**LLED 360­307 Fall 2017 Dr. Lorna Ramsay**

**Reading Analysis Reflection** **Date**: September 14, 2017

 **Facilitator Name**: Simon Widmann

**Text Chapters:**  *Language and Learning in Multilingual Classrooms: A Practical Approach*, Chapter 2 – First Days and Beyond. (Coelho, 2012)

**Name of Outside Source:** *Schools teach child refugees more than their ABCs,* written by S. Ross for The Globe & Mail (Ross, 2015).

**Main Themes**

* Ross’s article
	+ Integrating newcomers to Canada, Canadian society, and the Canadian educational system.
	+ Being sensitive to the experiences of newcomers to Canada, particularly children who have experienced war.
	+ The resources available to newcomer students and their parents.
	+ Resources from various school districts across the country are referenced in order to show the customization of approaches to teaching newcomer students and addressing their needs and the needs of their parents.
	+ The growing realization of immigrant and refugee parents that the educational system is there to support their children and the children’s families.
* Coelho text
	+ The manner in which schools serve as integration points for newcomer of children and their families.
	+ Different methods of how integration is used in schools and the wider educational system.
	+ Provides suggestions about how schools can develop relationships with students and their families.
	+ The school as the first point of contact between newcomers and Canadian society

**MY CRITICAL ARGUMENT OR THESIS**

*The successful integration of newcomers is necessary to maximize their potential,*

*economically, intellectually, socially and culturally, so that when they come to Canada their skills can be put to use (Citizen and Immigration Canada 2010). Therefore, it is essential to create a positive and welcoming experience especially for ‘newcomer students’ at Canadian schools. Does Canada (the Canadian government and its policymakers) do enough at the moment to welcome newcomer students in their communities? Where may our current system be failing? What are the strengths of the currently implemented system?*

**New Vocabulary**

* Understanding that newcomer children from war torn or stressful social backgrounds (e.g., Syria or North Korea), often take a while to understand that they are in a safe environment where they can take the time to engage in the environment, become comfortable, and where they can trust again.
* Having a separate initial space so that students become used to the Canadian learning environment.
* The educational system has specialized staff trained to handle first contact with newcomers, particularly newcomers (both students and parents) from countries where there is war and/or where society is highly regimented and built on fear.
* Initial assessment, that is, the first formal meeting with the parents in order to gain more information about the student.
* Assessment tasks, that is, trying to understand, through specific tasks, the educational level of students who have had some schooling.
* Reception and Assessment Centers, that is, a centralized location for combining services available to help newcomers with the educational system and parenting requirements.

**EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

* Developing relationships plays a big part in the integration of the parents and the students when they come to Canada.
* Allowing the parents to learn about how the educational system works is a significant part of the children’s success in the school system.
* It is important not to overload the parents, or the children, in a new environment. A slow introduction will create a good foundation for success both socially and academically.

*Insights and connections on practical teaching strategies*

* Understanding the importance of names and naming conventions of students and parents from different cultural and language environments.
* The detailed list of questions to ask students and parents.
* There is merit in the sequence of activities used to ascertain language and literacy levels.
* Directions about parents’ interviews and how to set parent networks up.
* Information about resources such as homework clubs, individual tutoring, and multi-lingual resources is helpful to know.

**QUESTIONS**

* Does the school arrange for all the stakeholders in the whole process to meet before meeting each new family so that there is a common understanding of goals and direction?
* Is there on-going training for teachers, other educational professionals and social workers in order to orient them to the special needs and different circumstances that they may come across during engagement with students and parents?
* Is there an on-call translation service for emergency translation, particularly in the initial stages as students and parents enter the educational system and settle into Canadian society?
* Whose responsibility is it in a school to make sure that a ‘welcoming culture’ and a new arrival procedure for newcomer families is somewhat cohesive?
* Do you think initiating a school “buddies” system for parents would make it easier for the newcomer family to settle in the Canadian environment? (new environment).

🡪Ask parents who are already involved in the school community to partner with parents who are new to the school district.

🡪These “buddies” could help to introduce immigrant parents to after-school programs as well as other resources that may benefit the family (plus answer questions that they may have)

**REFLECTION**

**Comments on Discussion**

*Critical considerations of the reading analysis presentation*

* There are social integration and educational integration systems in place to assist newcomer students and their parents.
* Being aware of the whole system and the resources available to students, parents and to educational professionals is key to ensuring student social and educational success.
* Being aware of the importance of the initial interview and assessments and how these work, will ensure that educational professionals are confident in their presentation to students and parents. This will ensure that newcomers are not distracted by an unsure approach.

*Further consideration?*

* What are the long-term follow-up mechanisms to ensure that the process is successful to the lives of these students as they go all the way through the educational system? Such an assessment would allow for improvements where necessary to meet contemporary needs.

# Bibliography

Coelho, E. (2012). *Language and Learning in Multilingual Classrooms : A Practical Approach.* Channel View Publications.

Ross, S. (2015, November 27). *Schools teach child refugees more than their ABCs*. Retrieved September 13, 2017, from The Globe & Mail: https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/schools-teach-child-refugees-more-than-their-abcs/article27517905/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com&