**Reading Analysis Reflection**

**LLED 360 – Dr. Lorna Ramsay**

**Date:** September 14, 2017

**Facilitator Name:** Kaitlee Simonson

**Text Chapters**:​ Coelho, E. (2012). Chapter 2: First Days and Beyond. ​*Language and Learning in Multilingual Classrooms: A Practical Approach.* Toronto: Multilingual Matters, p. 19­54.

**Name of external source:** Colorin colorado! (http://www.colorincolorado.org/)

**Main Themes**:​

* welcoming immigrant families takes careful and intentional planning and involves all members of the school community
* interview:
  + conducted with the family / student
  + use community volunteers, professional interpreters or bilingual educators when possible
  + gather information about the student’s previous educational history
  + communicate with the children’s new teachers about the needs of each student
  + provide orientation material to parents
  + arrange for a student guide (trained with gender and age similarities)
  + assessment tasks:
    - emphasize level of development in first language
    - proficiency in language of the school
    - proficiency in literacy skills
    - observe mathematical skills
      * strategies for appropriate assessment (Colorin colorado!):
        + choose comfortable accommodations
        + prepare students for computer-based assessments
        + use ELP scores to plan instructions
* programs and services:
  + homework club
  + individual tutoring
  + multilingual resources (ie: dictionaries in various languages)
  + access to computers and online resources
  + language and cultural clubs
  + implementing a volunteer program for parents
  + creating a school webpage accessible in multiple languages
  + building a collaborative relationship with public libraries and community organizations (ie: weekend and after school programs and events)
  + language classes for adults / parents

***Question:*** *What are some of the main themes that you focused on in your own reading of the text?*

**My Critical Argument or Thesis**:

***Arguments***

* attempting to meet the educational demands of immigrants from various background and with differing levels of academic proficiency seems like an unfair expectation to put on a teacher who may have a class of 30+ students
* immigration support within schools is vital and yet often only pursued with great interest or intention by those who are passionate or familiar with the needs of multicultural communities
* we do not readily take into account incoming immigrant student’s educational history and thus have expectations of them that are not realistic
  + we make academic and cultural assumptions about the student or their families within this new community (ex: morning routines, homework support, ESL proficiency)

***Question:*** *Do you agree or disagree with these arguments?*

***Thesis***

* in order to serve their diverse communities well, educators need to transform the cultural environment of the school itself, as well as the way the schools interact with its various communities (p. 53)

**New Vocabulary**:​

* ***activity bags:*** focus on key concepts in the early years of educational curriculum and often includes shapes, colors, numbers, etc
* ***cultural content:*** themes present in a culture that may be unfamiliar or obscure to an immigrant or newcomer (ie: bills, certain foods, geographical knowledge)
* ***family math:*** materials that encourage families to learn math through stimulating interactive materials that can be done at home
* ***first impressions:*** an initial encounter that forms a mental image or idea about a person, place or thing
* ***funds of knowledge:*** refers to historically developed and accumulated strategies that are essential to a households functioning and wellbeing
* ***initial assessment:*** gathering information about a child or family in order to discover what services are needed and who can provide them
* ***multicultural pluralism:*** when smaller groups within a larger society maintain their cultural identity through values and traditional practices
* ***parent network:*** a positive, productive and inclusive group of parents and staff that are involved in reaching out to new and immigrant parents within their community
* ***support guide:*** students who are trained to welcome newcomers and introduce them to the school

**Educational Implications:**

1. *Insights and connections to educational themes and theories or more global issues*

***Themes and Theories***

* maintaining a welcome attitude to multiculturalism emphasizes our “mosaic” attitude towards cultural pluralism
  + we often create a “melting pot” attitude towards immigration, especially within our school system, that dismisses our responsibility as educators
  + as the new curriculum moves towards a holistic and student-centered approach to teaching we must recognize the cognitive, social and experiential perspectives of each individual student
    - implementing interview and assessment tasks gives teachers insight into the practical teaching strategies that would be most effective for specific immigrant students

***Question:*** *How do we actively change our negative attitudes / the attitudes of others towards immigrants and their learning needs?*

***Global Issues***

* Colorin colorado! articles:
  + *Immigrant and Refugee Children: A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff –* offers insight and instruction on how to advocate and protect the vulnerable students in the school system
  + *Stress Related to Immigration Status in Students: A Brief Guide for Schools* – discusses the effects that detention, deportation and other status-related issues have on vulnerable students and families

1. *Insights and connections to practical teaching strategies*

* posters or displays in the foyer emphasizing a welcome community / multicultural approach to education
* signs and notices posted in various languages for directions to important areas of the school
* promoting a student mentoring program provides valued support for newcomers and leadership opportunities for others
* orientation videos created by class for the new student creates an opportunity for creative mediums and class involvement
* practical teaching strategies (Colorin colorado!):
  + home visits
  + parent letters
  + student case studies
  + increase the amount of one-on-one assistance
  + post a visual daily schedule
  + label classroom objects in multiple languages
  + focus on increasing parent involvement
  + create greater opportunity for writing / journaling

***Question:*** *What are some other methods to welcoming immigrants into a new school?*

***Question:*** *What would be the various roles that people might play within the school in relation to welcoming and supporting immigrants? (ex: principles, support staff, student teachers)*

1. *Further questions for discussion*

* What did you appreciate about this chapter? What were some areas of uncertainty?
* What have you done in your schools to promote multiculturalism?
* How do you hope to implement a multicultural approach in your own classroom?

**Comments on discussion:**

* Group members offered expressions of their own perspectives and experiences of how to interact and connect with immigrant students
* heavily emphasized the importance of a support/student guide in creating a safe and comfortable transition for new students
* collectively felt that a community that was cohesive and focused on integration and support was vital to the growth of immigrant students
  + everyone from the librarian to the teachers to the principles have to be on board with how to facilitate a positive and welcoming environment