and community participation Socioeconomic conditions		Racism and discrimination Negative influences	

Source: Ngo and Schleifer (2005, 31)

Appendix C.

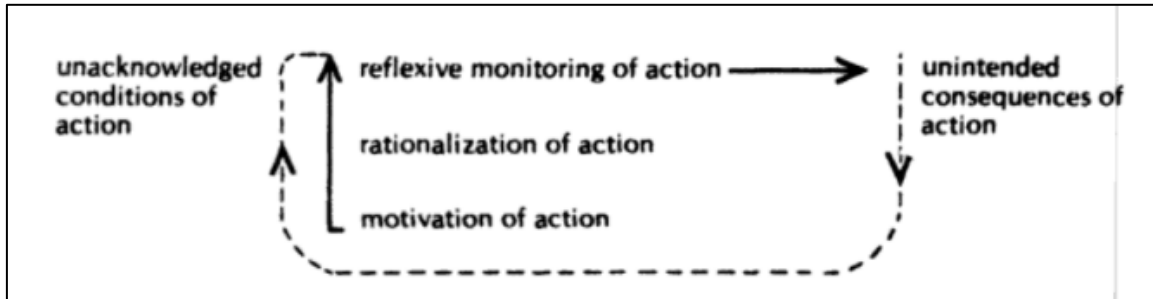
The Orb Web Model of Social Reproduction



Source: Corsaro (2011, 24).

Appendix D.

The Stratification Model of the Agent



Source: Figure 1, Anthony Giddens, "The Agent, Agency" in *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. (c) 1984 by Anthony Giddens. Published by the University of California Press.

Appendix E.

Interview Guide

Questions may include, but are not limited to the following:

COMING TO CANADA – Establishing Context

- How old are you?
- How long have you been living in Canada?
- Where were you born?
- Where did you move from?
- Where else have you lived?
- Who did you move here with?
 - Why do you think your family decided to move to Canada?
 - Do you feel your family made any sacrifices to immigrate?
 - If yes, what might those have been?
- Did you want to move to Canada?
 - Why?
 - Why not?
- What were your expectations before you immigrated?
- What do you like about Canada?
- What do you dislike about Canada?
 - What are the challenges you have faced since coming here?

YOUTH INTEGRATION PROGRAMS – Experiences and Evaluation

- How long have you been participating in youth integration programs?
- How did you hear about the program(s) you have participated in?
- Why did you decide to come to the program(s)?
 - Was it completely your choice?
- Have you participated in more than one program?
 - If yes, how were the programs you participated in different?
 - How were the programs you participated in similar?
- What do you like most about participating in youth integration programs?
 - Can you tell me about your favourite experience/memory while participating in a youth integration program?
- What do you like least about participating in youth integration programs?
- How could these programs be better?
- If you created a youth integration program how might you organize it?
 - What might you do differently then the programs you have participated in?
 - What might you do similar to the programs you have participated in?

FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP – Understand, Loss, and Rebuilding

- What does the word friend mean to you?
 - What makes someone a good friend?
 - What makes someone a bad friend?
 - Are there different types of friends?
 - What are they?
- What does the word friendship mean to you?
 - How do you describe a good friendship?
 - How do you describe a bad friendship?
 - Are there different types of friendships?
 - What are they?
- Tell me about your friends and the friendships you had before coming to Canada?
 - Who were your friends?
 - Where did you meet them?
 - What kinds of things did you do with them?
- Do you still talk to any of your friends from back home?
 - If yes, in what ways (email, telephone, Facebook)?
 - How are these relationships different now?
 - If no, why not?
- Do you miss these friends?
 - What do you miss about them?
- Tell me about your friends and the friendships you have made since coming to Canada?
 - Who are your friends here?
 - Where did/do you meet them?
 - What kinds of things do you do with them?
 - Has it been hard to make friends in Canada?
 - If yes, why has it been hard?
- Have you made friends participating in youth integration programs?
 - If yes, tell me about these friends?
 - Who are your friends you have made from the youth integration program?
 - Did you know these people outside of the program?
 - Why did you become friends?
 - Do you see them/hang-out outside of the program?
 - If yes, what sort of things do you do with them outside the program?
- Do you think participating in youth integration programs is a good way to meet new friends?
- Do you think youth integration programs could do a better job helping participants meet new friends? If yes, how?

IDENTITY – Understanding, Formation, and Change

- What does the word identity mean to you?
- What sort of things make up someone's identity?
- How do you identify yourself?
- What sort of things make up your identity?

- What sort of things shaped your identity before you came to Canada?
 - What sort of things shaped your identity after coming to Canada?
- How has coming to Canada shaped your identity?
- Do you think someone can have more than one identity?
 - Do you ever feel like you have more than one identity?
 - If yes, what makes you feel this way?
- Can friends help shape our identity?
 - If yes, how might friends help shape our identity?
 - How do you think your friends have shaped your identity?
- Can participating in a youth integration program help shape someone's identity?
 - If yes, how?
 - How has participating in a youth integration program helped shape your identity?

CONCLUSION – Wrapping Up and Asking about the Focus Group

- Is there anything we have talked about that you would like to go back to and talk about more?
- Is there anything else you would like to add or that you think we should have talked about?
- Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up group discussion about these topics with others who have participated in youth integration programs?

Appendix F.

Focus Group Guide

Questions may include, but are not limited to the following:

COMING TO CANADA – Establishing Context

- What are some of the challenges experienced by immigrant youth coming to Canada?
 - Which of these are the “most” challenging?
 - Why?

YOUTH INTEGRATION PROGRAMS – Experiences and Evaluation

- How did you hear about the program(s) you have participated in?
- Why did you decide to come to the program(s)?
- What did you think the program was going to be like?
- Have you participated in more than one program?
- If yes, how were the programs you participated in different?
 - How were the programs you participated in similar?
- What do you like most about participating in youth integration programs?
- What do you like least about participating in youth integration programs?
- How could these programs be better?
- If you created a youth integration program how might you organize it?
- Do you think youth integration programs are helpful?
- If yes, what about them is helpful?

FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP – Understand, Loss, and Rebuilding

- What does the word friend mean to you?
- What makes someone a good friend?
- What makes someone a bad friend?
- Are there different types of friends?
 - What are they?
- What does the word friendship mean to you?
- How do you describe a good friendship?
- How do you describe a bad friendship?
- Are there different types of friendships?
 - What are they?
- How has immigrating to Canada affected the friendships you had before you moved here?
- How many people still talk to their friends from before they moved to Canada?
- How do you talk to these people (email, phone, Facebook)?
- Are these people still important in your lives?

- Has it been hard to make new friends in Canada?
- If yes, why?
- What is the hardest thing about making new friends in Canada?
- Have you made friends participating in youth integration programs?
- If yes, tell me about these friends?
 - Who are your friends you have made from the youth integration program?
 - Did you know these people outside/before you came to the program?
 - Why did you become friends?
 - Do you see them/hang-out outside of the program?
 - If yes, what sort of things do you do with them outside the program?
- Do you think participating in youth integration programs is a good way to meet new friends?
- Do you think youth integration programs could do a better job helping participants meet new friends? If yes, how?

IDENTITY – Understanding, Formation, and Change

- What does the word identity mean to you?
- What sort of things make up someone's identity?
- What sort of things shaped your identity before you came to Canada?
- What sort of things shaped your identity after coming to Canada?
- How has coming to Canada shaped your identity?
- How has coming to Canada changed your identity?
- Do you think someone can have more than one identity?
- Do you ever feel like you have more than one identity?
- If yes, what makes you feel this way?
- Can friends help shape our identity?
- If yes, how might friends help shape our identity?
 - How do you think your friends have shaped your identity?
- Can participating in a youth integration program help shape someone's identity?
- If yes, how?
- How has participating in a youth integration program helped shape your identity?

CONCLUSION – Wrapping Up and Evaluating the Study

- Is there anything we have talked about that you would like to go back to and talk about more?
- Is there anything else you would like to add or that you think we should have talked about?
- What do you think about participating in this research project?
- What did you like about it?
- What did you dislike about it?
- If you did a research project on youth newcomers what sort of topics might you be interested in?