ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

RECENT IMMIGRANT MUSLIM STUDENTS IN U.S. HIGH SCHOOLS: A STUDY OF
SOCIOCULTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND MULTICULTURAL PROVISION

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ABSTRACT

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Rather limited research and few significant field studies have been done on recent immigrant students particularly from the Muslim societies of the Horn of Africa and the Middle East in the American high school context regarding their linguistic, cultural and religious needs. Most research studies suggest that immigrant students receive insufficient provision. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role high schools play in provision addressing the following questions: (1) What kinds of provision have been implemented to support a culturally sensitive education in public high schools in the U.S., and how effective have they been? (2) If any, what was the effect of the reform paper *No Child Left Behind*? (3) How could the role of teachers as culturally responsive educators be further enhanced regarding first/heritage language and cultural heritage maintenance? (4) Which steps would have to be taken in order to move towards a culturally responsive system?

Peterson's iceberg theory regarding cultures was the guiding theoretical approach which emphasizes the fact that in order to get to know each other's cultures, one has to closely examine the underlying issues that belong to them as the information available on the surface is simply not sufficient. Qualitative case studies were conducted based on survey questionnaires and interviews among students, parents, ESOL/ELL teachers and mainstream teachers from 6 different high schools.

This study has demonstrated that high schools can, in fact, be inviting, well-equipped with adequate ESOL/ELL programs. Findings from field work carried out in Loudoun and Fairfax County public schools in Virginia in 2011, indicate that there is a need to address misconceptions among ESOL/ELL students, their teachers and their parents as to what constitutes as multicultural education environment, and first language maintenance. It is explained how the role of culture-based after school extracurricular clubs like the Muslim Students Association can serve as a bridge between the culture of one's origin and the host society. While teachers could serve as facilitators, students can become researchers and see relevance of their culture. The result from this investigation through existing literature, stories of individuals and institutions will add to current knowledge on ESOL/ELL provision and offer a deeper understanding of needs from both parties.

Keywords: recent immigrant Muslim students, first language maintenance, MSA cultural heritage project

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>List of Abbreviations</u>

The following list describes the various abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the thesis.

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
AP	Advanced Placement
CAL	Center for Applied Linguistics
DHS	Dominion High School
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELL	English Language Learner
ELP	English Language Proficiency
ES	Elementary School
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FCPS	Fairfax County Public Schools
FHS	Freedom High School
GATP	Global Awareness Technology Project
GPA	Grade Point Average
HS	High School
IFOR	The Implementation Force
LBSS	Lake Braddock Secondary School
LCPS	Loudoun County Public Schools
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language – English
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
NEP	Non-English Proficient
MCPS	Montgomery County Public Schools
MSA	Muslim Students Association

OELA	Office of English Language Acquisition
PEP	Parents as Educational Partners
PTA	Parents-Teacher Association
PVHS	Park View High School
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SIOP	Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol
SOL	Standards of Learning
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VA	Virginia
VGLA	Virginia Grade Level Alternative
VOBC	Vocationally-Oriented Bilingual Curriculum
WATESOL	Washington Area Teaching English as a Second Language Association
WIDA ACCESS	World Class Instructional Design Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners
WVTESOL	Association of ESL Professionals in West Virginia

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction

Rather limited research and few significant field studies have been conducted on recent immigrant students particularly from the Muslim societies of the Horn of Africa and the Middle East in the American high school context regarding their linguistic, cultural and religious needs. Most research suggests that immigrant students receive insufficient provision in these respects. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role high schools play in this provision addressing the following questions: (1) What kinds of provision have been implemented to support a culturally sensitive education in public high schools in the U.S., and how efficient have they been? (2) If any, what was the effect of the reform paper *No Child Left Behind*? (3) How could the role of teachers as culturally responsive educators be further enhanced regarding the issue of first/heritage language and cultural heritage maintenance? (4) Which steps would have to be taken in order to move towards a culturally responsive system? The purpose of this research here is not to denigrate current practices or institutions, rather it is to offer an understanding and highlight educational practices worth benchmarking.

I first lived in a foreign country (United Kingdom) in 2000 and started working for an English secondary school in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire in October 2001 right after the 9/11 attacks. With my Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) Bachelor's degree, I was teaching first generation immigrant students from various backgrounds, whose audacity and resilience continue to inspire me as an American born and raised Hungarian living in the U.S. and who also spent 6 years in England. As a postgraduate student from Hungary, I was drawn to this field by a keen personal interest in understanding the struggles and successes the students were experiencing. After teaching in various secondary schools and in further education programs in England and in the USA, I began a systematic investigation of the adaptation of first generation immigrant students more than 10 years ago. Both my postgraduate dissertation and doctoral research address these issues through surveys and interviews. The individual stories have served as a vital source of insights into the lived experiences of cultural adjustment and provision. They offer credible and complex views on what is occurring in reality.

I have found that there are staff members, professionals in their fields, who are uncertain during intercultural interactions; also they do not necessarily know how to advise students on first language and cultural maintenance. Therefore, their actions are typically based on assumptions rather than facts about newly arrived immigrant students, especially from the Middle-East. Having entered their classrooms either in England or in America, most of my ESOL students went through a mixture of emotions that included but were not limited to feeling frightened, anxious, scared, excited, isolated, angry, happy, and lonely. The pervasive presence of the English language, the people, the different school system, and of course, the syllabus content seemed to have confused them. Since each country passes its values as the standard for norm resulting in loss of comfort, they felt tense and nervous most of the time; trying to adjust to something different occasionally created disorientation. According to my understanding, schools do not always provide a thorough orientation to prepare newly arrived immigrant students for the new society, the system and its cultural values, and they definitely fail to discuss the continuity of their first language and/or cultural maintenance. Thus, these students

rightfully feel misunderstood and confused about social relationships or school policies, just to mention a couple important issues in an educational setting. I often found that when educators did not take the time to brief these students, some would start to belittle the new environment, the new school, the host country (probably as a result of culture shock) and due to the dissimilar values, they were sometimes critical openly and sometimes quietly. The opposite also happened to some of my former students who would feel reluctant to talk about their country of origin after a while. Hence, a number of teachers and fellow students considered these students impolite and difficult to handle, and they failed to realize the depth of the process they were undergoing.

Instances that might have stimulated these reactions from the newly arrived students included their relationship with staff or friendships with classmates. They might not be used to questioning, challenging authority, also it could seem shocking that teachers might not "behave professionally" because they are too nice/friendly or drink refreshments in the classroom. Simple practices may not be apparent to them: whether or not they could interrupt their teacher, raise their hand or leave at the end of class with permission and that teachers admit they do not know everything. My students, immigrant or international, complain how friendships with native students tend to be shallow. They are not necessarily accustomed to superficial friendships because in their societies deep and lasting friendships are more prevalent as people normally grow, live and die in the same place. For them the definition of friend could be similar to that of brother or sister as a person whom they can count on regardless of blood connection. As a migrant to England and then to America myself, I have learned that perseverance and making compromises is unavoidable in order to get along.

It can be enjoyable to learn about surface-level cultural details such as Bengali cuisine, Indian music, and Persian rugs; evidently, however, a much deeper knowledge and more skillfulness in appropriate interactions are essential in an educational setting. I have attended numerous training sessions about diversity where most lecturers were extremely keen on describing the profundity of what we—teachers/tutors/educators need to face in our daily encounters with students from diverse backgrounds. Experience gained from personal and professional development en bloc geared my attention towards the further exploration of opinions, viewpoints, attitudes, philosophies, values, and convictions of my foreign students. Throughout this study, references will be made to recent immigrant Muslim students, which should be interpreted as the following: children who are recently arrived, first generation immigrants, born outside the U.S., and after leaving their countries of origin, they continue their education in U.S. high schools.

Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical framework of the research. Peterson's iceberg theory (Peterson, 2004) regarding the depth and complexity of cultures was the guiding theoretical approach which emphasizes the fact that in order to get to know each other's cultures, one has to closely examine the underlying issues that belong to them as the information available on the surface is simply not sufficient. This chapter explores the importance of the position of the individual in society, the position of religion in American and Middle Eastern societies, the interpretation of egalitarianism and democracy in Muslim Middle Eastern societies and finally the multicultural character of the society of the United States. Due to immigrants arriving with different traditions and cultural backgrounds, the U.S. American culture and society has been undergoing change, and a multi-ethnic or multicultural

state is being shaped (Cesari, 2004) where the influence of Judeo-Christian white middle-class culture still prevails. Attitudes towards new Muslim immigrants mixed feelings about Islam are discussed.

Chapter 3 explores the aspects in intercultural adjustment, the role of social factors in adjustment and the adaptive potential of the first generation immigrant child, the role of ambiguity in interpersonal relationships and interactions, and the issue of second language learning: how language and communicative competence influence adjustment. The hypothesis is that uprooting (Igoa, 2009) has both positive and negative effects on one's emotion and perception of the new surrounding environment. As individuals experience various stages of adjustment, the attention and empathy of schools is needed so that students' success is enhanced. The concept of *dissonant acculturation* is emphasized as it has been found that children, due to being exposed to the host culture more than their parents, acculturate faster and might, as a result, distance themselves from their ethnic heritage. It is a major risk factor, for parents may lose the capability to guide and support their children (Rong & Preissle, 2009). How such children may develop a bicultural identity is also discussed in the chapter. There are immigrants, who while maintaining their ethnic identity also take in the values and norms of the host culture and via integrating them, they develop a bicultural identity (Ting-Toomey, 2005). The discourse in this chapter is based on balanced bilinguals (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008); individuals, who can express emotions, converse and write academically in one language and can do the same in the target language. The goal of ESOL/ELL education varies; however, children more often reach bilingualism without a bicultural state of mind. Culture in second language education may only be emphasized or explained in certain contexts not in complete immersion (Brody, 2003). Biculturalism and bilingualism have obstacles, though. The answer could be following mindful, educational strategy which challenges students intellectually and teaches not only about the dominant culture but also about co-cultures as their backgrounds are incorporated in the school setting. The goal should not be cultural neutrality at all but the in-depth recognition of the cultural diversity of students.

Chapter 4 looks at the extent to which multicultural growth is being promoted regarding the school environment, bullying and racial harassment; and supplemental educational after-school services also. Due to a new wave of immigrants from Muslim societies of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, I have investigated how the need for greater understanding of these students and their experience is implemented (Omotosho, 2005) in public high schools via the answers gained from surveys and interviews with participating students, parents and teachers. The description of the field work and methodology is also included in this chapter. Attention is drawn to a program for ESL parents called *Parents as Educational Partners* (PEP, Wright, 2011 online) which provides support for them to manage school-parent communication better and support for parents with the school curriculum so that they can help their children with school tasks.

In **Chapter 5**, the educational opportunities for first generation immigrant children are discussed with the aim to link the *No Child Left Behind Act* and existing practices and strategies to supporting educational needs. Special attention is paid to the challenges of recognizing the missing heritage/first language support: specific reasons for teachers to promote and for parents to assist in bilingual learning. In this chapter, in opposition to other studies (Suarez-Orozco, 2002 and 2008, Igoa, 2009, Olsen, 2008), my research explores the county-wide educational practices worth benchmarking

in public high schools, such as the language evaluation system called WIDA and the *Global Awareness Technology Project* (GATP) from Fairfax County, which helps students understand the relevance of cultures in a global world. This study emphasizes the role of extracurricular activities like the after school club called *Muslim Student Association* (MSA) and how it could be further enhanced to go beyond its ostensibly superficial character. Significant part of this chapter points to the lack of comprehension that students face, and the lack of assistance they receive to effectively maintain their first language and cultural heritage; not because the participants do not care but because they do not seem to have the means. Accordingly, the chapter provides a comprehensive explanation of both in order to raise awareness of potentially enhanced forms of provision.

The criterion for the selection of public high schools to carry out fieldwork was that they are in successful school counties (Fairfax County and Loudoun County Public Schools in Virginia) with outstanding educational records. That way the research rationale could remain objective and focused as possible; interfering or distracting factors, for instance, disciplinary issues, segregation among students, or the burden of low standardized test scores would not be present. Qualitative case studies were conducted based on survey questionnaires and interviews among students, parents, ESOL/ELL teachers and mainstream teachers from six different high schools. This study showed that high schools can, in fact, be inviting, well-equipped with adequate ESOL/ELL programs. Findings from field work carried out in Loudoun and Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia in 2011 indicate that there is a need to address misconceptions among ESOL/ELL students and their parents as to what constitutes multicultural education environment, and first language maintenance. Furthermore, the role of culture-based after school extracurricular clubs like the Muslim Students Association can be extended and serve as a bridge between the culture of one's origin and the host society. While teachers could serve as facilitators, students could also become researchers and see relevance of their culture. The result of this investigation through existing literature is that stories of individuals and institutions may have implications towards current knowledge and provision and offer a deeper understanding of needs from both parties.

2 Discourse on Cultural Differences: Comparison from a Theoretical Perspective

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the research and explores the importance of the position of the individual in the society, the position of religion in American and Middle Eastern societies, the interpretation of egalitarianism and democracy in Muslim Middle Eastern societies, and finally the multicultural character of the U.S. American society. When looking at the concepts 'culture' and 'identity', there is no single definition for either. Brah (1996) emphasizes that culture is more likely the evolving historical essence of a group or a section of a society. Caldwell's analysis (2009) points out that although diversity may mean being an Arab, non-Arab, Sunni or Shia, traditionalist/conservative or a modernist/liberal, members of this faith, no matter what society they come from, Muslims will become an undifferentiated mass when it is about the *Ummah,* or community, and a common cause. For that reason, the best approach, when looking at people from another culture, is Peterson's 'iceberg theory' (Peterson, 2004) which emphasizes the fact that in order to get to know each other's cultures, one has to closely examine the underlying issues that belong to them as the information available on the surface is simply not sufficient. The relevance of this approach to this study will be discussed in more detail at the beginning of this chapter. A thorough examination of the U.S. American culture along with the Muslim societies of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa should be a prerequisite for educators who are responsible for the teaching of first generation immigrant students in secondary schools.

It has been declared that the character of a culture is somewhat represented in its school curriculum (Samovar et al., 2007, p.261) and also that "cultures tend to teach what is essential for self-perpetuation and continuation from generation to generation" (Ibid.). Brint claims that schools employ *selectivity* as they purposefully choose what they include in their curriculum; they set up boundaries to limit what is taught in the school environment; they intend to establish *focus* or continuous learning; they employ *sequencing,* which means that school material is written in a contiguous manner starting with the elementary and moving towards the more complex (2006, pp.7-8). In order for those involved in understanding the needs of first generation immigrant students from the Muslim Middle East or Africa, an insight into their culture is indispensable since the formal education process reflects the traits of a culture (Samovar et al., 2007, p.262). "It (1) provides knowledge of the culture (2) helps understand interpersonal relationships among students and between students and teachers, and (3) helps understand the importance a culture places on education" (Ibid.). Being educated about what and how a culture teaches us can provide students with these missing components.

It is vital for educators/teachers to recognize the dynamics of their teaching style, i.e. teacher-student interaction typically used in the American culture, and at the same time become knowledgeable of the newly arrived students they ought to teach. Since it is only natural to expect that cultural differences may appear under various circumstances, it is only natural to expect teachers to be prepared for them (Díaz-Rico, 2008). Diaz-Rico emphasizes the possible cultural differences that stem from the students' prior schooling experiences, which might include the following: the permissibility of both direct eye contact with a teacher or the lack of it and asking questions directly from the teachers or staying silent. Concepts of time can also be diverse depending on one's culture as well as dress codes

and school rituals, which teachers ought to be willing to discuss and understand. In agreement with the author (Díaz-Rico, 2008), this study argues that to succeed, teachers and students should reflect on their own cultural values to respect and to validate their heritage and ultimately adjust accordingly.

Getting background information to develop intercultural competence is useful; however, what is found in textbooks might not be represented by newly arrived students in American schools, so teachers may suppress their expectations. Middle Eastern and African immigrants bring their views, values, and ways of understanding life, some of which will either coincide or differ from those found in the American society. Occasionally, matters related to dissimilar customs or dissimilar educational practices may become sources of conflict and students might feel uneasy about the new rules. Compared to their fellow students, they may interpret situations differently, and organize concepts differently according to their cultural background. As schools are a place of learning, and culture is something we learn, students ought to be taught about the culture in their new school and their new community.

Learning styles and ways of processing information are thought to have evolved in relation to various cultural settings as "Over time, cultures have adopted approaches to learning that best fit their unique needs" (Samovar et al., 2007, p.266). My own Hungarian TEFL methodology teachers in college stressed nothing but student-centered methods (lively activities to enhance the engagement of EFL students instead of giving a lecture throughout the lesson); on the other hand, most of my former ESL immigrant students or EFL language institute students who had come to the UK were puzzled by such methods. Upon entering the classroom, students who come from culturally diverse backgrounds bring with them diverse ideas about education. This does not necessarily mean that each and every one of them or even most of them reflect or share the same exact characteristics. Thinking that would risk stereotyping and may lead to teachers trying to match all students by a straight set of characteristics. Yet, cultural styles affect learning and cognitive styles, which in turn shape how students learn (Ibid., p.267). As a consequence, it is without a doubt that students from such culturally diverse backgrounds will have some effect on the way American schools operate.

In addition to particular learning styles, in each culture there are particular reasons why students study called motivation styles, or the fundamental reasons why students want to learn. "What motivates students should be one of the primary concerns of educators; therefore, they must be aware of and employ a variety of motivational techniques that coincide with his/her students' cultural backgrounds" (Ibid., p.272). Besides their motifs, cultures may differ in the way they interpret the meaning of education. Brint argues that the terms 'schooling' and 'education' carry different connotations within each culture. The latter is much broader and takes place throughout one's life, teaching the individual how to survive and be accepted in a given society whereas the former is a more organized and formal type of education that takes place in schools (Brint, 2006, pp.1-2), and its length varies from individual to individual. Modern societies generally consider schooling to be an answer to social and economic problems and value schooling rather highly; consequently, people are willing to invest in it (Brint, 2006, p.3).

The term 'culture' has been described in slightly different ways, although these definitions seem to complete each other. The system is influenced by values (shared conceptions of life) and

norms (rules, sets of expected behaviors for specific situations) that are learned and not innate (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.90). It is an apparatus which people make use of to carry on with their daily routines. Hofstede defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind" which is done by one's family, school, work and community and makes individuals unique (2001, pp.9/21). "The 'mind' stands for the head, heart, and hands—that is, for thinking, feeling, and acting, with consequences for beliefs, attitudes, and skills" (Hofstede, 2001, p.10). Jandt emphasizes "the totality of that group's thought, experiences, and patterns of behavior and its concepts, values, and assumptions about life that guide behaviour" (Jandt, 2007, p.7), and that there is a substantial diversity within cultures. He also warns that individuals' cultural identity, while serving as a starting point, cannot provide a consistent picture of them[1] and as such should be handled with caution (Ibid., p.7).

In his book about raising intercultural communication competence, Klyukanov described culture as "a system of symbolic resources shared by a group of people" because they represent meaning, and they are produced and reproduced by people, who agree what they mean, and resort to them. He added that "intercultural communication is a process of interaction between groups of people with different systems of symbolic resources" (2005, pp.8-10) meaning that people refer to themselves according to their culture, nationality, race and ethnicity. Cultural identity refers to their membership in a group that shares the same symbolic meanings. National identity refers to people's citizenship and legal status. Racial identity refers to such alleged biological and physical characteristics as skin, hair color as well as facial features. Ethnic identity refers to symbolic heritage such as language, beliefs and rituals (Ibid., pp.12-13). Moreover, he claims that "hard boundaries" and "soft boundaries" exist within each culture: the former have deep roots, which are therefore difficult to change, while the latter do not and can be changed more easily.

Lewis identified three broad cultural styles and their characteristics. In *Linear-Active Cultures,* facts and figures are valued as are highly organized planners, linear thinking, straightforward, direct communication style, task-oriented approaches, and preference of rationalism and science over religion (U.S. Americans and Western Europeans). *Multi-Active Cultures* value emotions, close relationships, compassion, warmth, feelings, and act more impulsively than people from linear-active cultures. They prefer face-to-face interaction, use direct and animated communication style, and feel uncomfortable with silence (the Middle East). Lastly, there are *Reactive Cultures* (the Far East) that value subtle communication: listen first, and then respond, honor harmony, humility and agreement. Their communication style is indirect in which silence is not only tolerated but found meaningful (as cited in Samovar et al., 2007, p.267).

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[1] "Take the term 'British Muslims.' It could mean Muslims in Britain, that is those Muslims who just happen to live in Britain or are its citizens but too alienated to have any commitment or attachment to it. Britain means virtually nothing to them, and the Islamic *Ummah* to which they are tied by their religious identity is all that matters. Second, the term could mean Muslims of Britain that is those Muslims who see Britain as their home and feel loyalty and attachment to it. 'British' refers to their political, and 'Muslims' to their religious allegiance; and the two are kept more or less distinct. Finally the term could refer, for want of a better word, to Britishized Muslims, that is those Muslims who not only feel loyal to Britain and see it as their home but are shaped by the British way of life and thought, values, attitudes, etc. The term 'British' refers to their cultural orientation, which influences their reading of the Qur'an and Muslim history, and gives rise to a distinct British form of Islam" (Modood, et al., 2006, p.199).

'Culture' might be observed in diverse ways while conclusions about it overlap (Gudykunst, et al., 1996, pp.5-6). It is said to be made by people in interaction with others (Cushner & Brislin, 1996). Brislin and Cushner described culture as something with visible and invisible components. The more visible component is called *objective culture* (1977 Triandis as cited in Cushner & Brislin, 1996) and includes the artifacts people make: food, clothing, and names. The more invisible component is called subjective culture: values, attitudes, norms of behavior, the things generally kept in people's minds (Cushner & Brislin, 1996, p.6). Culture is passed on to generations by family, friends, and teachers via a variety of sources, just to underline one: the various experiences that individuals come across in a given culture's schools (Ibid., p.7).

Ultimately, culture is a fluid concept. It is difficult to fully define and measure it; consequently, various approaches have been under criticism. A number of scholars have designed their own research methods and created typologies in their approach to cultural differences among which Hofstede established five standard categories/dimensions of cultures (Individualism vs. Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity vs. Femininity and Long- vs. Short-Term Orientation) by analyzing questionnaires filled out by IBM workers in numerous countries decades ago. In this context, American society is very individualistic, while Middle Eastern countries (all of them are overwhelmingly Muslim cultures) seem to belong to the collectivist category.

Hofstede's findings have been criticized for being obsolete, having western bias, having partial geographic coverage, and not identifying all cultural dimensions possible; hence, the complete picture is missing. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, critics of Hofstede, set up seven cultural dimensions: Universalism vs. Particularism (defuse versus specific cultures), Individualism vs. Communitarianism, Inner-Directed vs. Outer-Directed (Human-Nature relationship), Time as Sequence vs. Time as Synchronization (Human-Time relationship), Achieved Status vs. Ascribed Status, Equality vs. Hierarchy, and Analyzing vs. Integrating (neutral versus emotional). Some of these value orientations, although not a perfect match, can be viewed as nearly identical to Hofstede's dimensions. For instance, Communitarianism vs. Individualism rather resembles that of Hofstede's Collectivism vs. Individualism. Hofstede's Power Distance dimension and the Achievement vs. Ascription value orientation (on the topic of how status is gained) appears to be similar. The Universalism vs. Particularism value orientation, which differentiates a preference for rules rather than trusting relationships, is not far from Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance and Collectivist vs. Individualist dimension.

Schwartz's model places the emphasis on values and claiming that those are the heart of culture, thus concluding that cultural values impact what happens to individuals. His model consisted of three groups: the first is Embeddedness vs. Autonomy where the former values social order, tradition, obedience and family security and the latter values creativity, varied and excited life, broadmindedness and pleasure. The second is Hierarchy, which values authority and social power, vs. Egalitarianism, which values social justice, honesty and equality. The final is Mastery where one changes and exploits the social environment to attain personal goals, vs. Harmony or fitting into the environment and accepting the world as it is (Schwartz, et. al., 1994, pp.85-122). In accordance with Schwartz's model, it is reasonable to conclude that some Middle Eastern and some African societies

have a tendency to value Embeddedness, Hierarchy, and Harmony; on the other hand, the U.S. American society characteristically values Autonomy, Egalitarianism and Mastery.

Ronen and Shenkar have set up eight broad clusters of cultures based on how similar they were, among which there are Anglo, Arab and Near Eastern; others are Nordic, Germanic, Latin European, Latin American, Far Eastern and Independent (1985, pp.435-454). Based on their history, politics and roughly on religion, Huntington identified seven vague civilizations including Islamic and Western and African; others are Japanese, Hindu, Latin American, Sinic. He had divided the globe into three areas: the West, the Islamic world and Asia based on religion. He pointed out that just as the 19th and 20th centuries were the era of nationalism, and the 21st Century belongs to religion (2005, p.15). According to Sen, Huntington's 'reductionist view', which uses religion as the only category to identify civilizations is vague and imperfect so is his claim that these civilizations are inclined to clash (Sen, 2006, pp.10-12). Cultures that may seem roughly alike could be dissimilar ethnically, for instance, and cultures that may seem distant could actually be fairly similar on certain other levels (Brah, 1996, p.238).

These apparent similarities or differences will become visible after revisiting the term 'culture' and realize that it has multiple elements, such as history, common traits, location, language, religion, race, art, and also elements of psychology, sociology, anthropology (Peterson, 2004, p.17). Peterson's culture-iceberg analogy, which is the basis of this study, regarding the definition of the term 'culture,' states that

> "While it has a part that everybody sees, they cannot ignore the much larger part of the iceberg that lies underwater. And, that can be the toughest bit to deal with. Most people tend to be eager to study the tip of the iceberg because that is the first things they are aware of when encountering a new culture" (Ibid., p.19).

Generally, the attractive/unattractive things about other cultures are what is seen at the tip of the iceberg of culture: clothing, language, food, eye contact, gestures, emotional display, pace of life, leisure activities, music, population, architecture, art and literature, sports (Ibid., p.20). The bottom-of-the-iceberg values are equally important, however:

> "notions of time, how the individual fits into society, beliefs about human nature, rules about relationships, importance of work, motivations for achievement, role of adults and children within the family, tolerance for change, expectation of macho behavior, importance of face, harmony, preference for leadership systems, communication styles, attitudes about men's/women's roles, preference for thinking style—linear or systematic" (Ibid., p.21).

One of the issues concerning this study is cultural difference which, no matter what major model is applied for comparison, undeniably exists between the societies of the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, and the USA. In identifying the difference, the role of the individual within the society as a whole, the importance of spiritualism and secularism, the exploitation of democracy (and that is within the equality of girls/women), racism and the acceptance of multiculturalism will be considered. Cultural traits are incredibly useful and important in understanding others, but they must not be the

only reliable source since individuals may differ on some levels (ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, ideology, demographics such as education, age) and overlap on others.

Scholars have described various concepts of culture and emphasized certain components of it. Among them, Peterson's iceberg theory was selected as a guiding model as it is simple, yet it emphasizes the complexity and the depth of the concept (the visible and hidden layers of the iceberg) without highlighting any particular section. His theory stresses the complexity of an individual. For teachers and students to be able to reflect on their own values, to respect and to validate each other's language and cultural heritage, deep immersion will be needed in both: a full discovery of each entire iceberg that embodies an individual. Only via such engagement will ESOL/ELL students be able to adjust well and will teachers be able to offer suitable provision.

2.1 The initial encounter with the new culture

Academics have investigated how individuals are seen in various societies. For example, Triandis mentioned horizontal cultures that value equality, less personal freedom; and vertical cultures that value equality highly and where people stand out from others (as cited in Gudykunst, 1996, p.25). Riley (2007, p.26) argues that culture is neither innate nor inherited biologically as it reflects how and what is learnt. It is traditions that exist in cultures/societies and are subject to change. "Culture is the play of signifying practices; the idiom in which social meaning is constituted, appropriated, contested and transformed; the space where the entanglement of subjectivity, identity and politics is performed" (Brah, 1996, p.234), and only individuals who know all three can make sense of the society they live in. These cultural markers as acronyms, abbreviations, geographical places, organizations, celebrated days, historical dates and characters, public signs, newspapers and games: references to such symbols or cultural markers are powerful as they reflect one's identity (Riley, 2007, pp.42-43).

In general, there are a number of common aspects among such groups within a society. There is normally a dominant social-cultural order which is often described as the characteristic of the culture of a given society (Brah, 1996, p.19). Only recently the role of one's identity has been accentuated when discussing cultural backgrounds. *Social identity* is formed based on how an individual participates in society (Riley, 2007, p.34). It consists of various social sub-groups of a person such as gender, age, religion, profession. As a result, individuals of a given society might represent diverse social realities and have diverse cultures from each other (Ibid., p.39). Parameters that determine one's social identity are gender, age, tradition, residence, occupation, religion, politics, pastimes, marital status, ethnicity and language(s). Any of these categories can also correlate with language and vocabulary (Ibid., p.89). Social identities may be in competition with each other and enjoy priority over one another (Ibid., p.180).

Based on contemporary findings, a person's identity is dynamic and complex and constructed out of the available social materials (Kauffman as cited in Riley, 2007, p.15). "Identity is not a singular but rather a multifaceted and context-specific construct" (Brah, 1996, p.47). Because *social reality* is formed by language, ethnic group and culture; it changes from role to role during the interactions with other members in a given group or society (Riley, 2007, p.86); so a given situation

can be interpreted in different ways (Ibid., p.51). Akin to Riley's argument, Sen also claims that there are a variety of memberships a person has: religion, gender, class, residence, profession, interests, and cuisine. These could be competing identities within one's self (2006, p.4). Sen argues that identity is not a given but a choice as people are typically free to prioritize their memberships and display loyalty towards particular groups. He emphasizes that this freedom is limited by the society in which one lives (2006, p.5), hence it is contextual: "if a sense of identity leads to group success, and through that to individual betterment, then those identity-sensitive behavioral modes may end up being multiplied and promoted" (Ibid., p.23). Besides class, gender, race, profession, etc., *cultural background* in fact influences people's identities, way of thinking and behavior, and quality of life (Ibid., p.112).

Hofstede concluded that most people grow up in societies where collectivism prevails and children learn that they are part of a *we-group*, so group decision is everyday practice. Only a minority of people live in individualist societies in which the interest of the individual prevails over the interest of the group (2001, pp.225-227). While more than two-thirds of the planet's population is claimed to have collectivistic value tendencies, merely less than one-third has high individual value tendencies. Overwhelmingly, in Western parts of Europe and North America individualism is the dominant cultural pattern, while in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Central and South America it is collectivism (Ting Toomey as cited in Gudykunst, 2005, p.75).

In societies where collectivism (Hofstede) or communitarianism (Trompenaar) prevails, group interests rule over those of individuals. People maintain extended family, conformity is very strong, and attention is paid to social status (Hofstede, 2001, pp.226-227). The lower the individualism score is, the less a culture emphasizes the right and interest of the individual over the group.[2] The differences in childhood socialization between individualist and collectivist societies lead to differences in modal personality characteristics and in behavior patterns (Ibid., p.253). Rearing practices are shaped by a set of beliefs, values and attitudes, which make an individual competent, that prevail in groups, societies or cultures with diverse social structures (Riley, 2007, p.134). Regarding children in a fundamentally *collectivist society,* they are rarely left alone; they learn that personal opinion is suppressed and predetermined by the group. Celebrations are essential and should not be missed out of obligation to its members (Hofstede, 2001, pp.228-229).

Many similar values are attributed to the diverse Muslim culture: respect for elders, close family ties; female chastity; strong conservative values concerning sexuality, pornography and censorship; priority of the observance of norms over freedom (Roy, 2004, p.138). Ismail, in his cultural awareness training document, has identified the family to be of great importance in one's social life. The concept and the borders of family go beyond not only the nuclear family but also the extended family (blood related members). Ismail maintains that one third of the rules in the Koran regards the family to be "an important unit" and mentions "a strong brotherhood" among Muslims (2004, pp.106-107). Huntington set up an order of importance according to which in the Muslim world

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The scores that describe the dimensions of cultural variability very obviously demonstrate the cultural distance between several Middle Eastern countries and the USA. For instance, while Britain and the USA have a score of 91 in the individualism versus collectivism dimension (placing themselves into the category of individualist cultures), the Middle Eastern countries' scores vary between 14 and 41 and belong into the category of collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 2001, p.215).

identity tends to be formed as follows: family, clan, tribe, the *Ummah*: an explanation for why nationality or loyalties to nation states have been frail (Huntington, 2005, p.16).

In order to understand the actions and the attitude of recently arrived immigrant students in U.S. schools, it is paramount to understand that an individual can take up and perform a range of selves (Colls, 2002, p.181). As people are members of religious, ethnic, cultural and regional communities, there are countless levels of one's identity ranging from the knowledge they share with the family, within the local community or within their country.

> "Identity, may be understood as that very process by which the multiplicity, contradiction, and instability of subjectivity is signified as having coherence, continuity, stability; as having core—a continually changing core but the sense of a core nonetheless—that at any given moment is enunciated as the 'I'" (Brah, 1996, p.123).

Identity affirmation strategies/claims take place when an individual utilizes one of these prototypical forms (Riley, 2007, p.115) referring to herself as a member of a sub-group, for example: 'As a teacher I..., I'm one of those women who..., Speaking as a skeptic...,We/us bilingual immigrants...' Therefore, identity is partially constructed in interaction with others.

Until recently, little research has been carried out on the adjustment of individuals from the Horn of Africa or the Middle East in the USA. There has been progress, especially since the 9/11 events, but, based on the published literature, there is a need for more extensive, less over-generalized research with multicultural research teams and their perceptions to compensate for that.

> "The religion, the cultures of Islam, Muslim nations and peoples, all become the subject of intensive exploration and probing by a huge array of analysts, from the most thoughtful to the most incendiary, from the most illustrious to the most obscure, from the most sympathetic to the most bigoted" (Allawi, 2009, p.9).

Jandt claimed that the Arab societies and culture are often misunderstood in the USA (2007, p.211). Most likely, only those personally involved or interested know that there are about 75 countries with great Muslim populations; not all Arabs are Muslim, though. Islam itself is diverse with branches (Ibid., pp.212-214), yet it is a way of life, and the central force of existence (Ibid., p.225). Jandt argues that most cultural differences come from religion as all corners of life are organized around and controlled by the Islamic faith[3]. Religion is a strong determinant in one's life in the Middle East, yet religious identity and cultural variations are both omnipresent (Sen, 2006, p.62) and are influential. Among Muslims there are common aspects, but there is an existing intra-Muslim diversity (Brah, 1996, p.47).

The basic attributes of the Muslim Middle Eastern and African societies are often portrayed similarly where responsibility and obligation towards the extended family, the clan, friends, keeping one's promise, cooperation before competition, and nepotism are paramount. In certain areas, the religious and social obligations of Islam are found within traditional obligations of assistance (Lewis, 2006, Rong & Preissle, 2009, and UNDP, online). These apparently similar societies, however, vary in many ways, for instance regarding their socio-economic and education system. In Afghanistan, classes

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[3] According to their understanding, activities of U.S. Americans such as neglecting their families, abandoning parents, acting immorally (sex, non-married couple with children) bring shame on one's family (Jandt, 2007, p.216).

are from Saturday through Thursday with longer breaks in the month of Ramadan (Flaitz, 2003, p.154), and the annual holiday is from January to March. In Saudi Arabia, the school calendar runs from September through June with a break around Ramadan for a month and the *hajj* for ten days, and school days are from Saturday- through Wednesday (Ibid., p.130); meanwhile, in Somalia classes are held from Sunday through Thursday (Ibid., p.256). Classroom settings or conditions can also be very different; for example, in the rural Middle East and Horn of Africa, those are typically below standard with overcrowded classrooms and minimum technology. Besides run down school buildings, educational supplies are also often unsatisfactory (Ibid.). On the other hand, the urban and the wealthy in certain areas of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa will be taught in a much more modern environment (UNDP, online; UNESCO, online).

In Saudi Arabia, Islam, the main religion, is omnipresent in the education system from the age of five. There is a mosque-like room to pray in each school. The curriculum includes material which supports Islamic ideas. It does not include music or dance classes; furthermore, science and arts are introduced only in the final two years (Flaitz, 2003, p.129). In Afghan schools, there are more male than female teachers, and female students may not receive as much attention from teachers as boys. In Saudi schools, the solution to this problem is that girls are typically taught by female teachers and boys by male. In Somali Koranic schools,[4] students may ask for clarification but are not asked to voice their opinion and are not encouraged to participate (Ibid., p.258). In a secondary school setting, in collectivistic societies, student-teacher relationships are in general rather formal. Teachers are highly respected and students are typically not expected to ask questions or voice their opinions (Ibid., p.156). Students are to copy and memorize materials of lectures, and discussions are seldom, and they normally do not compete with each other but help each other when necessary (Ibid., p.157). Corporal punishment is allowed (Ibid., p.259). Their relationship still remains very formal (Ibid., p.133). Such cultural and social upbringing is vital to know why some immigrant Muslim students in American schools might be reluctant to accept teachers of the opposite sex (Ibid., p.129), or to find explanation to their puzzlement; however, it might not even happen at all.

The relationship between the individual and the group, thus, is established in children's consciousness during their early years in the family is further developed and reinforced at school and is visible in classroom behavior. Teachers in a collectivist culture deal with the class as a group and pay little attention to individuals (Hofstede, 2001, p.230). According to the secondary school experience of my former students from the UAE and Saudi Arabia, every student had to pay attention in class, and those who did not or made noise were punished and the teacher would make them leave the classroom. An occasional slap could have landed on those behaving badly. One may call it favoritism or nepotism in the West, but in these societies students form the same ethnic or family background and/or networking system as the teacher or other school officials, may receive preferential treatment on this

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[4]Thanks to the presence of Islam, Koranic schools are widespread in Somalia where children (girls and boys alike) memorize the Holy Koran and possibly the Arabic language. There is a hope that Koranic schools might broaden their curriculum repertoire; however, inadequate teachers and their focus on parts of the Koran and Arabic still prevail (UNESCO, online)

basis. It would be rude not to treat one's in-group members better than others. Hence, besides individual differences, tradition also shapes people and is an indispensable part of one's identity.

Falaturi explains the difference between the role of the individual in western societies and traditionalist societies. In the former, it is assessed negatively; in the latter, though, he draws attention to the point that "Islam defines the role of the individual more strongly in terms of its ties to the community" (Falaturi, 1990, p.64). Within the same topic, Iqbal Ahmad Azami advises young Muslims on acceptable manners in his book. He describes the basic rules behind Muslim manners and at the same time criticizes those of the Western world. In a present-day rich, modern society, according to his perspective, being well-mannered means being posh or middle class, "it is the fashion for young people to say to their parents, 'Don't tell me what to do; I have my own life to lead, you go your way, I'm going mine,' etc. whether the parents agree with their children or do not agree with them, this attitude is a selfish one and can have no part in Muslim manners" (2004, pp.14-15). Although this book contains useful suggestions, it does not guarantee that those are actually closely followed in everyday life, and the fact that a book with such recommendations exists can indicate that Muslim manners might not always be present.

The purpose of education in a collectivist society is to adapt to the skills and virtues necessary to become an acceptable group member. Students' individual initiatives may be discouraged, while more conformity is encouraged (Hofstede, 2001, pp.236-237; Jandt, 2007, p.230). It might seem incomprehensible for those from such a society to see how children in Western societies could stand closer to their friends than to other members of their own family due to more difference in taste and behavior. The reality that children often learn more from the television than from their parents also appears unacceptable. The explanation for it reads simple, "in Islam, family is valued as something that we cannot manage without. It is the only proper training ground (...) to grow up as human beings" (Azami, 2004, p.16). As far as classroom manners are concerned, there is great emphasis on how to show respect to teachers. "We should recognize three types of father: our natural father, the father who imparts education to us, our teacher, and the father who gives us his child in marriage, our father in law" (Ibid., p.28). Then again, it is up to families and individuals how closely they follow Azami's advice. Based on my former Middle Eastern ESL students' experience, behavior in school in their countries of origin is changing, though, and unwrapped disrespect towards teachers is not a rare phenomenon any longer. A number of them have talked about serious bullying in their schools, "mean girls" syndrome and various forms of harassment in school restrooms.

The students participating in this research study come from Middle Eastern and African societies which have diverse ethnic and linguistic (the dominant official language in most of the Middle Eastern countries is Arabic) backgrounds. Because of affiliations such as national, religious and linguistic, racial and ethnic background, language, class, and gender, people in this region may have multiple identities (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.264). The Horn of Africa also includes a mixture of diverse small and large African countries such as Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Along with underdevelopment and poor living conditions due to instability and unrest within and around it, there are countless social problems these societies face. Due to such circumstances many children finishing school face unemployment and uncertain future (Upenn, online). In numerous African societies, there

are still boundaries drawn ethnically and linguistically (UNHCR, online). "Language is a defining factor for the identification of ethnic entities" (UNESCO, online), and relatively few Western societies are thought to have to deal with language and cultural or ethnic self-identity contention. The discussion below regarding various African and Middle Eastern societies is intended to provide an insight to the diversity of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Muslim immigrant students in U.S. schools.

Ethiopia is a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country where third of the population is Muslim living mainly in Addis Ababa[5]. Almost 70 million people belong to various ethnic groups and speak various languages or dialects (UNICEF, online). Like elsewhere in the region, there are a number of children who ought to take long distances on unsafe roads to attend school where classrooms may be crowded, teachers inadequately trained, and school materials are lacking (Ibid.). In Ethiopia the gender parity index has increased tremendously along with the number of female teachers (UNESCO, online). About two-thirds of primary school children stop attending school after completing grade 5. Female students are more likely not to participate or to drop out than male ones except in Addis Ababa (UNICEF, online). "Nearly 4.9 million adolescents aged 15-18, of which 2.4 million are girls, are not enrolled in school due to various economic and social reasons" (Ibid.). In rural Ethiopia adolescence is damaged due to early marriage and/or female genital mutilation and risk of HIV/AIDS. In Ethiopia the literacy level was estimated to be 50.3% for the male and 35.1% for the female population in 2003. In 2007, school life expectancy was for male students 8 years and for female 7 years (Economywatch, online). UNICEF in Ethiopia wishes to involve more girls in the school system receiving basic education.

In Somalia's multicultural society[6], with a clan-based social and political system, groups with various ethnic backgrounds speak a number of languages of which the most widespread is Common Somali (The Library of Congress, online). As far as religion is concerned, Somalia, mostly Sunni Muslims, stands out among its immediate African neighbors where Christian faiths and other African faiths are more widespread (Ibid.). Over half of the population is defined as nomadic and agro-pastoralists, nearly a third urban and the rest rural. People living near cities, in urban areas are more fortunate than the ones living in rural areas[7] (UNDP, online). Due to disintegration, civil conflicts[8],

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[5] Ethiopian Ethnicity; Oromo 32.1%, Amara 30.1%, Tigraway 6.2%, Somalie 5.9%, Guragie 4.3%, Sidama 3.5%, Welaita 2.4%, other 15.4% (1994 census); Languages: Amarigna 32.7%, Oromigna 31.6%, Tigrigna 6.1%, Somaligna 6%, Guaragigna 3.5%, Sidamigna 3.5%, Hadiyigna 1.7%, other 14.8%, English (major foreign language taught in schools) (1994 census); Religion: Christian 60.8% (Orthodox 50.6%, Protestant 10.2%), Muslim 32.8%, traditional 4.6%, other 1.8% (1994 census) (Economywatch, online).
[6] Somali Ethnicity: Somalis, Tumal, Yibr, Yahar, Midgan and Eyle and the non-ethnic Somali people: the Reer Hamar/Banadir and Barawanese people of mixed Arab, Persian, Pakistani, Portuguese and Somali heritage; Bantu riverine agriculturalists; Swahili-speaking Bajuni fishing communities; and Arabs of Yemen, Oman and Zanzibar descent. Spoken languages: Somali, (Cushitic with two main dialects, af-maxaa spoken by the majority and af-maay spoken by Reewin inter-riverine groups); Swahili (spoken by the Bajuni coastal groups and the Mushunguli). Arabic, English and Italian are also commonly spoken; the written language is Somali (UNDP, online, 2001, p.57).
[7] The ratio in 2000 was for nomadic pastoralist (52%), sedentary rural (24%) and urban (24%). Almost 100% of the dwellers are part of clans and sub-clans following Islam thanks to its spreading from the Middle East. Xeer is the customary law that people rely on besides the Sharia law (UNESCO, online).

and ongoing violence, most schools have been destroyed and stopped functioning (Flaitz, 2003, p.254). "A Somali child's chances of surviving to adulthood are among the lowest of children anywhere in the world" and as a result of illiteracy, little exposure to schooling, and no experience of "stable social relationships and systems of governance" (UNICEF, online). Because of the still prevailing gender discrimination, girls are still disadvantaged when it comes to school attendance or women in decision making amongst others (Ibid.).

In order to educate children to some level, Koranic schools[9] and refugee camps have been taking over where parents support the very few qualified teachers for their work. Access to educational opportunities is different with few female students enrolled and even fewer completing schools. It is more boys than girls being educated, but most Somali children, in general, have barely any knowledge of academic learning skills (Flaitz, 2003, p.257). The number of secondary schools is on the increase, but still there is a tremendous shortage of them and teachers that could educate students. It is important to note, however, that there are private schools, language schools, Islamic schools where there is higher quality of teaching and the facilities and foreign languages such as English and Arabic and computer training are often offered (UNDP, online, 2001, pp.85-86). "There are a number of private schools which are offering classes to students whose families can pay. Therefore, American schools may have different types of Somali students who require different educational services" (Somaliacultural, online). In 2006/7 schools were rehabilitated in urban areas and were run for fees/support from the parents and communities. Enrolment rates were increasing; however, for female (only a third) and poor students it is still harder to attend. A new curriculum and syllabus and textbooks in six subjects have been applied in working schools (UNICEF, online). Since 2007, UNICEF has been training teachers, assisting in the improvement of school management (textbooks, student record cards and class/school registers), drawing parents' awareness to the importance of children going to school, providing clean water and separate toilets, tented classrooms in various regions (Ibid.).

The UN Report describes a promising situation in Somaliland and in Puntland; however, it adds that presently "education indicators are extremely low" and there is "very limited staff and facilities" (UNDP, online). The enrollment rate of schools, where female teachers are rare and properly trained are also atypical, is still only over 20% and only less than the third of the students are girls. Nomadic families are worse off than urban ones as less than 1% are in education. It appears that the UN is determined to launch a joint 'Go to School' campaign[10] focusing on primary education so that many children especially the marginalized are targeted to gain access to basic education (Ibid.). School subjects expanded, enrolment and the literacy rate (49.7% male, female: 25.8%) have been on the increase in Somaliland according to a 2009 report by education officials (their plan is 75% by

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[8]Due to rivalry along clan lines (Ibid., p.136) and the resultant violence and insecurity, the presence of humanitarian agencies has been reduced on the ground (UNHCR, online).
[9]From the age of 3, those Somali children for whom it is possible to go to Koranic school learn how to read and write the Koran, from the age of 7 learn to read and write Arabic. In such schools the official language is Somali and Arabic is the second language (Somaliacultural, online).
[10]The Day of the African Child is marked on 16 June annually thanks to The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and it is dedicated to their commitment to improve the lives of African children (UNICEF, online).

2015). Those who are displaced or unable to pay school fees[11] still have little access to education, though (Irinnews, online). The goal set by UNICEF is to standardize materials, train and monitor teachers to increase quality of education "developing alternative, Non-Formal Education (NFE) modules, including curriculum, syllabus, learners' modules and teachers' guides for literacy, numeracy, science, social studies and life skills (including HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, female genital cutting, gender and other areas)" (UNICEF, online). Female Genital Mutilation is still carried out in Somalia because it is still not considered to be a violation of rights. Its negative biological impact on women has been acknowledged hence various local authorities and organizations have been calling attention to its abolition (UNDP, 2001, p.80).

Education is a fundamental human right according to the 1946 United Nations' Human Rights Declaration, and only uninterrupted formal education can promote and provide literacy[12] and teach people to actively and critically participate in their society (UNESCO, online). Little or no education prevents people from exploring what surrounds them. Literacy is supposed to embrace learning through experience, the mother tongue[13], the cultural background, and the identity regarding gender, class, religion, and race. It has been maintained that literacy in one's mother tongue or community language is just as important as learning a given official foreign language in order to avoid a linguistic gap. Moreover, learning to read and write in one's first language can serve as a basis for other languages. Literacy is not considered simply as the ability to read/write; it is a more complex abstract skill that leads to "acute thinking (know how) and the processing of available information (know that)" (Ibid.). To a degree it is literacy and ongoing education which have been thought to establish and promote progressive thinking and thinkers (Ibid.). Limited access to gaining literacy is just part of the problem in African societies. There is more to it, namely that imagination and creativity cannot be fully supported since the overwhelming majority of books published in Africa are textbooks. "Publicly-accessible knowledge production of African scholars takes place outside Africa. The UNESCO Science Report of 2005 indicated that Africa is contributing only to 0.4 percent of the international gross expenditure on research and development, and of this, South Africa covers 90 percent" (Ibid.).

In general, effective formal educational systems have not been fully established in Africa to reduce illiteracy significantly, plus; the African schooling system is thought to support the elite and is

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[11]In Somalia, Djibouti, and Ethiopia, primary school tuition fees have not been abolished (UNESCO, online).

[12] Learners employ Literacy in order to explore their own language and the world surrounding them. "Although literacy is different from language it exists and is acquired only in a given language. Literacy acquisition is language acquisition but literacy is not necessary language learning. Language learning is different from learning through a language. This distinction is critically important in mother tongue education and bilingual education" (Ibid.). When looking at the literacy rate of countries the figures reflect age 15 and over can read and write of the total population of a given country. School life expectancy shows the number of years children spend on schooling (economywatch, online). As the basis for comparison, in the USA according to 2003 estimates 99% of the male and female population was literate. Also, school life expectancy was 15 years for the male and 16 years for the female population in 2006 (economywatch, online).

[13]"We define it in a broader sense as the language or languages of the immediate environment and daily interaction which »nurture« the child in the first four years of life. Thus, the mother tongue is a language or languages with which the child grows up and of which the child has learned the structure before school." (Gadelii report, online)

blind to pay attention to social realities like catering to the rest of the society. Foreign languages as the medium of instruction (opportunities to rise above socially is seen by some through them) has been criticized and seen as a barrier which prevents the increase of literacy rate due to the burden of learning another language at the same time (UNHCR, online). Multilingualism itself (along with cultural diversity) is a fact in Africa where there are between 1,000 and 2,500 languages spoken (there are countries in Africa where a couple of languages are spoken, and there are ones where the number is up in the hundreds) out of which 176 African languages are used in education systems,[14] mainly in basic education (UNESCO, online). Many African children do grow up with several languages spoken in the family or in the immediate community they live in[15]. The proportion is that 70% of the languages taught in primary education are African whereas in secondary education it is only 25% (Gadelii report, online). Consequently, it is a common phenomenon for children in Africa that they are taught in school in a foreign language. Official or semi-official languages such as Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish are unknown to a large number of people across the continent; therefore, being taught in such can be a challenge for school-age children (UNESCO, online).

Dominated by tribes, in Afghanistan[16] it is customary to segregate and control women. It is a male dominated Muslim society with a strong hierarchy. Urban and rural dwellers live their lives differently as the latter are normally rather traditional and isolated (Flaitz, 2003, p.151). Education is considered to be very important, and the relatively few educated people are respected. Due to the current state of the country and the lack of educators, teaching can be interrupted (Ibid., p.153). In theory, girls/women are encouraged to go to school and to work, but in practice (insecurity due to the tribal wars, the presence of IFOR, the seemingly unattainable establishment of democracy) a small number of them go to school, or work, and a great deal of them are insecure and uncertain about their future. "Several killings of women in 2005 underlined the dangers women face in many regions, especially if they move outside strict traditional ways" (Keddie, 2007, pp.117-119). In Afghanistan as a result of community-based (e.g. mosques) and home-based schools (classes in teachers' homes) having been established since 2001 (in that year the number of enrolled female students recorded was zero), the number of female students enrolled in school is over a million. Because of shorter distances to schools and the about three hour teaching a day six days a week, children can support their families and receive education at the same time (UNESCO, online).

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[14]In Somalia Arabic is an official language (with Somali). In primary-secondary education Somali, Arabic, and English languages are taught (Ibid.). Ethiopia's semi-official language is English and Amharic is the African language. In Ethiopian primary schools the languages of instruction are vernacular and Amharic (replaced in many areas by local languages such as Oromifa and Tigrinya), and in secondary schools it is English. Languages taught in schools are Amharic, mother tongue and English (Ibid.).

[15]The authors draw attention to the difference between languages used in Western Europe and in Africa. To some extent there is linguistic homogeneity and standardized languages in the former and linguistic heterogeneity with well-established oralture in the latter (UNHCR, online)

[16] Afghan ethnicity: Pashtun 42%, Tajik 27%, Hazara 9%, Uzbek 9%, Aimak 4%, Turkmen 3%, Baloch 2%, other 4%; Religion: Sunni Muslim 80%, Shia Muslim 19%, other 1%; Languages: Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 50%, Pashto (official) 35%, Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen) 11%, 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai) 4%, much bilingualism (Economywatch, online).

Afghan girls' education normally stops when they reach the age of 12. One of the reasons is that the eldest girl of the household has many responsibilities and chores to carry out. In urban areas, though, they often finish high school before getting married as intellectual families do value educated wives (Flaitz, 2003, p.161). There is gender segregation in schools. Friendships are strong and students feel obligation to help each other in class. Like in other Muslim societies, here, too parents make sure that the friends their children have are from good families (Ibid., p.159). As free mixing between genders only takes places within families, it is, in a social context a sign of dishonor if a man speaks to a woman directly. It is suggested that women avoid looking men in the eyes to maintain the reputation of a proper woman; touching one another under is not allowed in any circumstances. Since men and women are not supposed to be alone in the same room a door should be left open (kwintessential, online). There is male dominance (polygamy is common) but gender mixing in the country (Ibid., p.252).

In Iraq as a result of Saddam Hussein's government, most women and girls had returned to traditional roles within the home. Since 2005, though, the constitution guarantees women equal rights and 25% representation in the National Assembly. There is a widespread insecurity since the 2003 war especially for women (kidnappings and rapes), plus some leaders have been calling for compulsory veiling. Basra, in the south, is Shia controlled where women must veil and not mix with the other sex. With the increase of aggression and insecurity, it is highly recommended that girls and women stay at home and "live a life of far greater restriction and fear than under previous government" (Keddie, 2007, pp.129-130). Women's legal status varies by region and community[17] (Sunni, Shia in the south, Kurd in the north). As a result of the war, social services have shrunk along with the number of doctors and teachers. The number of children who are unable to attend school in the center and the south has been on the increase with the exception of their Kurdish comrades in the north where it is relatively more secure. "Education rates are falling. The number of primary-age children not enrolled in school has climbed from under 800,000 to over 2 million since 2005 (Iraq MoE). School closures have been reported in Baghdad, and many schools have been caught up in violent attacks" (UNICEF, online). According to 2000 estimates, the literacy level was for the male population 84.1%, and for the female: 64.2%. School life expectancy in 2005 was still higher for boys (11 years) than for girls (8 years) (Economywatch, online).

In the UAE[18] the seven monarchies choose their president every 5 years. Women's equality is not established in the constitution, yet their rights have been extended. Nevertheless, the practices are not uniform and still reflect a non-egalitarian way. Family law is mainly unreformed *Sharia*, and

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[17] Iraqi ethnicity: Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%, Turkoman, Assyrian, or other 5%; Religion: <u>Muslim</u> 97% (Shia 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian or other 3%; Languages: Arabic, Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions), Turkoman (a Turkish dialect), Assyrian (Neo-Aramaic), Armenian. Religions: Muslim 59.7% (Shia, Sunni, Druze, Isma'ilite, Alawite or Nusayri), Christian 39% (Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, Assyrian, Copt, Protestant), other 1.3% note: 17 religious sects recognized (economywatch, online).
[18] UAE or Emirati ethnicity: Emirati 19%, other Arab and Iranian 23%, South Asian 50%, other expatriates (includes Westerners and East Asians) 8%. Religion: Muslim 96% (Shia 16%), other (includes Christian, Hindu) 4%. Languages: Arabic (official), Persian, English, Hindi, Urdu (Ibid.)

polygamy is customary on the condition that the first wife gives permission. Rape, abuse, harassment, and domestic violence are criminal actions by law and are punished. There is free health care, the birth rate has dropped to 3, and women receive maternity leave from work, but the rate of employment for women is still low as they face discrimination. Based on 2003 estimates literacy rate was higher for the female 81.7% than for the male: 76.1% population; school life expectancy was also better for girls (12 years) than for boys (11 years) (Ibid.). Overall, the UAE seem to be the most contemporary and progressive places to grow up in the region (Keddie, 2007, p.158). It is worrisome that while education is more widespread in the area even for girls, few critical minds have been produced, and without those changes are hard to come by (The Economist, 2009, pp.14-16).

It is worth noticing that today many women live better, more urban and independent lives than one would actually assume. Overall, women's education and their labor-force participation have increased as they have entered into a great variety of jobs—with reservations, though (Keddie, 2007, p.103). It would be negligent, though; to forget how recent most of the women's rights are in the West. There is a sociological evolution, increasing westernization (Roy, 2004, p.139) of Muslims; and the indications for that are decreasing fertility rates to European levels, with some exception, increasing frequency of nuclear families, growing gap between generations, as a result of better education of young people. Muslim girls are more frequently breaking up with their traditional roles as their parents/elder family members are becoming less able to exercise control over their children and influence their decisions. Such vague cultural values as respecting the elderly, maintaining close family ties, guarding female chastity, promoting strong conservative values and conformity over freedom are becoming less significant. If statistics reflect reality, and why they would not, in general, literacy, life expectancy, education, living conditions and infrastructure have been increasing tremendously in the region. Nevertheless, huge discrepancies in growth are apparent regionally.

Having reviewed the cultural traits of these Muslim societies, it is realistic to anticipate that students from such societies might face adjustment issues to some extent, in an American educational setting because schools do encourage *individualism*. For instance, students are expected to have and to develop opinions of their own. At the initial phase of this research, a group of Muslim students (at CAE language school, Cambridge, UK) helped put together a list of survey questions for this study. They all suggested the modification of all questions that started with "What do you think?" and "What is your opinion about…?" because they did not think that students would answer those as they are not used to these type of questions at all. One explanation is that "Some Asian communities, in particular Muslims and Sikhs, perceive schools as posing a serious challenge, even a threat, to the future of their family and its traditions" (Intercultural Education, 2001, p.198). In secular Western societies[19] teachers might expect these students to decide about their career (future plans) and important questions on their own without realizing that they might not all be used to doing that.

In the USA children receive less support; as the idea is to create a responsible, self-reliant member of society who possibly by the age of 18 will be ready to move out of the parents' house

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[19] Cultural interaction styles: communication is a significant activity because it is the mechanism through which learning occurs. Effective education presupposes effective communication skills. Students from different backgrounds may perceive and react differently to what a teacher says or does because they have internalized culturally different interaction styles (Jandt, 2007, p.273).

(Samovar, et al., 2001, p.119). This aim is presented in the education system where students obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to secure employment that provides income sufficient to survive and to live comfortably. Personal opinions, emotions and personal goals are accentuated. Privacy about time and space is crucial ('I come first' attitude). An individualistic tendency and freedom to be an individual is only a two century old phenomenon in the United States (Jandt, 2001, p.245) that is constitutionally guaranteed. Closely related to individualism and self-motivation is the presence of competition (Ibid., p.203). School is a place where the informal knowledge/matters of a culture are taught: the rules of acceptable manners, cultural values, gender-role expectations, etc. there is little or no information about other cultures—only American: Native, African, Latino co-cultures (Samovar, et al., 2001, p.220). Teaching takes place both implicitly and explicitly. The former happens in designated classes, the latter through praise for correct and scolding for incorrect behavior. It is noteworthy that both individualism, and collectivism are present in each society, but one tends to predominate in different areas of one's life. It is misleading to assume that either individualism or collectivism alone exists in any culture; all cultural-level scores are biased in some way or another (Jandt, 2007, p.211). Besides, their level may only be one of the factors that do not make everyone equally content or satisfied in their own societies.

2.2 Religion and the degree of secularism vs. spiritualism

Throughout the comparison of these particular cultures, reference to religion is unavoidable. It has to be acknowledged that individual differences do exist, but generalizations will be presented in this review to get a clearer picture of the overall role of religion. It must be dealt with and the attitude of people towards it, no matter how sensitive a subject matter it may have become. This sensitivity perhaps comes from criticism and the apparent dilemma of what believers of any given religion might feel uneasy about. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18 guarantees the freedom of religion: its teaching, worship and practice.[20] In reality, though, nearly one third of all people live in countries where there are profound restrictions on religion. Limitations by governments and/or fellow citizens involve persuasion of conversion, registration of one's faith with the government or discrimination against certain faiths. It is contrary to the claim that Islam introduced rights amongst which there is freedom of individuals to live without prejudice of one's color, or religion (Ismail, 2004, p.118). "Among all regions, the Middle East-North Africa has the highest government and social restrictions on religion, while the Americas are the least restrictive region on both measures" (Pewforum, online). It does not mean that the USA is a haven for all religions: religious discrimination does happen and the intensity increases day by day (The Economist, 2009, p.111).

In those Middle Eastern and African societies where Islam undoubtedly dominates, governments (with few exceptions) and fellow citizens (with few exceptions) jointly impose restrictions on religion/religious freedom. Amongst other reasons, to some extent conflict in the region

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[20] "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance (UN.org, online)."

of the Horn of Africa comes from the ongoing Islam vs. Christianity dispute with a clearly negative effect on the society (africa.upenn.edu, online). As Islam is a state of consciousness, a way of life in all senses, followers are expected to live their life from the standpoint of their religion in a world which is shared by *believers* (Muslims) and *infidels* (non-Muslims). There can be pressure from the society to be devoted, and conversion to another faith or abandoning it all is not a personal choice that one makes in the spur of a moment (Cesari, 2004, pp.53/128). In Islam, there is respect for the individual; however, it is not identical with a secular theory of individuality since people cannot separate their identity and their actions from the almighty and have to place themselves in a larger picture (Allawi, 2009, p.11).

There is an ongoing debate of *reciprocita* (Caldwell, 2009, p.147); that is, both Christians and Muslims should acknowledge each other's' faith as equal and let devotees equally practice their faith in any given country. Whereas the West, due to promotion of pluralism and freedom of religion, allows mosques being built, allows faith schools to operate acknowledging the equality of religions including Islam, Muslim societies do not typically let people exercise such rights. Christians rightfully feel undeserved intolerance if secular countries allow mosques on their allegedly Christian ground, but they are not allowed to build churches on overwhelmingly Muslim ground. On the other hand, Christians are not necessarily seen as determined or devoted as Muslims are when it comes to their faith (Caldwell, 2009, p.147). The perception is that for Islam, in most cases, there is no separation between state/politics and church. Islam has an all-embracing role: communal, cultural, social, and political life. It is considered to represent the opposite of secular European and American societies as in most countries in the Muslim world, Islam is either a state religion or under state control. Accordingly, the religion cannot easily thrive and faces many problems since typical western societies, where a secularist mindset dominates, tend to set aside religion in the private sphere (Cesari, 2004, p.75). Religious pluralism is only natural in the USA as one of the basic elements of the national ethos.

It is fairly difficult, if not impossible, to withdraw Islam from the public space and separate the public and the private side of Islam, or "the individual Muslim from the Muslim society" (Allawi, 2009, p.136). What people of secular views need to come to terms with is that the privatization of Islam is generally rejected by most Muslims. The author points out the difference among states in the Middle East (they all respect Islam and regard it highly but they range from tolerant near-democracies to theocracies), and that their religiosity does not necessary equal with traditionalism or oppose modernity (Ibid., p.157). When looking at pictures of everyday life in a number of Middle Eastern countries, one might form a perplexing impression that both the long existing traditions and the latest technology of the 21st Century can strangely coexist. Societies and their flexibility or readiness differ, though.

Islam shapes several aspects of a devout believer's identity and lifestyle. The self and the religion cannot be easily separated unlike in Western societies where religion is a rather private part of someone's life. Nevertheless, Islam is practiced and applied in a variety of forms in Middle Eastern cultures, thus there is an intra-Muslim diversity (Brah, 1996, p.47). Religious identity and cultural variations are omnipresent (Sen, 2006, p.62). Religion is intertwined with the everyday of the culture of most Muslim societies with shops closing for prayers and prayer times printed in local newspapers.

But that does not mean that modernity avoids them. Countries that have experienced economic success; for example, Dubai has become cosmopolitan and its ruling family is proud to acknowledge how Islam and modernity can thrive together. The Saudis have looked at modernity from an angle that helps attract millions for the annual Hajj proving the point that Islam and some form of modernity are in fact compatible (Allawi, 2009, pp.278-283).

Muslims express very different views of Islam and draw different conclusions about the implications of the faith in both private and public matters. It is not uniform, though, as there are not only ethnic differences but also differences between geographical origins, family tradition or spiritual commitment: one can be *culture Muslim, ethnic Muslim, religious Muslim* (Klausen, 2005, p.81). Religion has not always been as strong as it is at the moment in the Middle East. In his book, *The Crisis of Islamic Civilization*, Allawi describes his childhood in Iraq in 1950's at which time Islam was rather weak: Muslim countries put the emphasis on nationalism, ethnic identity or ideology instead of religion. Islam was put in one's private sphere and was fairly invisible for most in everyday life. Religion was taught in school, but the Koran was left on bookshelves. Friday prayers did not enjoy masses of people in mosques, people (including women) wore Western clothes, and the *hijab* or veiling was not an important topic to discuss.   He points out that the resurrection of Islam started in 1970's (Allawi, 2009, pp.2-3).

Although Islam is the dominant religion of that region, it has various forms and interpretations according to which people adjusted their lifestyles. It can be just as uniting (Muslim brotherhood and the concept of *Ummah*) as dividing (*Sunni vs. Shia*) among the followers. There are numerous ethnic groups and their languages. Arabic is the dominant language, but there are dialects (The Economist, 2009, p.4). Caldwell's analysis points out those divisive lines fade away when it is about the *Ummah* and a common cause: race, nationality, ethnicity, tribal links and they unite in a brotherhood (Caldwell, 2009, pp.126-129). This synchronization is most visible when the West attempts to criticize certain elements of their religion—on which restrictions have been imposed by a UN resolution as it was mentioned earlier. Criticism of one's belief is not a new phenomenon in Western culture; it happens in families, among friends, can be a harsh and heated discussion, and occasionally participants do end their relationship. However, it could also be a calm conversation about why some are spiritual and why others are secular.

It is difficult to define and grasp what being religious in America conveys. Several polls have taken place recently searching for the answer. Some degree of religious skepticism came about in the 21st century (Ibid., p.149) reaffirming the fact that cultures are not static, and people's perceptions are not necessarily permanent: views of people that think alike can change. It is best illustrated by the approach of the most eminent representatives of Christianity. One of them was John Paul II, who argued that devout believers have more in common with each other than with their non-believer fellow citizens. Pope Benedict XVI, on the other hand, has said that "within societies, believers and non-believers live in symbiosis, secular westerners have a lot in common with their religious fellow citizens" (Ibid., p.151) the reason being that they share certain secular and democratic values which have been mentioned before.

The basis for secularism is that while human reason allows peace and prosperity, unreasonable superstition produces war and misery. The secular-minded typically believe in human sympathy, on the other hand, can also lead to ridiculing religion and contempt (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.33). Nowadays secularism is associated with modernity, the future, democracy, privatized religion "the triumph of reason and science over superstition, sentiment, and unquestioned belief" (Scott, 2007, p.95). Scott believes that religion should not be considered as the antithesis of secularism; in fact, a modern state can recognize a variety of religious beliefs and accommodate them by separating religious holidays and state holidays (2007). She calls attention to simple facts that non-secular modern states and non-traditional religions both exist (2007, p.96). Individualist societies support individualist religions, in which the stress is on the person's relationship with the supernatural (Hofstede, 2001, p.249), and this is the sphere of life where the Western American culture becomes unique. Polling in March 2008 about religion[21] concluded that "Americans are, if anything, rediscovering the faith of their fathers" [22](*The Economist*, 2008, p.71).

Although there is not a state religion in America, President Clinton, contrary to the idea of separation of church and state, in 1997 made it acceptable to discuss religious views in federal workplaces and schools and to pray (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.54). Plus, since 2002, parents have the option of using government issued vouchers for tuition purposes in schools run by various churches (Huntington, 2005, p.349). American Presidents tend to refer to their religiosity (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.113), and it is believed that one of the reasons why President Obama won against Hillary Clinton was the fact that he "out-godded" her (Ibid., p.129). As of today, no Presidential candidate will want to come out as faithless although their government is secular and the constitution was not written in religious manners (Huntington, 2005, pp.355-365). "The America that George Bush handed over to Barack Obama in 2009 remained a deeply religious place—a three-hundred-million strong refutation of the secularization thesis that modernity was bound to destroy religiosity and push faith out of public life" (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.131). Even if in reality not all 300 million of them are believers, Americans' religiosity, distinguishes them from the citizens of most other highly industrialized western democratic societies.

A 2008 survey suggests that about two-thirds of Americans consider it important that their president has "strong religious beliefs," disregarding the frequency of his church attendance or his specific doctrinal beliefs: they regard religion as a substitute for personal values. As if religion would automatically protect one from being doubted about his or her honesty, faithfulness and devotion. Besides the hesitation to accept a president that is an unbeliever, not being a Muslim also appears to be important. A later poll (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, March, 2009) showed that in the eyes of 11% of Americans, Obama is a Muslim and one in five white evangelicals believe the same false idea to support their antipathy towards him. The political reality (USA Today, 2009, online) is

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[21] According to the Gallup World Organization, in 2006, people in the USA answered the question "Importance of Religion in your Daily Life" was 68% and in Muslim countries in the Middle East the answer ranged between 74-98%. (www.gallup.com)

[22] Some of the questions related to religion included: "Do you believe there is a God? Yes: 80% "Do you believe there is a hell?" Yes: almost 60% or: "If the president were an atheist, would you feel indifferent" almost 30% or: "Which explains the origin of the Earth?" Evolution 30%, the Bible 40%" (The Economist, 2008, p.72)

that to win the national office in the USA being a Muslim or a non-believer is still out of question regardless of how modern, secular and liberal the country might appear.

Being tolerant and secular indicates that various religions also their subgroups can exist and function well next to each other peacefully, and that, citizens of such societies are free to choose to which they want to belong. "Islam is still being bandied about in a violent and threatening way in the hope of silencing voices" (The Economist, 2009, p.14). Apostasy (to abandon one's faith and convert to another religion) is still outlawed, severely punished and simply not an option in many Muslim countries. According to a 2007 survey, a substantial amount of Muslims still favor death for those who abandon Islam (The Economist, 2007, p.58). Although punishment for conversion is rare in Western secular societies; the tolerance of Christian churches is still controversial.

Klausen claims that secularity of Western life is a misleading notion; in fact, some policies and norms are not at all secular: holidays are still religious reflecting Christianity like Christmas, Easter holiday although the latter is called Spring Break in the USA. Certainly, these holidays have been more or less secularized and their religious origin has faded as children expect Santa Claus at Christmas and the Easter bunny at Easter. Unless they attend church services that are set up for children, they will not know about the significance of Jesus behind all that. Conservative thinkers do criticize that secularism has gone too far; nonetheless, post-religious pluralism is a social reality that needs to be admitted and accepted (Klausen, 2005, p.108). Medved (USA Today, 2009, online) emphasizes the phenomenon of open competition among believers in America and extreme tolerance. Not everyone agrees that in the American society the role of religion is being strengthened. American religious identification is changing its format with beliefs[23] that are losing out. A survey indicates that while interest in most (most traditional) religions is fading[24], there is a group that has been gaining members and that is of the non-believers. They are not necessarily atheists, although that too is just another viewpoint that should be respected and recognized with a peaceful and fair-minded manner. The new groups call themselves humanists and free-thinkers reaching out for others that think alike encouraging them to "come out" (Ibid.). Regardless of its religiosity, what makes America a modern and secular society is that the role of religion in society, in politics, and in private life is played uniquely.

It has been noticed that secularization is curtailing faith into the private space. Religious influence in such public institutions as schools is retrenched (Fetzer & Soper, 2005, p.17). Being

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[23] Source: *American Religious Identification Survey 2008*, based on 54,000 interviews in 2008, margin of error +/- 0.5 percentage points. Christian generic app. 0.5%, Protestant mainline app. 6%, Catholic only app. 1%, Baptist 3.5%, Jewish app. 0.5%, and others that are gaining followers: no religion app. 7%, don't know app. 3%, new movement 0.5%, Protestant denominations like Jehovah's Witnesses 0.5%, Muslim less than 0.5 %, in nearly 2 decades (USA Today, 2009, online).

[24] The Pope's has recently announced the new Apostolic Constitution whose apparent aim is to help increase the number of church goers, although according to critics there is a risk that it will lead to confusion among the flock about what the church actually represents. It seems that the transformation will be even more extensive and soon will allow priests to give up celibacy (not the bishops) in the western church. Pope Benedict's goal is to re-evangelize Europeans and celibacy is said to be a hindrance to it. With the appearance of the followers of Islam in large numbers in Europe, it is understandable why the Pope wishes to hold the flock together; however, with such major reformation he will need to proclaim the core values of Catholicism to make it clear for everyone (The Economist, 24 October 2009, p.62).

aware of the increasing diversity of believers and non-believers, President Obama in his inaugural speech in 2008 referred to the United States as a multi-religious "nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers" (Prothero, 2009, USA Today, online). Lately, the number of those congregations putting restaurants, bistros and café's inside their buildings has been increasing, and that will certainly lure in more from the stay-at-home crowd perhaps even some from the crowd of the doubtful (Brinton, 2009, USA Today, online).

Americans are generally convinced that modernity and religion can succeed side by side. The attitude toward religious authorities and faith in America reflects little fear, duty and reverence and more liberty and freedom (Huntington, 2005, p.64). "America is the quintessentially modern country thus a problem for progressive secularists" (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.9). The authors proclaim, though, that religion and modernity are not exclusive terms and that democracy, free market, technology, and reasoning do not destroy religion whatsoever (Ibid., p.12.) In the highly industrialized West, one of the reasons for religious revival is suggested to be the increasing presence of Muslims. Their presence is said to have caused secular minded westerners to refer to themselves as Christian having reconsidered their own spirituality and naturally to the re-examination religion itself. Apparently, higher devotion among Muslims is too a response: to the principles and values of the West (Scott, 2007). It is worth noting that besides a growing crowd of skeptics, higher spirituality is meant to be happening globally, and that both the Islam and Christianity are on higher demand and support (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.16).

A religious secondary school's worldview necessarily varies from its state-run counterparts and it is emphasized, for obvious reasons, in their science curriculum. Many Muslims reject Darwinian evolution with a firm belief that Allah is the sole creator and master of the universe. Muslims are not unique with the view as many Christians too are convinced about creationism. A key principle for faith schools is to strengthen their students' commitment to faith (whether it be Christian or Muslim) and to preserve the groups' religious identity, values, and practices (Fetzer & Soper, 2005, p.151). Upon entering secular state schools, this could be one source of value collision for recently arrived Muslim students previously taught otherwise. Based on what the literature about culture traits suggests, religion is a predominant source of identity and value orientation for Muslims; hence, there is the potential that their cultural identity trembles.

There are those who believe (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.335) that the biggest challenge for religion is science and that the two are incompatible, thus religion is there to offer consolation and bereavement without explanation of the origin of life. Accepting science wholeheartedly is not that simple and straightforward even among citizens of such apparently secular societies. Certain state schools in the USA discuss creationism. According to a 2007 *Newsweek* poll nearly half of Americans believe that God had actually created us humans the same exact way we look today (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2009, p.335). Scientists Karl Giberson and Darrel Falk called for a ceasefire between science and religion, asserting that in today's America maintaining the conflict is a poor and pointless thing to do. "Evolution is as well-established within biology as heliocentricity is established within astronomy" (USA Today, online). By presenting themselves as examples, they argue that being a trained scientist and believing in God goes hand in hand. They find it disappointing that

44% of Americans still choose not to accept evolution (2008 Gallup Poll) and that fundamentalist Christian high schools and colleges still teach creationism in their science curriculum (USA Today, online).

Religion makes an essential aspect of cultural difference between newly arrived Muslim immigrants and the American society. They can be more religious than the society they are joining. Although it is apparent that the American society is rather uniquely religious in the western world, following one's religion has a special interpretation in the Muslim world. In individualistic societies people have a right to spread, choose, follow, and change belief. On the other hand, the concept of "once a Muslim always a Muslim" still prevails[25] (The Economist, 2008, p.30). Thus, religion among newly arrived Muslim students could be an important test case in the process of their socialization in America. What are the essential liberal values that a country and its government absolutely must promote and which are the cases where the state can comfortably tolerate a certain degree of value diversity is up in the air. The degree of similarity or difference between Christianity and Islam or secular worldviews ought to be put aside then people might have a chance to find common ground and identify shared values and shared projects.

2.3 The interpretation of Egalitarianism and Democracy in Muslim societies

What the American culture consistently promotes amongst other ideas is perhaps social cohesion via individualism, freedom (including religious freedom), and human rights as the essential values of democracy. Ideally, genuine democracy guarantees elections so that people are able to choose and discharge their legitimate leaders, "free access to state media," free "formation of political parties according to criteria other than ethnic affiliation," and the intellectual ability to sort out honest and realistic promises from demagogically fooling ones" (UNESCO, online). The government is required to stay transparent, provide independent courts, free press, civil rights, human rights, unbiased civil servants, institutions must be guaranteed, and openness, tolerance towards those who need it. It is evident that Islam cannot be blamed for the delay of the establishment of democracy (The Economist, 2009, p.11) as there is a solid and apparently impatient effort from the Muslims living in the Middle East to implement it. Several governments and their authoritarian leaders that for long ignored criticism and their own people, have realized it recently[26] in a more or less lethal way that there is a demand for Islam and democracy to function together. The followers of Islam say that it is an egalitarian religion, a free one. If people want democracy, they only have one option; and it is to fight for it by themselves as there are still rulers who do not seem to want to let go of their power.

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[25] Recently, the question of conversion was posed among Muslim religionists, and based on what has been found in the Koran it is not forbidden: "Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion," "Whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve," "There is no compulsion in religion." However, in Muslim societies where church and state are connected together, it is opposed. "Usama Hasan, an influential young British Imam, recently made the case for the right to change religions—only to find himself furiously denounced and threatened on Islamist websites, many of them produced in the west" (The Economist, 2008, p.30).
[26] Qaddafi ruled Libya for 4 decades, Mubarak ran Egypt for 3 decades, Assad, now his son Bashar has held onto power in Syria for three decades also. Due to the events of the Arab spring, the Middle East has been experiencing fundamental changes in its societies.

The degree of inequality among people and the unequal power distribution within a society evidently distinguishes the American, the Middle Eastern and the African societies. It is not that one society in question is more equal than the others; it is that inequality itself is noticeable in many areas of life in these dissimilar societies. Societal norms differ among cultures and societies with less inequality generally have more literate, better-educated populations where freedom is seen as a great value among the members of such societies. Within the American society, it is the 21st Century capitalism and economic success of the country that causes inequality. Freedom is guaranteed but social inequality and immobility is apparent and from this perspective, America is considered as a very unequal society. There is inequality, poverty, but it is said to be an individual's personal option not fate (Colls, 2002, p.191). Some inequality has disappeared or has been reduced almost completely like the gap between men and women and their pay, or between ethnic minorities. Ethnicity in education does not matter too much according to the newest studies, as children's future is greatly determined by their parents' education and income (The Economist, 2010, p.66); nor does, the foolishly alleged drawbacks of, speaking two or more languages at the same time.

Today, the American society is thought to encompass decent power distribution within as status-achievement and earned inequality matters and gained through hard work, ambition and competitiveness (Ting Toomey as cited in Gudykunst, 2005, p.75); however, other inequality or social exclusion in the USA is still evident. For instance, in the military where openly gay citizens are still not that welcomed to serve. The so called "Don't ask, don't tell", idea which was thought up under the Clinton Presidency in 1993 has been challenged thanks to President Obama's initiative as he promised in his State of the Union Speech on January 27, 2010. Apparently, the U.S. military had been losing out on essential service members who are Arabic and Farsi translators, but because of their sexual orientation, they were excluded (The Economist, 2010, p.34). On administrative level, the benefits of increased acceptance of diversity have been gradually acknowledged, tolerated and promoted.

In general, in the USA, sex roles are also somewhat differentiated (Hofstede, 1984, p.184). It was only less than half a century ago that women were granted (not without a clash) equal rights and opportunity in the West, which resulted in, amongst many other pleasant things like personal liberty, flexible part-time jobs, and an increase in divorce and illegitimate births (Colls, 2002, p.184). There is a stress on what people do. American people tend to define themselves by what they do/their occupation as it becomes part of their identity (Jandt, 2001, p.238). In the American society it is rather typical and accepted for one reason or another for women not to work, and live in domestic arrangements. The two-income household is just one of the options in the USA (Caldwell, 2009, p.173). The number of women is still insignificant in public life (less than 20% of all the governors); on the other hand, the number of women in education qualifications outnumbers the men: 57% Bachelor's degree, 59% Master's degree and 50% doctorates. The leaders of renowned institutions including several Ivy League schools and the National Defense University are all women[27] (The

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[27] The leaders: MIT (16th President Susan Hockfield), Harvard (28th President Drew G. Faust), Princeton (19th President Shirley M. Caldwell Tilghman), Brown (18th President Ruth J. Simmons) and the National Defense University (Lieutenant General Frances C. Wilson) (The Economist, 2008, p.40).

Economist, 2008, p.40). In short, although there is differentiation among Americans, one's individual initiative is respected and supported regardless of his or her gender, belief or socio-economic status.

It is not unusual to hear Westerners stress disapproval of the treatment of women in Muslim societies.[28] While the perception is that sexes are equal and rights are identical for most Americans, some people act as if women in the West have almost always been in equal position to men, and they seem to have forgotten that property ownership, involvement in business, inheritance, legal cases, and granted divorce have all been recent 20th-century developments. This evolution (the role of women and the culture of homemaking) has accelerated in the USA over the past five decades. Cooked food used to be laborious from scratch, and the concept was that women wanted to serve food that they cooked instead of buying convenience foods, indeed. Emancipation allowed modern women skipping the preparation of lunch dishes, let alone spending their afternoons baking a fussy cake. Having entered the workforce, few women do housework[29]. This is how home-makers evolved and became stay-at-home moms. Competence in ironing, sewing, cooking has declined, too. On the bright side, "the economy grows when women use their brains to boost business productivity rather than devise ways to make ironing less dreary" (USA Today, 2009, p.11A). Pew Research Center of the lives of Americans suggests that there are more female than male college graduates and that wives are now the ones with more education. Women's earnings have increased as well. They also found that people typically marry within the range of their education and income. Women's decision making is becoming more central than that of the husband within the family, especially if the wife makes more than the husband (The Economist, 2010, p.39). In short, egalitarianism is a recent accomplishment in the U.S. which needed the interplay of conditions. Its evolution is also now noticeable in Middle Eastern societies.

Islam conveys egalitarianism as followers are considered equal before God—although they may be quite unequal when considering authority and gender relationship (Hofstede, 2001, p.114). Respect and priority are given to people in high-status, in general as social hierarchies and status difference or inequalities based on one's family background, age, birth, order, gender, occupation, and education. People are better off accepting that rewards and sanctions are distributed unevenly (Ting Toomey in Gudykunst ed., 2005, p.75). Due to this accepting attitude; people believe that there are some who are born to lead while others must follow (Samovar, 2007, p.157). My former immigrant ESL and EFL students, who revealed their experiences in their home countries, have said that trends are changing, especially in wealthy Middle Eastern countries and students do complain about teachers whose personality is not flattering.

Gender roles can be greatly affected by religious traditions particularly in Muslim countries. Gender and religion are primary aspects of Muslim identity. Men and women have definite duties with

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[28] "Muhammad's supposed sexual appetites, polygamy, veiling, seclusion, and harems were attacked through ages, Muslim women were often seen as little more than slaves, and there were fantasies about imagined hypersexual harems and the prevalence of homosexuality" (Keddie, 2007, p.57).
[29] *American Time Use Survey* shows that in 1965 married mothers did 35 hours of housework a week compared to today's fewer than 20 hours even without having a job claiming that they use that time for playing with their children.

males being responsible for economic support and females in charge of family honor[30]. A young girl's behavior, chastity and restricted activity have to do with this concept. The idea of shame and honor are extremely stressed in certain Islamic societies; however, it is important to know that *honor killings* have little to do with Islam itself (Phillips, 2008, p.42).

In Arab cultures sons typically get twice as much inheritance than daughters and their education is priority because husbands are responsible for supporting the family. However, the Koran actually gave the right of inheritance to women way ahead of the West. Where women's education is supported—it is mainly to increase their chances for an educated husband (Aswad, 1999, in Suleiman ed., p.179). Contrary to such customs, Falaturi clarifies that "There is no difference in value between woman and man; both were created the same manner from one being. The emphasis of equality in the Koran was in strict contrast to the existing Arabic conception of considering women as inferior" (1990, p.65). Women in most of these countries follow clothing guidelines. For instance, they veil to protect their honor, dignity, chastity, purity, and integrity (Jandt, 2007, p.227). Women and the rights of women and men are *equal not identical*. In the Arab world these two terms are different. All public facilities are segregated by gender that is to protect a woman's honor by not interacting with men other than her husband and family members.

Having immigrated to Western countries, families could still be inclined to make a distinction among the two genders by giving boys freedom and independence to make plans; meanwhile, restricting girls' lives. Thus, newly arrived immigrant Muslim girls might find life complicated. Besides the possibility of experiencing racial prejudice and discrimination in the host society, their parents also tie their hands. Girls in particular are brought up to be obedient daughters with the prospect of arranged marriages and looking after their family. Parents put the emphasis on their preparation for marriage (cooking, housekeeping, etc.), not on their schooling. For that reason, from a western point of view, these norms and values of their culture disadvantage women (Intercultural Education, 2001, p.198). Flaitz states that typically mixed gender socializing for Somalis is discouraged in America, and students form friendships from similar cultural background (2003, p.259).

Despite moving away from one's country of origin, traditions and culture do not get left behind. In Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur's book, Muslim women speak about their childhood growing up in America. A set of prohibitions were mentioned like no revealing clothes, no alcohol consumption, no smoking, no gambling, no laughing out loud, no calling the attention of the opposite sex, and of course no intercourse before marriage.

"My two girlfriends and I grew up believing that we were priceless vases that could easily shatter, thus shattering our family's reputation. (…) Thus we believed that we were victims to

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[30] Most Islamic societies subordinate women and in such male-dominated societies chastity is everything. In practice it is relatively hard and requires some self-discipline to remain celibate until marriage even in such sexist societies; and it is women who are to blame when losing control. So called *honor killings* are not a universal phenomenon in Muslim societies as it typically happens in Kurdish and Pakistani communities. In the West among Muslim immigrants, using minors to carry out one is common. These families are too proud to allow their girls/women independence, and they are also too proud to be sentenced to prison by western penal codes for attempted murder. A genuine Islamic culture should not have to ignore fundamental human rights like equality of men and women (Caldwell, 2009, pp.177-178).

our femaleness. So, while our brothers were encouraged to go to school and become educated and successful, at nineteen we were married off to men from abroad chosen by our parents" (Samina Ali, Abdul-Ghafur (Ed.), 2005, p.25).

Aroosha Zoq Rana in *A Siren Song* explains women's status "There is a belief among Muslims that a woman is *awrah* meaning "damaging" and has a pejorative connotation. (…) The result is that she must be covered and hidden" (Ibid., p.174). UNESCO found "significant gender disparities[31] in access" (UNESCO, online, p.81) which means less intake of either female or male students in various African and Middle Eastern countries; nevertheless, many have made progress in the past 10 years including Ethiopia, Djibouti, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Gender disparities are thought to occur more often in poorer and rural areas.

The issue of veiling ranges from the status of Muslim women to their religious freedom and national identity. Forcing women to be free, by banning having one on, goes against freedom of choice. It is a complex question of tradition, choice, being told, stress self-discovery, political statement, and a fashion statement thanks to designer veils (Klausen, 2005, p.171). Abstract individualism is a modern phenomenon in the West which acknowledges human beings, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, social position or occupation. That is why they feel uneasy about Islamic cultures' regulation of sex and sexuality, veiling and what it implies (Scott, 2007, pp.162-168). Modern seculars regard the veil both as a sign of restriction/subordination or a symbolic rejection of western ways (Caldwell, 2009, pp.189-191). It creates a dilemma of what is less unacceptable: to force one to wear it or to ban one to do so. The potential pitfall is that while being sympathetic and well-meaning, not every woman (from the East to the West) wishes to achieve or enjoy gender equality.

Historically, Muslim cultures have had some form of veiling or covering, some looser than others. A conservative scarf which covers all the hair is the *hijab*; the *niqab* exposes only the eyes; the *abaya* a gown, covers the body; and the *burqa* covers everything from head to toe. Depending on where they live in Afghanistan, women still wear the *burqa* and men the *shalwar kameez* (Flaitz, 2003, p.157). Proper outfits include pants under skirts which make the definition of the legs undistinguishable. Wearing a headscarf in public is also strongly advised. Whereas in Somalia it is not rare to see Somali women wear the *hijab* since it is not obligatory to do so (Kwintessential, online). Apparently, the Koran does not mention veils or headscarves at all, but speaks of a curtain (*hijab*) that women should erect between them and men possibly to keep women separate behind a curtain in a house or wearing such garments. Upper class wealthy women who did not have to work in the fields wore a veil in some parts of the Middle East probably as a status symbol. The Koran does talk about a long flowing garment (*jilbab*) related to Muhammad's wives. There is only one referral to dress code in the Koran to all women to cover their private parts and put clothes over their bosoms. Throughout time the degrees of head coverage became important signs of religiosity or a sign of distinction by a Muslim woman (Bowen, 2007, pp.68-70). According to the Muslim girls Bowen interviewed in his

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[31]According to the UNESCO EFA statistics with the exception of Djibouti and Iraq, gender parity for the countries listed have improved but exists: in Djibouti 74% male vs. 67% female students, in Iraq 73% male vs. 66% female, Eritrea 91% male vs. 85% female, Ethiopia about 85% for the total school population (UNESCO, online).

book, veiling does in fact have a positive effect as men are less likely to harass a woman wearing a headscarf. These young women considered some of those wearing a *niqab* as very pure and completely detached from the world. Additionally, the talks also indicated a more deceptive side of veiling (Ibid., p.80) that is hiding one's true personality and a pretentious way of getting a husband. Some Muslims would insist that veiling is not at all a sign of religious affiliation but part of their religious lives. It is not about broadcasting their values but living according to god's will even if the reaction of others is that of disapproval (Ibid., p.187). Veiling and following certain dress codes is another issue which is handled in different ways in Muslim societies.

Various interpretations of the Koran's instructions regarding the dress code for both men and women are caused by the different approaches to religious exercise associated with various ethnic and national histories are part of the explanation. The differences reflect patterns of demographic variation and theological tendencies (Klausen, 2005, p.193). There have been various interpretations of the Koran about dress codes; and to clarify it all, Ismail states that while Islam does require both men and women to dress moderately (protection from the weather and being comfortable for the body matters), there is not such a thing as specific Islamic dress or uniform (2004, p.104). Thus, clothing of any country or tribe is based on tradition and is allowed if acceptable and moderate.

Gender mixing in various settings teaches children shared habits and values and prepares them for proper social interactions in the public area as fellow citizens (Bowen, 2007, p.158). When advising Muslim teenagers about proper manners, Azami draws attention to the correct manner of dressing. A young Muslim ought to keep his or her dignity in every moment even in the changing rooms and communal showers (Azami, 2004, p.89). Klausen states that if the reason is for women to cover up is to prevent distraction of men then it is something to do with female inferiority and misogynistic (2005, p.186). Muslims are criticized for their practice of gender segregation and preventing young girls from participating in emancipation expecting them to follow certain rules which might look rigid and may be considered damaging.

Despite globalization and western influence, Muslims regard the role of religion critical in the preservation of their personal and national identities (Esposito, 2002, p.63). It is necessary to understand that Islam besides being a spiritual religion involves social, legal, and moral actions of believers. Women are still inferior to certain extents in general, but there has been growth of women's right movements in most of these societies which brought about reforms, Islamic women's groups, and recent interpretations of the Koran and Traditions, in various directions (Keddie, 2007, p.122). In some countries women are encouraged to work in professional fields while in other more traditional ones, their work and areas of study are limited to the arts and humanities, "hoping thereby to preserve their role as wives and mother" (Kirdar in Griffin ed., 2006, pp.191-192). As discussed in Chapter 2.1, the status of women varies in Islamic countries; nevertheless, transformation as a common sociological phenomenon is evident.

2.4 The multicultural character of the U.S. American society

Cultures (of a society or an individual) are not static, and preserving them exactly the same way as they used to be, is extremely difficult and unnatural due to their complexity and fluidity. Evolution happens to human beings and societies they live in alike: due to globalization, new foreign words are added to languages, and new laws, rules and suggestions are born and made daily. Huntington considered this evolution more fatal thinking cultures do not evolve but die as they are mortal. He suggested that the USA recommits itself to its Anglo-Protestant roots promoting liberty, freedom, critical thinking, equal rights, openness, democracy, peace, freedom of speech, fair competition, and Christianity to slow down the process of decline. He believed this decline is indicated by the weakening national identity due to globalization, cosmopolitanism, immigration, multiculturalism (immigrants maintaining dual nationalities), and the strengthening ethnic, racial and gender identities (2005, p.4). However, the very essence of liberalism is to encourage freedom and pluralism along with the diverse expressions of faith, culture, opinion, and art among the citizens.

The world has changed into a multi-cultural environment where many Western democratic liberal countries now have multi-faith and multi-ethnic cultures or societies; as a result, definitions and priorities of citizenship, nationality, ethnicity or religious affiliation are becoming tenuous and feeble.

> "If diversity enriched and strengthened nations as much as everyone claimed, why would any nation ever want its immigrants to integrate into the broader society? That would be drawing down the nation's valuable fund of diversity" (Caldwell, 2009, p.83).

Tolerance towards all that coming from the state or the government is one thing; however, individuals within might not be equally committed (Klausen, 2005, p.165). Caldwell's skepticism is also supported by Riley and Brah. In the USA, there are numerous subcultures (groups within a culture whose members may share certain values of the culture but they certainly have some that differ from the larger culture) existing with each other, some keeping their own features and some integrating. One particular subculture – the immigrants tend not to assimilate and are reluctant to give up their cultural background. It has been observed that stable groups or communities in isolation can remain impermeable for various length of time maintaining their particular characteristics (Riley, 2007, p.27). Brah calls them subgroups which are not necessarily made up by immigrants, since ethnicity, religion or political affiliation can all be basis for it. "The concept of diaspora centres on the configurations of power which differentiate Diasporas internally as well as situate them in relation to one another. (…) It is the economic, political and cultural specificities linking these components that the concept of diaspora signifies" (Brah, 1996, p.183). In the U.S. these subcultures or subgroups make the prevailing culture more diverse and ambiguous. [32]

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[32] American ethnicity: white 79.96%, black 12.85%, Asian 4.43%, Amerindian and Alaska native 0.97%, native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander 0.18%, two or more races 1.61% (July 2007 estimate) about 15.1% of the total U.S. population is Hispanic; Religion: Protestant 51.3%, Roman Catholic 23.9%, Mormon 1.7%, other Christian 1.6%, Jewish 1.7%, Buddhist 0.7%, Muslim 0.6%, other or unspecified 2.5%, unaffiliated 12.1%, none 4% (2007 est.) ; Languages: English 82.1%, Spanish 10.7%, other Indo-European 3.8%, Asian and Pacific island 2.7%, other 0.7% (2000 census *note:* Hawaiian is an official language in the state of Hawaii) (Economywatch, online).

Although the USA has been described as a multicultural society, according to a survey that *The Economist* commissioned in March 2008, Americans are not routinely keen on multiculturalism (The Economist, 2008, p.72). In the past, people acculturated/adjusted to the American society by assimilating into the dominant culture. To do this, they would gradually let their old cultures go and learn the language and culture of the United States (hence the idea of the "melting pot"). Today, on the other hand, people acculturate to the dominant culture typically by simply integrating. They maintain their original cultures and at the same time gain knowledge of the dominant culture and language (Jandt, 2007, p.375). Jandt describes a *post ethnic perspective* that recognizes the fact that people live in and identify with many different groups at the same time. Instead of having identities based on things like ethnicity (rigid inflexible), it encourages people to choose identities for themselves based on their individual interests and affiliations (which is changing and flexible) not by heritage. "Postethnicity in the U.S. may be an extension of extreme individualism" (Ibid., p.374). One of the most fundamental beliefs in the USA is individualism. Associated with this belief are the ideas that everyone is the same, and that everyone should have the same opportunities (the American Dream). Jandt depicts the typical U.S. American people to be self-motivated, competitive, make decisions for themselves, responsible for their own actions and that they can change. They are efficient, practical, and look at progress and change positively. They have faith in science and technology and are materialistic. They are also conformists in a way that they like to keep up with the latest fads and fashions (Ibid., p.209). Many Americans do not represent the same social reality and are not the typical representatives of the American culture: the mass who oppose changes, science and technology.

Although there are those in the American society who have reached a post ethnic and post racial level (see the latest presidential election in 2008), there are still those who ridicule successful women,[33] oppose gay marriage, oppose abortion (even when the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest), and support creationism. They are the ones who refer to the Bible and think the universe was created precisely 6,300 years ago and occasionally receive support for presidency. Some dislike the idea of immigration and the presence of immigrants, some do not own a passport, are poorly educated and therefore insular (The Economist, 2008, p.36). Some fear that the principle of individualism and liberalism might be misunderstood by some getting too liberal and, as a result, the culture is in danger of being destroyed by its own principles (Phillips, 2008, pp.282-283). Besides Christian customs, traditional moral norms tend to have faded away, and it became unclear at which behavior or lifestyle should society draw the line of acceptance. There is an emergence of a culture of hyper-individualism which brings radical lifestyles and values (Ibid., p.64). Although the American society is individualistic, its situation is unique because "the churches have been in the forefront of the defense of Western values" (Ibid., pp.213-214).

The land of freedom entails intellectual freedom, also that 50 states have 50 laws so people can choose according to which laws they want to live, that immigrants can, to some extent, retain what they love about their culture and "find a cluster of his ethnic kin in America" (The Economist, 2009, pp.41-44). 13% or 38 million of the citizens are foreign born Americans. Compared to countries

[33] A Republican, Roger Stone and his wife Nydia launched a pressure group called Citizens United Not Timid to ridicule Hilary Clinton, one of the failed presidential candidates of the Democrats (citizensunitednottimid.org, online)

elsewhere, the USA is a relatively easy place to be at when following any religion. It takes immigrants less than 5 years to feel comfortable or part of the community according to the 2009 Public Agenda survey (77%) and only 5% never fitted in the American society (Ibid.). Even the all-embracing American society will expect newcomers to conform to basic cultural traits. "It is its pressures that have bound America's diverse citizens together as one people. You can have hyphenated identity, if you insist, but you had better know which side of the hyphen your bread is buttered on" (Caldwell, 2009, p.277). There is a lack of welfare and social pressure (cheap housing areas are best to avoid let alone live in one) to survive and roughly fit in; or leave as one may wish. Soft multiculturalism (Phillips, 2008, p.97) is what one sees in the USA where minorities along with the majority are free to practice their religion, customs and culture in private; but the mainstream culture and its law, traditions remain still influential.

Traditionally, immigration meant unconditional assimilation to avoid being singled out (Huntington, 2005, p.61). However, joining a multicultural society now might mean that individuals are allowed to preserve their culture as long as they keep up with the law and participate in the economy. As a result of that immigrants and their habits have changed throughout history (Caldwell 2009, p.123). Today due to technology, one's country of origin is an airplane flight away, and information about it or communication with stayed-behind family members or friends is done through satellite TV, Skype, Facetime, and countless free smart phone applications, slowing down or even preventing assimilation (Ibid., p.120). While just a few years ago the majority of Muslims in America were reported to follow American values being fully integrated, reality seems to be somewhat different today. Lexington argues (The Economist, 2010) that besides numerous other reasons; it is partially the not-so accepting U.S. society that pushes newcomers aside. According to his argument religious, ethnic diversity in the USA, these days, creates division rather than diversity.

Race and ethnicity have an impact on societies and individuals (Coles, 2006, pp.7-9). Research has found that racial-ethnic minority parents are very likely to discuss racial socialization with their children regarding racial bias although the frequency and depth depends on each group. They might also tend to validate their ethnic identity and contradict messages from the dominant group if those jeopardize the self-esteem and efficacy of their children. As a result, communication between parents and children about race relations are important as it may cause success or failure (Ibid., pp.127-128). Where one culture dominates, children can lose their objectivity easily; therefore, teaching about a variety of cultures when discussing a subject matter is recommended (Irujo, 1998, p.107). Honigsfeld and Dove's suggestion (2010, pp.31-33) ought to be adhered to; specifically that schools establish and provide a culturally responsive or congruent environment to help learning: a positive school culture that is inclusive to their diverse school population.

Julios describes an emerging *integrationalist model* (2008, p.116) which may save social fragmentation and create community cohesion. The individual right to be different is outweighed by the ideology of the collective duty to integrate (Ibid., p.140). By and large, the Muslim Diaspora has been regarded unable and unwilling to integrate in some places (Ibid., p.141). As a result of lacking shared values, there is no heterogeneity among white and non-white or majority and minority cultures "community of communities" (Kumar, 2003, p.257). The prevailing atmosphere of multiculturalism is

not too positive, and according to a study that looked at 6 European countries plus the USA (carried out by German Marshall Fund at al.) in 2009, in the USA 40% of the respondents think that immigrants take jobs away, over 20% think that they commit crime, approximately 30% oppose granting rights to benefits for immigrants. The conclusion of the study was that the American majority (over 60%) believe that their government mishandles immigration (The Economist, 2009, p.68).

There are some who are definitely alienated and feel that they do not belong, and some are convinced that "newly arrived Muslims should remain distinct from society at large" (Interfaithcenter, online). There are Muslims living in America resisting fiercely against the contemporary American way of life and have a nostalgic attachment to their native country's customs. They are the group which struggles to survive as a third of them never learn English and wives are kept isolated (Abdo, 2007, p.47). Caldwell describes "*adversary culture*, a culture built on distrust towards the dominant one" (2009, p.139). "Resist is not a democratic verb, in the way reform or dissent or oppose is. It is a revolutionary verb. Resistance is what one offers against a system that has no legitimacy whatsoever behind it" (Ibid., p.242). Huntington, too, had stated that in America the assimilation of Arab Muslims is perceived in particular as rather difficult and slow, possibly because of prejudice, the media or their aim to live according to Islam in every way (2005, p.188). However, looking at immigrants (including Muslim immigrants) from such standpoints indicates that they are expected to pursue a colonial style assimilation in the 21st century instead of a more realistic type of adjustment—laissez faire integration.

People estranged and segregated from the mainstream society find Islam as safe haven and an ideology which they can admire, and which provides explanations for them. It is worth keeping in mind that while several Muslims live like anyone else, there are plenty others who wish not to relate to the liberal democratic culture but maintain their Islamic values and run a parallel autonomous society and lifestyle. Religion itself can create an 'us and them' approach, however. Also an alienated Muslim minority in a secular culture does not necessarily find the new environment liberating, but one that perverts religion and handles it in a neurotic way (Roy, 2004, pp.35-36). They have been catered for, to some degree, by allowing Islamic dress codes and providing prayer meetings/rooms, or *halal* food in schools and other institutions; nevertheless, there must be an interest in cultural adaptation from the diaspora.

Caldwell claims that although it has been massive, the immigration of Mexicans, who typically follow divisions of Christianity, in the USA requires no major basic reform on cultural practices or institutions: Islam is different (2009, p.11). Due to immigrants arriving with various traditions and cultural backgrounds, the culture and society have been undergoing change and a multi-ethnic or multicultural state is being shaped. The newcomers typically live in communities with established support and networks of friendship, and their number rise, "race became a source of social conflict" (Christopher, 2006, p.4). Western democracies are revising multiculturalism especially because of the loud demands of Muslims. Mosques, *halal* shops and restaurants (essentials) mark the presence of Muslims living in the society. This study supports the claim of Fetzer & Soper (2005, p.147) in a sense that the authenticity of individuals belonging to a society might not be stronger just because the state they live in goes far to recognize their rights of religious practices and a certain style of life.

When individuals are frequently asked to define themselves, for example based on their ethnicity, there is a chance that their ethnic identity becomes rather strong as opposed to their national identity (Huntington, 2005, pp.300-303). For the members of Middle Eastern societies, citizenship-oriented behavior is atypical (Tibi, 1997, pp.222-223). Religious and ethnic bonds are firm, so it is customary to act as a member of an ethnic or sectarian sub-community (even a tribe) and to its identity that is not based on the state, thus there is a clash of habits between them and Westerners (Ibid., p.206). There is the *Ummah* or superior national pan-Muslim identity, an overall superior Islamic identity. Culturally, some Middle Eastern and African societies have (linguistically, religiously, tribally) diverse populations. A 2005 poll by Pew on Islamic extremism showed that a large majority of citizens of Pakistan, Morocco and Jordan (2/3rd of population) consider themselves as Muslims first before their nationality. Multiculturalism, which in theory promotes equal treatment for all cultures, in fact can become divisive on the expense of the prevalent culture and social cohesion (Phillips, 2008, p.115). Muslims as a minority tend to be blamed for standing out as those with a never-ending shopping list of demands for special treatment (Ibid., p.264). While it is entirely reasonable to seek to accommodate a minority's religious requirements[34] to make them feel welcome and accepted, developing a parallel system or society can weaken or prevent integration and social cohesion.

Alienation, distrust and segregation, are words hard to grasp as they may embody double standards depending on one's viewpoint. American residents that belong to the populous (mainly white) middle class (and those in the upper class) completely visibly and perhaps logically segregate their neighborhoods where they wish to raise their children amongst people alike. They carefully select schools (top at least 8-10 rated public, private, religious) they intend to send their offspring to, and they do so in the name of providing for their children's betterment--totally understandable. Interestingly and ironically at the same time, when people who belong to certain ethnic minority group(s) try to do the same, they are accused of acting against social cohesion.

Valuing cultural conservation stands for the preservation of traditional lifestyles by first generation immigrants in Western societies (Sen, 2006, p.113). Sen defines the idea of *cultural liberty* (Ibid., p.114) as the freedom to either preserve or change one's priorities. Cultural freedom does not necessitate multiculturalism and the continuation of past traditional cultural heritage of immigrants in Western societies but the option of questioning one's original culture and the priorities of his or her identities. He explains that an immigrant wanting to participate in the mainstream society in various ways would be considered as a multicultural act; however, his/her parents preventing him/her from doing so indicates *plural monoculturalism* (Ibid., p.157). Abbas describes the idea of multiculturalism as one that promotes political unity without cultural uniformity. It requires citizens (the white majority

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[34] Diwali (December 2-8) is one of the most important celebrations in India. Originally a Hindu celebration, it is now celebrated in nearly all regions in India. The festival celebrates the triumph of light over darkness. Santa Lucia (December 9-15) or the feast of Saint of Lucy who brought food to hungry Christians hiding from the Romans is celebrated by a parade. It represents the arrival of light and nourishment to villages. Kwanzaa (December 16-22) in Swahili it means the celebration of the first fruits of the harvest. One candle is lit each night during the week and each candle represents one of the seven principles like purpose, unity or creativity. Las Posadas (December 23-31) is Spanish for the Inns commemorating the journey Mary and Joseph are said to have taken from Nazareth to Bethlehem looking for shelter. Traditionally, people visit from household to household, like a pilgrimage, carrying candles with them.

and the different ethnic groups) to be willing to respect cultural differences and maintain a common sense of belonging at the same time. Significant ethnic social inequalities continue (2005, pp.16-17); therefore, how successfully the theory can be materialized is hard to predict.

This study claims that, along with the majority of the line of arguments above, strict cultural uniformity is pointless and obsolete in a globalized world. The populist stance of multiculturalism causing division rather than diversity needs to be abandoned and replaced by the concept of a congruent environment in which immigrant cultures can be maintained, and gaining genuine knowledge of the dominant culture and language is also promoted. Schools must teach children objectively and extensively about a variety of cultures so that the feeling of uneasiness towards certain cultures diminishes, so that children can prioritize their preference appropriately, and so that they would not find it difficult to adjust to life in the U.S. Instead of having to develop a separate parallel system for themselves, recent Muslim immigrant students should be able to express themselves in the education system where they are enrolled and gain validation of their cultural identity there. Every child should be given the opportunity to be able to take pride in their heritage perhaps via extracurricular activities.

At present, for Muslim immigrants it is not simply noticing differences between their own culture and the individualist American culture, but also about 'digesting the experience' and slowly but surely adjusting themselves to it, in order to avoid any confrontations or a culture clash. Coming from a collectivist society with low egalitarianism, facing more or less 'unrestricted' individualism and greater social equality could lead to apprehension and misunderstandings. As a newly arrived so-called minority, one is exposed to the judgment of national citizens. The judgment can indicate that the person is not part of the in-group and can rub on along with a mixture of feelings of not belonging, being inferior, or can be reassured and this is how "the concept can be internalized and can become part of their identity" (Huntington, 2005, p.23). People see their culture and their place in it according to their race, ethnicity, class, sex, age; thus, it may become a force causing clash among people within.

Kendall asserts that when people recognize the difference between one another, they tend to make comparison that can generate evaluation which eventually may lead to justification. Finally, conflicting justifications can create competition to demonstrate one's superiority. This way, stereotypes can be created and the opponent demonized (2003, p.70). When a weak and insecure culture of a majority meets a confident culture of a minority, clash can happen and one of them will have to eventually give up and give in (Caldwell, 2009, p.286). The fear of being viewed as racist or prejudiced may prevent people to say or to criticize certain actions taken by the Muslim minority (Phillips, 2008, p.298). Phillips argues that people might rightfully feel confused about what is considered to be racist or a source of shame to think because it is still unclear if minorities have actual equal status and rights with the majority (Ibid., p.24).

Besides individualism, achievement, success, activity and work, science/technology, progress and material comfort, efficiency and practicality, equality, morality and humanitarianism, freedom and liberty, *racism and group superiority* are also core American values that are considered to be essential among the majority of Americans (Kendall, 2003, p.82). Hofstede holds extreme uncertainty responsible for *Xenophobia and racism* as that can create anxiety and the way people deal with it can

be cruel (Hofstede, 2001, p. 146/175). Equal treatment of American citizens is also a recent phenomenon which got its start only about half a century ago, and it has been supported with affirmative actions like positive discrimination to loosen the superiority of white Americans: *Brown vs. Board of Education* 1954, the Civil Rights and Voting Right Acts 1964-1965 (Huntington, 2005, p.55).

Klausen analyzed the difference between *Nativism* and *Xenophobia* and concluded that the former is a political movement that discriminates on the bases of origin and seeks particular policies that will deny immigrants the right and privileges given to natives. The latter is a perception that foreigners, including immigrants, are a threat to national values. It is an attitude and can be exploited for political[35] and social purposes. Immigrants have recently been moved from an economic threat to a cultural threat since concerns over strengthening national identity are stronger than maintaining economic growth (2005, p.126). In America there are a number of people who wish to tackle multiculturalism that allows immigrants in the country who cannot speak English or may threaten America's Judeo-Christian values (The Economist, 2010, pp.31-32). Racial tension is actually based on cultural differences rather than skin color and is aimed at specific groups as Modood saw a changing trend over a decade ago namely "primarily a prejudice against Muslims" (1997, pp.133-134).

A range of surveys have been carried out for the last couple of years about the extent of prejudice or tolerance of American citizens. The ABC News/Washington Post Poll in January 2009 showed that racism is a big problem according to nearly half of black Americans, and somewhat of a big problem for half of white Americans (less than 5% in each group thought that there was no problem). The ABC News Poll in 2009 asked adults if they identify themselves as their race or as an American first. Overall 78% of them identified themselves as American first; but when breaking down the result, 87% of the white population said American first, which among the minority was only 51%. When asked about racial prejudice, over a third of Americans answered that they have at least some feelings or racial prejudice (PollingReport, online). The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press survey (conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International) in 2008 indicated that just over half the American population thinks that the growing variety of ethnic and racial groups in the U.S. is good (nearly a fifth says it is very good). An ABC News/Washington Post Poll in 2008 indicated that, at large, race relations in the USA are good (47%) (Ibid.). These results indicate that especially the people of the non-white population still perceive the U.S. society prejudiced.

A Pew survey on American attitudes toward Islam, showed that a majority (58%) of Americans discriminate against Muslims more than they do against Hispanics, blacks and atheists (Ibid.). Only homosexuals or Scientologists have worse reputation than them. Over half of those who took part in the survey do not know any Muslim in person, and their basic Islamic literacy is equally low. The secular and religious pluralist character of the United States is, therefore, under a criticism of simply being a Christian nation where "Catholics and Jews continue to sit comfortably alongside

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[35] Political parties of the extreme right promoting discrimination and oppression of certain minority groups seem to be getting stronger than ever in Europe (BNP in England, Jobbik in Hungary, Geert Wilders's Party of Freedom in Holland). Populist Islam bashing obviously exists in the USA; however, it will hopefully never gain substantial political respectability.

Protestants under America's sacred canopy. Muslims, however, are left out in the cold" (Prothero, 2009, online). Sound teaching about what a proper multicultural society stands for might lead to a shift of perception in the U.S. society regarding both race and religion.

In the USA at the moment there are mixed feelings about Islam, but positive experiences of personal acquaintances. Fundamentalist and evangelical Christians have called Islam the Antichrist (Cesari, 2004, p.37). Religious pluralism in the USA is one of the basic elements of the national ethos; however, *Islamophobia* in America focuses on religious aspects of Islam, in contrast to Europe where it is mainly about cultural issues (Ibid., p.40). Islam is considered to stand for the opposite of the so-called modern and secular American societies. Followed by the attacks of the Muslim extremists in the West, suspicion and surveillance cameras follow innocent and guilty Muslims alike living in America, so they rightly feel as vulnerable victims (Ibid., p.17). Immigration policy in the U.S. has become more restrictive when applying from Muslim countries and the practice of forcing Muslim women to remove their veils or headscarves no longer counts as discriminatory abuse (Ibid., p.39). The USA Patriot Act of 2001 extended the power of the government to monitor U.S. residents, especially resident aliens and their families. There is prejudice against Muslims and Islam from Left to Right, politically speaking. The Right sees them as terrorists, and the Left as those who, for instance, mistreat gays and women, and are anti-Semite and intolerant in politics (Allawi, 2009, p.181) with widespread hostility towards Israel and the Jews. Clearly, Muslim societies are not without discriminatory ideas either: some Muslims regard non-Muslims as *kuffar* (unbelievers) or infidels who are unequal and different (Phillips, 2008, p.144).

The media is said to have been creating mistrust on purpose and negative influence in general (Abdo, 2007, pp.5-6) and has not been helping to create a consensus. Besides mistrust, Muslims are also under constant pressure to disapprove extremism and condemn the terrorists. Ironically, no matter how profoundly Islamic organizations have condemned the attacks on the Western world; the media has no interest in providing a positive image via capturing those (Ibid.). Their dual loyalty, a split between what their host country does for them vs. their religion is potentially problematic and is at issue. The media typically takes no responsibility in creating images but selling stories. It does not necessarily mean that the media is irresponsible. It only means that newspapers, magazines, news channels are in general not held responsible for the news they transmit. They do not create the news, but they do not always make a wise choice in selecting which one to spread among people. They want the attention of their audience and satisfy their curiosity or hunger for outrage. That can be put on the market. Since the media in genuine democracies are free to say whatever they wish, and except from a channel or two they are independent from their government, they will choose the most obnoxious stories to win the daily competition—and those rarely promote cohesion.

While there are some who blame the media, there are those who blame initiatives from governments[36]; namely that multiculturalism and antiracism are being pushed on paper along with the

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[36] Ideally, a decent government funded school is expected to accommodate a long list of wishes of children and their parents. Regarding Muslim students it would mean providing prayer rooms, individual changing cubicles, not scheduling exams during Ramadan, organising sex education, assemblies and catering *halal* food that is responsive to the Islamic needs. Taking these steps would help Muslim students not feel forced into acting contrary to their beliefs. Such demands, however, may

promotion of racial, ethnic and cultural difference in institutions where employees are trained how not to be judgmental and give preferential treatment to ethnic minority (Phillips, 2008, p.110). Phillips's worry that moral judgments are mistaken for discrimination or prejudice and that people carefully avoid them so that minorities do not feel victimized is quite just. She sees it as an impossible goal to cater for self-designated victim groups (gender, race, religion, ethnicity) while downplaying the values of the dominant culture and restricting them to something universal, detached from religion, tradition, and nation (Ibid., p.100). Affirmative actions in the USA have been introduced assuming that their minorities wish for exactly the same things as the majority, and it is only discrimination that prevents them (Caldwell, 2009, p.268). One can only assume, but it always helps to engage in a productive dialogue.

Islam has only become visible recently in America, mainly in the 21st century and the West has been portraying Islam as a problem or an obstacle to modernization (Cesari, 2004, p.21). Awareness of what Islam stands for is still low in the USA, where over half the population is uncertain about the core beliefs, and most of them have no relationship with a Muslim. About half of them have an unfavorable view of Islam. Nearly a third sees Islam as violent especially against non-Muslims although two-third does believe the contrary (the highest among non-religious and young Americans) (Washington Post, online). The July 2005 Pew survey also showed that 59% of American adults view Islam as "very different from their religion." In the same survey; however, 55% had a favorable opinion of Muslim Americans.

The Muslim community in America is represented by people from 80 different countries of origin. A survey by Georgetown University indicates that two-third of them were born outside the USA: 34% from South Asia, 26% Arabs, 7% Africans. This survey found that the American Muslim community is better educated and better off, and younger as the whole nation, mosque life is on the increase, and the attendees are of mixed ethnic background (90% of mosques are ethnically diverse). It also shows that the majority of Muslims believes that it is good to be a Muslim in America[37], despite certain anxiety (Abdo, 2007, pp.63-64 and pp.84-85). After September 11, a record amount of hate crimes were committed against Muslims, mostly non-violent threats and vandalism. Muslims typically have become more defensive after the terrorist attacks because they felt that their faith was at stake. Probably, the reason for the appearance of numerous books on the topic was to explain Islam to both parties Muslims and non-Muslims (Ibid.). It is entirely logical then to provide information to first generation immigrant students within a supportive environment such as their high school if they wish to learn more about their cultural heritage.

Roy argues that Muslims enjoy greater freedom to live up to their religion in the West than in most if not all, Muslim countries (2004, p.157). Perhaps it is freedom of religion, or that religion should be one's private business, surprisingly, the Census Bureau is prohibited by law from asking

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have a negative impact on or create difficulties for certain institutions. Brint claims that schools are sometimes thought to be impersonal and threatening promoting conformity while ignoring pupils' personal needs and interests (2006, pp.9-10).

[37] Eboo Patel, founder of the Interfaith Youth Core in Chicago said, "When I say to an evangelical Christian, 'It's prayer time,' they might question the way I pray, but they understand viscerally the importance of prayer," "When I lived in England, and I said, 'It's prayer time,' people looked at me as if I was an alien."

about religious affiliation in its surveys in America where religion is so important for the majority. No precise figures can be found for the number of Muslims, especially first generation individuals living in the USA. It is challenging because legal systems prevent them from registering sensitive identifications like race and religion in census and identity papers (Ibid., p.101). Available data on Muslim populations and religious affiliation is gathered via various data collection (race, ethnicity and geographic origin).

A 2009 Gallup poll showed that, in general, Muslims in America are well off and well-integrated, and they are more likely than other Americans to be employed and be professionals. Two-thirds believe that their communities are good and they can make it in the USA with hard work. (The study shows that African American Muslims are not representatives of this group). Actually, a 2004 Zogby International survey says that Muslim Americans[38] do well in the USA with over half of them having at least an undergraduate degree; they are a highly educated group working in professional fields and the richest Muslim community in the world. They participate in the American public life[39] (WSJ, 2005, online). Opinion about them, however, is not as positive. Many Americans are making an effort to learn more about Islam, but they still hold stereotypes and are suspicious; only atheists and scientologists are viewed worse (The Economist, 2010, p.36). As an example of prejudice Geneive Abdo described her experience in San Francisco (allegedly liberal, open-minded, tolerant city) where an Arab friend of hers was seeking nomination for public office. While visiting a neighborhood and asked for political support from fellow citizens, they met bigotry and ignorance "along with cool breeze and the human chill from the free thinker San Franciscans" (Abdo, 2007, p.4). Discriminated Muslim Americans believe in justice in the USA so they try to find remedy at the courts—like other Americans.

First generation immigrant children who lived in a society or community where there was relative harmony between religious, social and national identity, may face divergence or even contradiction between layers of individual, collective and national identity. There are parents who are obviously concerned that a secularized Islam would destroy the essential balance between the individual and the collective (Allawi, 2009, p.255). Their fear is that they have to lose their cultural and social relationship to Islam, and that Islam itself as a religion can become simply an individual choice, or that it can be questioned. The individualization of religious choice then can lead to a range of possible Muslim identities from *Communal identification* which embraces orthodoxy, five pillars, circumcision, food prohibitions, rules regarding to dress (crucial elements) or *Ethical Islam* embracing communal and personal values (prohibitions may not be followed), or *Cultural Islam* identifying with

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[38] The number of Muslims living in America ranges from above six million and no more than three million to below two million. Tom Smith of the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center, estimated the total Muslim population at 1,886,000. Pew estimates their number to be 2.35 million adding that out of whom about two-third is foreign-born and have come from South Asia (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh), the Arab world (the Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Egypt, Iran), also from Europe and Africa (Interfaithcenterpa.org).

[39] Ishan Bagby, a University of Kentucky professor has made a study of mosque attendance in Detroit, and found that "the average mosque-goer is 34 years old, married with children, has at least a bachelor's degree, and earns about $74,000 a year." The conclusion was that "If this is representative of Muslim Americans as a whole, it suggests that the religiously committed among them hardly fit the profile of the alienated, angry young Muslim men so common today in Europe" (WSJ, 2005, online).

language, heritage, behavior in a group or society or *Emotional Islam* reacting (spontaneous and short-lived) to particular events, identification with political causes (Cesari, 2004, p.45). Many Muslims educated in the USA perform *Shahada*, following dietary prohibitions, pray occasionally and fast during Ramadan. They attempt to get the best of both worlds by choosing ethical and cultural Islam: living a life in a more or less secular way. This attitude requires certain knowledge of Islamic tradition to understand what practices and customs exist to choose from (Ibid., p.46). It happens mainly among people with a higher level of education. It is totally understandable if someone wishes to get the best of both worlds and students should be granted an opportunity to know what those are.

Culture does not give an answer to every question, but it offers a liable basis. Dimensions that are used in order to categorize cultures are only guidelines as there are individual differences. Sen believes that people's identities do not have to be linked primarily to their immediate community, especially when exposed to other communities. Thus there is access to comparison (Sen, 2006, p.33) "we are diversely different." Therefore, Sen challenges the view that people's behavior is judged and assessed only within their community. Brah, too, promotes the ideology and the use of *cultural diversity* instead of *cultural difference* for the latter conveys negative connotations (1996, p.91). People are influenced by their personality/attitude, age and social circumstances, religions, educational backgrounds, and numerous other elements shape their perceptions such as values, attitudes beliefs, and non-verbal communication. What teaching staff must be aware of is not making the cultural differences greater than they really are, and not to have and urge to smirk if immigrant Muslim students exhibit no more than cultural, emotional or ethical Islam: less strict or stereotypical than expected.

Identities have been found to be socially constructed; society gives status to, and discriminates, on the basis of physical, religious, ideological and other markers of identity creating concerns about social justice which has apparently not been actualized (Carr, 2006). Amongst other obstacles to a truly multicultural society, there are racial discrimination and disadvantage, a racially oriented moral culture, lack of properly implemented government papers and policies, lack of will and the lack of shared values from both white and ethnic minority residents. Also, there is no heterogeneity among white and non-white or majority and minority cultures but "community of communities" (Kumar, 2003, p.257). Rong & Preissle (2009) emphasize that immigrant children are usually positive about their schooling experience even though they are aware of the preconceived notion of the American society about people of certain ethnic origin. In consequence of on-going media influence, the U.S. American public has been manipulated to fear, discriminate against and dislike Muslims, their Islamic belief system, ethics, rituals and religious practices (Haque, 2004, p.3). There is a list of forms of prejudice and discrimination that have taken place in an educational setting: Verbal slurs are used to dehumanize a target group, avoidance to stay within one's comfort zone and ignore people whose appearance is different; Discrimination, which is the combination of the first two; and the problem that victims typically do not do much hoping that the problem will not escalate; and Violence is the extreme form but it does happen. The promotion of school-wide anti-bullying policies by students and school staff alike could be a remedy (Liese, 2004, pp.66-68). Effective education depends on the commitment of all: parents, students and school staff.

The education system should promote antiracism and teach children how to think not what to think. First-generation Muslims, who intend to stay, soon will be required to address citizenship, and how the new environment cherishes the idea of democracy, secularism, individual rights and pluralism. To participate in such a society somewhat successfully, they will have to learn how to negotiate and harmonize their cultural background with the new milieu. "They have had to discover how to be Muslim in a secular society and to develop the appropriate strategies for living as minority in a non-Muslim society" (Geaves, 2005, p.66). The education system transmits cultural traits and values in various settings/lessons. Core subjects like History and English could be difficult to teach following a multicultural approach when teachers wish to satisfy the demand of the parents of white American children and minority children about their heritage. A golden middle road must be found so that it is reflected that every child matters and is able to take pride in their heritage meaning that minority children are also touched not isolated.

One of the functions that schools have is helping shape students. What they see and what they learn will influence their thinking and behavior. Schools also teach what students need to know in order to lead productive, successful and satisfying lives. Culture influences education because by teaching a culture's history and language to students, a society is reinforcing its values, beliefs and prejudices. Each culture tends to glorify its historical, scientific and artistic accomplishments and minimize the accomplishment of other cultures. In this way, schools in all cultures, whether they intend to or not, teach ethnocentrism. And, overwhelmingly, the American education system does just like that.

Although there is still an ongoing debate whether education projects dealing with issues of ethnicity, race, language, immigration, and equality should be named *Intercultural Education* or *Multicultural Education*, it has been agreed that there is a demand for an educational practice addressing the problems of human rights and social justice universally. *The International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE)* acknowledges various forms of education concepts that tackle the problems of diversity and equity in education: "intercultural education, multi-cultural education, anti-racist education, human right education, conflict-resolution, multi-lingualism issues" (Grant, 2006, online). The goal has been the establishment of an educational system which can address the needs of ethnically and culturally diverse students and take actions for social justice effectively. Regarding Intercultural Education Batelaan emphasized inclusion, learning to live together, the importance of equal opportunity policies, equal access, language policies, cultural and linguistic rights, special care for students at risk, validation of specific skills/knowledge, cultural responsiveness (mindful), tolerance, anti-discrimination, anti-racism, human rights education, education for citizenship, reflective and critical attitude (2004, p.56). What scholars have realized from early on is that it is challenging for people from within and outside of any given ethnic group to accept diversity. As a result, equality can only be achieved through hard work and determination (Grant, 2006, online).

In a way multicultural education originated from the initial interactions of people in the United States with others outside of their cultural group. One of the movements that set out first was the *Intercultural Education Movement and Intergroup Education Movement* to educate about issues of ethnicity, immigration, assimilation, social mobility, and prejudice, such as tolerance and respect for

diversity. It was important to provide knowledge for immigrants about such values as freedom, justice, and equality so that they can become loyal to the host society, their new home. Initially, with the help of such movements, there were activities in the school and community to celebrate the immigrants' culture and contribution to society in general. School curricula were developed to raise awareness about differences in the life-styles of families and communities, the American culture, and the development of relations between students (Ibid.). Grant explains that historically in the USA the promotion of the causes of various ethnic, racial, and religious groups discontinued approximately after the Second World War, and the promotion of the idea of a single nation celebrating diversity while minimizing differences have begun replacing it. However, in school curricula people of color were still either considered to be exotic or simply ignored. *The Ethnic Studies Movement* started promoting a more all-embracing education policy and practices (including counseling, social work) reducing "whiteness in textbook content and illustrations and an increased accuracy in reporting the history and culture of African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos" (Ibid.).

Multicultural Education is a reinforcement of democracy, social justice, and human diversity process, which rejects "the mono-cultural content and ethos of the current and prevailing Eurocentric system of education in the United States." According to Grant, secularism, individualism, Christian morals and the superiority of European civilization prevail in school curricula ignoring the achievements and contribution of those that are not. "From a multicultural perspective, no one way of viewing the world, no one cultural standard, political doctrine or ideology can represent the full truth and value of human life, therefore multicultural education is essential to school and society"(Ibid.). Through awareness, students may widen their horizon and learn to reflect on issues related to ethnicity. The *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)* has a *Multicultural Education Commission* which has requested the inclusion of more diversity. The *National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)* held annually, is attended by numerous scholars and encouraged by the journals *Multicultural Perspective*, and *Praxis*. The method values cultural pluralism and opposes practices that encourage the reduction of cultural differences; it promotes the enhancement of cultural diversity. In order to achieve that goal, the core curriculum and methods of instruction ought to enable students to:

> "(1) learn the history and contributions to society of the diverse groups who comprise the population of the United States; (2) respect the culture and language of diverse groups; (3) develop knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of one's multiple group characteristics and how these characteristics can privilege or marginalize the individual and others; and (4) learn how to bring about social and structural equality and take action toward that end" (Ibid.).

It is also expected that through multicultural education students learn about why culture is important, its function, why and how an individual is shaped by and related to it. Advocates argue that it might be mutually beneficial if students from various cultures should learn how to question and challenge each other regarding art, literature, music, moral, and religion just to specify a few.

Wholesome social and cultural identities may only be developed in an environment of multicultural education (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.48). Nieto surveyed students about their educational experience in America. She concluded that students' cultures and curriculum often do not match. As a

result, they do not see the relevance for their lives and may become discouraged. She also found that the presence and reality of poverty, racism, discrimination and alienation disempowered students (Nieto, 1999, p.194). She also discovered that culturally and linguistically dominated/subordinated students' needs are not necessarily addressed as society in large has low expectations from them (Ibid., p.191). Pedersen, et.al looked at school counseling and found, for instance, that there are universal moral issues; however, as ethical perspectives are diverse, moral standards of the group in power may be different from that of others (2008. p.11). The authors draw attention to the phenomenon that multiculturalism is present in the social milieu and on the intrapsychic level, too (Ibid., p.23). Educators, thus, should not follow a single perspective (Ibid., pp.23/27/28/32). Dana (1993, 2005) developed a model for counseling which is ethnically sensitive called the Multicultural Assessment-Intervention Process (MAIP); it assesses cultural identity, level of acculturation, questions according to cultural etiquette, mother tongue use or preferred language, assessment is culturally appropriate, culture specific strategy is used to present results to the client (Dana, 2008, p.46).

Multicultural approach in pedagogy has been criticized for promoting segregation or even ghettoization of children (May, 1999, p.32). However, ignorance of various cultures, lifestyles, and religions might push students towards categorizing others based on potentially false preconceived notions. The curriculum should not be turned too diverse either. Cultural diversity is recommended to be adequately celebrated without too strong of an emphasis on difference to avoid becoming divisive: it could prevent ethnic minority non-English speaking students from accessing the society at large (Kalantzis & Cope, 1999, pp.260-261).

"In the end then, a critical multiculturalism must foster, above all, students who can engage critically with all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including their own. Such an approach would allow both minority and majority students to recognize and explore the complex interconnections, gaps and dissonances that occur between their own and other ethnic and cultural identities, as well as other forms of social identity" (May, 1999, p.33).

Sleeter & Montecinos argue that multicultural education should be a community-based social movement (1999, p.150). Variable curricula and a selection of role models from a variety of nationalities are essential. Being aware of various assessment systems, classroom discipline will also help educators understand students' behavior. These can be addresses through in-service trainings (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.118). Effective mentoring can assist and navigate immigrant children in a new school environment. While *bicultural mentors* may serve as a bridge between the culture of the country of origin and the host culture, *acculturated mentors* may provide vital information about cultural rules. Students may find help in community centers; however, it has been found that only a small fraction of them take advantage of such service and miss out on an opportunity (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, pp.84-85). Similarly, Nieto acknowledges that schools alone will not make a difference in achieving a multicultural well-being of students, community and politics ought to participate as well (1999, p.210).

When discussing what multicultural education is, Wilson argued that it is designed as cultures of various races are present in the American educational system. "This approach to teaching and learning is based upon consensus building, respect, and fostering cultural pluralism within racial

societies (...) acknowledges and incorporates positive racial idiosyncrasies into classroom atmospheres"
(Wilson, 2010, online). One of the arguments for it is the disproportionately low achievement and high
dropout rates of ethnic minority students; the other reasons are "reduction of fear, ignorance, and
personal detachment" (Ibid.) for students, teachers and administrative staff alike. While it "is the
potential catalyst to bring all races together in harmony" (Ibid.), there are pitfalls, namely, people might
accidentally enlarge cultural differences fostering prejudices, stereotypes and inferiority. The
characteristics that should all be present (and if one is missing resentment follows) when implementing
multicultural education are "a) a learning environment that supports positive interracial contact; b) a
multicultural curriculum; c) positive teacher expectations; d) administrative support; and, e) teacher
training workshops" (Ibid.). "A multicultural curriculum should be considered for several reasons: a)
provides alternative points of view relative to information already taught in most educational systems;
b) provides ethnic minorities with a sense of being inclusive in history, science etc" (Ibid.).

Banks and Banks (2010) described dimension of multicultural education: *Content Integration*
(examples from a variety of cultures), *Equity Pedagogy* (modify teaching styles to facilitate diverse
students), *knowledge construction* (teachers help students see and understand their cultural
assumptions), *prejudice reduction* (an attempt to modify students' racial attitudes), and *empowering
school culture* (aiming at all students from diverse racial, gender or ethnic groups) (Ibid., p.23). These
dimensions can be implemented in a secondary school setting in extracurricular activities transforming
them into genuine multicultural activities.

Amongst characteristics of most recommended multicultural curriculum, there is no reference
to ethnicity and religion in schools, mainly communication styles, collaboration and learning styles, but
it is as if the most important issues are being left out (Edchange, 2011, online). Issues involving
religion and education are perennial topics of public debate. Religious groups are often on opposite
sides of disputes over issues such as school prayer, the teaching of evolution and creationism, vouchers
and the use of school space by religious groups. While some argue that religion has an important role
to play in public education, others maintain that a strict wall of separation is needed when it comes to
religion and public schools (The Pew Forum, 2010, online). Epstein citing Baumeister blames
children's violence and cruelty on unrealistic and narcissistic self-esteem that often comes from their
moral idealism (2005, p.85) and emphasizes that religious literacy, interfaith cooperation and religious
pluralism could establish tolerance and harmony among people (Epstein, 2005, p.157). There is great
relevance of teaching about religion in schools for a number of reasons (see discussion in Chapter 5).

Traditionally, American public schools have not been accommodating and nurturing
immigrant children's first language or cultural values (Rong & Preissle, 2009, pp.15-16). It is *classic
assimilation* that immigrant children are expected to follow and to abandon their ethnic heritage
becoming all the way American, English speaking citizens of the USA. This process is considered a
subtractive practice that highlights what children lack (Ibid., p.16). Immigrant children's adjustment
and their academic attainment are also influenced by pre- and post-migration factors/conditions (Ibid.,
p.13). Via assimilation, they are anticipated that from generation to generation, they will climb the
socio-economic ladder improving their living condition. The authors emphasize the fact that a quick

adaptation of the new mainstream culture may result in *adversial subculture*, substance abuse, low academic achievement, and the rejection of the native culture and language (Ibid., p.14).

In agreement with Sanjakdar's (2004, p.152) recommended practical approach *cultural pluralism*—students' cultural background and social reality are taken into consideration—this study also proposes an all-inclusive stance that schools should pursue. As recent immigrants do maintain their first language and cultures creating a hybrid mainstream American culture (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.13), the rest of the society ought to be prepared to be comfortable with it and accept it. Demonstrating critical thinking and genuine care towards the diversity of the American people, U.S.-born or immigrant, needs to be all-encompassing in the curriculum, in extracurricular activities, and among the teaching staff regardless of the subject one teaches.

Typically, children's perceptions[40] about the world around them are filtered through and are exposed to the explicit and the implicit/hidden school curriculum, which is dictated by government policy makers: representatives of the dominant social group. "The imposition of one language, one literature, one account of (...) history, denies these children and their parents the possibility of a distinction between nationality and citizenship" (Byram, 1998, p.103). Positive outcome, social equity can be reached through the implementation of a *critical, post-progressivist curriculum* and multiculturalism (Kalantzis & Cope, 1999, pp.273-274). McLaren and Torres reckon that discussions of multicultural education, especially on the political level, have been typically restricted to the black and white issues ignoring the needs of other ethnic groups and the dealings with Latino students on the basis of linguistics and the creation of language policies (1999, pp.45-46).

Nunan and Lam (1998, p.128) described the complexity of the ideal standard teacher for the 21st century as the following: Knowledge of discipline, The capability to employ a variety of pedagogical methods, Communicative effectiveness in the classroom, The ability to develop materials, The ability to design and implement instruments for assessment and evaluation, The capacity to understand and handle community relations, Competence in using a range of educational technology, The motivation and ability towards further professional development, Genuine concern for students, Understanding of educational psychology, Effective counseling skills. An ideal multilingual teacher (Ibid., p.129), on the other hand, is expected to be even more multifaceted: Language proficiency in at least 2 languages (socioculturally dominant or target language and learners' language), Knowledge of linguistics, Appreciate the learners' culture and respond positively to the behavior due to the cross-cultural circumstances, Appropriate collaborative work, Utilize and adapt curriculum and develop materials, Design assessment materials for students and self, Effective handling of school-community relations, Evaluation of teaching, Teaching community/standard language and literature to examination levels, Use of mother tongue in classroom communication, Acknowledge and appreciate diversity of languages and cultures in the classroom, and Knowledge the theory of language learning/teaching. Critical pedagogy is also called bridging, counterhegemonic or emancipatory. For instance, it

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[40] Scholars often claim that immigrant children's identity are exposed to and influenced by two sometimes-conflicting cultures correspondingly: native culture and host culture. It is more within acceptable limits to think, however, that there are multiple cultures and factors within that influence identity (Brah, 1996, p.40).

challenges racism, class privilege and sexism; in addition to that the curriculum includes the history of diverse peoples. Students in such an environment can connect with their school and can enhance attainment (Erickson, 2010, pp.46-47).

A *critical post-progressivist curriculum* exists in non-racist social institutions that are open to and respond to cultural and linguistic diversity, and it is available for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Diversity should be the key term or the basis of a post-progressivist curriculum. The main focus of such a curriculum is guaranteed social access for each student. There might be need for various teaching pedagogies or methods but the goal should be the same for each student. Critical thinking skills ought to be applied as an element of critical multiculturalism in classrooms. Teachers, students and their parents need to engage in a meaningful and fruitful dialogue to negotiate teaching and learning styles instead of letting fixed standards dictate students' fate. In order to create such a curriculum, excellent materials must be available and teachers must participate in professional development or in-service trainings (Kalantzis & Cope 1999, pp.273-274). Because of perceived discrimination, and possible alienation, exclusion, especially Muslim children may experience an identity crisis (Haque, 2004, pp.10-11). Haque recommends that students ought to be exposed to intellectual confrontation at school or critical thinking about their cultural background and the new one. Nieto (1999) recommends the affirmation of students' culture as part of critical multicultural education. She places the emphasis on teaching critical thinking skills: discussions and debates in history, literature lessons. It challenges the teachers as well who have to rethink and revise their decision making process and methodology. Students' self-esteem ought to be increased because learning happens when they feel good about themselves.

Kumaravadivelu described macro strategies for language teaching as *postmethod pedagogy*. The author distinguishes the language-centered (focus is on grammatical structures and vocabulary), the learner-centered (the focus is on communication and the practice of previously learned grammar and vocabulary), and the learning centered methods (the focus is on a meaning-making process and to participate actively in the learning process) (2003, pp.26-27). The emphasis is on teachers' response to the needs of students in the learning and teaching process which is to maximize learning opportunities (the focus is on both the language and the content), minimize perceptual mismatches (requires teacher expertise and proper resources), facilitate negotiated interaction (using various interactional styles), promote learner autonomy (learners self-monitor their progress and development), foster language awareness (see the relation between language and subject knowledge to do well on exams), activate intuitive heuristics and contextualize linguistic input (make connections between language content and linguistic knowledge to meet the dual learning goals), integrate language skills, ensure social relevance (teachers are expected to be sensitive and behave accordingly in their educational response), and raise cultural consciousness (it is important to affirm and encourage identities in classroom participation) (Ibid., pp.39-40).

The goal of *critical pedagogy implemented by progressive educators* is to tackle the problem of social class inequalities besides other issues, such as ethnic relations, sexism, racism, and homophobia in schools (McLaren & Torres, 1999, p.48). Unfortunately, though, the perception is that critical pedagogy has not been used adequately to its full potential: "Critical pedagogy as a partner with

multicultural education need more than good intentions to achieve their goal" (Ibid., p.51). Problems with the implementation of culture-sensitive education are many, ranging from the inequality that exists in America to the white middle-class educators who are members of the mainstream, dominant class.

"As a result, in cross-cultural classrooms, well-intentioned multicultural teachers too often attempt multicultural teaching by presenting superficial versions of other people's cultures and communities; failing to affirm learning processes that allow complexity to emerge in the classroom as well as in the larger community" (Sleeter & Montecinos, 1999, p.154).

Lewis examined the reason for various levels of achievement of racial groups, also explored how racial inequality (access to resources) and racial identity are reproduced in schools. Schools were examined with a central role in constructing racial demarcation lines. The author found that it is the explicit and implicit core curriculum and school staff that either reaffirm or challenge racial understandings. Schools are thought to mainly strengthen social hierarchies. They rarely offer equal opportunities as schools, school personnel themselves and what they can offer vary greatly (Lewis, 2004, pp.4-5). It was also found that most white people in the U.S. live in racially segregated neighborhoods and educate their children in schools with mainly white students and teachers with little and insignificant contact with people of other race. The research revealed that most parents were not satisfied with the provision of multiculturalism in schools that wished to uphold a colorblind stance (Ibid., pp.12-18). It is not rare to come across superficial state-mandated textbooks and activities on multiculturalism or as part of the multicultural curriculum. To sensitize students to other students' experiences in injustice and racial discrimination superficial activities and textbooks and colorblindness are simply not enough.

The No Child Left Behind Act tends to support standardization, commonality across the country, and the reduction of racial and ethnic differences. It is then challenging for schools to respond to students' cultural heritage they wish to identify with even if doing so increases their academic competence (Minow, 2008, pp.7-8). When discussing features of just schools Minow, Shweder, and Markus described the *equality-difference paradox* omnipresent in the American society regarding schooling. It means that there is an effort towards equality without taking culture, religion, race, social class into consideration, and there is an effort towards cultural pluralism. Schools are caught in between these two efforts (Ibid., p.5). The dilemma is whether to support assimilation leaving some people feeling left out; or to support cultural sensitivity leaving social cohesion at stakes: academic success vs. preserving cultural identity.

The particular needs of cultures present at school needs to be realized and addressed instead of pushing the idea of commonality, common values. Educators ought to respond appropriately to the needs of various cultures and set up well-suited methods or pedagogies to do so. Instead of showing tolerance towards the cultures of ethnic groups other than our own, Sanjakdar recommends that celebrating them would be more proper and advantageous (2004). "All school personnel should be trained to maintain a culturally supportive environment so that immigrant students can attain personal

and academic success" (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.119). Thriving schools[41] have been identified as the ones racially integrated with a sense of community, high expectations, assessment, nurturing educational practices, and school programs providing educational and career opportunities (Ibid., p.120). Minow found that there are some schools that cater to the needs of recent immigrants providing transitional environment, bicultural or bilingual education, support for those with limited literacy in any language, preventing them from dropping out from regular schools (2008, p.42). Minow also discussed "how best to address the needs of immigrant students in the United States" and found that there can be commitment to multiculturalism but it is contested if there is no clear vision about it (Ibid., p.105). This study found that vision on multiculturalism is still blurry and it has not been addressed adequately. Teachers, students and their parents are equally uninformed about the nuances of multicultural education, hence they either do not know what to expect or they do not know how to cater for it (see discussion in Chapter 5).

For first generation immigrant students starting or continuing their studies in American schools, the following criteria have been identified that promote the success of ELLs: "(a) respect for students' languages and cultures, (b) teachers' high expectations of students, (c) language minorities as a leadership priority, (d) staff development, (e) language minority specific courses, (f) counseling, (g) parent involvement, and (h) committed staff" (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, p.53). The authors complete the list with students' willingness to work hard, making new friends, having mentors, and fast English language acquisition. Olsen (2008) examined the role of adults and adult resistance in high schools in America, and found that it was rather significant in preventing equal opportunities and the inclusion of newly arrived immigrant students.

Students are aware of the differences between their worlds/values and that of the rest of society, and they will be able to manage living in both if they are made to feel comfortable questioning the guidelines of Islam. For instance, advocating time for them to share in a social group among school mates. Because of the different personalities of students, some will find it easy while others more difficult to be Muslim in America. Nahidian recommends discussing Islam in details: contributions to science, math and literature made by Muslims throughout history so that students feel more of a connection to it by seeing how it is part of all aspects of their lives. One of her conclusions is that "If and when Islam becomes an acknowledged and contributing part of American culture; some Muslim children will no longer feel the need to distance themselves from Islam or downplay its impact on their lives" (Nahidian, 2001, online).

Ideally, school curriculum includes learning about various cultures, especially the ones relevant in America. It is essential to teach Muslim children (and mainstream ones alike) about Muslim contributors to humanity through school curriculum (Haque, 2004, p.17). There are a number of organizations that are ready to support to instill their Islamic identity: the International Institute of

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[41] Properly implemented multicultural education should, in practice, promote the positive presence of ethnic minority students while integrating them into the mainstream (Kalantzis & Cope, 1999, p.245). At the International Middle School in Minnesota, there is an emphasis on African culture and students work on a portfolio about their culture to connect with their heritage (WCCO, 2010, online).

Islamic Thought (IIIT) provides supplementary material to the curriculum of public schools, the Council of Islamic Education (CIE) does somewhat similar to that (Timani, 2006, online).

"For Islam to survive and flourish as a minority religion in a Christian and secular society, American Muslim children should learn and implement the following: (1) that they are Americans first and Muslims second; (2) that they can assimilate and integrate in the society without necessarily adopting values that contradict Islam; (3) that it is acceptable to decide on issues that best suit their situation as American Muslims rather than being influenced by Muslims from overseas who live in a different society and have no understanding of the American society and what it expects from its Muslim citizens; and (4) that tolerance and acceptance of other religions is essential for American Islam to prosper" (Ibid.).

Countless factors shape individuals and culture is only one of them—though it can be the strongest one. It is parents who prepare children with the best advice for the accepted behavior within their cultural group (Lewis, 2006, p.17). Yet, those instructions coming from immigrant Muslim parents can be rather different from those given by secular or Christian American parents. They probably work just fine within one's mainstream culture or society but can malfunction in others. When people are uncertain of how to act and react in a radically dissimilar milieu, they experience culture shock. In order to fit in, newly arrived immigrant children from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa are expected to be prepared to compromise and to integrate new values and norms of the host society to some extent. The host society's receptiveness along with the newcomer's expectations, willingness, and personality influence the quality and speed of the process. For the reason that an individual is much more than his or her culture, *individual uniqueness* plays a role in the process which means that (Samovar, 2001, p.17) personality, attitude, age and social circumstances can also determine people's behavior in certain interactions. Thus, people from various societies are not always representatives of the average and do not always rationalize expectations. As a professional who has acted as an EFL (English as a Foreign Language), ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), EAL (English as an Additional Language) and most recently ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher, it is interesting to have experienced that some students from collectivist cultures could fit into the individualistic English culture surprisingly well. Meanwhile, others struggled with the language and the integration itself for years and, as a result, are trapped in their own very close community for various reasons without any attempt to open up toward the host society.

Can U.S. public schools alleviate ethnocentrism[42] or are they likely to reinforce it? Can they involve social extracurricular clubs like the Muslim Student Association (MSA) and extend their roles to accommodate the needs of these students? Cultures with formal education systems tend to teach much the same thing—literacy, mathematics, history, and so forth—but diversity is found in what cultures emphasize and how it is taught (Samovar, et al., 2001, p.219). After all, schools that receive first generation immigrant Muslim students from the Middle Eastern region and the Horn of Africa must aim and reach at the same outcome: a relaxed person, feeling comfortable, confident, secured, well-settled, and learning a lot about themselves, finding out what to expect in certain situations and

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[42] The definition refers to the phenomenon when people judge a different culture by comparing it to theirs instead of considering it as a separate entity (Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.114).

what others expect. A social club called the MSA might just be the ideal place to supplement what is missing from an immigrant Muslim child's education. It can offer familiarity and some sort of continuity of their cultural heritage and promote cultural pluralism instead of the creation of parallel systems to affirm one's social and cultural identity. It could also reduce ethnocentrism without changing the core curriculum of secondary schools.

3 Socio-cultural Adjustment in Secondary Education: The Ability to Fit in

3.1 Aspects in intercultural adjustment

The previous chapter highlighted the role of the individual, religion, and multiculturalism in society to provide a background to understand sociocultural adjustment in the USA for those who arrive from the Muslim societies of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. Starting a new life this way entails *short-term difficulties* (Cushner & Brislin, 1996, p.116) such as moving, finding a satisfactory place to live, discovering places to buy familiar food, locating hospitals in case of emergency, or understanding the transportation. For families with children, schools need to be found. However, the process of successful inter/socio-cultural adjustment to the host society is a *long-term adjustment* with several phases. This chapter will explain why the length of time to accomplish it and to feel that one's newfound place of residence becomes home, varies among individuals. The aspects which influence adjustment are the following: the role of social factors; the role of ambiguity in interpersonal relationships and interactions; and finally the role of second language learning and communication competence will be discussed.

As reviewed earlier, due to the cultural attributes of these societies, there are numerous factors to consider in order to receive a proper picture of their adjustment while studying the circumstances of first generation immigrant students from the Muslim Middle East and the Horn of Africa in American schools. Students may struggle with both the language (that includes the Roman script and writing system) and the host culture at once. It depends, partially, on individuals and on their attitude as to what extent they succeed in learning English as a second language, also, how well they deal with the social side of the process of adjustment. The aim of this study is to find out if the following assumptions are consistent, or if there are additional criteria that might determine the outcome of their potential for cultural adjustment. Because of little literature on intercultural adjustment of specific ethnic groups in American schools, this study aims at closing some of this gap by providing insights into the sociocultural adjustment of immigrant Muslim students in Virginia high schools.

More than 35 million immigrants were counted in the USA in 2005 (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, p.10), and the number of foreign-born immigrant children is expected to increase daily especially in traditional and new gateway states (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.83). According to this data, there were 11 million children of immigrants, 3 million of which were born outside the U.S. Nearly 20 million speak languages other than English, and several million have difficulty with learning the English language (Ibid., p.5). Public schools (institutions that absorb considerable numbers of immigrant children) play an essential part in the integration process and are responsible for their education in general. There have been changes in recent immigrant demographics in the 21st century as a number of immigrants have been refugees with distressing experiences affecting refugee children's achievement linguistically and academically (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.11). Recently, immigrant families spread out geographically (Capps, et.al, 2005, p.35). It has been observed that the students who enter schools have become more diverse; the number of documented school-age ELLs is projected to double by 2020 (6 million) (Coulter & Smith, 2007, online). In the American secondary education,

44% of ELL students were foreign born in 2005 (NCELA, online). According to another source, in 2000 nearly 2 million foreign-born children were in 6-12th grades: 7% of the nearly 30 million secondary school students. 1.6 million Limited English Proficient children were linguistically isolated: about 1 million out of total 30 million high school students (Capps, et.al, 2005, p.7). 4% of them are from Africa and 25% from Asia (Ibid., pp.8-9). Arabic and African languages are not among the top 10 languages spoken by these children—Arabic appears in Pre-Kindergarten-5th grade only (Ibid., p.15). That is perhaps one of the reasons why the first language need of these students do not receive as much of attention as, for instance, that of the Spanish speakers.

The very broad category of first generation immigrant students involves children of *sojourners* (living in a country for six months to five years with a specific purpose), *migrants/ immigrants* (voluntarily moving to another country to resettle for a long period of time and motivated by social, economic, political, religious, or cultural reasons/forces) (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001, p.23), and *asylum seekers* or *refugees* (unable or unwilling to return to the country of origin because of political reasons, or fear) (Jandt, 2001, pp.339/346). Their moving and settling down in the host culture is most likely permanent. In a research study about migration in the USA, the term 'foreign-born' refers to naturalized citizens, lawful permanent immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, legal nonimmigrants (students, workers, or other temporary visa holders) and those in the country without authorization who were not U.S. citizens at birth. The terms 'immigrants' and 'foreign born' are often used interchangeably in research. "The term limited English proficient refers to any person age 5 and older who reported speaking English "not at all," "not well," or "well" on their survey questionnaire. Persons who speak only English or who report speaking English "very well" are considered proficient in English" (MPI, 2011, online). At the national level, the size of the foreign-born LEP population increased from 9.12 million to 15.67 million from 1990 to 19.64 million to 2008, which is 52.1%, out of which 4.8% of households were linguistically isolated. In Virginia foreign-born limited English proficient population of age 5+ increased by 42.3% between 2000 and 2008 (237,229 to 337,507), out of which 2.8% were linguistically isolated (Ibid.).

African-born immigrants make up approximately 16% of the black population in the USA who are a completely multilingual, multinational, multiethnic, multi-religious group, "Coming from a continent largely ignored by most, and woefully trailing the rest of the world in every measure of the economic and social well-being" (Arthur, 2006, pp.287-289). The number of African foreign born immigrants has been increasing; however, it is still relatively low compared to other immigrant groups. Also due to racial factors, African children seem to camouflage among other Black Americans and tend to go unrecognized and little information has been accumulated about them. Ethiopia and Somalia have become countries of origin of numerous immigrants, and refugees recently. Washington DC and Virginia (VA) are some of the major metropolitan areas where they settle. They tend to settle in urban areas and big cities; however, in recent trends 2 out of 5 have been settling in suburban areas (Takyi & Boate, 2006, pp.51-59). African immigrant students in American schools range from the ones who have prior schooling experience and speak at a noticeable level of English and others who have no prior schooling experience and have no knowledge of English let alone American values, goals, motivation, resilience and adaptation potential. This study agrees with Omotosho's claim (2005, p.vii)

that there is a need for greater understanding of foreign-born students and that their experience is implemented in the core curriculum other than immersion ESOL classes.

First generation immigrants are unique and differ from subsequent generations in a way that they have left social networks, cultural reality, memories, and experiences behind (Brah, 1996, p.194). Without a sense of history and belonging in order to identify with one's residence, acculturation or assimilation is a far reach prospect for them (Colls, 2001, p.181). There is an expectation to fully comprehend and to become a member of the group whose social reality (Riley, 2007, p.125) may be perceived as rather dissimilar from what they used to know. When immigrant students enter the new milieu of the United States of America, a process of changes called *acculturation* will begin or adaptation to a host/new culture. The process begins when people from a certain culture/society establish "continuous firsthand contact" with individuals of differing cultural origins (Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.124). It is completed when the norms and values of the host culture are learned and adopted and a new life is built (Jandt, 2001, pp.355-356). This transformation takes time and individuals differ as to what degree they become acculturated.

It is not to be mistaken for *enculturation*[43], which is a process through which in any given culture children develop their *social identities* such as ethnicity, gender, *personal identities* collectivistic or individualistic, the significance of norms, values, taboos, mores partially via interactions with others within that culture[44] and popular culture and mainly by either *democratic or authoritarian parents* who teach them about rights and wrongs. Democratic parents consider explanations and discussions of rules important, while authoritarian parents simply demand children to follow them (Ting-Toomey, 2005, pp.211-212). At a young age at home and at school gender roles are also learned (Ibid., p.213). Having experienced enculturation elsewhere, it is best to expect that first generation immigrants will not wholeheartedly embrace American mainstream values, particularly the controversial ones often criticized by host nationals themselves (abortion, gay marriage, death penalty, teenage pregnancy, cohabitation instead of marriage, promiscuity). On the other hand, they might not oppose any and/or all-American values automatically (Cesari, 2004, p.159). Upon their arrival, certain reservations and criticism of the host country's values could be expected, logically so.

Culture shock[45] is a predictable response of these newly arrived students, because of the differences between the host culture and the cultures of origin. "Cross-cultural transition is a

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[43] "The complexity of enculturation and the depth of its encoding in the human psyche are such that even individuals deliberately fleeing to another culture, mentally or physically, carry forward and recreate in their lives a considerable part of their previous enculturation" (Ahmed, 1992, p.128).
[44] Cultural meanings are created based on *rules*, which can be justified, understood, followed but contextual (Klyukanov, 2005, p.58). *Values* are apparent in one's behavior and culture that is how one decides what is evil vs. good, dirty vs. clean, dangerous vs. safe, decent vs. indecent, ugly vs. beautiful, unnatural vs. natural, abnormal vs. normal, paradoxical vs. logical, irrational vs. rational, moral vs. immoral (Jandt, 2001, p.6). Individuals holding several conflicting values at the same time exist and internal value conflicts may lead to uncertainty in society. *Symbols* (gestures or objects are understood by only those who share a culture), *rituals* (greeting, respect others, social and religious ceremonies) or collective activities are typically socially essential in assisting one connecting with the new society (Ibid., p.10).
[45] "Describing one's own culture is, in fact, not an easy task. It is a bit like asking a fish in water what it is like to swim in the water. Washed up on the beach, the fish quickly recognizes the difference, but may not be able (nor inclined) to describe it. Its immediate objective is to get back into the water. (…) Culture serves as a lens through which we perceive the other. Like the water surrounding the fish,

significant life event involving unaccustomed changes and new forms of intercultural contact" (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001, p.43). Holmes and Rahe observed (1967) that life changes either positive or negative have stressful effects on physical and mental health (as cited in Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.125). Culture shock could be the result of any life-changing situation, like moving from one country to another. Both physical and psychological symptoms could be experienced; however, their intensity and duration depend on several issues and vary among individuals (Jandt, 2001, p.342). The physical symptoms show a discrepancy in their extremeness. Extreme stress on health, safety and fear of physical contact with members of the host culture can also be observed. Psychological symptoms can start with criticism of the host country and go all the way to disorientation, fatigue, frustration, intellectual—emotional withdrawal, insomnia, irritability, isolation, loneliness, nervousness and self-doubt (Ibid., p.342).

   Culture shock has been described as an acculturative distress, anxiety during cross-cultural transitions (Oberg, 1960), as refugee neurosis (Pedersen, 1949); Garza and Guerrero (1974) compared the cross-cultural transition to loss and mourning, a very anxious, depressive and hostile state of mind (as cited in Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.125). Migration usually involves the loss of family, friends (schoolmates) and social status, traditional food, and could be followed by mourning and grief that could affect one's mental health (Furnham & Bochner, 1986, p.163). Arredondo and Dowd (1981) described the experience of migration as a phenomenon that causes despair, homesickness and disorganization (as cited in Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.125). Bock (1970) described culture shock as an emotional reaction, and David (1971) as a foundation for personal growth. Taft (1977) found that the common reactions of culture shock are sense of loss, rejection, feeling of impotence, and cultural fatigue (as cited in Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.377). Bennett argued that general transition shock is not only felt in cultural transition but also in other situations as well (as cited in Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.378). Culture shock, a defense mechanism "describes the feelings of disorientation and anxiety that many people experience for a period of time while living in a foreign country. It results in awareness that one's familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or functional" (Jandt, 2001, p.340). All the above-mentioned descriptions indicate initial stressful situations.

   After studying immigrant children with diverse backgrounds, Igoa (2009) identified a number of stages of this experience that she calls *uprooting*. The first stage is the *announcement* when parents let them know that they are moving to another country. It can take place months or days before one's departure. Only about 20% of the immigrant children in Suarez-Orozco's extensive sample arrived in the USA as a family unit whereas 15% arrived with one parent, and 33% of the children stayed back at home with one (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco 2002, p.67). According to their findings, a great deal of children (85%) becomes separated during immigration and a mere 15% are fortunate enough to travel with the family together. Those whose family travels separately might have to wait a longer period of time before reunification. "Children who had migrated with their families intact had significantly fewer depressive symptoms than those who were living in other types of family

culture distorts how we see the world and how the world sees us. Furthermore, we tend to use our own culture as a reference point to evaluate the other. For instance, as far as many Continental Europeans are concerned the British do not drive on the left side of the road; they drive on the wrong side of the road" (Shneider & Barsoux, 1997, pp.10-11).

arrangements" (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, pp.60-62). Omotosho states that departure detachment is followed by separation from the immediate surroundings along with relationality to it (2005, p.20). Although its feasibility is questionable, Suarez-Orozco et al. (2008, p.69) maintain when students are adequately and carefully prepared for their migration and separation, they experience less trauma and depression.

The second stage is filled with mixed emotions, *excitement or fear in the adventure of the journey* (Igoa, 2009). Upon the arrival to the new country, children experience the third stage called *curiosity*. Jandt (2001) calls it *initial euphoria* or the first phase of culture shock that usually lasts no longer than three weeks[46]. It is the period of observing new and exciting aspects of the 'new world.' However, Bennett's (1977) approach mentions no initial euphoria but *denial* as the first experience of individuals living in an unfamiliar culture. At that time, individuals usually try to enforce their value system (what they believe is 'right') in the host society and judge the host nationals and their deeds accordingly (as cited in Brislin & Yoshida, 1994, p.60). Hence, what newly arrived individuals find through curiosity can either lead to euphoria or denial and their journey will continue on very different paths.

It is *irritation and hostility* (Jandt, 2001) that takes over when one's focus shifts to the differences between their culture of origin and the brand new one. It can last for a few months, and it is vital as people can either withdraw or isolate themselves from the host society or start adjusting gradually. Akin to that, Bennett, claims that *defense* (as cited in Brislin & Yoshida, 1994, p.61) is what people use when they slowly realize that the value system they used to maintain does not necessarily work in the host culture. It might threaten their self-concepts, as most people perceive themselves via their cultural values. In order to defend that notion, their defense mechanism might turn into negative stereotyping of host nationals. For instance, Olsen found that parents of immigrant children find education important along with learning the language; however, some see American students as the ones not taking their schooling seriously (2008, p.49). As a result, they are afraid of their children making friends with them and being influenced negatively.

Research shows that immigrant children arrive with enthusiasm, work hard in school, and have good social attitudes. They are aspirational and show positive attitudes toward education, which is definitely worth cultivating[47] (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.1). The researchers refer to their Harvard Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation (LISA) study, which shows that when asked to complete the sentence 'School is _____' or 'Teachers are _____', over two-third of the children added something positive. A large proportion of those working with immigrant racial minority children in a school setting appreciate the positive attitude of these children and are pleased to work with them.

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[46] An Iranian student, who was 11 years old at the time of the initial research for my Master's paper, spent 7 months in the secondary school and seemed to experience *initial euphoria* throughout the whole time. He was smiling all the time and was not bothered by the fact that initially he did not speak English at all. Even if his English was improving very slowly, he bonded with some students, loved taking part of mainstream lessons, and felt no misery at all. The reason for this might have been the fact that he was aware of the fact that he was going to travel back to his country of origin eventually.

[47] Through their large-scale national study of high school achievement Suarez-Orozco et al., found that newly arrived immigrants were fairly engaged and did well academically compared to those who had been attending American schools for a longer period of time (2008, p.33).

Most teachers like them and are positive about them; however, these students feel that not all their teachers are proud of them, respect them, or would help them with problems (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.136) and some regard them un-teachable, lazy, and less intelligent: a nuisance (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.127). Thus, a teacher's attitude is vital in their adjustment experience. As discussed under multiculturalism, progressive teaching methodology entails that teachers are well-informed about a variety of cultures, and the ESOL/ELL student experience so that it is not only the ESOL/ELL teachers who exclusively feel responsibility for the students' educational attainment.

        After enrollment and having encountered the new school system *depression and confusion* may take place. Some may enter *the silent stage* (Igoa, 2009). The emphasis is on the fact that newly arrived immigrant children's development began in a different society and culture, thus they are still emotionally attached to those. Some children might need nurturing in a new school and cultural milieu; however, they need to stay independent and become or stay self-reliant (Ibid., pp.5-6). At this point, some are unable to communicate (possibly being at an early stage of learning English) with members of the native-born dominant culture due to language and cultural obstacles (Ibid., p.38). Silent children are not unwilling to socialize or work with others; they are simply observing and digesting the experience. The unfamiliarity of the environment and peer students might cause this phenomenon that can last up to six months or longer. There is also the perception that "Without basic comprehension of the input, which includes both the language of instruction and the academic content, students perceive the unfamiliar second language only as 'noise'" (Mora, 2006, p.31). This is not a 'passive' period, though, as pupils watch, listen, and explore the environment.

        As some might lack the confidence to speak, non-verbal gestures could be employed instead through which children can communicate: drawing, writing, speaking, art, and music. Although speaking skills seem to be limited, listening skills could still be actively working. Children enter the silent stage for various length of time, and if a student is unable or unwilling to take part verbally, he or she may be seen as unintelligent (Coles, 2006, p.125). During this stage they can be given homework assignments, cognitively demanding tasks as their academic responsibilities ought to be stimulated and maintained. These students should be urged to realize that they need to make an effort themselves in order to survive and succeed in the new milieu (Igoa, 2009, p.154). Help is probably needed to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and to realize that they do need to ask for assistance with tasks they cannot handle. In classroom settings, a feeling of hopelessness or being left behind other students and never being able to catch up with them may also occur.

        It has been suggested that culture shock, is merely "a subcategory of transition experiences" because of loss and disorientation and the need to adjust (Bennett, 1998, pp.216-218). To overcome the shock Bennett discusses that perception and one's position need to shift (1998, p.221). Monat and Lazarus (1991) have claimed that stress is related to frustration, threat, and conflict. Various coping processes to deal with it are related to one's effort to deal with perceived demands that exceed one's resources (1991, pp.5-6). Which coping style or processes applied in stressful situations depends on one's personality (Ibid., p.8). Major life events, whether they are positive or negative, are critical; however, negative life events are most likely to cause depression and/or other psychosomatic syndromes (Kanner, 1991, p.158). The possible symptoms of dislocation syndrome, uprooting and

experiencing defamiliarization may lead to alienation, persecutory anxieties and homesickness. As a result, "periods of confusion, disorientation, and disorganization, degrees of 'psychic' numbness, and a pervasive sense of meaningless, hopelessness, and helplessness" (Anthony, 1991, p.310) may be experienced. Western societies are more likely to expose their inhabitants of all ages to demanding and complex daily life, thus stress is omnipresent. Though, people within such societies experience various levels and frequency of stress. It depends on one's circumstances and individuality (stress-resistant or stress-sensitive individuals (Ibid., pp.307/311).

Igoa (2009) considers *assimilation and acculturation* to be a crucial stage when children face the dilemma of valuing and evaluating their culture or the new mainstream culture more. Acculturation is a dynamic process and the outcome along with the effects of the acculturation process depends on both societal and individual variables (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001. pp.43-45). Kumaravadivelu claims that while acculturation is a relatively fast and easy process to follow if one wishes to, assimilation ought to be facilitated by the mainstream community (2008. p.68). Igoa suggests that "A recurring theme regarding the inner world of the immigrant child is a feeling of *exhaustion*, not only from the sounds of a new language, but also from the continual parade of strange sights and events in a new culture" (2009, p.50). She claims that sleeping helps shutting down the minds. Thus, schools could show empathy towards students with such symptoms.

Schools need to be primarily responsible for nurturing children's experience of culture shock, and cannot expect the parents to carry out such a task alone as for one; parents might also be going through the same experience (Ibid., p.40). "Immigrant parents face a daunting set of tasks—finding work, making a home, enrolling their children in new schools, grasping the new cultural rules of engagement, learning English, and establishing new social ties" (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.70). Depending on their working hours, and other duties, parents of immigrant children may be unavailable both physically and mentally. Additionally, children attending public schools encounter the actual American culture more intensely than their parents do (Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.73). They may act out of their conventional role and put children in such situations typically reserved for grown-ups (in order to act as interpreters) as they would normally not (Ibid., p.75). Furthermore, they may not be able to be responsible enough for their children's education; particularly, if they have not mastered the English language.

Children may be embarrassed about their parents or their country of origin, and parents may tend to slow down the process of acculturation being afraid that their children will act like a U.S.-born American (Ibid., p.74). Parents are often concerned that their children are not challenged enough because teachers sometimes mistaken their linguistic ability and their cognitive skills. Besides that, they might find that their children's previous schools have already covered some of the subject matter in their country of origin. The egalitarianism and democracy seen in American classrooms, a different kind of discipline, expectation towards parents to participate in their children's school projects and assignments often causes puzzlement (Ibid., pp.148-149). Schools ought to prepare for meeting parents' disapproval of such practices and take it as a cultural misunderstanding, which they are to manage. Parents might not be involved in their children's education due to working several jobs, cultural differences, undocumented parents, or feeling self-conscious and uncomfortable due to their

lack of English skills (Ibid., p.150). It could take a while to fully understand the differences between types of schools, educational opportunities, and requirements for various careers.

Frustrated and threatened by losing their status, sureness and authority, parents "may become severe disciplinarians" strictly maintaining practices from their country of origin (Ibid., pp.76-77). In order to avoid losing their integrity, Igoa recommends that schools/teachers at least require a parent's signature involving them in the education of their children. That way they are directly involved in their education and children are less inclined to look down at their parents for not understanding the language (2009, p.138). Suarez-Orozco et al. found "less-than-expected tension around cultural parenting practices" and explained that newly arrived immigrant students still largely follow the norms and expectations of their country of origin (2008, p.71). On the other hand, it cannot be ignored what Brah (1996, p.43) claimed; that is, conflicts over divergent values between immigrant parents and children are natural having considered that native-born children and their parents fight over very similar issues.

The successful outcome of sociocultural and psychological adjustment is being able to cope with situations, behave appropriately in society and with others (Gudykunst, 2005, p.424). Based on Klyukanov's theory, culture shock occurs when those who migrate to a culturally fundamentally different country/society experiences the adjustment to new rules and situations. The *preliminary stage* provides an insight about the difference of the host people, the host culture and the new interaction style (Klyukanov, 2005, p.64). "Especially early on, much of immigration is a process of comparing the 'here and now' with the 'there and then'" (Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.87). Those who experience the *honeymoon stage* become excited about novelties found in the host culture. Frustration, confusion, and rejection can be felt in the critical *crisis stage*. Feelings of hostility may disappear during the *adjustment stage,* and the chance for living with the new cultural practices increases. One of the results is *assimilation,* due to which people gradually disregard the cultural tradition of their country of origin in favor of the new culture. Alternatively, *separation* takes place, as there are people who continue to favor their own cultural tradition and disregard the new (Klyukanov, 2005, p.65).

Somewhat similarly to the previous theory, Cesari highlighted 3 modes of integration: *acceptance* when there is a will to assimilate and adopt the host culture while there is a cultural amnesia concerning the old one, *avoidance* as an attempt to be separated where possible, and *resistance* that leads to extremism[48] and complete denial (2004, pp.175-178). Kim set up the *Stress-Adaptation-Growth Dynamic,* which focuses on the changes individuals ought to go through and overcome (2005, p.384) and maintains that it is only natural to resist change or novelty especially if that is against solid and different old habits or cultural elements (Ibid., p.383). Monitoring the possible outcomes; especially among Muslim immigrants, Islam is likely inseparable from ethno-national identity and students might miss guidance.

Among children experiencing cross-cultural encounters, defense mechanisms such as regression, passive-aggressive behavior and acting out because of stress are common. They might

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[48] "The illusion of singularity draws on the presumption that a person not be seen as an individual with many affiliations, nor as someone who belongs to many different groups (…)" (Sen, 2006, p.45).

become extremely dependent, might refuse to do their homework or partake in school-life because of quiet rebelliousness, or they might become attention seekers. The last term illustrates the defense mechanism that occurs among those children who did not used to act out, were shy and suddenly they turn into surprisingly loud, attention-seekers (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994, pp.76-77). Though, living in a new culture does not affect everyone in the same way. Researchers studying cross-cultural interactions promote gaining prior useful knowledge when planning a cross-cultural move in order to ease the culture shock in the host culture (Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.126). Obtaining general knowledge,[49] as well as putting aside mere assumptions, is most certainly an advantageous start. But one can wonder if it is always known where that would eventually be. Previous experience abroad and friendship/relationship with people from the host culture would probably offer great benefit; however, those factors are not always available. It is one of the reasons why schools and teachers ought to be prepared or trained on how to interact with students of various cultural heritages.

Separation, as mentioned above, might isolate first generation individuals for a lifetime; and *xenophobia*[50] from some host nationals might frighten and push them aside as well. Olsen (2008) claims that partially on account of recent terrorist attacks, and the high influx of Hispanic immigrants, U.S.-born Americans' distrust towards foreign-born people has increased. "INS raids of places where immigrants congregate (including parent meetings on school sites)" (Ibid., p.vi). Not all the members of the host society are eager to see people from different cultures; and tolerate their immediate presence. "Immigrant groups who are highly visible because of their race, color, and language are typically singled out for culturally elaborate and sometimes debilitating stereotypes" (Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.8). Greater psychological distress and adjustment problems were linked to the self-reported experience of racial prejudice, perceived discrimination of Muslim immigrants in Western societies (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001, p.90).

Suarez-Orozco et al. (2008, p.77) found that

"While overall teachers' assessments of immigrant parents were often patronizing at best and hostile at worst, looking into the eyes of immigrant youth we found a very different perspective. The vast majority of the children had internalized very high parental expectations for their academic performance."

Shabaya, emphasizes that most educators of African students may be prejudiced and/or have no or very little knowledge about their cultural backgrounds. Sociocultural issues, like these children's upbringing, play a vital role in understanding their behavior: being humble, avoiding eye contact, and avoiding confrontations (2006, p.265). As there may be a negative perception of the relationships between immigrant students and teachers by U.S.-born students, there may be a pressure towards

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[49] Cushner and Brislin described 4 useful concepts that are essential to gain knowledge of in order to function successfully in the host society: *immediate concerns* (housing, shopping, information on school system are enough only for the survival), *area-specific knowledge* (provides opportunities for individuals to engage themselves in intellectual conversations with host nationals), gaining *culture-general knowledge* (to overwhelm anxiety and ambiguity), and *culture-specific knowledge* (to create less ambiguity and uncertainty). Individuals getting familiar with rules, customs, and the etiquette of the host culture can achieve them all (1997, p.3).

[50] The definition of xenophobia describes the fear of strangers or foreigners and extreme nationalism. It usually occurs in societies where the population of minority ethnic people varies significantly (Jandt, 2001, p362).

newcomers on the expense of their academic success to downplay that relationship and the importance of education (Olsen, 2008, p.80). Consequently, there can be a decline in their academic success.

There is a pressure on newcomers to cease their foreign ways and act American. They are aware of the importance of clothing, clothing standards in American high schools, and being judged by the mainstream. They observe their U.S.-born American schoolmates to learn the ways to fit in and survive and avoid their ridicule (Ibid., pp.45-46). Olsen noticed that when immigrant students do act like their typical American school mates in order to be accepted, they are frequently labeled as "wannabees" from one side or the other (Ibid., p.73). "Problems occur when a person's internalized sense of belonging ('I am American') is met by exclusionary attitudes and practices in the host society ('You are not one of us—you are Muslim')" (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.372). Newly arrived immigrants' primary identity in the eyes of members of the host society is to be foreign; thus, certain behaviors are and others are not expected from them (Riley, 2007, p.196). During her research, a recent immigrant Afghan girl told Olsen she felt she could never be American. It was not necessarily her religion but her perception of being American was a matter of being black or white (Olsen, 2008, p.43). First generation immigrant students are fully aware of the fact that they have to change so that they fit in the new milieu. Reportedly; however, they are unsure to what extent, and what is enough for the host society (Ibid., p.56). Using a critical multicultural curriculum, teachers could probably explain just that and guide students towards that direction.

Students are susceptible to what others think about them. It has been suggested that children of various races are alert to prejudice or negative reception from the members of the mainstream culture. There is a great concern about the negative mirroring they receive as their identity is shaped partly by *recognition, nonrecognition or misrecognition* of others (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, pp.98-99). Igoa found an exceptionally descriptive way to explain mirroring:

"Children are very vulnerable to the projections of others—they look at another child and see their own face staring back at them. Children need mirroring. If a child looks into a friend's or a teacher's eyes and sees reflected someone who is not himself, he begins to lose his sense of self and to pattern himself on that 'other'" (Igoa, 2009, p.18).

An individual's social identity is shaped by what others think or how others view an individual changing from role to role (Riley, 2007, p.86). According to the LISA study, 65% of the children completed the sentence 'Most Americans think [people from the child's country of origin] are_____.' with a negative thought (Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.97). Reception of the new society and their attitude towards immigration are significant factors that influence immigrant children's experience (Ibid., p.36). Getting the occasional impression of racism and prejudice from the host national individuals, do not support acculturation well. Racism[51] is often expressed as the result of 'inherently different' cultures (Brah, 1996, p.155). Riley argues that the idea of a foreigner or stranger is considered to be rather problematic and challenging (2007, p.163), especially members of distant cultures. With the appearance of such a stranger, people's coherent clear and consistent cultural model trembles (Ibid., pp.170-171).

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[51] A variety of racisms has evolved with various historical reasons, characteristic features (Brah, 1996, p.169).

Antiforeigner comments (Jandt, 2001, p.362) in or outside school could harm these students' psychological well-being and could impede their socio-cultural adjustment. So could the xenophobic attitude from the members of the host society, whether they are peer students, their parents, or teachers. *Prejudice*[52] is a form of response from the host society. It does not necessarily have to derive exclusively from fellow students, but also staff, and teachers, who might mistreat them by expecting a lot less than from the others. These false assumptions probably originate from stereotyping. Some members of schools' staff could still maintain general impressions and ideas ("your typical Arab student") about how they might perform because of the teaching staffs' lack of commitment to learn more about them and other learning/teaching styles.

People can both implicitly and explicitly express prejudice without even realizing it. Once noticed in an educational setting, it should be confronted. Blatant or active denigration of a minority group can result in the sense that they are not worthy of decent treatment (Hall, 2005, p.204). *Conceit* and making fun of a minority group and its values strengthen prejudice. People occasionally rationalize it because of a previous negative experience, which could have easily been personal. In addition, lack of experience or media reports serve as a warrant (Ibid., p.206). It may make some decisions convenient or make social decisions quick and easy; however, there are missed opportunities for personal growth, solving problems, and developing relationships (Ibid., p.219). Negative attitudes such as ethnocentrism, prejudice, racism and various '–isms' (Gudykunst, 2005, p.296) due to narrow-mindedness or ignorance on the topic lead to intolerance towards strange cultures and negatively influence the accommodation of newcomers.

Teachers and school staff are together responsible for the consequences of derogatory sentiments deriving from prejudice and ethnocentrism. Therefore, when they show their commitment towards anti-prejudiced attitude and ethno-relativism in the presence of those that tend to act contrary to that are likely to think twice (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.152). The promotion and expression of anti-prejudiced, culturally relative behavior and passing it on to others is imperative, especially in an educational setting. A possible outcome is that others become less inclined to make ethnocentric or prejudiced comments especially in the presence of those who do not tolerate it. Phrases like "this type of speech is not acceptable for me" or "I'd prefer you didn't put down members of other ethnic groups in my presence," and not staying taciturn makes the non-prejudiced bystanders promote responsibility for the consequences of remarks or behavior (Gudykunst, 2003, pp.152-153). The concept of individualism in education may be used to promote equality through raising the awareness of other cultures and to discuss differing opinions and definitions (hard, soft) of multiculturalism.

Unfairly represented negative stereotypes are conveyed through the media and popular culture in the U.S. making Arabs and Muslims vulnerable and put in distress (Elaasar, 2004, pp.20-23); differences are magnified both culturally and spirituality (Marvasti & McKinney, 2004, pp.74-78). As a result, racial profiling and surveillance is considered appropriate by a third of Americans if it is aimed

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[52] Making a prejudgment based on membership in a social category. It can be positive or negative but the tendency is to think that it is negative. Negative ethnic prejudice is "an antipathy based on a faulty and unflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward a group as a whole or toward an individual because he [or she] is a member of that group" (Allport, 1954 as cited in Gudykunst, 1998, p.110).

at Muslims in America, for instance (Sirin & Fine, 2008, p.2). The process of "othering" is described in various forms: differences are shortcomings, objectification of the other, and familiar is superior and powerful, oppressive identity of the other (Marvasti & McKinney, 2004, p.69). Existing societal diversity or the branches in Islam are often overlooked: "it would be a mistake to suggest that the treatment of women under the defunct Taliban regime in Afghanistan was 'true' Islam, just as it would be inaccurate to argue that Utah's polygamous Mormons are ambassadors of Christianity" (Marvasti & McKinney, 2004, pp.46-47).

African immigrants have heterogeneous character due to differences in class, gender, education, ethnicity, and religion; still, such divisive factors can become negligible in regards to immigration (Arthur, 2008, p.87). Africans are likely to see Black Americans surrounded by discrimination and institutionalized racism, who ought to fight for issues taken for granted by their fellow white American citizens. Yet, they also believe that native-born Black Americans are still more advantaged than immigrant Black Africans (Ibid., p.66). There is also the perception that the dominant white majority, with the power of labeling, places African immigrants under the umbrella of Blacks (Ibid., p.81). Arthur also describes the phenomenon that educated affluent African Black immigrants are exposed to discrimination because of the perceived racial hierarchy in the U.S. (Ibid., p.73). Immigrants note that America ought to move towards "the multiple cultural and ethnic manifestations that exist in the country, and that immigrants and minorities should not be pressured to adopt the culture of the powerful and dominant ethnic groups as this will violate freedom of cultural expression" (Ibid., p.74). However, as shown in the previous chapter, there is societal pressure in the U.S. and multiculturalism in the American society is not without its flaws.

Occasionally, immigrants do choose voluntary alienation and marginalization to deal with exclusion and antipathy (Arthur, 2008, p.71). African students narrating their stories of immigration claimed to have experienced the feeling of being odd, and strange, but determined the new place as astonishing and challenging (Omotosho, 2005, p.19). Obeng (2008) concluded that African immigrants face considerable challenges when adapting to the American school system. He also mentions cultural alienation and cultural misunderstanding (Ibid., p.14), contrary to the fact that immigrants are ready to accept, for instance, the education system of the American society amongst other core institutions.

To prevent false judgments, it is essential that these students are introduced to the teaching staff and the teaching staff is adequately informed about their educational background and capabilities in advance. Brah argues that multiculturalism and pluralism within have reinforced the idea of cultural differences and brought institutional racism along (1996, pp.228-230). According to Olsen's observations in American schools, reluctant teachers, who oppose making accommodations in their teaching, hide behind their *color-blindness*[53] and insist on the apparent absurdity: the school is well-integrated "everybody is basically the same" and at the same time diverse (2008, p.178). It is a naïve

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[53] Intercultural trainings ought to be pedagogically and culturally sensitive and must avoid ethnocentric, unethical thus counterproductive practices (Riley, 2007, p.232). "The concept of culture is so complicated and contentious that even scholarly representations of culture often reflect overgeneralized, stereotyped, and otherized representations" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.18).

transparent demagogy some teachers demonstrate that hardworking students (newly arrived immigrant or not) could achieve whatever they wish "if there is a will, there is a way." El-Haj states that from an academic point of view, schools still treat students differently. On the other hand, treating them as they are all the same may lead to failure; therefore, the dilemma for teachers is how to act; it comes from contradictory preconceived notions about learning and differences. The author suggests to share commitment, broaden educational perspectives while adopting a different attitude not to marginalize any group of students (2006, p.10), and claims that relational view of differences is the answer (Ibid., p.16).

Pollock calls the colorblind attitude a *colormute* one, as it is not that people are actually colorblind but purposefully avoid or refuse using such racial terms (2004, p.3). As racial description of demographics or individuals can be incorrect, there is the dilemma when it is appropriate to talk in racial terms or if the description itself is accurate. Race labels are particularly suppressed when there is a risk of being seen as racist as people are unsure when and how race matters (Ibid., pp.8-9). The author warns that people tend to place others in clear-cut racial categories (racialization is a process of simplification), even research on education focuses on racial groups, and that can oversimplify the complexity of people (Ibid., pp.42-43). Pollock found a paradox, namely that students wish to be placed in racial categories when it came to the celebration of diversity in school. But when it came to their punishment, they all wished to be treated equally as if they were the same, so making race relevant was ambiguous depending on various circumstances (Pollock, 2004. pp.44-45). Thus, problems also happen "if we do not categorize strangers based on their ethnicities when they see their ethnicities as important to the interactions" (Gudykunst, 1998, pp.76-77). The ability to deal with the presence of a subculture: to *tolerate*, allow or respect the nature, beliefs, or behavior of others can be expected to vary among members of a host culture (Klyukanov, 2005, p.247).

There are members of the host culture who do not tolerate the presence of a foreign culture in their territory which is explained with the term *resistance* (Ibid., p.249). It is normally accompanied with *stereotyping*, a fixed notion that does not distinguish individuals within a group being judged; although, "stereotypes are at best half-truths" (Jandt, 2001, p.14). Individuals with such narcissistic attitudes could be judged inconsiderate and should realize that such behavior might have consequences. There are people who have lived a secluded life and can easily say that there is no problem/prejudice in their surroundings (Hall, 2005, p.192). Gudykunst & Kim claim that it is because they weakly identify with their ethnicity and do not belong to a group that is a typical target for prejudice and cannot comprehend what a discriminated person might feel (2003, p.110). Therefore, as a result of either resistance or seclusion, it is easy to miss the problems.

Positive or negative stereotyping creates an impact on what we perceive, what we encourage in others. Stereotypes could be reinforced in people's minds by predisposition of expectations thus looking for certain things. It requires sacrifice, but having unbiased personal proof first is essential (Hall, 2005, p.195). A large percentage of social stereotypes are gained from the media where non-Europeans are typically presented negatively and inaccurately (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.128). Triandis (1995, as cited in Gudykunst, 2005, p.305) advises that collectivistic cultures also have a

tendency to draw a sharper line between other cultures, supporting the concept of conformity or homogeneity; there is a stronger 'us and them' approach.

When applying *ethnocentric reduction,* members of the host culture expect or force newcomers to behave according to their culture's frame of reference. *Cultural norms* (shared standard for accepted and expected behaviors), *folkways* (widely accepted daily cultural practices such as dress code, eating, driving habits), *mores* (cultural practices with moral connotations), *laws* (written codified cultural practices) are typically considered set because of *ethnocentrism*, an inherent human condition or central perception (Klyukanov, 2005, pp.83-89). When neither the members of the host society nor the newcomers engage in real interaction, disregarding one another, *ethnocentric negation* takes place. However, when both parties defend their position and affirm each other *ethnocentric affirmation* takes place (Ibid., p.90). Looking at another culture, its members, values, and norms from an objective standpoint may not be simple. Those, who belong to certain racial or ethnic minority groups or subculture, are often judged by the dominant group, due to their *ethnocentric* thinking.

How cultures teach is also reflected in the way teachers and students interact, the importance they place on education: dress codes, individual textbooks vs. sharing them, teacher-centered lectures or student-centered education, the amount of academic subjects and extracurricular activities, students agree with teachers or debate ideas, the number of hours a day or number of days a year, holidays; and cooperative learning vs. competitive learning. "Schools are a primary means by which a culture's history and traditions are passed from generation to generation" (Samovar, 2001, pp.218-219). What cultures emphasize about their own accomplishments throughout history vs. others and how children are taught differs from culture to culture and is a sign of ethnocentrism. The American population has been changing drastically racially and ethnically and schools are affected by immigrant children. Education systems are said to have changed to adapt (Ibid., pp.220-223). The cultural influence of white male Americans still outweighs people of other ethnicity/color or race. The American education system now aims to accommodate students with diverse levels of ability and cultural diversity (Ibid., pp.224-225) by incorporating authors, literature, etc. from all over the world; it is still not pervasive enough and is occasionally superficial.

Ethnocentrism may not automatically have detrimental outcomes; however, it can produce negative results on both sides. *Negative ethnocentrism* shifts the emphasis towards the superiority of the dominant majority and stresses the inferiority of certain subcultures through stereotyping (unlike generalizing which is less harmful); and ridicule can only bring tension (Kendall, 2003, p.90). When surveyed, people are inclined to pick out only positive adjectives to describe their culture; some might pick seemingly negative adjectives, which, in fact, within their culture carry positive connotations. It is explained by *positionality principle* due to which people from different cultures claim authority for their vision of the world (Klyukanov, 2005, p.99). Showing concern and involvement towards a minority group can lessen ethnocentric behavior whereas indifference, avoidance or intolerance strengthens it (Hall, 2005, pp.200-201). Some harmful or threatening customs and habits of any given culture may be excused due to *cultural relativism* present in human nature (Lewis, 2006, p.23).

Developing successful relationships with host nationals might not always come easy. It presupposes that both newcomers and members of the host society overcame their ethnocentrism and

took up *ethnorelativism* (Klyukanov 2005, Lewis 2006). Native-born peers can serve as a crucial factor in newly arrived immigrant children's educational attainment. They may model towards English language, homework assignments; study groups, fashion, accent, and behavior just to mention a few. Whether or not these children form friendships with their U.S.-born classmates depends partially on their country of origin. Typically, though, it is uncommon for them to form friendships with white middle-class and African-Americans students. Thus, immigrant students tend to remain segregated in schools. "Only a 4 percent of all informants reported having close friendships with white American peers, after an average of six years in U.S. schools" (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.81). Olsen has found that recent immigrant students often feel hurt and rejected by schoolmates who are extremely reluctant to befriend them. Ironically, there is a frequent complaint from U.S.-born American students that the newcomers converse in their first language among them not in English (2008, p.65) distancing their own selves.

Gradual adjustment (Jandt, 2001) is the phase during which relief is found in the host society by feeling more comfortable, being able to control and predict things and feeling less isolated; however, full adjustment can take years or might not happen at all. This is the phase of, as Bennett[54] puts it, *acceptance*[55] during which newcomers finally move from *ethnocentrism* toward *ethnorelativism*. "*Cultural relativism* (…) does call for one to suspend judgment when dealing with groups or societies different form one's own. (…) Information about the nature of the cultural differences between societies, their roots and their consequences, should precede judgment and action" (Jandt, 2001, p.15). It means a gradual accepting that their values do not necessarily function in the host culture, and they learn to respect the host nation's values by developing behavioral strategies (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994, p.63).

Newly arrived immigrant children's intercultural adjustment is influenced by their *perception* or awareness of what takes place around them while making sense of it all (Klyukanov, 2005, p.81). Perception involves categorization; however, rigid categories (and their overemphasized importance) not only slow down effective communication, but also prevent people from acknowledging individual characteristics (Gudykunst, 2003, p.210). Categories are frequently used in the USA, a multicultural host country; to define groups of ethnicity and/or religion. Many among the apprehensive population reappropriate the forged categories. People following Islam are often believed to share a common Muslim culture (Roy, 2004, p.126); regardless of their actual culture of origin or individual character since religion is often identified as culture itself.

Naturally, response to the new milieu is greatly influenced by predispositions such as cultural beliefs, attitudes and values based on which ideas are formed about the new culture (for example a new school system). Eventually, immigrants make a decision whether or not they like the surrounding

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[54] Bennett also claims that the third phase of adjustment is called *minimization* as it refers to the phenomenon that individuals are likely to minimize the differences between their culture and the host culture. They are inclined to believe that differences might exist; however, those are rather insignificant (as cited in Cushner & Brislin, 1996, p.3).

[55] Suarez-Orozco et al. found that 59% of the immigrant children they monitored identified themselves completely with their country of origin, 26% mostly, 14% somewhat, and about 2% said they felt mostly or completely American. Thus was one of the reasons they tended to form friendships with peers form similar cultural heritage or country of origin (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.83).

environment. There might be resistance towards Western or American concepts. Educators that notice that newly arrived students dislike certain attitudes or values, ought to find out the reasons and try to seek solution for them (Klyukanov, 2005, p.82). Poor adjustment (Furnham & Bochner, 1986) and an increase in mental illnesses might occur when expectations of migration (material well-being and integration) cannot be accomplished. Alienation and separation is the outcome of unfulfilled expectations and unattained goals that the migrant individuals had set for themselves. The role of *ethnic media* is also important, as it has become widely available even locally, and it can easily take over the role of the dominant mass media weakening the chances of successful integration and cross-cultural adaptation (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.366). For first generation immigrants being a Muslim may be more of a struggle rather than a form of liberation as they may experience pressure to integrate or acculturate Islam along with their own selves (Mandaville, 2004, pp.105-109).

Culture clash and marginalization are not the only potential outcome of the process (Brah, 1996, p.41) if it is presumed that cultures with conflicting values, due to cultural transmigration, can have a positive mutual influence on each other. Through adjustment, the ability to function in both the host and one's native culture *adaptation or biculturalism* can be achieved (Jandt, 2001, p.341). Having accepted and learned to respect the culture of the host society, the end result of *adaptation* (Bennett as cited in Brislin & Yoshida, 1994, p.64) is empathy with individuals from the host society, and adjustment of behavior when interacting with host nationals. Individuals could become bicultural or multicultural beings as a positive outcome of *integration* by preserving their cultures and becoming an integral part of the host society at the same time. It is not uncommon to separately maintain (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001, p.211) the important parts of one's original culture and participating in a host culture at the same time. Nevertheless, not every first generation immigrant is able to integrate multiple sets of values.

Dynamic and functional 'cultural transformers' or 'biculturalists' have a secure ethnic identity and feel comfortable in the dominant group at the same time (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.225). The benefit is to become very valuable labor force in an "increasingly internationalizing world" (as cited in Brislin, Yoshida, 1994, p.65). Still, because of one's 'flexible personality', co-nationals might express discontent. *Pluralism* is an alternative to *assimilation* (Gudykunst, 1998, p.78) that means individuals have not yet given up their ethnic identity. "The first generation of immigrants does not completely assimilate into the new culture. The linguistic and cultural hurdles are simply too high and too many" (Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.91). They typically feel stuck between the new and old cultures, as their experiences will be viewed via a dual frame of reference (Ibid., p.93). First generation immigrant students almost certainly do not experience *assimilation* as a multigenerational process (Jandt, 2001, p.356). Individuals who do, give up their original culture or cultural identity, identify themselves as Americans (Gudykunst, 1998, p.77), participate fully in the host culture, which, naturally, after a few generations cannot be defined as host culture any longer.

The concept of *dissonant acculturation* implies how children, due to being exposed to the host culture more than their parents, acculturate faster and might, as a result, distance themselves from their ethnic heritage. It is a major risk factor because parents may lose the capability to guide and support their children (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.120). It can occur among 1st, 1.5th, and 2nd generation

immigrant children. Maintaining the connection with one's native culture and learning the new culture at the same time is what helps (Igoa, 2009, p.39). With proper cultivation, these children can develop a bicultural self. Igoa (2009) explains that during the so-called *in the mainstream* or *integration* stage *maladjustment* happens if children feel that their culture is or may be prejudiced against or ridiculed. As a result there is a cultural split and children act inconsistently in a variety of contexts (Ibid., pp.41-45). There are immigrants who, while maintaining their ethnic identity, also take in the values and norms of the host culture and via integrating those who develop a *bicultural identity* (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.223). When immigrant children's culture and language, and their becoming of bilingual/bicultural are not validated, they might feel that they sabotage their roots thus cultural splits might take place (Igoa, 2009, p.131). School teachers together, therefore, are responsible for validating the languages and cultures of all their students and assist them with continuation if needed.

Based on the *Social Identity Theory* visible minorities, including immigrant minorities, need to enhance self-esteem, and one way is to be acknowledged by the dominant majority; for instance, via good quality intergroup relations, mutually rewarding circumstances in which the cultural and economic security of diverse ethnocultural communities are assured (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001, p.120). Kumaravadivelu described a cultural phenomenon among recent immigrant children of ethnic communities according to which as preteens immigrant children accept their cultural beliefs and practices. However, as teenagers under severe peer pressure, they tend to rebel against all that, and then as young adults they once again appreciate the significance of their bilingual or bicultural identity often complaining to their parents about not pushing them hard enough (2008, p.3). He added that "While communities and societies as a whole do perform gatekeeping functions, it is individuals and groups of individuals that largely shape the contours of cultural transformation" (Ibid., p.18).

Olsen found higher depression rates, less independence, hyphenated identities, less pressure to conformity, limitation on dating, maintaining their cultural integrity; but higher educational attainment among immigrant girls compared with boys (2008, p.123). There are parents who do encourage their children to learn certain cultural practices; at the same time, they insist that the children resist certain others. The most accentuated is the Americanization of immigrant daughters more specifically the peers and dating of adolescent girls (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, pp.79-80). Some immigrant parents generate informal parallel tutoring to give support to their children's learning including English lessons, or lessons to maintain the language and culture of their country of origin (Ibid., p.11). Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2002, pp.6-7) said that *Faustian bargain* occurs due to the process of immigration, during which parents tend to lose parental authority and family cohesion and worry that the children become too westernized thanks to peer pressure. These researchers found, and with it this study is also in agreement that children whose parents support bicultural attitudes are the fortunate ones and have greater chance to take advantage of immigration.

Brody claims that achieving bilingualism is not only easier, but it is more likely to be catered for than biculturalism (2003, p.38). "We can ask learners to temporarily play a role that is not their think thoughts that they don't usually think. Ultimately, however, they will have to decide how they wish to shape this culture of the third kind that is neither the one they grew up with, nor the one they are invited to enter" (Kramsch, 2003, p.32). Babiker presented the concept of *cultural distance* (1980)

as a possible reason for distress experienced by individuals in the process of socio-cultural adjustment or acculturation. He found that the bigger the difference between the culture of origin and the culture of settlement, the worse one's psychological well-being could be (as cited in Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.137). Similarity of the original culture and the host culture is one of the most important factors in acculturation (Jandt, 2001, p.354). Upon the interaction of people from very different cultural backgrounds, similarities tend to fade away and differences tend to become highlighted (Lewis, 2006, p.38). It is not only difficult to reach a balanced bicultural-bilingual status/identity but also to maintain it. This middle ground may be uncomfortable for many since in order to embrace such an identity, one should be supported from both the school and the home (Olsen, 2008, p.241). However, such an idyllic circumstance is rare.

Besides cultural distance, along with the cultural factors, individual factors might affect the acculturation of individuals. "Some new immigrants do maintain some of their more exotic cultural practices, but this has always been true" (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.55). There are differences among individuals from the same culture of origin depending on, for instance, whether they lived in cosmopolitan or rural areas. Moreover, younger people might find the adjustment to the new culture more or less difficult compared to the older ones. However, it depends on several other aspects, which include their approach towards the host culture and their personality—language skills, whether or not they are talkative, outgoing, curious, a risk-taker, or open-minded (Jandt, 2001, p.365). Age and educational level both are criteria in the process as younger and better-educated people have better potential in adaptation (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.370).

Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) claimed that younger immigrant individuals take on the values of the host culture faster and more efficiently than the older ones[56]. They can hold the values of both cultures and equally maintain relationships on both sides. They probably reach the phase of biculturalism faster than their parents reach it; consequently, they might have arguments with their parents or within families deriving from the growing cultural difference between parents and children (p.212). Parents may still hold traditional collectivist values and their children move towards the individualist values of the new culture, so debates might arise between them. Their arguments, do not necessarily originate from such discrepancy between the values and morals they hold. Invariably, value conflicts between generations of the same society occur as well.

Individual factors that determine individual's behavior in intercultural interactions can be put into three groups: *personality* has two features 'idiocentrism' (it represents loneliness, alienation, being less sensitive to other's behavior and putting emphasis on achievement) and 'allocentrism' (being supportive socially, paying attention to other's status characteristics, behaving in a socially appropriate way) (Gudykunst, 1998, p.50). There are two types of *individual values*: 'individual' (hedonism, achievement, social power) and 'collectivist' (pro-social, restrictive conformity, tradition values). People can hold all these features or values, but which ones dominate will greatly depend on whether

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[56] A 17-year-old Iranian student, who has been already mentioned, and her family celebrated both Christmas and Eid, also both the western New Year's Eve and the Persian one. Her close family gave each other presents and she presented Christmas cards to all her teachers during the last week before the holiday. She and her family had been to England only for two years, they already felt they should celebrate both holidays. There were other students though who did not celebrate the Christian/western Christmas. The Bangladeshi students celebrated Eid only, and missed the entire school day.

they were socialized in a collectivistic or individualistic society. *Self construals* containing two features: 'independent' (the view of the individual's self as unique and independent entity) and 'interdependent' (the view of the individual's self as part of a close social relationship where others guide the individuals' behavior) also influence intercultural interaction. Everyone has both construals and one of them always predominates. Particular situations and circumstances determine when and which of the two dominates (Gudykunst, 1998, p.53). Newly arrived immigrant children from the Horn of Africa and the Middle East with dominating idiocentric, individual or independent characteristics might find adjustment to the host culture easier than those with strong allocentric, collectivist or interdependent characteristics.

Successful adjustment is a combination of four factors: *good personal adjustment* (Cushner & Brislin, 1996) can occur when people feel comfortable in the host country. Most individuals can probably only flourish when they are among a particular society that shares their language and culture. Not everybody feels comfortable at home, though, as some are oppressed at home and liberated abroad.[57] The second factor *developing and maintaining good interpersonal relations with hosts*; (Ibid.) refers to individuals who have learned to respect host nationals and form good relations with them. For example, fellow students spend time together and share personal information about each other. *Task effectiveness* (Ibid.) as the third factor describes how well students adjust their learning styles to the teaching styles of the host country and complete their goals in school, such as the completion of tests or examinations. The last factor is *no greater stress or experience of culture shock than would occur in the home culture when moving into a similar role* (Ibid.). It suggests that individuals having reached the final phase of intercultural adjustment should not experience extraordinary difficulty and frustration when having transformation in their lives. It can occur, for instance, when secondary school students leave school for college (Ibid., pp.3-4); therefore, they get into a different community with new rules, new requirements and new goals to accomplish.

The United States laws support integration by allowing migrant individuals to keep their nationality/citizenship of origin, *dual-nationality* (U.S. Immigration Support, 2011 online, CBC News, 2008, online). Dual-national children may visit their country of origin every so often occasionally spending school holidays there. Some consider it as advantageous, especially in a globalized post-industrial economy/world; others think it puts their loyalty in danger (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.59). When laws of a country do not allow individuals immigrating to the USA to keep their original citizenship in order to take up an additional one, it could lead to a sort of psychological struggle because losing that passport could mean the end of a relationship with their country/culture of origin forever. Most countries taken under consideration in this study do not recognize dual citizenship, albeit religious affiliation (being a Muslim) carries more weight than nationality.

Basic citizen roles shape one according to the extent people within a given society attach either high or low priorities to themselves or to the society they reside in. *Self-centered citizenship* implies that citizens tend to prioritize their own needs over those of society (American). *Altruistic citizenship or Ideological citizenship* implies persons placing society's needs well ahead of their own.

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[57] A life of foreignness imposed by poverty or persecution or exile is unlikely to be enjoyable at all (*The Economist*, 19 Dec 2009, pp.107-110).

Democratic form of citizenship suggests that people consider both individual and societal needs equally important. *Apathetic citizenship* applies to those who are either passive, alienated, or skeptical about the political significance of the citizenship issue.[58] "They care, and at some level they tend to believe that their alienation conveys a message which may eventually be heard by the society's leadership" (Rosenau, 1997, p.230). Regarding immigrants in America Epstein notes that non-Westerner immigrants should avoid exhibiting too much patriotism of their country of origin and make an effort to show commitment to the new land. Often because of this, one's house of worship becomes more than that: community, identity reassurance and a place where one can find relief from outside pressure of conformity (Epstein, 2005. p.178).

The aim of cross-cultural adaptation is to establish a healthy relationship with the host culture through the process of adaptation to the host environment that offers constant challenges when coming from a very different one (Kim, Y., 2005, p.375). Students might be motivated intrinsically or extrinsically, learning what is relevant and useful or what is on demand (Samovar et al., 2007, pp.272-273). Evidently, successful integration is the solution to sustain health and well-being after the relocation and settlement of people into a culture that is different from the culture of origin. Eventually, adjustment is influenced by several factors, such as cultural distance, social support, and individual characteristics; therefore, it is a result of an impact of circumstances.

Acculturation on an individual level depends on the person (personality, language fluency, values, previous experience, cultural identity), just as much as on the situation (social support, cultural distance, cultural contact, amount of life changes). Factors that influence the successful outcome of a newly arrived immigrant's adaptation are *preparedness* (mentally, emotionally, motivationally), *ethnic proximity/distance* (similarity, compatibility), and *personality* or personal predispositions such as openness (resistance, willingness), strength, and positivity (Kim, Y., 2005, pp.389-390). Success can be measured by means of *functional fitness* (how well one can communicate with and form relationships with host members), *psychological health*, the emergence of *intercultural identity* and individualization which entails a clear self-definition (Ibid., p.391). It is not only the individual's willingness and openness that matters in adaptation, but also *host receptivity* or openness and *host conformity pressure* challenging the newcomer to act according to the dominant cultural elements. Besides ethnic group strength, the extent to which newcomers are discouraged to participate in the host environment is also vital (Ibid., p.388).

3.2 Role of social factors in adjustment and the potential for cultural adaptation

Cultural diversity is becoming more apparent, providing schools with challenges especially in such a heterogeneous society as the American (Kendall, 2003, p.97). Cultural diversity implies cultural differences within nations; for example, the USA is a heterogeneous society where characteristics of people such as religion, race, ethnicity, wealth are diverse. This diversity is mainly the result of immigration. The presence of those immigrants different from the majority of the society can result in

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[58] "The idea that nothing, not even loyalty would be required of immigrants, so long as they did not subvert the laws of the country came up constantly in one form or another" (Caldwell, 2009, p.125).

the frustration of the majority who can be intolerant towards newcomers. There is usually a message from the majority that either they belong or they do not. In case of the latter, social support comes from a subculture closest to that of the newcomer (Ibid., p.86). Members of a unified and solid ethnic subculture might retain their language shows that language is important for collective identity. Appropriate conditions, significant joint goals can be developed when the majority and minority groups work together to achieve them (Hall, 2005, pp.253-254). Positive and supportive attitude institution-wide is essential.

Various sources of *social support systems* such as co-national friends, mentors or those of similar cultural heritage, bilingual assistants in school certainly play a substantial role in their psychological well-being during the process of acculturation (Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.136). There is also emphasis on the significance of the family members and the co-national relations. They can provide informational and emotional support to the newly arrived individuals of the same culture/society. Besides, they can empathize and give advice on the culture, the local rules and regulations. In school, it is probably helpful having a peer student from the ELL/ESOL program or the same cultural heritage, who can help the newly arrived student understand the school system, show how things work (using a vending machine, standing in line for lunch in the cafeteria, being punctual in the morning), what is allowed, and what is forbidden at school.

Landis and Bhagat found that satisfaction derives from maintaining co-national relationships, but quality relationships with host nationals is also related to psychological well-being of first generational immigrants. Studies showed that some first generation individuals who spend more time with host nationals could be happier than the ones spending time with co-nationals (Ibid., p.137). A healthy balance between the friendships of the host national and co-national peers[59] probably provides for the chance of a successful acculturation of newcomers. It is naturally easier to create confidence if people share common values, interests. Without confidence, there will be no trust either. Trust can be established based on background knowledge or can be the fruit of a relationship between people who are willing to work on it and encourage it to happen. It is conditional and at times interest plays a part; for instance, succeeding in school. The notion of mistrust coming from members of the dominant culture could be a reason for some Muslim communities in the USA to maintain segregation and autonomy.

Suarez-Orozco et al. claim that students may do better at school if they are *behaviorally engaged*[60]: they complete homework assignments, do class work, pay attention, and follow behavioral rules in school. The authors found that boys are disadvantaged as girls are the ones typically maintaining their initial positive attitude in school (2008, pp.48-49). Probably due to their restricted and monitored activities, immigrant girls typically do better at school than boys. "Religion and culture

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[59] Based on what I have seen, newly arrived first generation immigrant students seemed to have formed friendships amongst each other, and there were only rare occasions that the English fellow students accepted or befriended one.

[60] There are numerous reasons why students' performances and *academic engagement* decline throughout time. *Relational engagement* refers to students forming friendships and social relations in schools. Suarez-Orozco et al., have found that girls typically do better than boys bonding with others although girls experience more anxiety and depression in school (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, pp.45-46).

have a tremendous influence on the experiences of immigrant girls. Girls of Hindi Indian or Muslim Afghani backgrounds face very different issues than do Catholic Mexican, or Buddhist Chinese girls (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.80). Certain ethnic minority boys experience that teachers do not expect much from them; also these children may perceive more open racism from the rest of the mainstream society. *Gender* thus is a key factor with immigrant girls having friendships that are more reliable, take school more seriously, and have more responsibilities in their homes (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.39).

Samina Ali remembers her parents' attitude in her childhood growing up in the U.S.: "They felt the threat of American culture encroaching on our innocence, and to keep us protected, to keep us from being inhabited by America while we inhabited it, we children were threatened by expulsion, from family, from community, from Allah. A clear choice was set up…God's way or Satan's way" (Ali, 2005, p.23). Her recollection goes on about her isolation from American friends, no dating or staying out late, no slumber parties but constant religious constraints. "Despite this, none of us would have traded places with the most popular girls in our classes. Our parents, being recent immigrants…we children inherited their fierce pride for our backgrounds" (Ibid., p.22). Islam affects one's life from every aspect, as it is taught and emphasized in schools (the Arabic language itself which is the dominant language is full of religious expressions). Religion determines gender roles, behavior, and attire. Nonetheless, it is fact that there is a difference between the attitude and *worldview*[61] of a child growing up in rural Pashto Afghanistan or urban Dubai.

The first generations of immigrants in their countries of origin experienced certain levels of identity (parochial, ethnic, national, and religious) as a whole. In the U.S., though, these levels of identity might contradict one another making acculturation difficult (Roy, 2004, p.122). *Cultural identity* is formed based on a combination of given physical appearance, perception of others, and perception of the person's relation to the mainstream culture. How strongly people are attached to it, hold its values, and follow its norms is called *cultural identity salience*. Based on contemporary findings, a person's identity is dynamic, complex, and constructed out of the available social materials (Kauffman as cited in Riley, 2007, p.15). "Identities are inscribed through experiences culturally constructed in social relations" (Brah, 1996, p.123). Collective identities reflect and are signified by religion, gender, race, and class for example. Sen believes that it is essential for a person to realize the ownership of an assortment of identities (2006, p.45). Scholars often claim that immigrant children's identity are exposed to and influenced by two, sometimes-conflicting cultures correspondingly: native culture and host culture. However, the presence of multiple factors that influence one's social identity is only natural as that is a rather complex entity anyway (Brah, 1996, p.40).

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[61] *Worldview* influences aspects of one's perception, value systems, thinking. The study of Islam helps intercultural communicators understand newcomers (Samovar, 2001, p.92). Behavior is shaped by individual perceptions of the external world, thus people cannot follow an identical pattern; their perception can, however, be more or less similar when coming from similar biological and experiential background (a perceptual group). Identity groups share similar perceptions "a pattern of perceptions, values, attitudes, and behaviors that is accepted and expected by an identity group is called a culture" (Singer, 1998. pp.98-99). "No two people can perceive 100 percent identically and that the groups with which we either have been, or are, associated for most of our lives determine what and how we perceive" (Singer, 1998. p.107).

Hegel (as cited in Riley, 2007) set up a mixture of recognition that influences one's social identity: 'affective recognition' (for example parental), 'ethical recognition' (to be respected, have equal rights, or the presence of xenophobia), 'social recognition' (mutual inclusion in group activities) (Riley, 2007, pp.177-178). The extent of recognition or validation of one's social identity is crucial (2007, p.175). Shutz (as cited in Riley, 2007) insists that those new to a society might feel a sense of meaninglessness due to the relative irrelevance of their language, customs, culinary, or religious practices: their social identities (Ibid., p.172). Confusion may derive from identity conflict. One's former identity might tremble because of racism, or the diverse roles of one's gender, religion, language, and social status (Brah, 1996, p.42). What used to signify one's identity, for instance gender relations, religion, language or social status, might lose its core sense.

Ethnic appearance does not automatically mean that the ethnic subculture is more salient than the mainstream or popular culture[62] (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.214). There are Americans who accentuate the history of their ancestors and those who refer to themselves simply as American (Samovar et al., 2007, p.93-95). As it was mentioned in Chapter 2, in the United States, there are numerous subcultures built on race, religion, region, etc. and one can belong to several at a time. *Ethnic subcultures* (Kendall, 2003, p.88) share racial, linguistic, or national background and identify themselves with it. Some groups can be marginalized from mainstream society others interact with it. Members of subcultures can live in large communities concentrated around one area or spread out thorough the country. Muslims are a subculture in the USA. Holding onto their original culture, first generation immigrants from Muslim societies might be able to cope with culture shock by living close to those who share their background. Members of a group that make up a *counterculture* (Ibid., p.89) reject the cultural or societal values and norms of the majority and seek alternative lifestyle: It can range from rebellious youth to radical political activists.

For the newly arrived, gaining competence can be a slow process; therefore, *ethnic social communication* can become rather strong in order to find out what is important to survive in and how to adjust to the new milieu. For protection against prejudice and for loyalty and comfort, students tend to form friendships and spend time with others from similar backgrounds, race, and ethnicity (Olsen, 2008, p.74). Besides counseling and support given to students in schools, to receive key information in order to manage, they reach out to networks of family members and friends typically from the same country of origin (Ibid., p.54). Religiosity and belonging to a denomination may also be advantageous (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, pp.84-85). "The informal friendships and networks formed in these organizations sometimes function as surrogate kin group organizations, offering emotional, economic, and practical support to immigrants with or without family" (Arthur, 2008, pp.85-86). They assist in social integration, act as a bridge between the individual and the society to avoid alienation and promote participation. Ethnic sources can be vital for survival as it is relatively free of stress and frustration.

However, there is a chance that some newcomers will rely heavily on such communication and become isolated in the end (Kim, Y., 2005, p.387). *Ethnic identity salience*, though, is typically

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[62]The term refers to activities, product, and services that are assumed to appeal primarily to members of the middle and working classes in a society—currently styled behavior, fashion (Kendall, 2003, p.91).

maintained across generations and members of ethnic subgroups can hold onto it, for example, through language or religion. This can result in the majority questioning their ethnic heritage and significance, especially if that is very different from that of the majority (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.216). "An ethnic identity has greater or lesser salience depending upon context" (Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.120). In a new society, people are more likely to be reminded of their ethnicity than in their country of origin. Ethnic identity style is influenced by one's ethnic community, opportunity structure, social mirror, family factors, and individual factors (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.121). Berry (as cited in Kim, 2004), has found that those immigrants who firmly cling to their ethnic identity develop *ethnic-oriented identity*. They may find communication with members of the dominant culture frustrating and stressful.

On the other hand, those for whom ethnic traditions lose their significance, an assimilated identity will ascend (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.224). Banks points out research that shows "the cultural and national identities of immigrant youth are contextual, evolving, and continually reconstructed" (2010, p.27). The author suggests that students can be transformed into cosmopolitan citizens, who care about the world community, and can maintain their family roots and community cultures at the same time (Ibid., p.28). "American Muslims, like many Americans, have an amalgamation of identities—some have religious meaning; while others are linked to the variety of activities in which they are involved" since multiple identities go beyond a one-dimensional ethnic identity (USIP, 2011, online).

Ethnic identity emerges through the confrontation of the immigrant and the host culture and each wants to dominate. Esposito claims that today Muslims struggle with questions of their identity and assimilation. There have been reformers emphasizing that diversity and pluralism are integral to the message of the Koran, which teaches that God created a world composed of different nations, ethnicities, tribes and languages (2002, p.72). There are Muslims in the USA with common concerns regarding the practice of their faith,[63] the retention of Islamic identity especially for their children, and the preservation of family life and values (Ibid., p.177). They could be singled out for harassment as they might be easily spotted by such markers as the manners of their dress, women's veil, men with untrimmed beard, turbans (Ibid., p.174) just to mention a few. Living as a minority in a dominant culture that is often ignorant about Islam or even hostile to it, pushes many Muslims towards the experience of marginalization, alienation, and powerlessness.

Immigrant Muslim groups (similarly to African American Muslims and other converts) are becoming more diverse and plural; the ethnicity and religious practices are diverse (Leonard, 2003, pp.137/34) Newly arrived Muslim immigrants often have firm religious and national identities compared to the ones in previous waves of migration (Sirin & Fine 2008 p.36). However, immigration may result in intergenerational, inter-gender conflicts challenging concepts of traditional roles (Leonard, 2003, p.93). Thus, mosques are important sites for the development of Muslim identities in

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[63] Muslim societies typically practice some gender segregation to various degrees in public and private places. Unmarried men do not mix with unmarried women. In big cities it is changing though (Esposito, 2002, p.87).

the USA (Ibid., p.75). Sirin and Fine's research (2008, pp.14-17) focused on diverse groups of Muslim youth in the U.S. ages 12-18 in order to set up identity-maps or identity negotiations.

They found that young adult/teenager first/second generation immigrant Muslim individuals need to establish many identities for themselves including "hyphenated selves" (Ibid., p.3) to understand who they are, and identify with themselves, for example, as Muslim Pakistani American, Muslim Somali American. They found that as one's cultural identity is not set in stone, individuals may alter it throughout their life (Ibid., p.12): "a new immigrant is always ready for shifting identity parameters for finding where he or she stands in relation, and in reaction, to the cultural and historical context" (Ibid., p.22). They added that there is "Lack of research on Muslim youth in general" (Ibid., p.13) and that "very little systematic research has been conducted among Muslims of immigrant origin in the United States. Even less is known about the experiences of adolescents and young adults of this population" (Suarez-Orozco, 2008, p.xiv).

Mandaville states that many of the millions of Muslims currently living in the West are only 'nominally' Muslim, or 'culturalist' Muslim. This term refers to those people *ethno-historically Muslims*, but do not regularly practice their religion. Their sense of identity is not usually strongly informed by Islam (2004, pp.110-111). Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco describe the *ethnic flight style* as children demonstrate strong identification with the dominant culture. For them, learning the language is essential, so is doing well at school in order to distance themselves from their family or ethnic group either symbolically or literally. Children rejecting the institutions of the dominant culture can develop *adversarial identities*. These children may face problems in and out of school and end up as dropouts. Reasons for this are the absence of competent role models, family members and the dominance of peer groups. However, besides the two extreme identities, most children develop a *transcultural identity*. Ideally, they even develop bilingual and/or bicultural competencies (2002, pp.103/107/113).

Most relationships are established among people that are perceived as somewhat similar. Reluctance to enter relationships with strangers is due to unpredictability, uncertain expectations, stress or lack of proximity (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, pp.337-341). To develop relationships and establish trust and confidence, it is useful to verify commonalities and differences between the immigrant and the host cultures. Paying attention to personal similarities should not be overlooked either (Ibid., p.282). Communication between people from diverse cultures would be easy if both parties were competent and mindful cross-cultural communicators. To become competent means to validate and respond to one's cultural identity having found out with which identity that person is salient (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.218). When newcomers develop a host communication competence, they are familiar with the way the majority feels, thinks and acts. This embodies (1) *cognitive competence*: familiarity with the host cultural elements and language, (2) *affective competence*: motivation, openness and willingness, and (3) *operational competence*: verbal and non-verbal behaviors (Kim, Y., 2005, p.385). Teachers do not need to agree with the behavior of the newly arrived child but ease their feeling of displacement and struggle (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.229). Validation happens when the child feels being understood, respected and valued through verbal and non-verbal messages from the new milieu.

Recently, Middle Eastern, Arab, African Muslim people, cultures and societies have been subject of co-cultural or intercultural studies as their number is on the increase in the U.S. People naturally find it difficult not only to understand but also to appreciate cultural differences (Samovar et al., 2007, p.9). They tend to overstate differences making them more important than they really are (Samovar, 2001, p.169). It is important to gather information about the cultural background of newly arrived immigrant children with the intent to expand one's knowledge about a distant culture either via *passive strategies* such as observation, *interactive strategies* like talking to the newcomers, or *active strategies* such as literature or talking to people who can provide practical information (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, pp.279-280).

To what degree an individual participates in the new environment, communicates with host members, or abandons ethnic cultural traits (deculturation) depends on his or her self-interest (Kim, Y., 2005, p.382). "The dependence and closeness to family members among recently arrived immigrant youth is considerably higher than what we would expect to find among mainstream American teenagers" (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.73). Immediacy means that students typically prefer to be around people they like and evaluate highly, thus approachable teachers are appreciated. Empathic teachers understand how immigrant children feel, and what they need and respond in a way that meets those who also communicate in a rewarding way. Igoa emphasizes the importance of listening to the children, of the feeling of having roots, of understanding cultures and of belonging (2009, p.10). She recommends for school staff to become a teacher-researcher-facilitator when catering for these children (Ibid., p.7) so that children can maintain their connection to their culture of origin and their academic performance in the educational setting in the host country. A supportive climate should be paramount in such a classroom where the educator is genuine and congruent (mean what they say, say what they mean). "An education system that fails to understand cultural diversity will lose the richness of values, worldviews, lifestyles, and perspectives of the diverse American co-cultures" (Samovar et al., 2007, pp.281-282). Educators are advised to inquire students and their families or communities about their religious affiliations (whether or not they are more traditional or more secular) so that those can be taken into considerations and catered for if possible (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.290) and not try to change the worldview or perception of immigrant children but adjust school support accordingly (Ibid., p.115). Speeding up or forcing the process do not ease the anxiety and frustration which are caused by culture shock.

3.3 Ambiguity in interpersonal relationships and interactions

It is more likely to experience uncertainty and anxiety when communicating with strangers especially from very different cultures. Anxiety may derive from not knowing the language, the fear of being perceived as prejudiced or incompetent, or the condition/situation of the encounter, especially when being alone in it (Gudykunst, 2005, pp.286-287). There are minimum and maximum limits to it, so the requirement for effective communication is to stay within the limits. Developing trust and confidence and developing positive expectations can reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Reduction of anxiety can be achieved by avoiding communication with members of unfamiliar cultures (Ibid.,

p.288). "The nature of the connections we have with strangers influences the amount of anxiety and uncertainty we experience interacting with them" (Ibid., p.302). *Uncertainty Avoidance* (Hofstede, 1984), involves the acceptance or tolerance of uncertainty/ambiguity. By and large, it is about the attitude of cultures towards rules, regulations, structures in a society and people's willingness of risk-taking, "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations" (2001, p.161). It reflects on society members; whether or not they are open to change, novel ideas, and tolerate diversity (Ibid., p.160). Akin to this principle, Lewis described the USA as high/medium trust, Africans, and Arabs as low trust societies since they trust only those they know personally (Lewis, 2006, p.145). Having considered that, teachers should be able to establish trust and lower students' anxiety.

Uncertainty itself is a normal feature of life; every day is accepted as it is. Different and strange things are usually treated with curiosity and one's human rights as essential in *Low/weak uncertainty avoidance societies*, like the American. The society is usually tolerant towards deviant and innovative ideas or behavior, which is not expected to be threatening (Hofstede, 1984, p.125) and experiencing novel situations is encouraged. People's precision and punctuality[64] comes naturally (Ibid., p.125). Teachers try to get parents involved in school issues, and their ideas are required (Hofstede, 2001, p.163). Normally there is an informal mode of address. Students accept a teacher who says, "I don't know," the respect goes to the teacher who uses plain language, and to books that explain difficult issues in ordinary terms; intellectual disagreement is a stimulating exercise. Both students and teachers like open-ended learning situations with vague objectives, broad assignments, and flexible timetables. Students are expected to show initiative and come up with their own ideas to contribute to the learning process. They exhibit self-efficacy, high, independence, and hope of success. Competition and the perspective of winning or losing are naturally part of life (Hall, 2005, p.231) and have to be dealt with in the USA.

There are situations that can easily provide potential cultural misunderstandings because some cultures cherish certain values that others might consider being insignificant and trivial. In high uncertainty avoidance societies, teachers are supposed to have all the answers as they are expected to be experts of their major. They are respected and are not to be questioned. Immigrant children who have socialized that way might confuse American teachers when they smile and nod or say, "Yes, I understand," even if they do not. It could be offensive in their culture to tell a teacher that his/her explanation was difficult to follow. In some societies it is accepted and possible for a student to have a disagreement with a teacher in academic matters, but in others it would be interpreted as disloyalty

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[64] Jandt described Polychronic time as one of the characteristics of the Middle East, which emphasizes people's involvement, and completion of dealings over their dedication to schedules. "By their actions, polychromic cultures demonstrate that they are oriented to people, relationships, and family" (Jandt, 2007, p.226). Muslim students might feel frustration in their host society if they have to miss school, extracurricular activities, etc due to obligations for their friends and/or family. Religion may also affect learning and class attendance as prayers are several times a day (McLaren, 1998, p.179). As Iqbal Ahmad explained it to young Muslim teenagers in his book, it is more sensible, for example, "to arrive at the mosque a little late, but calm and collected, than to arrive just on time but red-faced and flustered from running." He stresses that being clean is regarded important as people live in groups, thus they need to consider and care for others' health and comfort as well as their own. A thoughtful person's body or breath should not smell badly (Hofstede, 2004, pp.61-62).

"children are used to stronger systems of rules and norms, and will more often feel guilty and sinful" (Hofstede, 2001, p.162). There is a tendency for students not to give credit to their own ability for their achievements. Typically, children's self-efficacy[65] is low; there is a fear of failure, traditional role models for female students, "this side contains the Muslim countries of Turkey and Pakistan, and the Arab speakers" (Ibid., p.177). Proper motivation is supposed to come from parents who also monitor their children's behavior at school. There are parent-teacher information meetings, but unlike in Western societies, teachers do not seek advice from parents (Hofstede, 2001, p.163).

A formal mode of address is accepted in such societies. There are numerous anecdotal yet relevant examples to support the related experience of these students in a new milieu. Initially, my students addressed me as 'Miss' or 'Teacher.' Due to the complicatedness of the pronunciation of my Hungarian surname, my students were rather easy to be convinced to address me by my first name. According to Kumaravadivelu, it is the *language-culture connection* behind the reluctance of accepting minimal status differences when addressing one by his or her first name instead of last name for instance (2008, p.22).

My experience of teaching first generation immigrant students in an English secondary school supports this impression. Until I actually assigned a quiz to test their knowledge, they made me believe that everything was understood that had been taught in the 'special English' lessons. The first test results proved that it was not the case. Although, I asked them to let me know if they did not understand any part of my explanations, they continued nodding every time I said 'Do you understand everything?' 'Is everything clear?' 'Is there anything that you do not understand?' In order to find out if they understood the rules and vocabulary, they needed to be tested frequently and had plenty of homework to practice what had been said. While I constantly assured them that they could let me know anytime if they had any questions, and I coached them how to ask for clarification, it never really happened even though most of them spent months or years with me in the school. Similar behavior was observed among my former EFL/EAL students in an American community college and various language schools in England where I taught Muslim students. There has always been the moment when students looked at each other with the 'I do not have a clue, do you?' expression on their face, but they would smile at me as if everything was all right. I had to make sure I caught that glimpse of doubt before a new topic or exercise was introduced.

It can be difficult for the host culture to identify the symptoms of sacred values and respond appropriately to them. Besides acknowledging differences, openness, empathy can assist in the reduction of anxiety (Gudykunst, 2005, pp.425/432). Respect, moral behavior, the expectation of fair treatment can all help overcome anxiety along with accurate knowledge of the host culture or the newcomer (Ibid., pp.440/434). On the other hand, perceived minor and major discrimination by members of the host society increases anxiety (Ibid., p.444). It could be useful to put together "action plans" for newcomers before they deal with or face possible uncertain or perplexing situations. Fortunately, though, for the most part, students can and do increase their social skills (trial and error) over time to enact appropriate and effective behaviors.

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[65] "Self-efficacy refers to one's sense of personal ability, which is reinforced by successes and weakened by failures" (Hofstede, 2001, p.169).

Education influences children's thinking and behavior as it provides them with cultural values including gender role expectations, and both formal and informal guidelines to become fully functional members or survivors of a given society. Children and their abilities certainly vary. They can be from the urban middle class used to competitive exams, can apply high level cognitive strategies, computer literate; and they can also be from deprived rural areas with little schooling or no literacy skills at all. *Parental education* can be a positive factor in a child's academic achievement because educated parents will use vocabularies that are more sophisticated and help with homework assignments supporting their children academically (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.37). Their parents' educational background will determine how much assistance they can provide for their children besides working out the complexity of the education system (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.129). Julios also claims that students' academic prospects and performance are heavily influenced by their parents' academic standing beside family structure (2008, p.33). Weissbourd suggested that parent-teacher interaction may affect the moral growth of students and establish a moral community; they together can find problems student may face and find out how to deal with them. One way to engage parents in order to create a moral community is to have them as volunteers devoted to certain school projects (2009. pp.235-238). The ways parents can help with their children's education will be discussed in greater length in the following chapters.

The frequency and the option of using advanced technology in classrooms can be extremely diverse in the Horn of Africa and in the Middle East; therefore, the level of technical expertise should be found out before asking any student to carry out a seemingly simple task. It can be a highly embarrassing experience for any student no matter from which side of the globe he/she is (Ibid., p.174). Teaching techniques like open-ended questions, cause and effect reasoning, argumentation, stimulation are apparent in American classrooms (McLaren, 1998, p.177). Constructive criticism is given and meant well; praise is also given, when actually deserved.

Societies differ based on their vision on the social positions of teachers and students, the relevance of the curriculum, cognitive abilities of students due to high/low expectation of the society, teacher-student interaction inside and outside the classroom (Ibid., p.173). In *task-oriented cultures,* teachers are judged by their work and efficiency, whereas in *ascriptive cultures*, they are judged by the level of their qualifications and past experiences (Ibid., pp.109-110). People look at one's qualification based on their culture, and that will influence how much respect they will show (Lewis, 2006, p.131). The principle of intelligence can also carry different connotations in different cultures; for instance, in the Middle East adults or even students with extensive knowledge of the Koran (memorized) may be viewed highly intelligent (McLaren, 1998, p.172). Memorization is a learning style (and teaching can be heavily built upon that) that might not help students comprehend complex theories in secondary schools subjects. Brislin and Yoshida's research suggest that teachers from Western societies might be surprised at the level of diligence of students from Eastern societies may carry out occasionally

overloading themselves[66] (1994, p.100). It does not mean, however, that every one of them will be hard working as individual attitude and motivation will be highly influential.

Another anecdotal but relevant example is a former 17-year-old Iranian student of mine (Manor Community College, Cambridge, UK), who was extremely studious. At the end of her final school year (Year 11), she received an award from the principal for her constant diligence. However, for the 2 years I assisted her, she was often disappointed that hard work was not necessarily enough to get through the education system. As a consequence of her lack of proficiency in English language, her test and exam results were not always what she had expected. They did not always reflect her actual academic knowledge. Unfortunately, as the education system places the emphasis on final assessments, she often got disillusioned. Probably, as a result of her constant worry, she developed a stomach ulcer that seemed to 'disappear' or 'calm down' every time she went back to her country of origin for the summer holiday.

In a *mindful* (Gudykunst, 2005) multicultural educational setting, teachers and school staff recognize that there is a challenge because of cultural diversity[67]. Mindful educational strategy challenges students intellectually and teaches not only about the dominant culture but also about co-cultures as their backgrounds are incorporated in the school setting. The goal should not be cultural neutrality at all. Parents, families and communities should be involved in designing the curricula taking aural, visual, and verbal preferences into consideration (if they are challenged or offered a variety of those teaching methods to satisfy those learning techniques in their educational settings). Besides teaching the educator how to instruct, it is also important to teach the student how to learn. To achieve success and frustration-free survival, Samovar et al suggested that educators develop multicultural competence, provide multicultural classrooms, become competent multicultural communicators, and develop multicultural communication strategies. There will be conflicting values, but those must be acknowledged and addressed and not necessarily accepted or ignored (Samovar et al., 2007, p.278). This study agrees with Bennett's argument (1998, p.192), that is the golden rule of treating others like you would like to be treated, as well-meaning as it may be, cannot always be applied effectively in an intercultural setting or encounter. Communication strategy needs to shift

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[66]When interviewing the language support assistants from Ernulf Community School, St Neots at a single-day training in 2003 Spring, they confirmed that the majority of the students usually become utterly devastated if they do not get the grade they were aiming for.

[67] Education researchers have distinguished diverse learning styles:

Field independence (competitive, analytical, task-oriented) vs. field sensitivity (work with others and guided by the teachers, rewarded for effort)

Cooperation (work with others) vs. competition (work independently)

Trial and error (solve problems this way in USA) vs. 'watch then do' (observe teachers then try)

Tolerance vs. Intolerance for ambiguity (structured vs. spontaneous teaching and classroom environment also teaching contradictions)

Listening and receiving: passive learning style where one is told what and how to think

Analytical learning approach: use logic to discover knowledge

Impulsivity/ reflectivity (how long to think about the answer including quick responses and guessing)

Energy/calmness (active and animated classroom or a clam environment)

Passive-receptive (listen to the teacher and speak when permitted) and participatory-interactive (engage and respond actively).

Fieldtrips, role-playing (drama), hands on learning (Samovar et al., 2007, pp.268-274)

focus from sympathy (the social concept of assumption of similarity or ethnocentrism) to empathy (the assumption of difference or multiple-reality).

The idea of 'border crossing' in schools, is the ability to switch cognitively and culturally from one's cultural worldview to that of the school's. Educators are expected to help students with various backgrounds absorb and use skills, knowledge and values to take part in the new society (Cleghorn, 2005, pp.104-106). "Caring for (…) requires us to respond to expressed needs and to monitor the effects of our actions and react anew to the responses of those we care for. Caring about establishes conditions so that we can care for others" (Noddings, 2005, p.7). Cleghorn (2005) claims that when schools introduce such practices (exams, language of instruction) which subtly exclude certain students, students might become 'push-outs' contrary to the perception of 'drop-outs.'

It has been observed that ELL students still face challenges at school, show higher rates of dropouts and lower academic achievement compared to native speakers. Sometimes it is not their intellectual ability but their background knowledge that holds them back in their academic achievement (Wabdberg & Rohwer, 2010, p.6). Reading and writing requires background knowledge: use what immigrant children already know and can connect to (Hirsch, 2009. p.12). Hirsch also cautions that if educated language is used at home, it can be advantageous regarding background knowledge (Ibid., p.16). By activating students' background knowledge, it improves comprehension of expository texts. KWL learning: The K-W-L strategy stands for what I Know, what I Want to Learn, and what I Did Learn (MSU.edu, online). The answer is then student centered education or instruction, which refers to cooperative, collaborative, and community-oriented learning (Wabdberg & Rohwer, 2010, p.190). For instance, sheltered instruction is supposed to be comprehensible to every student in every discipline. Students in such classes with trained teachers, who have made curricular and instructional adaptations (differentiated instructions), show improvement in their academic performance (Ibid., p.188). Teachers and trainees can do a better job if they moved away from methods they have learned in the past (Hirsch, 2007, p.12), and if most schools seek not to provide for the NCLB act (Ibid., p.20) only.

Various steps lead to the competence of mindfulness, and to start with, educators should asess their own culture, the cultures present in their classrooms and teaching/learning styles relevant to the multicultural setting. Samovar (2007, pp.279-280) suggests the acceptance of challenges to diversity and addressing them at the same time because neutrality and ignorance are a hindrance. Also the expectation of the inevitable conflicts and learning how to deal with them are essential because clashes do happen due to personality and cultural differences. In line with his argument this study also recommends that in order to institutionalize all this, a school's practices and policies might need revision and discussion among staff members.

3.4 Second Language Learning: how language and communication competence influence adjustment

Due to human migration, there has been an increase in contact among individuals with distinctive backgrounds. Intercultural communications or conversations are *interdependent* between the speaker and the listener in certain situations or context. Attention ought to be paid to "the

interactional practices of people in places, trying to grasp their sense of its significance and importance, their grounds for understanding its shapes and meanings" (Carbaugh, 2005, p.12). Just as familiarity with a culture is central when learning its language, knowledge and uses of the language is practical when learning about one (McLaren, 1998, p.105). Besides trouble with the novelty of the host culture, linguistic difficulties can also make life complicated.

> "Immigrant children are more than 'language minority' children. They are children who have been uprooted from their own cultural environment and who need to be guided not to fling themselves overboard in their encounter with a new culture—for some, a 'powerful' culture—and with a new language" (Igoa, 2009, p.9).

Shabaya also states that immigrant children are challenged in their adjustment to school, life, culture and home and adaptation of novelty of the new environment, social roles and relationships, etc. This adjustment is further complicated by mastering the English language to excel in school and increase the prospect of future employment, especially if children have limited formal education (2006, p.258). Students are expected to master the language to a level that satisfies their educational demand. Besides learning the vocabulary and the grammar they are also expected to understand how to communicate all that successfully. Such ethnolingusitic elements need to be incorporated in everyday communication to attain functional fitness in the new milieu.

When people from diverse backgrounds converse, they might need to alter their way to formulate their thoughts in order to fit into the host society. Cultures have been distinguished on the basis of their communication style (Hall, 1970) and divided into *High-context* (little has to be said or written) *and Low-context communication* (the mass information is made explicit). Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey and Hofstede found that Hall's distinction can be interpreted as an aspect of collectivism and individualism according to which collectivistic societies typically use *High Context communicative style* and individualistic ones the *Low Context communicative style* (Gudykunst &Ting-Toomey, 1998, pp.38-39). Members of societies, using high context style of communication, show greater distinction between insiders and outsiders. Most of the transmitted information is in the physical context, and very little of the message is unambiguous (talking around the point, being able to read between the lines). That is why people using low-context communication often judge it as an ambiguous and ineffective way of communication. Individualistic societies, like the American, use low-context communication, which is a rather clear and direct way of interaction. Ambiguity is not cultivated, e.g., "Say what you mean," "Don't beat around the bush," and "Get to the point" (Gudykunst, 1998, p.54). Answering questions directly with 'Yes' or 'No' can be frustrating for those whose cultural conversation style is less explicit (McLaren, 1998, p.112). In low-context cultures, verbal messages are elaborate, highly specific and tend to be highly detailed and redundant. Verbal abilities are highly valued with logic and reasoning expressed in them.

High-context communicative societies have a different way of using language. Not everybody is allowed to say whatever he or she wishes to say and there is the tradition of using non-verbal signs/body language, the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person and the perception of self is not necessarily separated from the group. Participants rely on contextual cues such as background information between good friends when conversing. Whereas in low context

communication the relationship or setting does not matter, the emphasis is on the words used (Hall, 2005, p.44). It might be challenging to use first/last names also "the informal and formal use of 'you', which exists in many non-Anglo cultures, including Arab cultures. English speakers do not make this distinction" (Schneider & Barsoux, 1997, p.24). Soon they will realize that after learning the English language, they have to learn the American way of speaking English (Singer, 1998, p.102).

Communicative practices differ not only on an intercultural but also intracultural level (Riley, 2007, pp.93-94). According to Riley, social knowledge system (2007, p.31) determines the way people communicate, bring up their children, teach students in schools. Learning about communicative practices "ways in which members of a given community exploit their linguistic resources" shows that for "white Anglophone American teachers, speech is a good thing, silence is bad. (...) Talking easily is a sign of openness, talking fluently a sign of intelligence. (...) The Anglophone teachers busily fire away their questions, expecting the children to display their knowledge" (Ibid., p.135). They can as most Western parents dutifully answer their children's never-ending thread of questions (Ibid., p.137).

Lewis vaguely described the Arabs and the Africans as *dialogue-oriented* people and the Arabic language as full of terms that refers to praising and blessing God or the Prophet ('God's willing' ʾinšāʾAllāh or *mashAllah* used frequently). The Americans are *data-oriented* favoring facts, databases and printed sources (2006, p.48). The American style can be perceived as direct, aggressive and confrontational, and the American English as fast-paced including exaggerations and hyperboles (Ibid., pp.65-69). American English and speech reflects opportunism, casual, and contains clichés. There are certain expressions that hide what a person really intends ('You have got to be joking!', 'No way!') along with overstated aims, and chances (Ibid., p.11). Lewis claims that listening skills are a particular element for each culture. He described Americans as those who listen carefully or indifferently depending on the conversation, would like to know the bottom line: like to hear facts, new information, and like to be entertained (Ibid., p.69). Arab listening habits are different. They look for personal touch, and can become rather defensive if the topic is Islam (Ibid., p.73).

The *primary purpose of a language* varies from being a *social lubricant* (the speech might be indirect or vague to avoid unpleasant feelings) to conveying *information* (tends to be more accurate and direct) (Hall, 2005, p.43). The kinds of greetings for strangers, acquaintances and close friends differ in each culture (McLaren, 1998, p.104). The American is probably the most informal among the societies in the 21st century (Lewis, 2006, p.94). They typically follow up their greetings with a friendly wave or perhaps brief exchanges about obvious and trivial things like the weather, current events, and visible personal effects (attire worn, object carried or held): a *small talk*. Its function is to acknowledge verbally the existence of each participant (frequent use of first names) and establishing a momentary civil link between them to comfort themselves. The tone is typically quite friendly. American people can seem fairly friendly as most of their encounters are to acknowledge each other's' existence and show commonality.

The way they try to reassure themselves and connect with others is to engage in small talk about obvious things such as clothes worn, the weather, recent events, etc. It has a worthy function in the American society, yet it may seem superficial and unnecessary or even misleading to outsiders (Carbaugh, 2005, p.20). Nevertheless, friendly interaction or American friendliness should not be

confused with genuine friendship since the former is a routine ritual (Ibid., pp.44-46). Besides small talk or greetings, there are other elements in communication like turn taking, leave-taking (saying good-byes), compliments and their acceptance, and the intensity of apologies, concepts of politeness also distinctively vary from culture to culture (McLaren, 1998, pp.107-111). Riley defines *phatic communion* as a sort of communication which does not convey actual information, has importance to function properly in a given society. For example, greeting a relative or friend is essential in an everyday communication practice (Riley, 2007, p.127). If misused in a given group or society due to communicative problems, confusion or awkwardness might be created.

Cultural differences are not easy to memorize or recognize instantly[68], thus misunderstandings due to intercultural miscommunication do take place. However, once realized that there is awkwardness, it is best to explain or clarify what happened since people are willing to forgive intercultural mistakes in such situations (Hall, 2005, p.167). Potential pitfalls might be *patronizing* attitude (the feeling of unequal treatment), *false sharing* (one's choice of topics is culture-related), and *culturist language* which uncovers one's ideologies (Holliday et al., 2004, p.31). Previous experience, the media, politics, even influence of intellectual sources should not seduce people's current encounter (Ibid., p.41) with a person from a culture different from theirs. Ineffective communication may also occur due to lack of fluency in language of the host culture, pronunciation, grammar, unfamiliarity with topic being discussed, or social factors (Gudykunst, 2003, pp.269-270).

Languages differ in the technique they use for writing down figures, compose a letter, or address an envelope (McLaren, 1998, pp.118/122). The use of idioms, euphemisms, code switching, ever-changing popular slang, surprising length of silent period or whether or not one's social positions should be verbally recognized are all sources of misunderstanding during verbal communication (Hall, 2005, pp.140-146). Although there is international humor, it is very difficult to joke[69] around people from very different cultures and find the common ground. Accent, pitch, laughter, volume, and turn-taking cues or *paralanguage* typically go along with verbal communication and need to be learned in order to be certain of a message conveyed (Ibid., p.173). People tend to overstate *common sense* and forget that it is not as neutral as they think it comes from experience and daily experience is based on one's culture (Lewis, 2006, p.7). Similarly, there are not as many *universal human characteristics* as one might think as basic instincts are influenced by one's culture, too (Ibid., p.18). Consequently, plain language is best used in intercultural communication; slang, colloquialism and idioms should be avoided. It is also useful to remember that some thoughts are untranslatable or lose their significance when translated.

Communication is an extremely complex issue to handle, during which numerous mistakes can be made. Gass and Varonis, (1991) classified two types of *nonengagement*: *noncommunication* when the host and the newcomer avoid communicating, and *communication breakoffs* when the continuity of communication is not considered worthy which should not take place in a school

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[68] Klyukanov explained that "intercultural communication is a process whereby people from different cultures display mutual tolerance, trust, and resistance, sustaining their collective identities and the overall process of their interactions" according to *sustainability principle* (2005, p.258).
[69] Anglo Saxon countries are said to use humor quite often—in the USA, it is mainly sarcasm, kidding and feigned indignation (Lewis, 2006, p.13).

environment. *Miscommunication* as *misunderstanding* (participants do not realize that something went wrong) and *incomplete understanding* (one of the participants knows that there is a problem) could be both avoided by at least one participant being mindful, making effort in their approach. Miscommunication can also occur when participants firmly but inaccurately believe that they have confidence in their interpretation of intercultural communication (as cited in Gudykunst, Kim, 2003, pp.240-241). Likeman (as cited in Hall, 2005) described the phenomenon of *gratuitous concurrence,* which is also a source of misunderstanding and refers to the occasions when people agree with the speaker, for the sake of the conversation even if they do not understand completely or at all what a conversation is about, due to lack of understanding of the dominant language (2005, p.147). In an educational setting, it is rather frequent that teachers talk to or ask students who in return simply nod in agreement when in fact they might not be sure of what has been said.

Non-verbal communication can also play an important role in interaction. In an educational setting teachers, and staff can convey information verbally and can also complement it with facial expression, the correct tone, or substitute it with simple gestures: verbally delivered information accentuated with non-verbal communication (Ibid., p.161). Several forms of non-verbal communication that vary from culture to culture including *artifacts* used by people for a specific purpose such as clothing, *kinesis* the use of body movements, *proxemics* or spatial zones/distances between people, or *plaptics* the use of touch in communication (Klyukanov, 2005, pp.54-55). Another concern is that individuals do not approach anyone freely in collectivist cultures: gender, rank, ages, profession, and type of relationship are all factors in boundaries one cannot cross (McLaren, 1998, p.108).

Effective communication[70] is achieved through the reduction of misunderstandings. Spitzberg and Lupach (1984, as cited in Gudykunst, 2003) identified three components of perceived competence. Effective communication requires *motivation* to communicate, *knowledge* or awareness of how certain cultures interpret messages differently, and *skills* to engage in intercultural communication, to manage uncertainty and anxiety, to empathize with newly arrived students with various cultural backgrounds (p.275). Kim set up strategies or *conversational constraints* suggesting that effectiveness may increase via choosing strategies and tactics for mindful communication: (1) Concern for clarity embodies making intentions explicit; (2) Concern for minimizing imposition means letting the other person act freely; (3) Concern for avoiding hurting the hearer's feelings is rather self-explanatory supporting positive self-image of the person from a different culture; (4) Concern for avoiding negative evaluation or disapproval of the hearer—collectivist individuals are thought to seek more approval than those with individualistic tendencies (Kim, 2005, p.99). What Gudykunst & Kim (2003, p.292) suggest is worth considering, that is teachers of immigrant students need to realize that despite the fact that they have been in the given society first, occasionally in order to establish fruitful communication, they also have to make adjustments.

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[70] English language learners still mastering the language may employ a number of *compensation strategies* when communicating with native speakers to avoid miscommunication: *topic avoidance* (changing the topic); *message abandonment* (I do not know it in English); *self-repair strategies* (the language learner corrects himself while speaking, uses a word from hi native language, or approximates); *collaborative strategies* (ask for help from the partner, or check if the partner understands/follows) (Riley, 2007, pp.207-210).

The key aspect in communication is one's *language acquisition*, to what degree a person can speak and use English, the language of the host country. English proficiency of parents, prior schooling, parental literacy, time in the USA, average attendance rate at school, English use in informal settings (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.164) are all factors in predicting one's English language proficiency. Baker states that while for the Arabs, it is history and Islam that convey unifying forces for nationalism, for the Americans, it is freedoms, liberties and the American English. Consequently, language policies favor replacing immigrant languages (2006, p.84). And the result of that is that bilingualism is still not considered as the norm, or the dominant view in the USA (2006, p.10).

There are numerous challenges to learning English as a second language: the mother's education particularly, educational background or previous exposure to English as a second/foreign language, age of arrival, cognitive aptitude, sustained interactions with educated native speakers of English, adequate quality language program (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, pp.158-161). Olsen defines "*language shock*" as the phenomenon among students wanting to learn and master the English language but facing limits (2008, p.93). "A lack of English language fluency not only precludes them from access to the core curriculum, but is a social stigma as well. Immigrant students regularly express frustration about not having the English needed to participate fully and comprehend what is happening formally in school" (Ibid., p.94). Language shock is a source of frustration similarly to culture shock in a way that individuals will experience it to a certain extent. And as culture shock can be surmounted by successful integration into society language shock can be triumphed by mastering the language of the host society.

English language learners are thought to be the fastest growing population in the USA[71]. They face various difficulties; for instance, linguistic problems, the concept of learning certain subject matters, grasp the subject content, and possible academic insufficiency due to what has been taught in their country of origin. The older they are the more complex the subject gets, instructional methods can be unfamiliar—quick response, argumentation, written assignments over oral and cooperative education (2007, pp.234/276). Further difficulties include language translation because linguistic equivalence of certain vocabulary can be deceiving, so can be idioms, concepts and culture-related communication techniques and the reality that languages are culturally based (Samovar, 2001, p.162). Within the same language, there can be various meanings given to a word, and acronyms can stand for ideas one can only guess.

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[71] The Muslim community in America consists of many subcommunities with different geographical and cultural antecedents and views as well as different positions on the religious spectrum (Cesari, 2004, pp.130-131). Large Middle Eastern immigrant groups in the USA recently are made up of Syrian, Lebanese, Egyptian, Iranian, Iraqi, and Israeli based on the 2000 Census Bureau (Rong&Preissle, 2009, p.269). Nearly 97% of Middle Eastern immigrant children are enrolled in schools. About 12% are enrolled in private schools. Looking at immigrant children and their families from the Middle East, researchers have found that over 90% of Middle Eastern immigrant children live in households where children speak a language other than English—Iraqi families are nearly 98% and about a quarter of them live in linguistically isolated households (for Iraqi families the ratio is almost half) (Ibid., pp.279-280). When asked about their English proficiency, 1% admitted speaking no English at all, almost a third admitted speaking English not very well (almost half of the Iraqi children), and two-third admitted speaking English very well (almost half of the Iraqi children) (Ibid., p.284). Over 50% of the Middle Eastern children arrived to the USA between the ages 0-5, about 30% between the ages 6-10, only about 14% (nearly 20% Iraqi) between the ages 11-15 (Ibid., p.283).

Phrasal verbs and idioms might make communication problematic, but learning them is part of the process of learning the host culture. Native speakers most likely know the intended meaning of "it is raining cats and dogs," though the literal meaning of the phrase would probably confuse and might even frighten an individual new to the language. Learning the grammatical structures of the English language is equally important in order to integrate into the new culture, as to understand the meaning and usage of English words requires the understanding of the grammar. An English word can be a noun, a verb or an adjective depending on its position in a sentence and also the position of the stress in a word (Jandt, 2001, pp.149-150). Besides, most likely, the grammatical structure and the writing system of the African and Middle Eastern languages differ. Finally, developing academic English can take much longer than developing basic, everyday English. There are some who have already learnt English as a foreign language in their home countries, so they have great advantages in catching up with the language and the curriculum.

Recent immigrant children, who are teenagers at the time of immigration, typically struggle with adjustment more than the younger ones. "Most immigrants take several years to gain a working knowledge of English, and the secondary school curriculum demands both language competence and substantial previous content knowledge. To survive in high school peer cultures, foreign born teens also need to adjust to nonacademic features of U.S. high schools" (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.114). Dropping one's first language and abandoning the culture is still very much a prerequisite of successful integration[72] into the mainstream American society in the 21st century (Ibid., p.60). "The percentage of all U.S. people who spoke only a heritage language in 1890 was higher than it was in 2000, 3.6% and 1.3% respectively, a pattern state by state as well as nationally" (Ibid., p.82). Rong & Preissle claim that immigrant children who arrive as young as the pre-school age have higher opportunity to integrate and succeed academically (2009, p.34). The age of arrival matters in mastering English with age 10 being a critical demarcation line. Younger than 10: over 60% develop English language proficiency, over 10 years: less than 40% (Ibid., pp.74-76). Another influential factor in successful English language acquisition is whether or not immigrant children were exposed to English at school in their country of origin.

Although there is a perception that a large number of students, especially younger ones, do master English fairly quickly (and there are others who struggle with it for years and can hardly make any progress[73]), the language of social participation is far from the language needed for successful participation in academic studies (Olsen, 2008, p.105). "The process of learning a second or additional language is related to the pupil's cognitive, linguistic, and socio-cultural development" (NALDIC,

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[72] Typically, learning a second language or the process of linguistic adaptation leads to a large amount of immigrant students becoming monolingual in English (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.71). Olsen stated that students go through parts of a similar process: "(1) the marginalizing and separating of immigrant students academically; (2) requiring immigrant students to become English-speaking (despite huge barriers) and to drop one's native language in order to participate in the academic and social life of the high school" (2008, p.9).

[73] One of the 13-year-old ESL students at Manor school had his 'silent period' during his entire first year in school. He finally broke the ice of silence sometime during the second year. The reason for his silence was that he was not confident enough to use the language. In addition to that, peer students did not support him either. No one has really befriended him. By the time I was leaving the school, he had reached a level where he actually wanted to speak; however, it was still rather difficult to understand him due to his very thick accent.

1999, p.3). Suarez-Orozco et al., who have carried out extensive studies on immigrant children in American schools, concluded that 6-7 years are needed to master a second language; and for gifted children the number of years can be reduced to 2-3 (Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.138). Others put it between 7-10 years of influential academic language environment (NALDIC, 1999, p.5, Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p.156). It has been estimated by experts that approximately 1000 hours of instructions is necessary to gain competence in a second language. Naturally, to reach the required goal, during the time of learning, no major stress or identity crises are expected (McLaren, 1998, p.114). Based on examining numerous researches, Hamers and Blanc (2000, p.75) concluded that a sensitive period for second language learning is hard to find, although starting the learning process at an early age allows learners a longer period of time for acquisition and less complex tasks to deal with.

Butler and Hakuta claim that there is not a specifically critical period for second language acquisition; however, as children get older there is a decline in performance particularly in phonology acquisition. Therefore, age is only one of the factors assisting in second language acquisition. Besides socio-psychological factors like one's identity and motivation, the most important are the educational factors affecting one's cognitive academic language proficiency (2006, pp.127-129). Language acquisition is part of the acculturation process; as a result, people influenced by various linguistic, cultural and ethnic values could develop unique identities or profile different from monolinguals (Butler & Hakuta, 2006 p.132). Rumbaut asserts that immigrant children arriving before the age of 12 tend to master native-like fluency without traceable accent. After the age of 12, skills might become rusty. Thus, the highest level of *linguistic acculturation* is of those children who arrived between the ages of 6-12 (2009, pp.44/51). While learning one's first language is associated with enculturation, learning a second language is with acculturation. Saville-Troike (2003, p.6) makes a distinction between participating in the speech community and becoming a full member, but he concludes that children of minority immigrants have greater chance to become full members of the dominant speech community.

Garrett et al., (1989) identified several factors that influence second language learning, more specifically among members of minority ethnic groups learning the dominant language of the host society. There is the risk of losing one's mother tongue,[74] or not developing fluency in the first language especially not to the age appropriate level (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.87). The importance of recognition of oral, social English and academic (differs from age to age and so does content knowledge), is vital and that educators do not suppose that mastering a second language quickly, requires nothing but focus (Ibid., p.87). Rong and Preissle mention a possible silent period that can last up to 3 months. They also found that to reach oral proficiency typically takes a year (and still have severe difficulty reading and writing) but becoming academically confident may take 5-7 years (2009, p.72). Disappointingly, even if first generation immigrant students learn English quite well and quickly, some still tend to stay behind compared to others. They just simply did not grow up with the dominant language of instruction. Educators are expected to be patient, respectful and acknowledge

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[74] Intergenerational language transition: 90% of first generation speak first language at home, 40% second generation, 9% third generation, but there is a big drop in the 1.5 generation (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.69).

the contribution of those students no matter how much that is. Eventually though, second language competence will perhaps reduce anxiety and also provide a relief of being aware of what is happening.

The vital factors: similarity between the language of an ethnic minority and the host society; to be exposed to the language extensively; to have linguistic competence; and the worth of learning the host language (as cited in Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p.233). Learning the language of the majority depends on how weakly or strongly a member of a minority group identifies with the group or ethnic subculture. There is higher proclivity if learning the dominant language of the host society alows the individual to rise, to be accepted in the host society, and to gain a positive social identity (Ibid., p.232). Those who feel that learning English might help them be accepted in the host society and help achieve their goals (good grades at school, successful tests, getting accepted into the chosen college, etc.) will make an effort to learn the language and will probably maintain relationships with peer students from the host society. However, the two do not necessarily correlate. Educational goals and an aspiration to be accepted in the host culture are highly likely to assist their acculturation and have other beneficial effects as well (Gudykunst, 1998, p.193). Students who do not consider their first languages as important parts of their identity and wish to be integrated to the host society as quickly as possible are likely to learn English faster.

Besides the capability of learning foreign languages, individuals' motivation also has a role in the process. Their unique personality, intellectual and emotional strengths also matter. Some students might feel that it is unnecessary to learn the language of the host country as they can still manage in their own closed community. If they feel that their first language is central to their national, ethnic, tribal, religious identity and the acquisition of English language would threaten it, they might learn English only to the extent that it could not endanger them (Ibid., p.193). These students might be able to cope only within their community, since little familiarity with the English language would set up a language barrier between the individuals and the peer students. Without using/practicing the second language they would probably never be able to integrate themselves into the host society.

As face-to-face or direct communication with host members can result in frustration and anxiety, newly arrived immigrants rely on members of their ethnic group. People with a strong sense of ethnic identity could face *separation* or *insularity*[75] (Jandt, 2001, p.356). Most certainly, they are the ones who prefer the companion of co-nationals to host fellow students, thereby delaying the process of their own sociocultural adjustment (Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.136). Frustrations do occur naturally, but the more intense they get, the slower the process will be. They will keep on clinging to the values and norms they know well, hence there is the risk of developing a *marginal identity* (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.221). Children with disadvantaged backgrounds, also due to their and their parents' lack of English proficiency, may be absent from school more often than those with a comfortable level of

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[75] Esposito claims that the coexistence of Muslims and non-Muslims in the future is unpredictable as both sides are challenged to move beyond stereotypes and develop a more pluralistic vision via mutual understanding and respect. He says that many Muslim minorities in Western dominant cultures, which are often ignorant about Islam or even hostile to it, experience a sense of marginalization, alienation, and powerlessness. "Muslims in Europe and in the USA have common concerns regarding the practice of their faith, the retention of Islamic identity especially for their children, and the preservation of family life and values" (2002, p.177).

English (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.88). Reaching out to these families having recognized the underlying issue ought to be a goal for schools. The immigrant experience is clearly quite complex.

Language has an immense role in shaping one's individual and collective identity having seen that especially first generation immigrants emphasize keeping their native language[76]. To what extent ethnic minority languages are preserved depends on the particular interest and beliefs of a given school community and staff along with the pedagogical approach used (Julios, 2008, p.36). Today, one in five children in the United States lives in an immigrant family, yet there are still misrepresentations and cultural assumptions associated with bilingualism, along with misconceptions mainly due to teachers not having enough education regarding bilingual development and lack of empathy. "In the United States, bilingualism is still reticently associated with minority populations. Worldwide, however, bilingualism is the norm, rather than the exception" (Souto-Manning, 2006, online).

Factual experience of teaching Somali children in American schools, shows that there is a strong link between heritage language retention along with acquisition of the new and the academic achievement, "acculturation, and a sense of continuity with their parents and others from their native country" (Kruizenga, 2010, online). Apparently, bilingual children had the highest test scores, high self-esteem and the fewest conflicts with their parents providing a close tie to them, a social capital. "This social capital (…) could possibly lead to the growth of cultural capital and is thus linked to social mobility" (Kruizenga, 2010, online). Schools have been criticized for stressing "an English immersion only approach as it increases cultural dissonance and can cause children to lose their native language" thus creating *dissonant acculturation*, in which parents' language and cultural acquisition fall behind their children's and also affects their religion and finally their identity (Kruizenga, 2010, online).

Almost all the immigrant children Suarez-Orozco et al. monitored considered English very important, but nearly a third of them found it difficult to learn and almost all of them said that learning it was indeed a challenge (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, pp.147-149). *Collateral learning* (Jegede, 1995) or *cognitive apartheid* (Cobern, 1998) are terms to describe the experience of children who are taught in a second language and who are unable to compartmentalize new knowledge along with prior knowledge that was rooted in one's first language because the prior knowledge is not connected without teachers' help. "A disjunction between the culture and language of the home and the culture and language of the school occurs which requires the learner to literally cross borders in going from one to the other" (Cleghorn, 2005, pp.108-109).

U.S.-born American educators working in secondary schools need to be aware that many English speakers in the USA rarely speak other languages (McLaren, 1998, p.125). "It feels efficient, but being a native English-speaker also seems to many to confer an unfair advantage. It is far easier to argue a point in your mother tongue. It is also hard work for even the best non-native speakers to understand other non-native versions of English (…) and to decipher the various accents" (The

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[76] New York operates 65 dual language public schools. Its first Arab-language public school The Khlail Gibran International Academy opened in 2007. The school teaches Arabic as well as Arab Middle Eastern history and culture and inevitably discusses Islam. As there is a perception that bits of Islam are probably unavoidable, it has been under scrutiny whether or not it is against the American conviction that paying taxes to support religious teachings violates the separation of church and state (The Economist, 2007). It suggests that if there is significant student body and if there is a will, there is a way.

Economist, 21 July 2007, p.53). Naturally, educators working with children of immigration are not expected to learn all the languages that are present in their secondary school environment, yet any sincere effort at learning even a small amount of other languages (greetings for instance) is appreciated.

Communication between educators, parents and students should take place about language related issues and they need to become aware of the concern of bilingualism and what it necessitates. There could be a discussion to raise awareness about possible outcomes such as *true bilingualism*: fully functioning in both languages*, pseudo-bilingualism*: preferring one language to *alinguisticism*: lack of competence in any given language (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.60).

> "Ethnographic research has revealed that immigrant children who completed the transformation from heritage monolingualism to English monolingualism in a very short period of time often faced emotional, psychological, and social problems. The rapid transition weakens ties to the children's original language and culture and may cause identity confusion and ambivalence toward heritage cultures, resulting in academic and socialization problems in school" (…) (Ibid., pp.63-64)

They lose the ability to participate fully in their families and communities, and their sense of social alienation increases. Undetected or underestimated special language issues need to be addressed because, for instance, *alinguistic* learners (unable to develop an age-appropriate first or a second language) may go unrecognized until it is too late. Rong & Preissle's conclusion (2009, p.89) is worth bearing in mind as they state that usually, the reason for this is the lack of communication between the parents and the school staff.

Baker makes a distinction among varieties of bilingualisms and asserts that immigrants are typically *circumstantial bilinguals* as they learn a language to function in a new society. Immigrant language minorities reserve one language for particular societal functions (2006, pp.4/73). She also states that immigrants in the USA typically find themselves in communities where the domains or context (home and family, schooling, religious activity, commerce, social and cultural activity, correspondence non-official, correspondence official, mass media) is subtractive since there is an expectation from the overall society that one's home language will be replaced by the majority language (Ibid., p.69). She describes a person's language ability as one with four components: receptive skills (listening, reading) and productive skills (speaking, writing). In addition, there are skills within (pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, phonology, and semantics) (Ibid., p.7).

Frequently, teachers or even researchers consider bilingual individuals as "two monolinguals in one person"; in the U.S., it is reflected based on tests that measure ESOL students' language competence compared to monolingual English speakers' unfairly. They are often labeled with denigration as in the case of LEP students in the USA. They are typically children of immigrant families or language minority families (Ibid., p.10). Baker gathered some factors that encourage language maintenance (recent migration, homeland language community intact, low social mobility, ethnic group identity due to nativism or racism, cultural or religious ceremonies, culture distinct from the dominant culture) and others that encourage language loss (homeland language speakers dispersed, social mobility, high levels of education, ethnic identity denial due to ethnic discrimination, acceptance of education in dominant language, illiteracy in the home language) (Ibid., pp.76-77). She asserts that

in the USA, there is typically a "three generation shift"; however, it is not exclusive, language loss may happen quicker or slower due to a range of circumstances (Baker, 2006, p.78).

The many dimensions of bilinguality have been summarized by Hamers and Blanc (1989) and they found 6 dimensions and 17 types of bilinguality (Hamers and Blanc, 2000, p.26). A bilingual individual is not two monolingual individuals in one although according to them, balanced bilinguals do hold two native-like competences according to them. The assessment of bilinguality and bilingualism, as language competence is multidimensional is rather complex. Usually, it is the comparison of the monolingual competences of a bilingual speaker with monolingual standard. It starts with the definition of one's bilingual competence: the authors distinguish native and high-level competence. Ideally, all languages spoken by the individual should be measured; however, with various home languages students from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa bring to the USA, it is rather impossible to hope that language measurement could be extended to all (Ibid., pp.33-34). Besides that most measurements are culture dependent, and it is premature to assess one's competence based on one type of measure.

Parallel maintenance of the children's first language and English as an additional language is important and can make a difference in developing cognitive flexibilities. "Literacy in one's home language is the best basis for developing literacy in a second language" (Olsen, 2008, p.91). C. Suarez-Orozco and M. Suarez-Orozco have found that the overwhelming majority of children they studied considered learning English essential along with maintaining their mother tongue (2002, p.52). There is a familiar phenomenon, yet, that fluency in English is achieved at the expense of at best abandoning at worst losing one's first language, which may be considered a tremendous loss (Olsen, 2008, p.92). There have always been critics who argued that bilingual[77] education or the maintenance of one's first language would interfere with all sorts of things including the assimilation of newly arrived immigrant children, their cognitive development, or the dominance of English as the main language of the country. Today, however, it would be rather naïve to believe in the validity of such ethnocentric theories; also, the obviously steady global dominance of the English[78] language itself is without a doubt.

There is a need for intercultural understanding and the ability to communicate effectively in a world of international interdependence even if confronting intercultural differences is a source of frustration or gratification. "Social skills are more general and are crucial to all social interactions in

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[77] Suarez-Orozco, et al. distinguished various forms of bilingualism according to which there is a *dormant bilingual* is a person who can express emotions, converse and write academically in one language but can do the same on a superficial level in the second. A *balanced bilingual* is a person who can do the same in both languages. An *elite or elective bilingual* is one who learns a second language to expand his or her academic repertoire. A *folk or circumstantial bilingual* is a person who speaks a lower status language and the dominant language of the society and most likely is discouraged to maintain it. Immigrant children in the USA are often encouraged to give up their first language and focus on English language acquisition (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, pp.151-152). The authors suggest that periodically teachers test newly arrived/first generation immigrant children's bilingual ability using the Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test (BVAT).

[78] After the initial contribution of the British Empire to spreading the English language, the United States helped it to reach a global dominance. In America the English language might not be the absolute majority language; however, when considering the educational hierarchy of languages present, and regarding its socio-economic position, it is definitely the one that reigns over others (Julios, 2008, p.35).

that they encompass wide range of capabilities from initiating a simple conversation and adjusting to the behavioral patterns of different interaction patterns to developing and solidifying a relationship and managing conflicts" (Gudykunst, 2003, p.363). The human character of children is largely shaped by the education system, which through the curriculum can, if it decides, assist in promoting an intercultural and diverse world of a society, which is considered to be multicultural. Careful education in a multicultural setting should not produce separatist or marginalized children (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, pp.388-389); furthermore, in an ideal situation cultural diversity is stressed over the prominence of the dominant cultural ideology, and ethnic minorities are not victimized or oppressed culturally (Kim, 2005, p.376). There is an emphasis on the need for Muslim role models and the importance of prominent Muslims showing the younger generation that Islam can be compatible with success in the West (Mandaville, 2004, p.125). It is challenging and valuable at the same time to teach students and expect them to learn about and to adapt to the American mainstream culture while paying respect and attention to the newcomers' original culture and personality, too.

4 Secondary School Policies Regarding Immigrant Muslim Students from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa

Following the discussion of issues pertaining to multilingualism and multiculturalism in the preceding chapters, this chapter looks at secondary school policies; to what extent multicultural growth is being promoted regarding the school environment, attire, and Halal food, bullying and racial harassment. Services available outside schools, supplemental educational after-school services are also explored. Due to a new wave of immigrants from Muslim societies of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, there is a need for greater understanding of these students along with their cultural heritage and experience and how those are implemented in the curriculum other than ESOL/ELL classes (Omotosho, 2005) in public high schools. There is a lack of research in the area of multicultural provision in the U.S. educational systems, especially with regards to Muslim immigrant students. The qualitative research, explained below, focuses on the specific situations of these students and the provision they receive. It analyzes data on patterns allowing the participant's voices to be heard and to offer authenticity. The following pages explain the study purpose, the qualitative research method, a description of the research site, the participants, and the data collection protocol.

4.1 Fieldwork and Methodology

As discussed in the previous chapter, while the role of schools in the process of intercultural adjustment and integration is, in general terms, rather well explored (see Samovar 2001/2007; Jandt 2007; Anwar 1998; Steinberg 2000, Olsen, 2008, Igoa, 2009, Suarez-Orozco et.al., 2002/2008), there is a clear gap in relevant research about the impact of recent changes in educational legislation, in particular the U.S. document *No Child Left Behind*, and about the effort to move forward to a culturally responsive curriculum. Rather limited is also the recent research on immigrants from the Horn of Africa and Middle Eastern cultures. Finally, significant field studies are uncommon and I aim at making a significant contribution to research by filling this gap. In particular, the result from such an investigation would add to current knowledge on provision and provide a deeper understanding of needs from both parties. There have not been many studies that would examine the provision of first generation immigrant Muslim students in the U.S. regarding their linguistic, cultural and religious needs, and this research proposes to help restore the balance as within existing literature, stories of such individuals or institutions have been rarely considered. This study explores strategies for recognizing and bridging obvious gaps between teacher and student expectations regarding first and second languages, religion and a culturally responsive curriculum. The educational purpose is to raise awareness among secondary school teachers and staff above such issues, offer pragmatic solutions and improve students' accomplishment or retention if necessary.

4.1.1 Study Purpose

Among the aims of this study is to look at secondary school policies; to what extent multicultural growth is being promoted regarding the school environment, attire, and Halal food, bullying and racial harassment. Services available outside schools, supplemental educational after-school services are also the aim to explore. Furthermore, educational opportunities for 1st generation immigrant children are discussed with the aim to link the *No Child Left Behind* Act and existing practices and strategies for supporting educational needs. Special attention is paid to the challenges of cultural sensitivity of the school environment and the heritage/first language support: specific reasons to engage in bilingual learning in a sheltered environment. Key questions to be addressed are the following:

- What kinds of provision have been implemented to support a culturally sensitive education in public high schools in the U.S., and how effective have they been?
- If any, what was the effect of the reform paper *No Child Left Behind*?
- How could the role of teachers as culturally responsive educators and communicators be further enhanced?
- Which steps would have to be taken in order to move towards a 'culturally competent system of care' (Delgado 2005)?

Due to a new wave of immigrants from Muslim societies of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, it is investigated how the need to greater understanding of these students and their experience is implemented in the core curriculum other than ESOL/ELL classes (Omotosho, 2005) in public high schools. In opposition to other studies (Suarez-Orozco 2002 and 2008, Igoa, 2009, Olsen, 2008), my research explores the school-county-wide educational practices worth benchmarking in public high schools such as the language evaluation system called WIDA, the *Global Awareness Technology Project* (GATP) from Fairfax County, which helps students understand the relevance of their culture in a global world; also a program for ESL parents called *Parents as Educational Partners* (PEP, Wright, 2011 online) which provides support for them to manage school-parent communication better and support for parents with the school curriculum so that they can help their children with school tasks. This research emphasizes the role of an after school club called Muslim Student Association (MSA) and how it could be further enhanced to go beyond its ostensibly superficial character. A significant part of this chapter points to the lack of comprehension students face and lack of assistance they receive to effectively maintain their first language and cultural heritage. Accordingly, a comprehensive explanation of both is provided to raise awareness about potentially enhanced forms of provision.

The fieldwork focuses on the dynamics between the U.S. American and immigrant Muslim cultures in public schools as well as understanding and describing the role that these schools play in the provision of newly arrived immigrant students from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. The purpose was to learn about the features of schools especially their ESOL/ELL teaching programs and methods, and to better understand their significance in the lives of their students, to understand parental attitudes and preferences in selecting schools for their children. Also, it is to formulate appropriate strategies to assist them meeting and even expanding their educational goals, especially those that relate to

bilingualism/biculturalism as one of the highly beneficial life skills along with some elements of a traditional Islamic education perhaps.

Acquiring access to public high schools to carry out fieldwork was challenging for several reasons; therefore, the whole process took nearly a year. To begin with, in the USA, researchers need to apply to school counties to seek approval. Once it is granted on county level, permission from individual schools within the county need to be requested. Out of eight different school counties, only two approved. I contacted schools, which would fit the study purpose; more specifically, state-of-the art schools that promote learning and have great achievement records. That way ESOL/ELL provision could be measured more accurately, without such possibly interfering circumstances as low-income neighborhood, discipline issues, gangs, disinterested teaching staff, which could affect the quality of education and provision. Eventually, 3 schools promised to participate in only one school county (Loudoun County Public Schools). Through the help of the High School ESOL specialist of Fairfax County, Virginia, access was granted to FCPS high schools and an invite to the GATP fair, despite the previously rejected application. Schools that agreed to become involved in the research needed to find a convenient time as teachers and students run a busy schedule. Therefore, the most challenging part of this chapter was to establish rapport and a networking system in order to gain access to high schools. The other reason for the limited number of participating school counties was the post 9/11 religious sensitivity. A school county official in charge of research application approval (Montgomery Public School County), among the first counties rejecting the research application, found the research itself noteworthy but could not "interpret" the word "Muslim" in the application. She found it too insensitive. After that refusal I reduced the number of the word "Muslim" in the application proposals and the first approval was soon granted.

4.1.2 Data Collection Protocol

Participants

Dissertation fieldwork was conducted in May, June and September, October 2011, among first generation immigrant students in 9-12th grades from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. It took place in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) in Springfield, Burke, Fairfax; and Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) in Chantilly-South Riding, Sterling, serving ESOL/ELL students. Each participating high school is a large (approximately 2,000 students) comprehensive high school located in middle class neighborhoods. Data was collected by survey questions, observations, and interviews.

Table 1: Tabular summary of dissertation fieldwork

Schools	Female students 9-11 grades	Male students 9-12 grades	Parents	Countries of origin	ESL Teachers	Mainstream Teachers
Lake Braddock Secondary School (FCPS)	3 surveys 2 interviews	N/A	2 surveys	Palestine/Jordan Egypt Turkey Ethiopia Iraq	1 ESL teacher interview/survey	N/A
Fairfax HS (FCPS)	1 Interview/survey	N/A	1 interview	UAE	N/A	N/A
Lee HS (FCPS)	1 survey	N/A	1 surveys	Afghanistan	N/A	N/A
Freedom HS (LCPS)	4 interviews	3 interviews	2 surveys	Ethiopia Egypt Afghanistan Iran	1 ELL Chair-Interview 1 ELL assistant – survey 2 ELL teacher surveys	1 MSA sponsor - interview
Dominion HS (LCPS)	1 survey	1 survey	N/A	Iran Syria	1 ELL chair-interview/survey, 2 ELL teachers surveys	2 surveys
Park View HS (LCPS)	3 surveys/interviews	1 interview/survey	1 survey	Morocco Kashmir Pakistan	1 ELL chair interview/survey	3 surveys

Additional interviews – Body	Position
Fairfax County Public Schools	1 ESOL HS Specialist FCPS interview
Loudoun County Public Schools	1 ELL HS Specialist LCPS interview

Source: dissertation fieldwork conducted in May, June, September, October 2011 by Krisztina Domján

Student population, percentage of English language learners, cultural heritage, language groups represented, and type of language programming were the characteristics considered in the selection of high schools for the study. Students and their schools were studied to varying degrees of depth due to their varying degrees of willingness to participate. Four high schools were studied in greatest depth and allowed two or more site visits; therefore, interviews with teachers, and students and classroom observations were possible to be conducted. Students and parents of the remaining three high schools only participated indirectly via survey questionnaires or interviews.

Method

The qualitative data were categorized and the findings were determined by the themes that most frequently came up in interviews and surveys; thus the findings reflect topics discussed repeatedly by participants. Survey questionnaires were administered (see Appendices) among students, parents, high school ESOL/ELL teachers/coordinators, mainstream teachers along with open-ended interviews conducted with students, parents, high school ESOL/ELL teachers/coordinators, an MSA sponsor, and ESOL/ELL specialists (FCPS and LCPS). For data analysis, interviews were recorded in the form of field notes and audiotape recordings that were transcribed. According to the predetermined protocols, survey questionnaires were handed out to ESOL/ELL students, their parents (to be sent home); content and ESOL/ELL teachers and assistants followed up by classroom observations and guided interviews.

Field notes on the teachers' attitude, classroom dynamics, and school environment were taken during each observation. After each period, the researcher shared the perception with the teacher to check if the researcher's interpretation about the classroom activities were accurate. One purpose of the interview was to obtain additional detail and clarify the researcher's initial interpretation of the information collected from the surveys and the observations. The interviews lasted between 30-40 minutes in teacher's classrooms, meeting room, home at a time convenient for the teacher and the students. Four interview sessions took place in focus groups; however, there were a couple of individual interviews, but all guided by somewhat personalized sets of questions mainly about general impressions of each high school, English language provision and facilitating first/heritage language and cultural/religious needs. Although the questions had been formed, modifications and additions to them were made when necessary as the interview was being conducted. All of them were audiotape-recorded and transcribed and a summary was sent to the teachers in the form of supportive feedback. Six additional interviews were carried out: two with ESOL/ELL specialists, one MSA Sponsor and three with ELL/ESOL teachers during which only notes were taken.

The student survey questions were categorized into themes: background information, heritage and additional languages, teachers, heritage culture and friends, and school plans. The teacher survey questions were also categorized similarly to the student survey. The parental survey contained fewer questions and were not grouped but logically ordered. The surveys were given to the teachers who then handed them out after my visit to the schools. Also some surveys were handed over to individuals themselves willing to participate in the study. Due to the area-specific target group, the survey questions were translated to Amharic, Arabic and Somali. Together with the English version the translated version of surveys were also given to the participants—students and their parents. The students and their parents chose to answer in English, which was indeed helpful while processing the answers. All the participants needed to fill out the consent form prior to their participation.

As part of doing a qualitative research, observations were conducted in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, where the teacher was also an interview participant. The researcher collected data by completing observations at different times in five different ELL/ESOL teachers' classrooms. The lessons observed were in sheltered ESOL/ELL (SIOP) classes. During observations, the researcher was an observer and did not take part in any classroom activity. The observation permitted the researcher to witness student – teacher interaction in a naturalistic setting (Waxman, Tharp, Hilberg, 2004, pp.4-5). It granted access to more in-depth evidence regarding intercultural communication competence of the educators and student functional fitness in the milieu of American high schools. It showed whether teachers recognize and how effectively they meet this challenge.

The documents that were collected and reviewed included samples of materials such as worksheets teachers used in their classroom, also information leaflets on gateway programs, parental education programs (PEP), adult education programs such as ESOL/ELL provision from the front office of the

schools visited. Additional material was gathered during *The Global Awareness Technology Project* (GATP) and an ELL students' *Publishing Party* of about these projects. The researcher was invited and participated as a spectator in the *Global Awareness Technology Fair* among FCPS ESOL students held in May 10, 2011. It was held at Falls Church HS from 6:00 to about 8:30 p.m. in the cafeteria. Fourteen schools were represented. WIDA Level 3 ESOL HS students in FCPS HSs competed for the prize. Mrs. Kalpana Ronlov's ELL writing class invited the researcher for a *Publishing Party* on May 20th, 2011, where students performed oral presentations of their written works, poems or essays in Dominion High School. Parents, teachers and the ELL High School specialist were invited to celebrate the students' attainment.

The implemented approach was comparative with a theoretical focus on cultural differences, bilingualism, second language acquisition and the available language programs. It was built on qualitative data gathering on the assumption that educational provision for first generation immigrant students in American high schools should not only take one's cultural heritage and heritage language into consideration but also accommodate them by going beyond superficial level during the process of integration.

Although the qualitative research method does not allow for the collection of statistical data; and the limitation of the field work to the Virginia area makes it harder to see whether or not the same results would have been found in other regions of the country; consequently, this data cannot necessarily be used to make assumptions beyond this specific group of participants. However, this does not mean the data is necessarily less valid or reliable. Its strength lies in focusing on more complex aspects of small groups revealing their experience, feelings, thinking and behavior in more depth as the participants provide data in their own words. Lived experiences cannot be quantified easily, and an advantage of qualitative research is that it can investigate them.

Following the guidelines of Phillips and Pugh (2005, pp.46-55) and Stebbins (2001, pp.45-49) the qualitative data was analyzed in order to find similarities and differences until a pattern or theory can be formulated. The research studies of Anwar (1998), Ancess (2003) and Menken (2006) prompted and inspired the approach to survey design. The hypothetico-deductive method was used (Phillips & Pugh, 2005, p.50); and the questions were generally open-ended so that valid and reliable data would be acquired (Stebbins, 2001, p.49) for a critical examination of the hypothesis.

Due to the extensive and demanding research application procedures in each school county, fewer schools and students could participate than expected. Nevertheless, this qualitative research is built on a great selection of case studies akin to Ancess' 2003 research. What is presented are characteristics of the experiences and needs of students, their parents and schools with the intention of possible comparisons to other student groups. The countries of origin of students participated in the study are Afghanistan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kashmir, Morocco, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, and UAE.

4.2 Promoting multicultural growth in the school environment

The survey students in FCPS and LCPS filled out reflected that they seemed to be taking the path of integration. The students who participated in this study have lived in two or three countries on average, and upon arrival, they were between 9 and 17 years old. They all expected it to be different to join the new school system. They started school as soon as a week or a month after arriving to America. All of them admitted listening to 99.5 FM (a popular local radio station) and watching popular television shows regularly, which means that the majority of these students accept and enjoy what the American mainstream entertainment media offer. They typically do not miss the school system from their countries; as, apparently, those are stricter and smaller, and less advanced. They are all positive about their progress at school and find the school environment supportive. They are satisfied with the coeducational environment as well (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys).

Settling down in a new environment is never stress-free. The question whether or not they have friends from the American culture/native speakers was raised during interviews and on the survey. Most of the answers revealed the following, "Some of them are from Pakistan, and some are Spanish and American… Where I live there are Spanish and African and American, but not Pakistani," also "yes, because thankfully I play sports", "yes, in my classes", or "very few." These students greatly miss their friends and family members (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys). The students were also asked to compare the meaning of friendships in their new community and in their hometown, and the majority of these students consider the latter not only different but also stronger:

- "American friendships just throughout high school, back home lifelong friendship," (FCPS, Afghan female student arrived at the age of 15)
- "American friendships I feel are temporary until you graduate high school, back home my friends are long term, " (FCPS Jordanian female student arrived at the age of 13)
- "In our country friendship is like we become brothers but it's different here," (LCPS, Pakistani male student arrived at the age of 13)
- "In my country they are friendly; but I doesn't have American friend so I have no idea about them." (LCPS, Syrian female student arrived at the age of 13) (LCPS ESOL/ELL Student Surveys)

These students can recognize the difference between the concept of friends in the U.S. and in their country of origin; however, it does not mean that they will shy away from forming friendships with American students which contradicts Suarez-Orozco's (2008) and Olsen's (2008) statements that immigrant children remain segregated and are rarely befriended by U.S.-born students (see discussion in Chapter 3). While these researchers examined deprived schools overwhelmingly, where segregation, discrimination prevailed, and the quality of education (ESOL and content subjects alike) was low; the schools in this research, as mentioned earlier, were of great reputation in such regards.

The theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 pointed out that Islam shapes every aspect of one's lifestyle, and that Muslim parents usually teach their children that they are different from non-Muslims in their value system and way of life, but their actual expectations to follow those varies. Their children are typically told that they cannot drink alcohol, eat pork, take drugs, or engage in pre-marital sex. Parents, for instance, may control the music children are listening to or the TV program they are watching, the magazines they are reading, and the clothes (which may provoke desire in the opposite

sex) they are wearing. Group social activity is often permitted with supervision. According to the survey results, parents are more lenient and may sacrifice religious observations on the altar of assimilation/acculturation and successful educational outcomes. Most parents only give advice about dress code, eating, praying habits at school. Whereas an Afghan male student said, "I'm not allowed to eat at school or eat meat somewhere else," an 18-year-old Afghan female student said,

> "dad is the kind of person he says, follow your religion don't forget ...like you can date and stuff, we can do that. I can ...have a boyfriend, and I bring him home. ...my father is just really strict about that... Like he doesn't mind if we wear short dresses... because that is how the environment is like that is how the people around you are...my father would love for us to be wearing scarf and everything. But even when I lived in Pakistan, my dad was like, when I was leaving the house, when you go outside just put a scarf on. But in America, he's like, don't cover up, [but] don't wear shorts or like your bra stripes showing and stuff, he doesn't approve that."

I don't think dads in general like that kind of stuff (Domján, K)

> "Yeah, my mom is chill about it. She cares but she's not strict or like my dad sees my nail polish and he's like, well, you have hand polish on and people will give attention to your hands and that's wrong, and I'm like, well I'm still gonna do it. Yeah, I told my mom, she was like, do you have to wear makeup when you go to school, and I'm like trust me there are other cuter girls, than me and they wear skinny shorts and their legs are showing, and those guys will probably look at them instead of me. But my dad, like, I never have him bring me in the morning cause it's like, but my mom's chill about it. But he doesn't ask if there is *halal* food, he knows there is none. But like my sister she is 8th grade and she doesn't eat outside meat. She makes sure she's halal. And she makes sure she gets something that doesn't have any meat. But my mom the same thing. My dad he never eats out. He's like I don't care if they fry fish on that, I am sure they fried hamburger on that before, so he's like even though they told me that it's fish, I'm not gonna eat it.   So my dad doesn't, he goes, buy expensive meat, but buy halal."

What about your parents, do they say anything about what to eat what to do? (Domján, K)

> Egyptian girl: "Well, my mom is not like very religious. I mean she doesn't even wear a scarf, so.
> Afghan girl: yeah like my cousin, in her school there are other girls trying to wear the scarf for some reason, but like when she dresses everything has to go with the scarf, she's wearing tight clothes, or boobs are out on the floor, her bra stripe is showing, but she just wears the scarf, which I don't get. I'm like if you're gonna wear the scarf you have to wear clothes that doesn't show every single part of your body."

So they didn't really want to follow like home customs? (Domján, K)

> "They do, like, they still do the prayers and the holidays, they follow that, but just like inside the house. They all speak in English, the younger kids."
> (LCPS ESOL/ELL Student Interview-Focus Group for Girls)

Their answers reveal that some of these students and their families reserve faith to their private sphere having reexamined the role of religion in the American society. On the other hand, there is an overwhelming influence of the American culture due to which some Muslim students neglect customs that included praying, fasting or wearing traditional dress. While there are essential Islamic values that either the parents or the students themselves feel strongly about, they are perhaps also aware of the need for shared values in the new milieu to fit in. All this confirms Cesari's (2004) theory about living in a secular environment and the individualization of religious choice as a resultant, immigrants are susceptible to taking up a range of Muslim identities (ethical, emotional or cultural) to get the best of both worlds, and these participants are doing just that (see discussion in Chapter 2).

Islamic food distributors have brought halal food to several public schools in certain parts of the U.S.[79] There is no *Halal* food served in any of the participating LCPS or FCPS schools; however, schools do send home a monthly menu so that parents can see what is available and which food item contains pork. Similarly to the discussion above, some parents strictly enforce the eating of *Halal* food, others do not, but the final decision lies with the students themselves:

So you have packed lunch? (Domján, K)

Afghan girl: "No, ever since he came, but dad is the kind of person he says, follow your religion don't forget your like you can" "my father tries to make sure that we really eat halal"

Do you bring your food here? (Domján, K)

Kashmiri girl: "Sometimes I bring it, sometimes I go to the cafeteria; but I don't like the food, I don't eat it because of my religion. I can eat there salad or cheese pizza, we can eat but it has to be halal."

Did your parents ever want you to bring food because of what you get here? (Domján, K)

Moroccan girls: "Yeah. They tell us to do, but it really doesn't matter"
(LCPS ESOL/ELL Student Interviews)

Another conclusion from the survey is that schools could facilitate more for Muslim students regarding prayer. Those teachers who answered the survey questions claimed that students may pray in school, on the other hand, prayer rooms are rarely designated (during Ramadan)—and mostly ad hoc. The responses included: "have a prayer room set aside for religious holidays but I'm not aware of one during the rest of the year—they probably do?" "To pray there is the conference room during Ramadan thus for fasting they do not have to go to the cafeteria and be supervised by staff, not very many students take advantage of the service though" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys). Parental replies confirmed what the teachers said, "just this past week the school sent out emails telling teachers that they should not let students out of class for religious purposes which I think is completely absurd" or "no, they do not allow the students to have Friday prayers at LBHS and they have pork food which I'm fine with but they do not have alternatives in the lunch lines. Kind of what you see is what you get" (ESOL/ELL Parent Surveys).

When asked about prayer, students said that their schools understand the needs of fasting; however, to pray "only during Ramadan" "the school does not have prayer rooms…, separation of church and state, they don't have halal food, they understand the need of fasting, like my gym teacher won't make me run or work out excessively if I am fasting." "They used to, but not anymore. They changed, it used to be in the library but some students were just walking around instead of praying so they stopped it." "No, I don't know if there is a room. I could I think because there is another girl I think who prays here. I am not sure" (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys and Interviews).

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[79] Detroit suburbs (Dearborn Public Schools) has the largest number of ethnic Arabs outside the Middle East with about third of the students being Muslim and eat both breakfast and lunch at school. Their demand was built upon the fact that the school district had been already providing meatless lunches for Roman Catholics on Fridays during Lent, and pork had been banned from lunches (Collins, 2001, online).

Most students pointed at the library as the ad hoc prayer facility; "*Is it the same spot in the library?*" "It depends, if it's busy or not. I go somewhere else, to an office or something." "I could pray in the classroom. During Ramadan on Fridays it was in the library. The school believed that if it was important for you to pray you could find a quiet place." This girl is from the UAE and her mother during Ramadan, amongst other Muslim parents, was allowed to take food to school for the Muslim students when it was time to break Fasting in the afternoon (Student Surveys and Interviews). Based on these answers, school officials might be misinformed about the prayer practice of Muslim students if they cater for their religious needs only during Ramadan. To designate a specific area in schools should not require tremendous amount of logistics. Moreover, those students who obviously merely take advantage of teachers letting them out of class to pray and just wander around should not be allowed or should face consequences. However, over-generalizing their behavior does not reflect proper pedagogical practices.

The policies and practices surrounding teaching and learning are part of the politics of the culture (Kadi & Billeh, 2007, p.2). There is a great deal of inaccuracy or even sensationalism about Islamic education in the West (Ibid., p.5). Igoa defines *dialogic intervention* as acting as an intermediary in a school setting between the children's world and reality, also maintaining a constant dialogue between the student and the teachers responding to their needs and concerns (2009, p.117). Igoa recommends following a *threefold intervention called CAP*: a well-balanced focus on one's Cultural, Academic and Psychological well-being (Ibid., p.119). She suggests that teachers take responsibility and guidance to maintain the balance. It also helps if school staff realizes how the U.S. educational system discriminates against newcomers (Ibid., p.101). It helps if children know that they and their cultures are valued and accepted by school staff and classmates and are considered just as important as their native-born classmates (Ibid., p.103). Reading about education in Islam should be necessary to understand the nexus between schools and societies, the spiritual dimensions of learning and the social configuration of learning institutions. Cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national, or religious expressions should not be seen as obstacles but as expressions of fundamental human development.

The encounter with the secular American school system may cause considerable problems for both those newly arrived immigrant Middle Eastern and African parents and the students who may resist change or accept it only reluctantly in the name of preserving a Muslim identity. By all means, private Islamic education can function as complimentary to the secular public schools (Kadi & Billeh, 2007, p.17), but might not always be an option or available in the community or have decent reputation. It is undeniable that a good educational provision should take account of the needs of religious minorities like Muslims in a democratic society. It is possible that by promoting diversity in schooling; however, we may create ghettoization and social fragmentation instead of cohesion.[80] There

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[80] Far from reaching multiculturalism, to strengthen American identity, millions of dollars are spent on improving teaching American history. Senator Lamar Alexander, who introduced a bill in 2003 to create summer academies in American history and civics for schoolteachers and high school students, said the following in March 2009: "I argued, as I mentioned earlier, it was time to put the teaching of American history and civics back in its rightful place in our schools so as our children grow, they can learn what it means to be an American. On the "Nation's Report Card," our worst scores for our seniors in high school are not in math or science but in U.S. history. It will be very difficult for us as a country to succeed if we don't learn where we came from. (…) I invite my colleagues to join us, and I invite all

have been warnings about fragmentation[81] of communities racially, culturally, by faith…segregation in housing and community. There are schools that do not pay attention to the needs of newly arrived immigrant students: they are either ignored or thought of as obstacles to paying full attention to teaching state mandated high-stakes tests (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, p.162). There is an ideological shift from assimilation and integration towards surface-level cultural pluralism and celebration of diversity.

Muslim religious practices are still hard to maintain in a society which, by and large, accommodates and revolves around Judeo-Christian holidays. As a consequence, many practicing Muslims could find it difficult to determine the relationship between their religious identity and the American national identity. Interestingly, there is a perception that some immigrant Muslims who, in fact, used to be rather secular in their homeland (Muslim society), used to take Islam for granted, tend to become rather observant once settling in a Western culture/society, especially when they see that their children are exposed to Western influence. Therefore, sending their children to public schools can be a grave concern for parents. Driel claims that devout religious (any religious conviction) families, in general, feel uneasy about their children attending secular (according to their interpretation, the atmosphere is highly individualistic, selfish, and immoral) schools. A secular educational setting can be one where religion is not discussed at all, or where various religions are discussed without bias towards any. Faith based schools and segregated education of such children are the result of this objection. One sort of faith based schools with an increasing number is Muslim faith schools (Driel, 2004, p.xii). A National Research Council (NRC) study about children and adolescents from immigrant families found that the longer immigrant children stay in America, the larger extent they become Americanized (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, p.5).

Immigrants from Islamic societies, most likely, used to take Islamic schooling and lifestyle for granted, but in America they need to keep up with their Islamic identity and accommodate needs in other ways following their own initiative. Finding Mosques that operate as weekend Islamic schools or enroll into full-time Islamic faith schools which are mainly private (Eck, 2001, online) seem doable for most of the time. Bowen found that Muslim groups in the West have been criticized for their closed order, the constrain which requires them to follow certain rules, like girls veiling, keeping girls from participating in emancipation through immersion in state institutions, and following a different authority other than the given state in which they live (2007, p.160). And, Timani stated that typically, not the first generation or newly arrived Muslim immigrant children are at risk of losing their Islamic identity but those born in the U.S., whose parents are immigrants and of subsequent immigrant generations (2006, online). For both, Bowen's findings and Timani's simplified claim were refuted by some of the students as seen previously, who participated in this study regarding the extent of veiling or dressing Muslim girls must follow and the pace of the identity-related transformation Muslim

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Americans to join us in their communities, in their schools and in their States, to make that a priority" (Alexander, 2009, online).

[81] "I received the best education our community had to offer. I had access to the best Western education. I was isolated socially and coed activities were completely out of the question. I had a small circle of friends." (Abdul-Ghafur, 2005, p.7)

children pursue especially if they are exposed to their surrounding environment in the majority of their time.

In the analysis called *Education of Muslim Children - Challenges and Opportunities*, about various forms of schoolings in the United States, Emerick stressed that investment in education is essential to acquire intellectual property. She emphasized the importance of parents fighting hard to keep their child in the same spiritual tradition as they are. She stated that Islamic schools have been created because the topic of Islam is not present in public education or it is treated in a biased manner. She also believed that most families are concerned with their children's academic achievement and neglect their personal Islamic well-being; consequently, they altogether become Americanized and/or Westernized. As a result, their identity as a practicing Muslim fades away eventually (Emerick, 1999, online). Although academic and professional skills are needed to survive and to establish certain living standards in the U.S., Islamic education is also key if an additional aim is to build an Islamic character. A profound knowledge of both Christian, secular and Islamic concepts seem very important in this context in order to develop cultural awareness and to be able to critically question or challenge identity concepts.

4.3 Current forms of bullying and racial harassment

In the USA, schools vary typically depending on the neighborhood or area: schools with current technology and stimulating curricula with proper role models, and schools which lack resources, or a charismatic principal, low morale among staff or no contact with students from the middle class. An effective school which creates *fields of opportunity for immigrant children* ought to have "positive leadership, high staff morale, high academic expectations for all students regardless of background, a high value placed on the students' cultures and languages, and a safe and orderly school environment" (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, pp.132-133). The schools which participated in the LISA study varied from high functioning to catastrophic institutions that create *fields of endangerment*. Problems that the authors identified included poorly maintained school buildings, outdated curricula and textbooks, inadequate PCs, not enough counselors, little continuity and school community, and teachers pushing immigrant children (due to their limited English proficiency) towards the least demanding and least competitive classes preventing them from gaining access to college education. A great deal of children were seen enrolled in "violent and over-crowded inner-city schools where they face overwhelmed teachers, hypersegregation by race and class, limited and outdated resources" (Ibid., pp.134). Those schools were rather different from the ones that participated in this study, however.

Educational opportunities and systems vary depending on, for instance, the number of years students spend in formal schooling; elementary, secondary schools, what is voluntary or mandatory within, if a national curriculum exists, length of a school year, week, day, classroom experience. The general educational goals are to create faithful citizens, they are influenced economically and historically, specific educational goals reflect if the focus is on facts, national exams (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005, pp.11-13). Abdi and Cleghorn describe the sociology of education as schooling

processes, practices, social groups and relations between them, teachers, students, parents, school admin, officers, and community representatives. It regards the academic and social results of the schooling process. They identify three kinds of education: informal (family), formal (schools), and non-formal (organizations outside school). "To contextualize instruction is to attend to (…) aspects of the culture of schooling" (Ibid., pp.4-5). They believe that education is a social process with intended and unintended functions. It is related to the economy, politics, belief systems, thus dominant norms and values are reflected. Teachers and students are the key participants and classrooms are influenced by variables or social meanings attached to life experiences, social, racial, linguistic, educational backgrounds. Schools play a role in the process of socialization and the acculturation of newly arrived children, and to what extent it is manifested in Virginia high schools is what the research interviews and survey questions of this study intended to uncover.

Schools must understand that they play a significant role in the cultural adjustment of the first generation immigrant students and tackling racism and bullying is extremely important. Researchers have found that "attitudes held by members of the dominant culture strongly influence patterns of immigrant, sojourner, and refugee adaptation" (Landis & Bhagat, 1996, p.139). Additionally, discrimination and bullying could lead to sociocultural adaptation problems (Ibid., p.139). The crucial task is to prevent it, or tackle them efficiently and immediately. The schools I visited during data gathering clarified that they prepare their staff to respect the students; they also prepare their existing student population along with the recently arrived children to accept each other. Unfortunately, to experience some form of bullying or isolation is an almost inevitable phenomenon in high schools, yet their own approach of solving problems differs. An FCPS ESOL teacher stated in the survey that "the school has no policies in place but I have honestly seen very little racism—usually more ignorance and immaturity, ESOL students show racist attitude more often than others." A Loudoun County PS ELL chair claimed that "Anti-bullying program trains students to be ambassadors within the school. Students of all ethnic backgrounds participate in this program." When asked about racial atrocities, staff members who were not ELL teachers mentioned "antibullying," "discuss openly," "if I hear it I correct it, tolerance needs to be taught at home," "absolute zero tolerance" as their methods (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys).

Although zero tolerance might be a well-meaning standpoint at schools, it might not be effective enough in order to tackle the root of the problem without including dialogue, respect, and tolerance between groups with differing values, and promoting authentic personal and cultural pride for students (Liese, 2004, p.73). McCaine's research shows that 10% of schoolteachers typically promote sameness or colorblindness, 10% discuss differences, and 80% are confused and/or unwilling to tackle the issue (Ibid., p.69). As it was indicated in Chapter 3, Olsen (2008) argued that reluctant teachers hide behind their color-blindness, which Pollock calls a 'colormute' attitude as they remain silent and do little about the issue. Accordingly, Samovar (2007) urges the presence of genuine and congruent educators and El-Haj (2006) suggested broadening educational perspectives while adopting a new attitude towards the treatment of newcomers. Although Chapter 5.3 will reveal that the schools that participated in this study demonstrate genuine care overwhelmingly, based on the answers extracted

from the ESL and content teacher survey, there are still some who have not adjusted their attitude just yet.

To find out more about their experience in the American society[82], I asked ESOL/ELL students about the topic of prejudice and discrimination. A Kashmiri student spoke about her expectations upon her enrollment **"**Some people because of 9/11 I thought would be; I was expecting some behavior, but everyone was nice to us. They never say anything like you are Muslim, you are dirty, nothing" (LCPS, ESOL/ELL Student Interviews). Apparently, newly arrived students have not only been enquired about their culture by "teachers, students," "everyone when they ask about my accent," "a lot of people," **"**friends," "my friends from other culture," "yes, and I love it I love educating people" but have also receive judgment from others "once my scarf was pulled off," "the only kind of discrimination was because of my scarf but they were 'jokes,' or "yes, it was unfair" and "yes there is some student," "yes in a good way and bad," "yes they made fun of me," "yes-accent in the talking and dressing and language." When students were asked if they ever have a sense of not fitting in/not welcomed, their answers included "yes, I wear a scarf and students/teachers automatically think terrorist (crazy) so it does make me feel left out," "at first I did but now I have a good group of friends that are my backbone," "I do sometimes just because my family and I don't have the same traditions" "yes-racism by students school time and streets" (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys).

Parents were also surveyed for this study to learn about their stance on the issue of bullying, and although most of them experienced nothing, a couple of them from FCPS said "My daughter's scarf was pulled off as a "joke", some teachers faulty relate to a certain group… I think they should definitely make punishments tougher and more harsh just so lessons can be learned", also "there was a time when she complained about her scarf being pulled off. My husband and I went to the school and thankfully the problem was stopped. It is wonderful how accepting the teachers are" (ESOL/ELL Parent Surveys). The students were also surveyed on how their schools deal with bullying, and again, while most were contented about it and knew what the punishment was, there were some hard feelings from both FCPS and LCPS: "not enough, I see it every day in the halls and it's ridiculous", "it does happen a lot, but there is only so much the school can do", "there is a lot of bullying in my school" (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys).

According to such findings, it is hard to conclude that schools always utilize efficient prevention or protection. Nevertheless, following the line of argument about the need to teach about religion in high schools, in Chapter 5.3, such instances could have been prevented. Had students been taught about the relevance of headgear in a class called *World Religions 101*, for instance, they might have been taught about not teasing these girls this way. It was previously argued in Chapter 3 that the road to efficiency and successful long-term adjustment is validation (Ting-Toomey, 2005) via which students feel less displaced and are more understood, respected and valued in the new environment.

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[82] The attitudes of Americans toward Muslims were explored in a recent study called *Muslims in the Community at Large: Discrimination, Prejudice, and Respect* by Zogby which concluded that Muslims sense lack of respect from the host culture. Whereas 35% have had positive personal experience, 16% have encountered disrespectful and intolerant Americans. It is women and the younger generation who tend to declare incidents of anti-Muslim discrimination they experience in the workplace, among friends/acquaintances, neighbours, and not surprisingly, at school (21%) (Zogby, 2004, online).

When interviewing five girls in a focus group, I asked them about participating in mainstream classes. Most of them are still mainly in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) classes designed for ESOL/ELL students, but they do share few classes with mainstream students. They have an ambiguous feeling sitting in those classes and have a fear of being laughed at when speaking:

>Afghan girl: "it is so uncomfortable speaking out like, you would know what to say, but it is just like, around you there are different, if we were in ESOL class we all speak, but like if you're in a regular class with regular people like white kids in them, and then especially me, I can't speak out."
>Egyptian girl: "Yeah I can't."
>Ethiopian girl: "Yeah."
>Afghan girl: "I don't know for some reason I can't like, most people don't realize that I'm from another country because they say I don't have accent, but still I don't feel comfortable speaking out."

>*You should, you have no accent! (Domján, K)*

>Ethiopian girl: "Yeah, I feel like I am scared that I might say the wrong thing. So when I speak out, they think that I know it wrong, and that stuff, so I don't feel like it."

>*Don't you think even US students say the wrong thing sometimes so they feel the same way? Maybe it's not a language thing (Domján, K)*

>Ethiopian girl: "Like you said the wrong thing because you're from another country. They think, oh she did that because she's from there."
>Egyptian girl: "Actually, if I was in my country I make mistakes, of course everyone makes mistakes in the classroom, when I say something wrong, I feel bad, I don't want to be embarrassed in front of everyone, but I don't feel that embarrassed if I am there, if I say something wrong here, it's gonna be a lot harder for me. I mean yeah, they're gonna talk, they're gonna say, she knows nothing."

>*Do you think that the students really care that much? (Domján, K)*

>Egyptian girl: "They do, yeah, they do actually. If they I mean I don't know, I mean I don't wanna, just, so not all of them but some of them, they make fun, and a lot of them they fix me and they're nice."
>Ethiopian girl: "Yeah."

>*There are always those students who are not nice. (Domján, K)*

>Egyptian Girl: "Yeah I know everywhere. Not in America, in Egypt, too. If I say something wrong, oh she said that… ok, I mean, chill."
>Ethiopian girl: even if they don't say that kind of stuff in front of your face, they go away and they say it like that.

>*Behind your back? (Domján, K)*

>Ethiopian girl: "Yeah. But, you know it is something like, who cares?"
>Afghan girl: "College is different. Here you see them all day, college you go to class, you leave and that's done. There if you're friends with them, they will not make fun of you. But if you're not friends with them you don't see them much after class. But here you always see them." (…)
>Afghan girl: "Yeah I was like that too, like that. Cause you are just like, there are some words, I was in 9th grade and there were some words that they told me to read, and I couldn't pronounce it…"
>Ethiopian girl: "And if you pronounce it everyone would like laugh"
>Afghan girl: "Like my sister she was in Health class, and she said, actually that was my cousin, and she was born here, she said marijuana (dz) instead of marijuana (h) and she said, everybody started laughing at me. And my sister she was in 3rd grade and there was this guy

Jose (dz vs. h sound) she's like everybody started laughing at me. There are some words that I can't say it or you might say the wrong word, that is like…embarrassing."
Ethiopian girl: "That happens a lot, like you know the word, you know what it means you just can't say it, if you say it wrong, everyone would laugh and you are scared of the laughing, so you can't say it.
Egyptian girl: "I mean she's with me in Health class, she knows me I'm just sitting like this during the whole class [head down] it is the most boring class."
(LCPS, ESOL/ELL Student Interviews-Focus Group for Girls)

One of the surveys also mentions the dreads of pronunciation: "At first at school was very awkward but I have lost the accent now" (LBSS, Student Survey, Female Student). When talking to the group of boys, they said that they do not speak up in class too much either (LCPS Interview, ESOL/ELL Male and Female Student Focus Groups). Based on the interviews and the survey sample, one of their concerns is pronunciation and not losing their accents fast enough. Language acquisition, and native-like fluency, or effective communication as it was discussed in Chapter 3, for those arriving over the age of 12 becomes harder and slower to master. Their answers reflect the frustration which derives from the language shock Olsen (2008) described, and which is due to the fact that they are learning the language; however, they do face limits to achievement; for instance, because most of these students were older than 12 years old when they arrived.

In Olsen's (1997) study, participants were self-aware how their pronunciation affected how they were perceived by their peers. They worked hard on their accents in order to avoid being targeted for the way in which they spoke English knowing that it was a necessary milestone in their potential acceptance by peers and the progression in the academic life at school. Suarez-Orozco, et al., also found that "Everyone wants to belong, to have a sense of community. ELLs who assume a more American identity are often treated like outsiders by the very students they choose to identify with because they look or sound different than their native English speaking peers" (2008, p.162). Even if a student masters a second language, mis-pronunciation or awkward usage of it can still happen occasionally. "Those who cannot speak fluent English or the standard dialect are often treated as somehow less intelligent, but just limited in their linguistic abilities" (Hall, 2005, p.199). It has been found that students tend to keep silent and speak little in public due to *linguicism,* which means that ELL/ESOL students might be ridiculed or bullied for their accent (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.203). Because the majority of these students have passed the critical phase of learning the language, which is about 12 years of age, especially mastering phonology, they remain vulnerable due to their detectable accents.

Consequently, the above data shows that the biggest discrimination or insult students face in these high schools is the occasional pulling off their headscarves, which obviously reflects lack of knowledge of religion, and the occasional laugh due to their imperfect English accent. The former problem could be tackled by proper teaching of religions, as discussed earlier, and the latter is a typical immature natural human reaction that is hard to prevent. These immature students probably laugh at each other's pronunciation in French, German or Spanish classes as well. As the Egyptian female student pointed it out, students in Egypt also feel embarrassed in class if misspoken, and they also voice their judgment on each other. Language teachers (not only ESOL/ELL) are normally perfectly aware of students' reluctance of speaking up when learning a language and aware of students making

fun of each other's imperfect pronunciation. Naturally, teachers should always remind students who are laughing that their insensitivity may hurt feelings.

4.4 Available supplemental educational services

First generation immigrant students from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa are most likely to consider the American educational system as an unfamiliar one where the school system is organized in a different way from the one they are used to (including attitudes towards authority and the style of teaching). In order to help new students and their parents to settle easily and to clarify all the rules and requirements that schools maintain, they need an introduction to the system. Occasionally, if requested, it is done with the help of an interpreter at the beginning of the induction phase to ease the frustration students and/or their parents might feel because they are unfamiliar with the new system. Communicating with parents is equally vital for both schools and students. It requires great resourcefulness from those schools that receive immigrant students since occasionally neither the student nor the parents speak English. Non-English speaking parents might feel excluded, and might shy away because they do not (fully) understand what the schools want from them and vice versa. There are often young and flexible parents who speak and understand English. Some might have no or little previous experience with English and it makes integration for them more difficult from an academic point of view. Teachers might fail to recognize that just because someone speaks a second language (English), does not mean that the culture that belongs to the language has been (fully) explored yet. The time and energy that schools invest in an effective working relationship with the parents probably vary among schools. The link can start with the school informing the parents regularly about the students' progress at school via mail and can end up with parents (mothers) visiting classes or taking part in voluntary classroom support.

Schools could assist newly arrived immigrants in finding immigration information centers, services, resources, adult literacy and ESOL programs, after-school programs, (educational oriented) in order to ease their adjustment (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.53) and promote it. Teachers with cross-cultural skills help acknowledge and resist the potential stereotypes, discriminations pupils face in and after school (Ibid., p.51). It is the responsibility of a school to explain how the American society works, inform parents about ethnic communities, which means that schools should be familiar with them. Also, it is vital to make rules, assessment or evaluation methods and systems, grades, graduation, further education clear and cannot expect parents to find out the information on their own (Ibid., p.120). The authors (Ibid., p.121) emphasize, however, that there are some immigrant families who do not wish to liaise with ethnic communities as for one reason they might feel that it would result in extra burden and obligations towards them.

Parental involvement and close monitoring are important for academic success. By and large, parents of newly arrived immigrant students are not always aware of the essential criteria of building their children's career towards college education: good grades or GPA, honors and AP classes, good SAT results, extra-curricular activities, letters of recommendation, college application essays (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, p.142). However, students seem to be aware of all that typically. There has been

research about the benefits of support provided by parents, such as encouraging children, instructing them at home and communicating with their school called 'parent involvement.' Parents are willing to assist, but they often worry and do not know how to help in general. For limited-English-proficient and non-English-proficient (LEP/NEP) high school students, parental help means to "become co-learner, facilitator and collaborator, a means of support as the high school-age student develops independence and explores future educational options" (Simich-Dudgeon, 1986, online). Parents need to understand what this concept is about since they might think that their inference is unnecessary, or counterproductive. "Involving LEP/NEP parents in their children's education is to acculturate them to the meaning of parent involvement in their new social environment" (Ibid.). These parents are recommended to "reinforce educational concepts in the native language and/or English. Additionally, bilingual community liaisons should be available to bridge language and cultural differences between home and school" (Ibid.).

According to a study carried out by Trinity College in Washington, DC and the Arlington, VA Public Schools, parents learned "how to collaborate, to be co-learners with their high school-age children in the completion of specially-designed home lessons from the Vocationally-Oriented Bilingual Curriculum (VOBC), a supplement to the ESL program which was in use at the implementation site." Both parents and students gained knowledge about American living and the American school system. Reasons for parents being unable to participate were long working hours, or their absence (Ibid.). Due to all the above information available for school officials and the proposed ESL programs intended for the parents of ESOL/ELL students, this study determined to expose how much provision of that kind is in fact in working progress in Virginia public high schools.

There are parental education programs or classes that help understand report cards according to both ESOL and ELL HS specialists I interviewed. The *Parents As Educational Partners* (PEP) program is a series of evening sessions offered to parents (aimed especially at immigrant parents) to educate them about ways they can support their students' success at the school.

"As part of the Virginia Department of Education's ongoing effort to assist school divisions in meeting the parental participation requirements for Title I, Part A, Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, and Title III, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students, under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001,"

an institute was set up which "provides training for school divisions to utilize a curriculum designed to assist LEP parents in overcoming the language and cultural barriers that may prevent them from participating fully in their children's educational experiences," entitled *Parents as Educational Partners (PEP): School Related Curriculum for Language Minority Parents* (Wright, 2011, online). It has the relevant and appropriate curricula and materials that deal with parental involvement issues and English language acquisition so that LEP parents feel more comfortable when taking part in their children's education. It offers adult ESL instruction, information about the U.S. school system, and strategies for school involvement, and help overcome language and cultural barriers. It is considered to be an "ongoing adult education and interactive activities rather than through sporadically scheduled

parent meetings or workshops. The PEP Curriculum[83] takes language minority parents from the role of learners to the role of decision makers in their children's education" (Bercovitz & Porter, 2002, online). Participating parents are shown how to identify specifics, and essential information in their child's school, they practice writing notes to the school, responding to them in spoken and written forms. The materials are suitable for parents with a variety of English proficiency (Ibid.). The free classes vary between 12-21 weeks, available in English or Spanish in the Washington, D.C. Area Class sites include McLean, Reston, Vienna, and Northern Virginia (Fairfax County Virginia, 2011, online). English classes for adults in Loudoun County's Adult Education program are held in one of the participating high schools.

   Those parents who filled out the surveys speak English and used the translated surveys (see Appendix) as a helping tool. However, it was apparent from students' answers that there are numerous parents who do not speak English at all or only on a very low level. It was also obvious that they are not taking classes for the simple reason of being busy with work or with young children. In PVHS, LCPS this is what the students said:

   Do your parents speak English? (Domján, K)

   Pakistani boy: my mom not, my dad yes and Arabic.
   Moroccan girl 1: my mom knows some words (like shut up)

   Do they take any classes, though? (Domján, K)

   Moroccan girl 2: my mom is taking some evening classes in a church, every time she is not tired she goes there. It is Tuesdays and Thursdays. They have graduations also, every time you pass a class a level, they give you like a certificate.

   Does she like it? (Domján, K)

   Moroccan girl 2: My mom loves to talk, so it doesn't matter to her; if she finds someone she'll talk to them, it doesn't matter if they can't speak English.

   What about your mom? (Domján, K)

   Moroccan girl 1: She wants to go but she doesn't have so much time.
   Pakistani boy: she doesn't take classes. She is busy.

   Are these free classes with volunteers? (Domján, K)

   Moroccan girl 2: they all pay 15 bucks a year, I guess. It's real teachers who do it at night. Like what we have here too, teachers who teach parents at night.
   Ethiopian girl: "My daddy is speaking a little bit I mean he can't pronounce very well, his pronunciation is like me, like little, my mom she doesn't speak English".

   Does she want to take any classes? (Domján, K)

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[83] This award-winning, content-based curriculum consists of seven instructional units: The U.S. School System, Report Cards and Curricula, School Personnel and the School Day, Study Skills and Homework, School Procedures, School Health Procedures, Parent-Teacher Conferences (Bercovitz & Porter, 2002). There are ESL/Bilingual Classes for Parents (using the content-based PEP Curriculum), Parent/Child Activities, Parenting Workshops, Inservices on Parent Involvement for District School Teachers.

Ethiopian girl: "She will take because she has a little baby and she takes care of it, she will go like next year. Yeah."

What about your parents? (Domján, K)

Iraqi girl: "They doesn't speak very well. But they take now my father and mother are learning online and they take class. So they just learn now."

So when you all came here first, and your parents did not speak English well, did they go and take ESL classes or courses? (Domján, K)

Afghan girl: "My mom went to a few but that was like, it was free, but most people were old, the first time she went there they were giving them cards to play with, and she was like, what am I learning here? They were like old people, and there were like a lot of Spanish people, all Spanish people sitting around and they never spoke English, only speaking their language and my mom was the only Afghan one, so she wanted to learn English but she was only hearing Spanish. So she was like, I'm learning more Spanish than anything else. That was the first time. My dad knew a little bit, so he didn't go, and when he started working he picked up a little bit. My mom she's good now."

The majority of the parents did not respond to the parental survey. The data gained from the student surveys, however, shows that a lot of mothers do not speak English. Very few of the respondents said that their parents take ESL/ESOL classes. The reason why they were not taking classes included having to work or taking care of younger siblings, as anticipated based on prior studies, or the available and affordable classes were of low quality (ESOL/ELL Student Interviews).

There is ESL teaching as adult education generally offered throughout the counties (Adult ESOL); schools do not keep track of the number of parents attending them, though. There is information provided for them about the program, but schools do not make suggestions neither do they encourage parents typically. "When Park View ELL teachers receive information about Adult Education registration in time, we pass the information on to our students, so that they can share it with their families. Unfortunately, we don't always receive this information more than a few days in advance" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys). Based on teachers' perceptions, parents are interested in their children's education although it varies among individuals. "Families are typically interested in their students' progress at school. They have attended "Meet the Teacher" events, requested and attended conferences for their students, and attended other events, such as award nights. However, participation is not consistent across the population, whether because they are intimidated by the culture/language barrier, busy working, don't see it as their place to interfere, etc" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys). Translation is available, and they may bring or request an interpreter. Information leaflets are typically automatically available in Spanish (front desk everywhere); other languages seemingly need special requests. School-home or community liaison exists in each school district, yet those are typically Spanish and Korean speaking liaisons (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys).

"How can the school, staff, or others minimize the potential pitfalls, and emphasize the potential benefits in the process of engaging these students, communities?" (Domján, K)

"DHS, LCPS: educating all stakeholders is key; open dialogue, ongoing effort"

"PVHS, LCPS: Maybe it would be helpful for a committee to meet with a focus group of parents from a particular ethnic group represented at Park View to hear their questions and concerns and come up with ways to better serve students in that population" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys).

A support group for ESOL parents that could be led by a paraprofessional is the solution Becker offers, where they would share information about school and help each other gain a better understanding of the system (2001, p.180). PEP programs could help them reduce anxiety, awkwardness and avoid embarrassment during interpersonal interactions in school (Ibid., pp.172-173). There they could, for example, be informed that those parents who have limited English skills and/or are illiterate can still be involved in their children's learning experience via oral discussion about the children's school day. It would be a place where parents, with the help of a paraprofessional, could share tips like that. She also recommends for parents – jobs or duties permitting – to participate in the PEP program, which is offered in Loudoun county and Fairfax county. This is another concept with which parents might not be familiar with: the more involved parents are in their children's education the more successful children are at school.

Ramirez and Soto-Hinman state that culturally aware teachers will understand that immigrant parents are not familiar with the American school system. It needs to be found out what sort of help or information they might need. Back-to-school nights and open houses might not be enough for immigrant families to address all their concerns. Anticipating questions and confusions is a good start and remedy can be modeling (2009, p.280). What is also important is to realize that it cannot be assumed that all immigrant families deal with similar issues. Personally knowing students' families can show how specific and diverse needs students and their families have (Ibid., p.277). Therefore, teachers might consider exploring communities including shopping where their students and families do, or visiting their places of worship (Ibid., p.278). If not, then for example, teachers might invite parents into American or World history classrooms. However, not all parents are keen on sharing and may be suspicious so they cannot be forced to do so (Ibid., p.279). Perhaps these parents could be assisted by Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and could form an ESOL/ELL parent group that meets on a regular basis discussing issues related to their children's education. At present there is a yearly ESOL or ELL dinner, breakfast in schools, and an annual ESOL cluster meeting which introduces new practices, rules and regulations. Due to its infrequent nature, it is doubtful that parents who attend them can exchange meaningful enough information.

5 Forms of Provision and Educational Opportunities for First Generation Immigrant Muslim Students

5.1 Existing practices and strategies supporting educational needs

The educational opportunities for first generation immigrant children is discussed with the aim to link the *No Child Left Behind Act* and existing practices and strategies for supporting educational needs with special attention to the challenges of cultural sensitivity of the school environment and the heritage/first language support. In opposition to other studies (Suarez-Orozco, 2002 and 2008, Igoa, 2009, Olsen, 2008), this research explores the existing school-county-wide educational practices worth benchmarking in public high schools, which could help students understand the relevance of their culture in a global world. Emphasis is put on the role of an after school club called Muslim Student Association (MSA) and how it could be further enhanced to go beyond its ostensibly superficial character. Significant part of this chapter points to the places for improvement regarding the assistance students receive to effectively maintain their first language and cultural heritage. For that reason, the chapter provides a comprehensive explanation of both in order to raise awareness about potentially enhanced forms of provision.

Newly arrived immigrant students are usually tested when entering an American high school because the schools have to know what their language proficiency is, and what support they might need in order to participate in the lessons. Some of them arrive without literacy or oracy skills in English, or with limited English proficiency. While some might be literate in one or more languages, others might be new to the Roman script, have a limited or non-literacy skill in their first language due to a variety of reasons. Based on the language test result and their education record, schools then will decide how to proceed. Schools have their own admission policy for students in general. There should be a relevant and detailed assessment on the newly arrived student(s) when entering school; however, the test is normally about their English language knowledge only. One of the survey questions aimed at the ESOL/ELL teachers asked if students' first language literacy skills are evaluated upon enrollment, and the result showed that it rarely is, let alone being repeated annually (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys).

A range of acts and offices exist concerning the education of students who can be titled as bilingual, language minority, Limited English Proficient (LEP), English Language Learner (ELL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). As it was revealed from the interviews with the ELL and ESOL Specialists of both school counties, schools in Fairfax County and Loudoun County offer sheltered classes in the content areas for ELL/ESOL students called Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) until they are ready to join mainstream classes.[84] There are summer ELL

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[84] There are different ways of handling the teaching of first generation immigrant children in schools: simplifying the vocabulary for children so that they comprehend the lessons; modify lessons which become English lessons partially; pull out children form lessons and teach them English that way, then send them back to the mainstream classes for immersion; teach subjects to children in their first language until they master the English language enough to switch to learning the school subjects in English. Their goal is to keep the children from falling behind the curriculum. Some schools take advantage of immigrant children and use their presence in a classroom so that the rest of the class can

programs to boost knowledge, designed for Level 1 and very low Level 2 students, for 4 weeks, 4 hours daily. To check a child's education, there are report cards from former schools. Schools ask for the educational record from students' countries. If a high school age student cannot show a transcript or report cards from former schools, they are placed in 9th grade (ESOL/ELL Teacher Interviews).

Monitoring the ESOL/ELL student progress, schools in Virginia keep an eye on students very closely and thoroughly as one of the ELL chairs has explained that

> "For newly enrolled students who answer on their enrollment form that they speak a language other than English at home, the ELL Department is required by law to administer the W-APT test in order to determine their proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English. The WIDA test is administered every year to monitor their progress in English. Students who score a 1-5 out of 6 in the W-APT or WIDA will be enrolled in the ELL program, receiving a designated number of hours of services per week depending on their level. For example, students who score a 1-3 will typically be enrolled in ELL courses in addition to mainstream courses. Students who score a 4 or 5 out of 6 usually have, at minimum, a study hall with an ELL teacher. Once students score a 6, they no longer receive services; however they are monitored by the ELL department for two years, so that the department can determine whether these students are succeeding in the mainstream program or whether they still require support. The ELL chair (myself) is in charge of this process at the school level. I am supervised at the district level by Loudoun County ELL Supervisor" (ELL/ESOL Teacher Survey).

When I asked about how satisfied they were with provisions for teaching ethnic minority students, these specialist teachers answered unanimously "yes", "satisfied", "I'm generally satisfied. If provisions for teaching ethnic minority students are lacking, I am not aware of what they are and so I wouldn't know what I am missing" (ELL/ESOL Teacher Surveys).

The ELL chairs said that "students receive services as long as they test that they need them they will only "age out"; as "technically the only limit is 22nd birthday." "Students are tested upon arrival and then in the spring annually, WEDA, Level 1-2 beginners, Level 3 intermediate and Level 4-5 advanced. The classes enhance both language and curriculum with a gradual release, once students join mainstream they still keep in touch with the educators." Teachers tend to be very lenient. A student may choose to opt-out and join mainstream classes, if they wish to and return, (the final word is the parents' the school is flexible about it) if they find it too difficult, to ELL content classes. Students are assessed using mainly the WIDA test, "although we are encouraged to continue assessing students using our own measures throughout the year." The participating teachers were asked if they keep track of how well ELL students do having joined mainstream classes, and answered "only if student is having difficulties" or "SOL scores are at times but informally," "teachers and content teachers communicate." There is communication between mainstream and ELL/ESOL teachers typically said, "but only once or twice. They will ask for your input on how to best teach them, but typically will expect the ESOL student to adjust to their teaching style, rather than the other way around," and that "some more than others. Most want to know what they can do to help students be successful. Or, they want to collect information about students (language level, background, etc.)." *Gateway programs* offer support for struggling or underperforming students ELL/ESOL and mainstream alike and prepare them for the GED by developing literacy skills, and providing evening ELL courses/evening ESL for adults (ELL/ESOL Teacher Surveys). Their answers imply that ESOL/ELL and content teachers do what they are professionally expected to in order to fulfill their roles. It is also obvious that the

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learn a foreign language and at the same time they can also act as role models for the host language (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2002, pp.139-143).

students are given proper and even extra provision in order to learn the English language and be able to join mainstream classes to continue with their academic attainment.

The purposes of the *Title III - English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act* are to make sure that limited English proficient students, which include recent immigrant students, are assisted with their development of English proficiency, high levels of academic attainment in English in the core academic subjects, and meet the same academic achievement standards as everyone else. It promises to develop "high-quality language instruction educational programs designed to assist State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and schools in teaching limited English proficient children and serving immigrant children and youth" (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, online). Through such provision students are supposed to become proficient and properly prepared to participate in all-English instruction settings. Parents are expected to participate in language instruction educational programs. Schools are held accountable for increasing students' English proficiency and core academic content knowledge. They are expected to use approaches and methodologies, acquired through professional development activities with "a positive and lasting impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom" (Ibid.), which are scientifically researched, thus, effective in secondary school school-wide programs. Parents have the right to decline to enroll or to have their child removed from such program or method of instruction, if available and receive assistance in doing so. Schools are expected to inform parents about how "to be involved in the education of their children; how to assist their children, where to learn English; how to achieve high levels in core academic subjects; and how to meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet" (Ibid.) in a language they understand.

According to the *Title II under NCLB Act 2001*, schools need to track their limited English-speaking students to receive resources, which they can use to develop immigrant children's English proficiency so that they achieve on the standardized test the way native speaker students do (Rong and Preissle, 2009, p.91). Timed, culture-bound standardized tests are said to cause headaches for newly arrived immigrant children, especially for those with limited English proficiency since it is significantly related to English academic achievement, even for ELL students who had been in U.S. schools for 3 years or longer (Mahon, 2006, online). Academic attainment is demonstrated in English, so there is an intense pressure on schools to teach English to LEP immigrant children and prepare them as swiftly as possible or else they receive sanctions (Olsen, 2008, p.viii). The *NCLB*'s single test is considered by education specialists to impose huge pressure on schools where intermittently standards are lowered, teachers focus on teaching to the test (The Economist, 2010). "The nation's policies have become surreally disconnected from the realities of immigration in the (…) schools of the United States" (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, p.362).

The currently used standardized tests, developed to assess native English speakers—not ELLs, rely heavily on language proficiency. Consequently, the English language learners are educated in U.S. public schools in a way that meets the demands of high-stakes testing. There is a fear that "these tests are first and foremost language proficiency exams, not necessarily measures of content knowledge, there is continued cultural and linguistic complexity in test items that are further sources of

measurement errors" (Dorn, 2005, online). To respond sufficiently, the amounts of English instruction students receive in a school day have been increased. It has also been found that while developing communicative competency in English used to be a popular methodology, "ESL pedagogy in the high-stakes testing era has now moved away from a focus on communicative competence to a focus on essays and literary elements, as well as memorization, signifying a major change in both the content and approach of ESL classes" (Ibid.). Landis and Bhagat emphasized the relationship between language fluency and psychological well-being, adjustment and general satisfaction (1996, pp.132-133). Thus, the key for their successful integration into the mainstream of secondary schools is fast English language acquisition. The sooner and the more proficiently the students speak the language of the host culture, the better they can integrate into it, and the better they can feel living in it.

        In Virginia, various assessments had existed and the title of LEP student population still varies county by county (Fairfax: ESOL, Loudoun: ELL); however, about 3 years ago WIDA was introduced in the entire state along with VGLA-reading assessment. Students' progress is solely based on English Language Proficiency (ELP) Levels on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners). That is their official ELP level, but teachers can place students instructionally ahead of their level if they think it is more appropriate. Students are encouraged, for the most part, to be placed in the instructional level that matches their ELP Level and adjust the instruction to match. Moving up levels depends on students; it varies as it has no limits. At early stage of learning (especially for newly arrived students) it can be very difficult if not impossible for ELL students to participate in mainstream lessons without understanding hardly anything. Children are given 3 years to participate in a program before tested in English for reading and language arts. "Waivers may be granted for an additional two years on a case-by-case basis for students who show need" (PBS, 2005, online).

        ACCESS for ELLs is the English language proficiency assessment given to students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. It is given annually to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English in WIDA Consortium member states. ACCESS for ELLs test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five ELP standards: Social & Instructional Language, Language of Language Arts, Language of Mathematics, Language of Science, Language of Social Studies. Test forms are divided into five grade-level clusters: Kindergarten/Grades 1-2/Grades 3-5/Grades 6-8/Grades 9-12 (high school). Within each, there are three forms: Tier A (beginning), Tier B (intermediate), and Tier C (advanced). It fulfills and goes beyond the *NCLB* requirements. "It generates results that serve as one criterion to aid in determining when ELLs have attained the language proficiency needed to participate meaningfully in content area classrooms without program support and on state academic content tests without accommodations" (WIDA, 2011, online). Developed together with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) ACCESS for ELLs is updated and published annually (one-third of the test's items), thus the assessment is being continuously modified.

        The scores add up based on Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Consequently, students are put in various levels which are Level 1 entering, 2 Beginning, 3 Developing, 4 Expanding, 5 Bridging, 6 Reaching, and placed into classes according to their level. *Report about English Language Proficiency* levels is given for parents/guardians and is available in a number of languages

121

including Arabic and Urdu; the *Translation of Score Report* is available in a number of languages including Arabic, Amharic, Somali, and Urdu (WIDA, 2011, online). When answering the survey questions, ELL/ESOL chairs and teachers confirmed that guidelines regarding ELL/ESOL students have changed "constantly especially tests for classifying and naming levels," " guidelines in terms of testing, documentation/record-keeping, services distinctions" "some several times" or "they are modified every year" (ELL/ESOL Chairs/Teachers Survey). The constant modification can only suggest that they aim at betterment and that the number of such students is growing; therefore, there is a need for a reasonably straightforward testing system, which can determine appropriate provision for them.

The interview and survey answers all indicate that when ESOL/ELL teachers grade, they admittedly focus on what their students could do rather than what they could not do. The teachers have to follow the requirements of the districts or schools, some districts or schools just provided general guidelines for them to follow. My findings also show that they do not consider subjectivity a serious issue in classroom-based reading assessments[85] (ELL/ESOL Chairs/Teachers Surveys).

> *"How leniently do you handle student evaluations or test? How subjective can you be during the interpretation of test scores?"*

> DHS, LCPS: "my tests in class are designed with language levels in mind"
> PVHS, LCPS: "We can allow students to retake tests"
> FHS, LCPS: "There is an opt-out option from ELL for students who wish to and return as well, they can the final word is the parents' the school is flexible about it they can join mainstream classes then if they find it too difficult, they can return to ELL content classes"
> PVHS, LCPS: "we are encouraged to continue assessing students using our own measures throughout the year."
> (ESOL/ELL Teacher Survey)

New approaches have been putting less and less emphasis on grammar while teaching ESOL/ELL students. The main reason behind the approach is to do better on standardized academic achievement tests content-wise, which are in English. Consequently, English language teaching has moved from language-based to academic content-based instruction, which also emphasizes teaching socially appropriate language (Becker, 2001, pp.5-7). In spite of that, if done well, content-based ESOL/ELL teaching does not and should not ignore grammar because the work that students do, ESOL/ELL or non-ESOL/ELL alike, must be grammatically correct. Additionally, those who still oppose the explicit teaching of grammar must realize that students who use analytical thinking skills most likely expect grammatical instructions and explanations (Ibid., p.33). One of the features of ELL teaching in Virginia is that English grammar is taught implicitly as it emphasizes integrated skills and it is not grammar based. Still, it can turn out to be very difficult to gain proficiency in English without learning about the grammatical rules and background. As a practicing ESL teacher, I have noticed that there are numerous students who appreciate teaching basic grammatical patterns, and it works. Learning them could probably offer a great foundation to build the language on in the further educational phases. Suffice to say language is best learned in context, yet there are some essential rules of a language that need to be understood and learnt in order to avoid further confusions and to avoid

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[85] While ESL teachers consider classroom-based reading assessments, valuable and accurate that provide great help to the daily teaching, they "viewed state-mandated standardized testing negatively and of little value for English language learners" (Jia, Eslami, and Burlbaw, 2006, pp.479-495).

incorrect grammar to become a bad habit. Nevertheless, participation fully in the mainstream lessons and gaining fluency enjoys priority over learning English explicitly. Although there is probably more to education than curriculum knowledge, a well-balanced proportion of ESOL/ELL lessons and mainstream lessons is not a standard for provision of ELL/ESOL students in high schools. The function of ESOL/ELL curriculum is to support subjects. *Content ESOL* focuses on building vocabulary and concepts, *Language ESOL* on literature, reading novels; *Concept ESOL* on classes, social studies, and science, for instance.

During a classroom observation at Lake Braddock HS, Fairfax County Public Schools, ESOL students were learning how to do research, text analysis, comprehension in reading class. The focus was on integrated skills, reading skills concentrated on questioning, connecting, inferring, visualization, transformation or synthesizing. The level there was of mixed (3 levels) students Grade 9/10/11 due to the small number of students (FCPS, LBSS Classroom Observation). The observation in Fairfax County and in Loudoun County schools revealed similar use of learning strategies.

Effective strategies for ELL/ESOL student needs and capabilities differ widely. Schools that have ELL/ESOL departments or grants can finance assistants. In Virginia, in Loudoun County public schools, devoted and qualified teacher assistants are not only handy but also have the proper knowledge or experience to assist ELL students, especially the ones from different cultural and educational background. The role of the support teachers is to enable ELL students who are at the early stages of learning English to gain progress and access to the curriculum. They are usually concerned with the linguistic needs of these students and make sure that their accomplishments will rapidly meet the requirements of the curriculum. Most likely, these students need help because that would enable them to participate in lessons. In Fairfax County schools, ESOL assistants are only in mainstream classes. In both counties, though, teachers and assistants are highly trained professionals, and the schools themselves are far from what Olsen, Igoa or Suarez-Orozco described. Contrary to what they have been described, these schools do not hide their ESOL/ELL students or their classrooms, nor do they lack resources. The schools are very welcoming and fully equipped for provisions that are worth benchmarking. Funds and finance permitting, the educational experience of ESOL/ELL students seem to be close to that of a U.S.-born native speaker.

In the participating schools I visited, exclusion was not apparent at all, the classrooms were located among other rooms; one could not tell the difference, and ELL/ESOL students had as much access as any other students on school grounds. Extensive research studies[86] fail to describe in details

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[86] Although the majority of the immigrants had said that the reason for their immigration was to provide better opportunities for their children and some of them emphasized education as the main reason (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, pp.31-32), two-third of the immigrant students who were monitored lost interest in their academic studies. Suarez-Orozco et al. found differences among immigrant groups based on their country of origin, however. They found critical factors that influence the academic performance and achievement of immigrant youth which range from family structure, father's employment, mother's education, gender, academic self-efficacy, attitudes toward school, emotional well-being, school problems and violence, number of years spent in the USA, English proficiency, cognitive engagement, relational engagement, and behavioral engagement (2008, p.37). More American public schools are poor quality than those which are not, and competitive ones are typically in affluent neighborhoods with white children (The Economist, 2006). Seemingly, most newly arrived immigrant children land in dysfunctional schools where violence, low academic expectations, high rates of turnover of staff, hostile peer culture, poor resources, and unproductive

those schools which in fact are inclusive towards first generation immigrant students. Parents who filled out the survey said the following about their expectations and experience: "I expect that they get the same level of education as other American students," "I expect all my children to get the same treatment that any other American student gets," "I expect it to be good for him good education" and "we had to change from a Muslim faith/private school for better education and better environment (no more bullying)." They, however, had mixed feelings about the ESOL/ELL programs: "I would like to see my children out of ESOL as soon as possible because they do not need to be in ESL", "yes, I am happy, it has allowed [our daughter] to grow and become a better speaker and writer of the English language" or "yes", or "ELL program I am so happy", "my daughter tested into WIDA Level 3 but did not have to take classes" (ELL/ESOL Parent Surveys). To see how students experienced schooling I asked them about their contentment as well, and those who filled out the survey were almost all happy with their progress in school (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys).

Students' academic progress and English language proficiency are measured by testing about which parents can be informed along with the performance of their child's school. The result is included in report cards. Teachers are expected to follow and teach curriculum, based on state standards and to adjust lessons "with the freedom to implement innovations and allocate resources" (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, online) so that they prepare students to meet and/or exceed the standards also to meet students' needs. Professionals still quarrel over the usefulness of the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001, which has been "designed to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools" (Ibid.). Assessments are taken place in the areas of reading/language arts, math and science; they are not limited to those, however. English proficiency test (oral language, reading, and writing skills in English) is also administered among LEP students. It is mandated that schools test at least 95 percent of students of different subgroups; LEP students as well. "States must provide reasonable accommodations for students with limited English proficiency. For the latter, accommodations may include native-language versions of the assessment; however, in the area of reading and language arts, students who have been in U.S. schools for three consecutive years will be assessed in English" (Ibid.). There is the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) to recognize issues that affect English language learners and to provide services (special programs, initiatives, activities, and resources) to help ensure that English language learners and immigrant students attain English proficiency, achieve academically and "close the achievement gap" (Ibid.).

When asked about testing in various subject areas, the interviewed ELL/ESOL teachers said the following:

> LBHS, FCPS: "we usually have an ESOL team member for each content area with test working input"
> DHS, LCPS: "I imagine this varies by class"
> FHS, LCPS: "Most ELL students do not take SOLs, there are accommodations like dictionary use, extra time at teacher's discretion"

English language programs are omnipresent (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008, p.41). "Paradoxically, many families migrate to seek a better education for their children, only to find their children mired in the worst schools in the United States—schools that are racially, linguistically, and economically segregated" (Ibid., 2008, p.366).

PVHS, LCPS: "In ELL sheltered instruction courses, yes. I think some mainstream teachers simplify their language for ELL students, but not all."
(ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys)

It justifies that assumption that more attention needs to be paid to the issue as the students themselves feel lost during testing in mainstream classes. When students were asked about the same topic, they said, "For instance, when we have a test in Health. It's not that easy it's like, I don't know even if you have choices but it's hard. Ok, so am I gonna use my dictionary, I have to translate each word in the test, and it's like many questions. So, it's like 1, 2, 3, 4, ok, it's 3 this time" "yes, so sometimes I just guess...like there are many answers" (Student Interview – ELL Female Students Focus Group). As the Egyptian and Ethiopian students revealed, although they are familiar with their usage, dictionaries[87] are of little help if the majority of the vocabulary in a given test need translation. This is one key issue teachers must consider to address.

Ballantyne, Sanderman, and Levy concluded that different grade levels require different types of accommodation. For instance, while in grade 4, the dictionary was found helpful, in grade 8 linguistic modification helped. Teachers are, thus, recommended to consider the accommodations implemented in their own classes. "Amplify not simplify" is a concept not all teachers use just yet in public schools. The widespread accommodation is simplifying texts, which normally entails shortening sentences and deleting irregular forms; as a result, students see reading passages that do not represent authentic language. An amplified text contains more explicit language, no indirect information, limited technical terms, and distracting clauses, which provides the students more opportunities to comprehend the reading material (Ballantyne, Sanderman, Levy, 2008. p.36).

Neill has observed that teachers tend to ignore language complexity and fail to realize that even if ELL students know the content, they might not be able to understand certain questions on tests (Neill, 2005, online). Individualized work along with extra homework for ESOL/ELL students (Irujo, 1998, p.13) will probably reduce their anxiety in mainstream classes. To help students prepare for a topic, Else (in Becker, 2001) emphasizes the following language objectives in sheltered classes: *content-obligatory language* (language related to specific content-area topics; words and phrases that would be taught in a mainstream class as well when learning about a new topic), *content-compatible language* (words or phrases that need to be taught only in ESL classes to understand a given topic) and *nontechnical vocabulary* (for instance, teaching comparatives, superlatives, third person singular, conditionals, etc.) (Becker, 2001, pp.74-75). With such language preparation, students should be fully equipped to take on the challenge of a new topic. If it is not a sheltered class, mainstream teachers should ask ESOL/ELL teachers to help them prepare a lesson plan.

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[87] Normally during testing, students receive some form of accommodations; however, their effectiveness varies. Apparently, bilingual dictionaries help little considering that the test is in English, simplified English had little effect either. Extra time, reading items aloud and English language dictionaries are a better resource. "If students are not familiar with using dictionaries, providing them during a test may actually be counterproductive" (Ballantyne, Sanderman, and Levy, 2008, p.39).

5.2 Addressing the missing first (heritage) language support

Despite the fact that hardly any country recognizes more than two languages as official, apparently there are fewer *monoglot* people than those who speak two or more languages (Tucker, 1998, p.4). The USA is one of the multicultural societies that have been reluctant to incorporate the linguistic needs of linguistic minorities, contrary to their increasing and already sizeable presence. There are about 400 languages spoken in American schools and over 70 languages are used by over 10,000 students. There are also language variations within the languages spoken (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.61). Most immigrant students live in linguistically isolated households, but the widely available options for them are the all-American monocultural and monolingual curricula and environment in which the condition of academic success is mastering the English language (Ibid., p.57). There are bilingual and multilingual immigrant families; however, the one with the most disadvantageous family is the linguistically isolated one. Monolingual Western people with monocultural-national identity can seem reluctant to comprehend its importance (Byram, 1998, p.100). There are specific reasons for teachers to promote and for parents to assist in bilingual learning. School staff needs to be trained to gain an understanding of cross-cultural education including showing respect towards children's first language. Teachers and parents could discuss first language provision with a strategy in mind which includes simple but descriptive recommendations aiming at first language maintenance.

American English itself is viewed to be a strong unifying factor in America, and linguistic diversity as segregating, therefore, frowned upon. Huntington declared that a nation can exist only when a group of people think and desire so by showing commitment and that the weakening commitment is due to multiculturalism, diversity, racial, sub-national identities, immigrants maintaining dual identities other languages (Huntington, 2005, p.107). Segregation in America, however, is more obvious and present among social classes. It is in fact the middle class and the upper class that go against social cohesion isolating themselves in high-priced neighborhoods and their children in pricey parochial, private, and reputable public schools. Language there has little to do with cohesion.

Tucker states that much attention is devoted to language issues on the expense of others (1998, p.9). Batelaan stresses that democracy and equal access should be given to each student at school (2004, p.57). Rong & Preissle suggest that most policy makers focus solely on the English language acquisition (2009, p.19), and they ignore the additional needs of immigrant children: social, physical and educational. In order to provide well, accurate and timely information ought to be obtained about the characteristics of students on local and national level, individual and collective pre- and post-immigration conditions. That way schools can become familiar with the kind of languages spoken in the community, among the children and their parents, so that they can find resource to assist them and maintain their first language (Ibid., p.63). The survey that ESOL/ELL teachers filled out asked if they encourage ELL students to read (and write) in their languages and maintain their cultural heritage. Even if teachers in general do, they are not always able to give students any specifics.

"Do you encourage ELL students to read (and write) in their languages and maintain their cultural heritage?" (Domján, K)

LBHS, FCPS: "yes of course"
DHS, LCPS: "yes-maintain the home language and developing English are both highly valued"
PVHS, LCPS: "I do, but I must confess that for me this encouragement has not gone beyond simply telling them that I want them to be bilingual and that studies show that students who practice reading and writing in their own languages get better within their own languages and then transfer skills over to English, the language I am trying to teach them. I ask them to read independently out of class, and when they are not using this reading for a project for me, I tell them that they can read in their first languages. I don't allow them to read in their first languages for projects because of course I want to ensure that students are getting some practice with English and because I am not qualified to assess them in their first languages" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys).

Logically, ESOL/ELL teachers' task is to teach English and help them reach proficiency quickly. Unfortunately, it is unclear for them, when, where and how they should encourage first generation immigrant students to reach mutual bilingualism as they perhaps do not identify with that role. From my son's school, Clermont ES, FCPS before the summer break parents were sent a leaflet that drew attention to the importance of reading even throughout the summer in one's first language and English both. The person who composed this leaflet suggested that if there is not a native speaker in the household, parents need to "enlist a retired neighbor or friend of the family who is willing to spend time reading with your child over the long, hot, and often (for kids) boring summer break." Such sentimental sentences are proof of diminishing prospect of proper professional and pedagogical care or involvement and that of superficial concern. And even if there is an eager adult, without a detailed, specific and perhaps, bullet-pointed suggestions neither will the parent nor will the enlisted retired neighbor know what to do exactly. Besides, of course, the question is why it is worth mentioning or recommending only for the summer break, and why is not there an explanatory and educational leaflet for the rest of the school year?

Parents do not have a clear strategy for helping to maintaining their children's heritage language either. Their ad hoc solutions include spending summer holidays in their country of origin (or in a country which uses their language) so that children can at least work on the conversational level of their language; some enforces using their first language in the entire household, some allow children to converse in English among each other:

Afghan girl: "Yeah a lot of people do it like that, like my aunt. Her kids were all born here, and during summer time she would take them to like Dubai or Pakistan, and there she would have them read the Koran, not the language, they really don't care. Yeah, they really don't care because I don't know, some do some don't. Like some new born, maybe they try to speak their language with them, but before they really didn't care that much. The Koran and stuff, the Islamic stuff, they would take that back home, and stuff."
Ethiopian girl: "At home sometimes we speak English sometimes Amharic, but they speak Amharic more than English."
(ESOL/ELL Student Interviews)

These strategies are characteristically restricted to strengthening listening and speaking skills exclusively. Most of these students can read and write in their first language and only few cannot. Parents, mainly those who have weak English skills, use first language at home, along with those who would like to see their children maintaining their heritage language.

"What if you forget?"

Moroccan girl: "You can't if you have half of your family who speaks Arabic in the house."

Egyptian girl: "No, don't worry I'm gonna stay Egyptian, I know my language so, so well. I mean I used to get, it's not even possible in Egypt to get a 100 out of 100 in Arabic language… In Egypt we take Arabic too. I mean we learn grammar, we learn all that, but I used to get 100 out of 100 in Arabic. My teacher was like I don't know I just wanna find one mistake, but he couldn't. I love Arabic, I love Arabic a lot. Especially when you read the Koran it's like the formal Arabic cause we have formal and we have the regular Arabic."

Moroccan girls: "They don't care actually."

Pakistani boy: "No they don't care they told me to read and write good in English. So don't care about your language, so where you are, do that first."

Pakistani boy: "Well, since you're in America, you can't really write in Arabic cause there aren't a lot of people who speak or write in Arabic, so it is mostly English."

Ethiopian girl: "I want to improve my English because my reading level is low, so I read books in English."

Iraqi girl: "But the little brothers yesterday asked my mother what's a butterfly in Arabic and my mother was like what? So my mother now keeps teaching him. My little brother's about 7 years old. In my home my mother never wants us to speak in English, you can learn in the school how to speak English, but at home you must speak Arabic in the house to don't forget. I cannot forgot, but my brother who's 10 years old he's maybe. He keeps reading every weekend too because he can read, too. But my little brother is in now first grade and there we learn how to read and write and he started first grade here, so he's gonna learn that English not Arabic. So my mom's gonna teach him sometimes." (ESOL/ELL Student Interviews)

"Do you practice doing so in your free time?"

Kashmiri girl: "No. not now. I used to, but when I came here I stopped. (…) I am afraid if I start reading books in Urdu, I will forget English. I want to learn English first." (ESOL/ELL Student Interviews)

Iraqi girl: *"*All the week I just practice reading and writing in English, but in the weekend just on F-S-Sunday for two hours I just read stories or sometimes my religion book sometimes yeah, because my aunt told my mother that if I didn't read and write I will be forgot yeah…my culture (ESOL/ELL Student Interviews).

These students mentioned numerous causes during the interviews for neglecting their first languages. The most reassuring reason came from one of the students who is confident in her mastery of Arabic. However, what the rest of the students stated were based on mere opinion not experience. For instance, because their parents do not care about first language maintenance, or because they speak the first language at home and that is enough (again contentment with listening and speaking skills are stressed). One student talked about how her parents put her and her siblings to Koran schools in order to memorize it and to learn Arabic and about Islam. Since the children there were from different cultures speaking various languages, the language of instruction was mainly in English, which did not justify the purpose (LCPS ESOL/ELL Student Interview-Focus Group for Girls). More alarming answers are the perception that English skills will only improve by neglecting the first language, and the belittling of the first language as worthless compared to English. One parent at least realized the relationship between her children's first language and cultural heritage maintenance and decided to teach them herself in order to prevent the loss of both. Her example seems to be uncommon among the interview participants, however.

There are parents who actually encourage English at home so that they can themselves practice the new language and improve their skills. Their attitude towards having their children as quasi tutors varies, though; while some receives corrections well, others take them as pure criticism and refuse them:

Moroccan girl: "I speak mostly English, but my mom tells me to talk to her in English so that she can learn it, too. Cause if I only speak to her in Arabic she will yell at me, to say it in English, so she learns from that."

Moroccan girl: "They yell at me when I correct them, so I just go with it, yeah that's right."

Pakistani boy: "They want me to correct them, they ask me what's wrong, tell me explain me, that is how I learn English by talking to other people and they correct me and then I learn from it." (ESOL/ELL Student Interviews)

Few newly arrived immigrant children and their parents (let alone their ESOL/ELL teachers) have a clear picture of how to handle one's heritage or first language. The answers infer that students do not worry about their first language but concentrate on English language acquisition which is probably being promoted at school and at home especially where the parents also wish to master the language. What they are rarely informed about are at least three important concepts introduced by Becker (2001, p.169): (1) an ESOL/ELL child should read in English at home to parents/guardians even if they have limited English proficiency (2) ESOL/ELL children should read with their parents/guardians together in their first/heritage language regularly to reveal the connection between oral and written language; furthermore, they should "engage them in frequent, caring conversation for cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development" (3) if parents/guardians are not fluent in English, they should not promote using incorrect English ('let's learn it together') in the household. The explanation for this is that conversing in a language that is one's strongest will provide opportunity to discuss a variety of topics more in depth and to cultivate cognitive development. Whereas this will, in fact, enhance the child's academic attainment, forcing limited and/or incorrect English in the household could have a negative effect on learning.

In practice, what students learn in school in English could be discussed in their household in their first language. They may perhaps then have a chance to enrich their vocabulary in their first language and receive confirmation of their understanding of the given topic (Irujo, 1998, p.95). Alternatively, parents might read in their first language to their children or, if illiterate in first language, tell stories using wordless books (Becker, 2001, p.178). Irujo emphasizes the importance of developing bilingualism and biliteracy parallel, and at the same time developing a positive self-esteem, and attitude towards both languages to avoid *language prestige*, with the help form parents and teachers (1998, p.96). By and large, those with older siblings or no siblings use English only in school; on the other hand, those who have siblings attending school themselves converse in English at home. Several of these students noticed that for their young siblings who attend elementary school English dominates and the first language tends to become weak or is lost almost entirely.

Afghan girl: "No, not with my parents. With my brothers I do, sometimes we speak in my language, but most of the time, like my younger brother, he doesn't know how to speak our language. He only speaks in English, or my little sister she came here in 3rd grade so it is the same with her. My parents, we speak our language with them."

Ethiopian girl: "My parents, they work at night, so my brother, when he comes home, he talks to my sister and she can't speak our language that well either, so for him to understand what she is saying she has to say it in English."

Ethiopian girl: "Yeah with my brother, I speak with in English, but with my mom I speak our language, because my brother, he came here in 4rth grade so his forgetting our language he still knows a little but, he forgets, his personal comfort is to speak in English."

Pakistani boy: "I use both. I talk to my parents in Urdu, but my brothers and sisters, in English."

Moroccan girl: "I speak both, with my sister it is mostly English, she goes to college, to NOVA"
(LCPS and FCPS ELL/ESOL Student Interviews).

These findings were vindicated in the survey as the majority of the students use their first language at home, half of them use both first language and English, and only few of them use English only at home. Most of the students use English at school, with friends and with siblings. Siblings who also attend school speak English. Hardly any of them admitted speaking both English and their first language well. But when asked which one they prefer to speak, the majority chose English. As discussed in Chapter 3, children may drop their language if it is not fostered or catered for sufficiently.

Schools are supposed to meet the needs of the community they cater for. Teachers could play an influential role in student's maintenance of their first/heritage language and culture. It is recommended that they teach in ways so that they can rely on the students' cultural resources: dialogue, bonding (Sleeter & Montecinos, 1999, online). Besides the traditional three Rs (writing, reading, arithmetic) a relevant, 21st century educational system emphasizes three new Rs: *rigor* (the ability to handle AP, IB and honor courses where performance is carried out via a variety of assessment methods), *relationships* (students work together on tasks and staff share leadership responsibilities, best practices and innovative ideas), and *relevance* (students' attention can only be drawn to school if course content and the delivery of instruction are relevant to real-world applications).[88]

Genuinely equal treatment will emphasize handling recently arrived immigrant students' first/heritage as a point of interest.

"Language is part of a person's sense of identity and closely linked to their personal, academic, social, and emotional development. How people feel about the process of becoming bilingual or multilingual is crucial. It is essential that schools show respect for pupils' home and community languages and for the narratives and culture in which the languages are embedded" (DFES, 2004).

The ability to speak two or more languages is not only a valuable skill in itself, both for individuals and society, but also contributes valuably to mental agility and cognitive understanding; to thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills; to capacities to be objective and tolerant of ambiguity and uncertainty; and to greater interpersonal and intercultural sensitivity, and greater competence and confidence in social situations. This study agrees with and promotes the claim which appeared in a DFES publication (DFES, 2004) that processes of teaching and learning English as an additional language are to do with becoming bilingual, not with substituting one language for another. Indeed, long-term research into the achievement of bilingual pupils shows that support for pupils' first language at academic levels is vital to academic success in the second language.

When participating students were talking about what language they would like to study at school, hardly anyone picked their first language, it was English, French or Spanish. (The second language they had studied in their home countries are mainly English and French. Some of them have already been learning Spanish, French or German as second languages in their recent schools.) Why

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[88] "Employers have expressed concern about the limited number of applied skills include working comfortably with individuals from other cultures, (…) demonstrating the capacity to think critically and solve problems creatively, (…) master the skills that the global economy demands" (NEA, online).

they did not choose their first language is hard to determine. Perhaps they know that it is not an option at their school, or they are confident in their heritage language skills and do not feel the need for further acquisition. Or for the worst, it simply did not occur to them that their language, and for most it was Arabic[89], is just as worthy and valuable as French, German or Spanish in the globalized world.

> *"Are you going to learn any other languages in school?"(Domján, K)*

> Ethiopian girl: "I wanna learn Spanish."

> *"What about you two?"(Domján, K)*

> Moroccan girls: "Our second language is French, so it is English, and I am taking Spanish, too. It's good to learn a lot of languages."

> *"Are you practicing in your first language? The reason why I am asking this is globalization and future job prospects where fluency in several languages is or might be required."*
> *(Domján, K)*

> Pakistani boy: "That is why we are taking Spanish, we are learning Spanish."

> *"Did your teachers ever emphasize the importance of maintaining your first language?"(Domján, K)*

> UAE girl: "No, they never said anything"
> (LCPS and FCPS ELL/ESOL Student Interviews).

During a typical enrollment, parents fill out a home language survey; students are tested on English speaking skills, (perhaps academic skills in their home language), then an academic schedule/program is assigned. What immigrant families cannot typically find in American public schools is bilingual instruction and multicultural curricula, what they find is the promotion of Anglo-Saxon culture and the English language; and the pressure to score high on the annual standardized test. American school officials[90] still ignore the fact that in a shrinking world, increasing number of jobs requires bilingual skills, and that it also affects earnings; in short, people who can fully function in two or more languages[91] will have advantage in today's global market.

Parents need a thorough explanation of what maintaining two languages entails and how to become part of the process. The involvement and support of parents and the community of a given school (including the school itself) is essential. Information about values, beliefs, practices (Byram, 1998, p.100) could be quite valuable if transmitted in two languages, by which the students not only reach a bilingual competence but also a bicultural state of mind. The function of heritage languages

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[89] Although the Middle East and North-East Africa are often considered Arabic speaking areas, due to the language having the status of an official language or vernacular, there are various dialects of Arabic spoken besides several other substrata languages and international official languages that all comprise the many linguistic sub groups in the regions. Therefore, it is not surprising if people from the regions speak several languages Arabic being only one of them (Rosenhouse & Goral, 2006, pp.835/844).

[90] "While U.S. policy makers urge foreign-language education for monolingual English-speaking children, it makes no sense to deprive bilingual speakers of their heritage languages." (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.64) Foreign languages could be reviewed and students' second languages could be used if they wished so (Ibid., p.93).

[91] Nunan and Lam declared a decade ago already that the multilingual education practice should be much more common because the number of students who need to become proficient in more than one language have been growing (1998, p.117).

ought to be moved out of the "cultural thing" (Sook Lee & Oxelson, 2006, online) status quo; a cultural artifact that should be showcased during Multicultural Week or on International Day/Night. As a bilingual educator with a bilingual child, I find it disappointing that America has not discovered the benefits of bilingualism in the 21st century globalized world. Apart from perhaps better job prospects, bilingual individuals also gain personal benefit as their horizon broadens.

Speaking several languages does not endanger one's commitment to his or her social group or country of residence, as "identification with the state will always be one of many identities of individuals" (Gadelii, 2004, online). He claims, "linguistic and cultural diversity is not a threat per se and can be managed to the benefit of a whole country" (…) "learners can develop language awareness, learn several languages and the respective cultures simultaneously, understand the complementarities which exist among languages and cultures in contact and become skillful communicators in multilingual settings" (Ibid.). Interestingly, the line of argument above is of the UNESCO, of which the USA is a member, for the practice of multilingual education in African countries in the name of efficiency and broad vision. Ironically, though, the very same practice is opposed or at least not widely supported in the USA itself. This valid argument from Gadelii under the aegis of UNESCO inevitably brings a question to mind: if such a bi or multilingual education is being promoted and asked to be implemented elsewhere why is it not in America?

Agirdag suggested that educators avoid ethnocentric monolingualism of any form as that may stigmatizes language learners. Teachers need to understand that the two languages are not competitors, indeed, they are complementary with great benefits (2009, pp.270-275). Members of the teaching staff (ESOL/ELL and mainstream equally) should be more sensitive to the needs of children from different cultural backgrounds. For many immigrant students, schools raise complex issues of culture and relationship to family and community. Many perceive schools as undermining identity, in part through devaluation of native language. Thus, schools should, to the extent possible, support students home, community, culture and language. Again, among other things, teachers and paraprofessionals from the community should be employed. "Faced with imminent pressures for linguistic and cultural conformity from peers, teachers, and society, children from linguistic minority homes are losing their heritage languages more rapidly than ever before" (Sook Lee & Oxelson, 2006, online). Even among first generation immigrant children, the heritage language is eroding which is alarming since the traditional pattern among immigrant groups is that of the three-generational language shift (Ibid.). Instead of looking at the rich diversity of heritage languages as problematic obstacles of attainment and integration, they ought to be viewed as "a powerful linguistic and cultural resource that needs to be maximized" (Ibid.). With the help of ESOL/ELL teachers, ESOL/ELL students and their parents need to be informed about Ballantyne, Sanderman, and Levy's discussion (2008, pp.28-29) about the fact that literacy skills in one's native language help with literacy in a second language, and also that concepts and skills learned in one's first language will transfer to one's second language: the words to describe them need only be learned.

As discussed in Chapter 3, research indicates that heritage language maintenance in the form of *additive bilingualism* leads to academic and personal benefits for linguistic minority students. Meanwhile, losing proficiency in one's heritage language, for instance, reduces the prospect of viewing

the world from different perspectives, and can result in communication breakdowns with family members, alienation from ethnic community networks, and lower self-esteem. Additionally, it has been noted that students who miss out on fully developing in both their heritage language and English language are

> "significantly more likely to drop out of schools than those fluent in both languages. Thus, for linguistic minority children, losing proficiency in their heritage language is more than just a loss of a linguistic system; it is a separation from their roots, a denial of their ethnic identity, and a dismissal of their potential as a bilingual and bicultural member of society" (Sook Lee & Oxelson, 2006, online).

 It is the concept of connecting with and educating the "whole child. A consistent theme that ran through the interviews was the dominant belief about language learning to be an "either/or" choice rather than a "both/and" alternative that can lead to additive bilingualism" (Ibid.). This is why teachers can encourage students' attitudes towards their first/ heritage language and not only those who are proficient in the students' heritage language or in any other language. It is just as influential to show interest in the heritage language and value it publicly in the school space and treat it as a resource.

There are the pressures of educational policies like WIDA and NCLB/SOL testing. What needs to be addressed is how to educate the whole child, thus how to motivate to maintain one's first/heritage language and create ideal circumstance for it. There are possible pitfalls that should be avoided by doing so:

> "To avoid mismatches in native language, language of instruction, and language of assessment. A student may receive content instruction primarily or wholly in English. S/he may have insufficient language to be fairly assessed in English. However, assessment in native language (if available) may not be helpful if the student is not literate in native language, or if the student has learned content in English and cannot access the knowledge in native language" (Ibid.).

According to Else in complete synch with this study, "bilingualism and biculturalism are gifts that everyone should be lucky to receive" (as cited in Becker, 2001, p.178). Irujo argues for the consistent and logical separation of the two (or more) languages one uses. It means that in order for students to function well in L1 (first language) and L2 (English) monolingually without interference from any or without preference toward any, L1 and L2 ought to be kept separate (1998, p.95). She distinguishes *nonfluent bilingual* students (those who prefer the language which they feel it is their strengths), and *fluent bilinguals* who are unmindful which language they are speaking in any given movement. She found that teachers are often unaware of issues related to bilingualism; for instance, that using one's first language and English separately will allow students to reach *additive bilingualism*, and that students will understand that they do not need to put their first language aside, even forget it to master English.

> "Trying to understand complex content in the weaker language is difficult work that children will avoid if   they can. They therefore tune out the input in their weaker language because it is not necessary for them to understand. Input that is tuned out does not become intake, and therefore cannot contribute to language acquisition. If children are proficient

enough in both languages so they don't need to tune out the weaker language during concurrent language use, they will soon get bored by hearing everything twice" (Irujo, 1998, p.95).

In practice, what she advocates is a simple *Preview/Review technique*, which suggests the preview/introduction of a lesson in L2, the teaching of it in L1, and then the review of it in L2, or vice versa. This way, the two languages are not only separated but the information (content, sophisticated concepts and vocabulary) is taken in two languages attaining greater student understanding (Irujo, 1998, p.97). Although Irujo's recommendation regards bilingual educational programs, it could be converted to ESOL/ELL programs, especially on high school level, by involving the library (books in languages of ELL/ESOL students) and the help of parents or volunteers from the heritage language community (Irujo, 1998, p.97). Irujo rightfully emphasized (Ibid., p.94) that most importantly, students, their parents, and teachers alike need to become aware of the fact that learning does not have to be exclusively done in English.

In a report by UNESCO it was concluded that "worldwide the choice of the language of instruction and language policy in schools is critical for effective learning" (UNESCO, 2007, online). It is the teachers in a given school who should be aware of these students and respond adequately to their sociolinguistic circumstances (Nunan & Lam, 1998, p.118). Modern/foreign language programs, protected language programs, heritage language program, international language program, language across the curriculum: strategies, policies that promote language shift or language maintenance (Ibid., p.126). Furthermore, those children who often travel back home should be evaluated to see how their language level is doing.

An existing educational policy promoting and tackling bilingualism on some level in Fairfax and Loudoun County Public Schools in Virginia is *Spanish for Fluent Speakers* within *The Foreign Language Program of Studies*. It was designed to prepare Hispanic students to take part in AP courses. There are Levels 1, 2, 3 and the goal is to develop their reading and writing skills.

"The primary goals of the *Foreign Language program* are to ensure that students: Communicate in languages other than English, Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures, Connect with other disciplines and acquire information, Develop insight into the nature of language and culture, Participate in multicultural communities at home and around the world" (FCPS, 2011, online).

It is the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) that set up guidelines to measure language learners' performance levels; the program is called the Performance Assessment for Language Students (PALS). Students' level range between Novice-Low level and the goal is to reach Intermediate-Mid level or beyond. "In the Foreign Language curriculum, students will not only learn to communicate with native speakers of the language, but they will do so with the cultural knowledge necessary to interact in an appropriate way" (Ibid.). This statement infers that school officials do realize the importance of cultural knowledge beside linguistic acquisition. They simply need to realize that spreading proper cultural knowledge can also take place outside the Foreign Language Programs.

The purpose of the *Foreign Language Credit Program* is within the Virginia Department of Education is to allow students to earn foreign language credits (those whose native language is other

than English) if they can show oral and written proficiency in their native/heritage language. "The proficiency exams are administered by the Foreign Language Office in November of each year. Students may also use two credits of ESOL at the B1 level to fulfill two of the foreign language requirements" (Ibid.). The credit program is available with proficiency exams in Amharic, Arabic, Punjabi, Farsi, Urdu, also in Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Korean, Bengali, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog/Pilipino, Twi, and Vietnamese. "During the learning process, they will derive the benefits of developing insight into their own language and culture as they learn to communicate with others" (Ibid.). According to the *Program Philosophy and Goals,* language and communication in several languages has become paramount in today's world due to the development of telecommunications, the surrounding multilingual environment, and the expectations of higher education and future employers (Ibid.). Level 3 ESOL students can participate in the World Language Credit Exam (20-25 languages can get credit). For an advanced diploma ESOL provides 2 credits and one's first language 2 credits.

This educational program that assists Spanish speakers to maintain or reach bilingualism could be extended to other languages represented in these school counties. Just by visiting schools to gather data for this study, it was obvious that there are numerous Arabic speakers, who would benefit from a language program offered to Spanish speakers. The involvement of parents is essential, and besides offering them interpreters or sending home leaflets regarding school-related matters in two languages (typically Spanish and English), schools should consider sending out descriptive explanatory leaflets regarding language-maintenance matters in languages ESOL/ELL parents from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa will actually understand, comprehend and accept.

Mastering the English language can be extremely important for immigrant children and their families for all the reasons that have already been fully argued in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. Based on the answers from the student and parent surveys, the participants are aware that their English language acquisition will move them forward and their teachers are doing their best to facilitate for that. Parents could also be provided by the necessary tools to assist their children with their studies or homework if they wish so. [92] As indicated in this chapter, because of *NCLB* schools are under pressure to teach the English language to their LEP students efficiently and assess them on a regular basis which they do well by constantly modifying their tools for continued improvement. On the other hand, because of *NCLB* the attention is shifted from the students' first (or additional) language(s). The footnotes in Chapter 2 point to the diversity of existing languages in the societies of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa where these immigrant children come from. It is evident that they are exposed to a variety of languages and perhaps speak more than one already themselves, thus they are familiar with the idea of bi or multilingualism.

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[92] Although Rong & Preissle found that adult immigrant parents rarely use English at home instead of their first language, as this shift takes place through generations; and their accent will probably stay heavy and detectable, and may never become fluent or competent speakers of English at all (2009, p.94) if given the necessary tools, they should be able to assist their children. They need to be encouraged to participate in ESL, ESOL programs if available. In addition, schools or educators can talk about their plans about home communication (which language they intend to use as tool of communication at home). Aid, funding, resources for ethnic community language schools ought to be one of the priorities of local governments.

Even if on administrative level (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, online) multilingualism is validated, teachers are encouraged to advance their professional development regarding their cultural competencies, collaboration between colleagues and promoting the value of one's primary language, the survey and interview results do not show that the effort has been put into practice. What is also obvious from the answers is that neither the parents nor the teachers fully recognize the importance of literacy skills in one's first/heritage language nor they know exactly how to support the students if they desire to maintain that.

Appendix 9 and Appendix 10 are two informative and educational leaflet samples for ESOL/ELL parents and teachers that provides information about ESOL/ELL students in the U.S. in general, highlights and refutes misconceptions about first/heritage language maintenance and second language learning, and recommends practical ways to achieve bilingualism. There was very positive feedback at the WVTESOL Conference in April in front of ESOL teachers (secondary school, adult education, higher education) and the WATESOL (secondary education ESOL teachers) Conference in October 2011 when these results of this research were presented. All the information leaflet samples I handed out were taken and besides secondary/high school teachers, adult education teachers also found the information useful. They are the ones who teach the parents of ESOL students, and they felt they could share this knowledge with them and raise awareness while teaching them the necessary English skills to function well in the society. Perhaps in the near future bi/multilingualism will be more supported country-wide and those who wish to raise bilingual children or those who are trained to teach them will have the necessary tools to do so.

5.3 School environment: cultural sensitivity and primary concern for cultural heritage maintenance via extracurricular activities

As discussed in Chapter 4.3 and 2.4, pluralism, multiculturalism and tolerance are based upon mutual understanding and respect. Recognition of significant religious differences can still be accompanied by respect for the right of others to hold different religious beliefs. The coexistence of Muslims and non-Muslims is challenged and there is a need to move beyond stereotypes and established patterns of behavior to a more inclusive and pluralistic vision informed by a multi-dimensional dialogue. While searching for information about East African immigrant students in U.S. American schools, this discussion thread came up on a website-forum intended for teachers, which only supports the perception that there is a lot to accomplish as schools teachers have extremely diverse standpoints about the education of immigrant children, and also that a more inclusive and pluralistic vision might still be a far cry.

> Posting 1:
> "I live in Minneapolis where there is a high concentraton of Somali children in classes. I am preparing to teach and I would like some advise. I do have some knowledge of the students backround. Can anyone help me answer these questions (and any advice)?
> 1. Are there any certain customs when speaking with the family?
> 2. Who will I expect to commuicate with, mom or dad?
> 3. What is the role of the family in Somali culture?
> 4. What are the gender roles?
> 5. What should I expect from the children?

6. Do the children wear the head garments?

7. Do the children observe the fasting that takes place during Ramadan?

Any information will be greatly appreciated! Thank you."

Posting 2:

"I think it is great you are trying to accomodate their customs, but don't feel bad if you commit a faux pas. They are in the US now and they have to pony up to our customs."

Posting 3:

"Okay, I hate to say it, but I agree with this harsh comment. When I moved to the US, many of my teacher's actions seemed absurd, in the least - yet I was learning American customs. To add some value to the conversation, though, here's my thought:

ASK THE KIDS. They know their customs better than anyone here."

Posting 4:

"Good for you for doing what ALL teachers should do to create a positive learning environment for their students. As for "ponying up to our customs", unless you are a native american, your family was an immigrant too. We all share our cultures, that's what makes life a life long learning experience."

(Teachnology, 2010, online)

Teachers ESOL/ELL and content teachers alike seem not to have a uniform position on how far they should go in order to provide a multicultural environment for immigrant children. While some sound ready to go the extra mile others are satisfied with the bare minimum and promote a 'sink or swim' stance. Having inquired teachers about the same topic, my survey answers revealed a rather candid, occasionally defensive attitude especially when rationalizing certain perspectives in a more or less demagogue manner, somewhat similar to the posts above:

What provisions of multi-cultural education exist in this school?
DHS, LCPS: "some, which culture?"
How does this school meet the specific needs of Muslim students (to make them confident in their Muslim identities, to offer children a clear and positive sense of identity)?
DHS, LCPS: "it doesn't"
FHS, LCPS: "extra-curricular activities MSA pervasive throughout curriculum"
What/how much do you know about the cultural backgrounds of your students (the education structure of their cultural heritage, learning style preferences, nonverbal behaviors, and gender role expectations)?
DHS, LCPS: "a lot"
FHS, LCPS: "a great deal"
FHS, LCPS: "not as much as I should"
Does your current classroom setting embody only American cultural values?
DHS, LCPS: "no"
DHS, LCPS: "do other countries adapt American cultural values when teaching their kids? NO, this is America, Adapt! This is America and American culture should be taught"
FHS, LCPS: "no"
FHS, LCPS: "only American values"
Do all cultures receive equal attention in the schools? Why, how?
DHS, LCPS: "yes"
DHS, LCPS: "no, the order is white, Hispanic, blk…"
FHS, LCPS: "activities, clubs, curriculum"
FHS, LCPS: "it is impossible"
Do you make sure that the student develops a secure ethnic identity and is able to establish genuine interpersonal contact with members of the dominant group?
DHS, LCPS: "no get real."
FHS, LCPS: "yes"
How do you develop some classroom exercise that might help students in a multicultural classroom overcome ethnocentrism?
FHS, LCPS: "literature, writing assignments"
DHS, LCPS: "No, get real, where were you in the 40's 50's 60's?"
What is your plan to integrate the various cultures in a multicultural classroom into a classroom community?

DHS, LCPS: "mix them all up together, be open, be honest"
Which multicultural organization works with the school?
FHS, LCPS: "Muslim Club and Language Clubs"
(Content Teachers Surveys)

The answers show inconsistencies within school counties and within schools as well depending on each teacher's view and perhaps commitment. There are some teachers who do make an effort to consider immigrant children as resource to enrich the learning experience of everyone at school. Their answers suggest that perhaps teachers could find out more about the cultural heritages and also imply that there is not enough done about expanding the curriculum to be more inclusive regarding other cultures represented in schools except for extra-curricular activities.

Each school that participated in this research study displays a very similar mission statement on their websites. They focus on "helping our diverse student body", "employ a variety of methods to meet the needs of every student and create an environment in which learning is active and personalized" "empower students to be academically competitive in a constantly changing world" (LBSS, FCPS, online). "Provide all students a diverse and challenging educational experience that will prepare them for their role in an ever-changing global society" (FHS, LCPS, online). "Work collaboratively as a community to create a rigorous and nurturing learning environment," and "as reflective practitioners, we analyze appropriate data and adjust our practices to implement programs that meet the needs of our diverse student population." "Every student will graduate from Park View High School with the skills necessary to excel as a responsible member of our ever-changing world" (PVHS, LCPS, online). "Committed to the emergence of a school culture that is characterized by high expectations for all students within a distinctly personal environment…display courtesy, character, and integrity in all situations….respect the rights of every member of our diverse community" (DHS, LCPS, online). In relation to these statements, the administration emphasizes their awareness of the diversity of their student population, and they seem to acknowledge the need for diverse teaching methods; also that each student must be prepared for a globalized era. Thus, there is awareness and acknowledgement, but the effort from each teacher is still debatable along with the curriculum used in each class.

The answers, coming from parents' and students' surveys used for this research, point at the frequently reoccurring misconception among them that a multicultural school is one that is "interracial," "multi-racial," "by putting our religion in school, showing everyone how we live," "because I saw all the students from different cultures making and showing their religions." (In a Loudoun County school, the beginner ELL class has an assistant who is a Japanese-born Masters' student. In the advanced ELL class, the assistant is Moldovan.) When asked more specifically if all cultures receive equal attention in the school, parents had mixed feelings and experiences: "in her history class, they have ONE SECTION in the entire book, throughout the year. I don't think that helps them establish their identity at all" in another school "well, in her history and English class they learn about Islam and the Middle East and they ask [our daughter] to lead the discussions" (ESOL/ELL Parent and Student Surveys). Parents, students and some teachers fail to realize that the mere existence or coexistence of cultures does not make a school multi-cultural; it needs to become more meaningful than that.

The key characteristics of multicultural education, discussed in Chapter 2, have been widely explored. It includes acknowledging the contributions and perspectives of ALL groups in content accurately, or within the context of the larger curriculum. Furthermore, stereotypes, the assumption of the American society are supposed to be challenged. "When an opportunity arises to address racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, or other forms of oppression, facilitate it. Encourage students to think critically about the United States, capitalism, the two-party system, and other traditionally untouchable subjects of critique" (Gorski, 2010, online). Teachers should present content from a variety of perspectives, not only that of the majority groups. Most importantly, teaching and learning materials are expected to be diverse and critically examined not only during special months or during celebrations. Students must be engaged in the teaching and learning process and for that teachers need to act as facilitators so that students can also learn from each other's experiences and perspectives and be critical about all information they receive from teachers and curricular materials (critical thinking need to be modeled for them).

Reluctant teachers who oppose making accommodations in their teaching hide behind their color-blindness, and state the apparent absurdity that the school is well-integrated "everybody is basically the same" and diverse at the same time (Olsen, 2008, p.178). Olsen often ran into the naïve demagogy mainstream teachers voiced, namely, that hardworking students could achieve whatever they wish. She found the insufficiently prepared teaching force and the unwillingness of teachers to update their pedagogy concerning dealing with LEP students in their classes as a negative influence on children's educational opportunity (Ibid., p.170). To make curricula work well for ELL children, educators should gather as much information about them as possible. This way they can tailor programs or curricula according to specific needs (Rong & Preissle, 2009, p.86). Besides education systems, there are teaching styles, academic content, communication styles, learning strategies and various learning styles (Zhukov, 2007, online) that Muslim immigrant children carry from the Middle East or the Horn of Africa.

The newly arrived ones need assistance to build up confidence, to increase a healthy self-esteem in an unfamiliar world, and to discuss academic and social concerns. The Muslim Student Association club's sponsor has this role in one of the participating schools. The teacher, whose additional duty is being the sponsor or supervisor of this after school club, also pays attention to the social progress of the members, whether they are first or subsequent generation of immigrant Muslim students, by being sensitive to their problems and needs, a source of encouragement. Muslim girls do discuss concerns with the Pakistani-born MSA sponsor in a Loudoun County high school if they have a close enough relationship with her. It is because, helpful they might be, counselors might not give the proper advice to the students as they help solve their issues. For instance, when helping the students, finding out what makes them happy (individualism) is not always the point or the proper solution: it is to find solution to problems keeping in mind that they have to think about their family ties (collectivism) (MSA Sponsor Interview). Parents also prefer if their children talk to them first: "yes, thankfully there is [counseling] but we are glad that she can come to us first before needing to go to school counseling" a parent from FCPS or "yes, but my child was getting help by communicating with

me every day" from LCPS. When asked about role models, parents were inclined to point out the MSA sponsor in their child's school or fellow Muslim peers (ESOL/ELL Parent Survey).

An official mentoring system could probably be also implemented to help out newly arrived students, especially if more senior students in the school (probably other ESOL students with similar linguistic and/or cultural heritage and experience) fulfilled the role of mentors in high schools. Where it exists both teaches and students do tend to assist if required. "This would probably be good for us." "Yes, there are both student and teacher mentors. We use informal mentors within ELL, particularly for new students" (ELL/ESOL Teacher Surveys). A student from the UAE said, "I was the TA of the ESOL teacher and I helped out newly arrived students" (ESOL UAE Female Student Interview). There are Muslim and African teachers in numerous schools; on the other hand, their number is not very high. "It would be wonderful if our faculty could grow to represent the student population's religious and cultural make-up a bit more" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Survey). It sounded, based on the answers, that there is an intention to employ more ethnic minority teachers. Most students have role models at school, teachers that they consider compassionate. While teachers surveyed, in general, assumed role models should be Muslim teachers or ESOL/ELL teachers, the survey reflects otherwise: "my English teacher", "my gourmet food teacher" (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys).

The teachers who took part in this research study all claimed that immigrant children (from culturally diverse background) affect the way in which their school functions. The amount of information they have about the cultural backgrounds of the students (the education structure of their cultural heritage, learning style preferences, nonverbal behaviors, and gender role expectations) varies. Whereas in one school the ELL chair was self-assured "we tend to get to know our students well overall", other teachers were not: "I never feel like I know enough. I do try to learn, though. In the beginning of the year especially, my warm-ups for the beginning of class are usually surveys of the students, trying to learn more about their upbringing and education before coming to the United States" (ESOL/ELL Teacher Surveys). Due to the presence of immigrant students, participating educators were asked a range of questions related to inter/multi-cultural curriculum or modified curriculum to see if all cultures receive equal attention in the schools, a "culturally competent system of care" (Delgado). There were questions about their strategies to integrate the various cultures in a multicultural classroom into a classroom community, about how minority ethnic pupils are encouraged to appreciate and express important aspects of their identity and heritage, and whether or not schools maximize the significance and value of cultural and ethnic diversity.

> *How do all cultures receive equal attention in the schools (a "culturally competent system of care" (Delgado))?*
> FHS, LCPS: "The beginner class has an ELL assistant who is a Japanese-born Masters' student. In the advanced ELL class, the assistant is Moldovan."
> "In Social Studies, there are 5 major religions taught, world religions"
> PVHS, LCPS: "I am told that the social studies curriculum covers world history in a much more balanced way than when I went to school (less West-centric), but I am not exposed to their curriculum myself."
> *What should be the role of secondary schools in the process of intercultural adjustment? Where to draw the line?*
> DHS, LCPS: "help educate about American culture/practices while respecting the native culture – should not infringe on beliefs or practices essential to home culture"
> PVHS, LCPS: "Within ELL, our emphasis has been on helping our students adjust to the U.S. school system."

Are there any intercultural workshops available for staff/teachers?
LBHS, FCPS: "not that often"
FHS, LCPS: "occasionally, sometimes weekends or after hours and teachers do not have the extra time to participate"
PVHS, LCPS: "Professional development offered at the school and department levels in the fall has sometimes included a session about serving particular cultural group within our schools. The last I recall in the past 5 years were for Latino and Asian students and their families. I believe ELL TA's have been administered a session on serving Middle Eastern students."
(Content Teacher Surveys)

From the answers it was obvious that the curriculum itself is not multicultural. Most frequently, references to places and opportunity included world religions being discussed at school, also subjects like Social Studies, History and Geography. How extensively a range of cultures are taught about depends on individual teaching effort. "I teach ELL Reading. I try to use multicultural texts whenever possible. I also try to get students to draw upon and share their past experiences as they practice reading and writing in English" and "English classes discuss that there are tales in various cultures, cultural norms that accepted, values and skills are taught" also

"The school uses standards set by Virginia. No, I would not say the curriculum is officially modified to be more multicultural, but the curriculum does allow for creativity and choice by the teacher, and I believe many teachers, including myself, do try to infuse multiculturalism into the curriculum where possible. I am told that the social studies curriculum covers world history in a much more balanced way than when I went to school (less West-centric), but I am not exposed to their curriculum myself" (ELL/ESOL Teacher Surveys).

The school as a social system consists of many factors: teaching styles and strategies, curriculum and course of study, instructional materials, assessment and teaching procedures, school staff and their attitudes, perceptions and actions, school policy and politics, school culture and hidden curriculum, learning styles of the school, languages and dialects, counseling programs, community participation and input (Banks, 2010, p.24). The many intended functions of schools include custodian function, teaching functional literacy, general knowledge to participate in society, teaching facts and procedures of core subjects, and teaching skills, including, optimistically, critical thinking skills (Abdi, 2005, pp.6-8). The unintended functions or the hidden curriculum are reflected in treatment of achievement, punctuality, authority relations, social mobility, etc. The authors believe that it is a myth that there is equality in educational opportunity (access, treatment, potential) in western societies. They also suggest that members of dominant groups tend to discriminate against and exclude people of lower social classes or minorities from the learning process in subtle ways even if those would be hard working and highly able individuals (Ibid., p.10). Social control also belongs to the unintended function which is reflected in the way gender, linguistic, ethnic, racial groups are treated.

The majority of the participating ELL/ESOL teachers believe that the role of secondary schools in the process of intercultural adjustment is to "help educate about American culture/practices while respecting the native culture – should not infringe on beliefs or practices essential to home culture" and "Within ELL, our emphasis has been on helping our students adjust to the U.S. school system" (Content Teacher Survey). Mainstream teachers' attitude towards first generation immigrant children is similar. Although they tend to discuss learning styles and expectations with them, time for them to warm up and become familiar with the new culture range from "you over here, get with the program" to "all year" and "as much as they need" (Content Teacher Survey). Their current classroom settings normally embody only American cultural values and are occasionally justified by lack of

experience and empathy "do other countries adapt American cultural values when teaching their kids? NO, this is America, Adapt! This is America and American culture should be taught" (Content Teacher Survey).

A somewhat multicultural curriculum is currently embodied in the form of the *Global Awareness Technology Project (GATP)* in Fairfax County Public Schools. The high school specialist for FCPS, who works with 30 high schools to provide curriculum, resources and professional development for teachers, stated that FCPS has been using GATP for a couple of years so that ESOL students could demonstrate global awareness starting in 9th grade for Level 3 students. The goal is to raise awareness among students about "interrelationships and interdependence of the countries and cultures of the world" by using technology affectively and knowledge acquired through research. The topics are geography, literature, history, culture, leadership, government, music/art, and math/science/technology. Students are required to present orally, not only read but analyze information acquired from a variety of written materials and will use the sources ethically. At the end of each school year there is a contest where the best exhibitor wins. Originally, GATP has been part of the 5th grade social studies curriculum. ESOL teachers are using an adapted version so that the curriculum fits ESOL students. GATP relies on and emphasizes integrated skills. ESOL teachers, librarians and techs all help students. Normally, the entire 3rd quarter is taken up for the project itself. The Global Awareness Technology Project used in Fairfax County is one that combines the use of "critical literacy, cooperative learning, and process writing" (Irujo, 1998, p.110), criteria that are essential in the learning of bilingual children.

To guarantee positive long-term relationship, some schools celebrate the religious festivals and some share the cultural traditions of immigrant students. Regardless of the size of such student body, schools can still be considerate and can pay attention to their needs by recognizing and supporting their cultural heritage (Brah, 1996, p.41). Religious festivals in FCPS and LCPS such as Ramadan are not necessarily celebrated; still students are allowed to observe them. High School ESOL/ELL specialists mentioned events like an "international night" in schools when asked about the multicultural aspect of the curriculum but the specifics all depend on schools. It may be called International Night, or Multicultural Show, or Multicultural Night, or Heritage Night, for the event the whole school is invited, parents of students and staff and the community. There are presentations, fashion shows and in some schools food stands: "We wear our clothes and bring in food," "Where people sing and dance like from their countries" "Food? No just dance. If you join the Multicultural Club, you help prepare for the night. You can dance there and sing" (ESOL/ELL Student and Teacher Surveys). As stated by students and teachers, it is always anticipated and welcomed in the school. Sadly, a good portion of parents whose children were interviewed were unable to attend due to long working hours or younger siblings. It could have been a great opportunity for them to see how their children are in included and involved in school activities. Even if there is the ever-threatening potential of a clash, culture clash and marginalization are not the only outcomes of the process of cultural transmigration; there is always the possibility of positive mutual influence on each other.

In the past, religion was used in schools to guide students' life and shape their virtues (Craper & Hunt, 2009, p.12). Now, there is serious lack of references to religion in basic textbooks, teaching

about religion and its role and influence[93] (Craper & Hunt, 2009, p.30). Public schools have been believed to be the places were immigrant children can be assimilated, Americanized and taught citizenship besides morality (Ibid., p.19). If public schools wish to reflect that every child matters and they do fear to leave one behind, they ought to find a way together with the parents and the immediate community to add two new R's to the other basic ones (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic) with high priority: Race and Religion. Most American public schools cannot offer Islamic studies. The closest they can offer for Muslim students is an assortment of culture-related extra-curricular or after school clubs. Their existence and intention is praise worthy but offer too little compared to their full potential. When I asked participants about valuing cultural and ethnic diversity and encouraging minority ethnic pupils to appreciate and express important aspects of their identity and heritage; parents, students, and teachers' references overwhelmingly included the following: International clubs, Middle East South Asian cultural club, Multicultural Club, Language Clubs and the Muslim Student Association (MSA).

American public schools are secular. There is freedom of religious expression, however; thus students in American schools only need to ask for a certificate of exemption from rules concerning dress code, styles of uniform and those can be granted (Klausen, 2005, p.181). The issue of teaching about or discussing religion is risky in public schools that do not know how to approach it and what to tell students. As there are 700-800 denominations half of which are imported from standard world religions, and no established state religion (Samovar, 2001, p.95) in the U.S.; it could be rather beneficial to hold Religious Education lessons in state schools. A study suggests that providing biblical literacy can take place without engaging in any sort of religious indoctrination. The stance is that "Students who want to do serious study of Western civilization need to know the Bible" (Mattox, 2008, online) as that is part of literature, art, music, social studies, and pop culture. It has been proven (Ibid.) that regular church attendance, and a result; better biblical literacy had a positive effect on students' attainments. The recommendation is elective courses[94] that teach the Bible and world religions objectively without indoctrination devoting equal amount of time to all. The students participating in this study talked about their former schooling mentioning that the subjects in their previous education such as Arabic language and Islamic studies are clearly absent from their current education (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys). The parents, understandably, would like to see more teaching about Islam and their cultural heritage in high schools "by putting our religion in school, showing everyone how we live" (ESOL/ELL Parent Surveys). Those are rarely mentioned in mainstream classes, however. This study proposes, in line with arguments of researchers discussed below, that concerns regarding cultural heritage including religion need to be addressed by the introduction of an in-depth analysis of world religions and the broadening of culture related social clubs in high schools.

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[93] Apparently, this idea of public schooling does not appeal to a large number of people. Due to religious reasons, Muslim schools amongst other faith based schools have been growing along with home-schooling of children of religion. By the 21st century the number of Muslim faith schools grew over 150 about 20 000 students enrolled in them (Craper & Hunt, 2009, p.33).

[94] Texas, Georgia and Tennessee have passed legislation promoting historical or literary biblical studies as an elective. In Alabama, the state Board of Education approved The Bible and Its Influence as a textbook for public schools. South Carolina has passed "released time" legislation. It allows students to take (and, if the course is eligible, receive credit for) a religious class off-campus during school hours (Mattox, 2008, online).

The topic of religion was critically explored in both the surveys and during interviews with the students and the answers revealed that only two female students (UAE, Morocco) have attended a faith school before joining a public school; out of which, one left her faith school due to unsatisfactory educational provision. Unfortunately, it was never revealed why the other student stopped attending her faith school, and why the other Muslim students never joined a faith school in the first place (ESOL/ELL Student Survey). The interviewed students' parents did not intend to send their children to private Islamic faith school except for one family (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys). This student attended ISA (a private faith school) and joined public schools in 10th grade. According to her story, besides mainstream subjects she also studied Arabic and Islamic studies. The reason for her decision was that she "was given D's and C's and the teachers were too (unrealistically) strict and harsh. When I switched to public high school, first Marshall HS, then Fairfax HS (I graduated from there this summer), I got A's and B's. ISA really ruined my GPA for college" (FCPS, UAE ESOL Student Interview). In short, parents and students alike might face the occasional dilemma that is whether to attend a reputable but secular public school with excellent educational records or an Islamic faith school with questionable ones.

As of now, in most American public schools religious practices and beliefs are not present; though, there is religious diversity in the country. DelFattore calls it the hands-off approach: no special recognition of any faith in schools, prayer is of private action of students without official validation (2004, p.311). There are controversies over religion in American public schools (Murray, 2008, p.18). While discussing *What Schools Ban and Why,* Murray stated that "Because people so often differ from each other in the values they embrace, controversies arise over which values to promote in school—or at least, which values deserve highest priority" (Ibid., p.8). As there are versions of reality according to which people live their lives, what they consider controversial or offensive[95] to their values can vary (Ibid., p.24). There is also pressure from parents and communities that a school promotes certain moral values of their preferences[96] (Ibid., p.10). Although efforts about religious education regarding Islam only concern Muslim students, the rest of the student population is still left behind without at least partial religious literacy.

Prothero, Murray, Rechtman and DelFattore, among many others, all provide exhaustive valid and relevant argument for teaching about religion in school in order to rid misconceptions, enhance mutual tolerance and gain proper knowledge. The appropriate role of religion in schools varies among societies around the world (Murray, 2006, p.3). For religious people in America, tolerance is not enough; their goal is to be understood by those who do not share their faith. Prothero sees that people in America are religiously illiterate not only about their own faith but also about others' (2007. p.35); "we may be at a tipping point where we are realizing that you cannot really respect a religion that you do not understand and that understanding a foreign religious tradition means wrestling with ways in which that religion is fundamentally different form your own" (Ibid., p.152). He claims that religious

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[95] It has been suggested by a superintendent in the state of Georgia that instead of the term 'evolution', the phrase 'biological changes over time', is used to ease the pressure from parents of conservative religion. This suggestion was abandoned and was not implemented (Murray, 2006, p.5).
[96] Books in schools have been banned for various reasons including 6% promotion of religious viewpoint, 4% racism, 4% sex education (Murray, 2008, p.19).

literacy is sacrificed "at the altar of tolerance" (Ibid., p.45). Religious liberty is part of social and cultural maintenance to deal with a variety of religious views in a free society like the American (DelFattore, 2004, p.314). Partially, American history books, schoolbooks are to blame for this ignorance giving students superficial knowledge of religion, if that (Prothero, 2007, p.65). Prothero argues that schools typically believe that discussing religion in schools is unconstitutional. They wish to avoid controversy, and they lack, therefore, in impartial explanatory lessons about religion leaving their students in the dark (Ibid., pp.66-67). The author claims that the NCLB reform, for instance, stirred the focus away from religion towards other subjects of high importance. The irony is that the knowledge of cultures and religions are essential bases for literature, ancient stories, history, music, sociology, or political science; hence, this study proposes the extensive teachings of both.

Religious studies can be intertwined with multiculturalism and citizenship and the basis for an end of culture wars/clash (Ibid., pp.176/179). There are schools of education that prepare educators for teaching about religion, how to do it and in-service training (p.170). Weiner and Yuskaev also asserts that educators are expected to prepare students for such religious diversity and interfaith: there is training available since 2003 (2006, p.155). DelFattore explains schools' reluctance that there is a governmental required neutrality of religion in public schools (2004, p.8); therefore, there is conflict over "The Fourth R" religion in America's public schools. Educators are still in doubt about which religions to promote not whether to promote one (DelFattore, 2004, p.14). Prothero recommends the introduction of a Bible 101 class in public high schools and also a World Religion 101 class, both neutral and non-influential with opt-out provision, arguing that "Americans deserve to be equipped" (2007. pp.165-170). For instance, World Religion studies classes in high schools might include symbols, myth, rituals, traditions, discussions, reflections; write reflection papers, reading projects, videos, field trips, visitors. It is supposed to be an academically rigorous course where students are expected to understand not to agree, to appreciate and expand their knowledge about various religions (Rechtman, 2006, p.138). The collaboration of high school teachers and scholars is essential to identify texts to use and how to implement resources, and the class (Streight, 2006, p.149). As a result, students may become more understanding of each other and learn to *communicate* with each other better (Rechtman, 2006, p.144). Again, most likely, through religion, students' culture could be understood and validated.

High quality and effective education should mean that religion is treated fairly and is included in the school curriculum i.e. taught about (Craper & Hunt, 2009, p.62). Kollar argues that although it is not easy to teach or learn about one's own and other's religion, it needs to be done in public schools for people's sake (2009, p.24). He proposes that public schools are where the diversity of religion should be accepted and taught about so empathy can be developed instead of divisiveness (Ibid., p.184). Greenawalt maintains that teaching about religion is accepted and legal (2005, p.77). The law allows schools to teach about religion but does not mandate them to do so. He reasons that it has not been proven whether or not teaching about religion alienates students from a religion or interests them. Or, that they do not need to be sensitive to parental concern (Ibid., p.86). Hence, as part of human concerns and as part of the fair treatment of students, it should be taught in schools (Ibid., p.79). Again, the understanding of subjects such as history, science, and literature can be greater, broader if

the role of religion is explained within in a balanced and objective matter (Ibid., p.83). An earlier quote from a parent shows that there is an apparent underrepresentation of religion in the curriculum "one chapter only", and some of the teachers also claimed that the curriculum is not all-embracing regarding diversity (ESOL Parent Surveys).

Besides acquiring knowledge of religions, teaching about religion is also about the promotion of religious freedom: "religious liberty for all citizens" (Robert & Lester, 2006, p.13). Taking this course gives an insight about world cultures (Ibid., p.17); at the same time, it helps cut down on bullying, and helps build an inclusive society while changing attitudes that lasts through adulthood[97] (Ibid., p.14). If such courses are introduced in high schools, teachers who are trained to teach about religion from an academic point of view should only be allowed to do so (Greenawalt, 2005, p.80). Robert and Lester documented an example of a high school where such a course actually was held and *The Usborne Book of World Religions* was used. They found that having taken a world religions course gave students inside knowledge, tolerance, and comprehension of others' religious practice (2006, p.6). Taking such a class did not change students' own religious affiliation, and felt the righteousness of it, also no controversies arose, and only very few parents opted out (Ibid., p.7). Having taken the course, students were more supportive towards the religious freedom of Muslims and are more interested in their religion; it also eased students' insecurity and threatened feeling because of other religions (Ibid., pp.28-29). Students belonging to minority religions/unpopular groups found it very useful; furthermore, students were more likely to defend others of minority religion if offended (Ibid., pp.32-34). Students were proud and able to use the gained knowledge and information in their later studies (Ibid., p.41). Robert and Lester concluded that there is room for improvement but there was an overall satisfaction (Ibid., p.51). Since the schools that participated in this research study are state-of-the-art and high achiever institutions there should be a genuine effort from them to attempt introducing such course(s) and see if they can become triumphant in that regard as well.

Many racial and ethnic groups combine ethnicity and religion with religion playing an essential part in one's values and worldviews (Putnam & Campbell, 2010, p.493). Religious organizations might function as a source of ethnic identity reinforcement for new immigrants (Ibid., p.264); especially if often for people, the community sharing the same faith ("religiously based social network") is more important than faith itself (Ibid., p.444). Friends are very influential when it comes to the judgment of other religious and social groups and categories (race, class, ethnicity); therefore, having a religiously diverse social network leads to a more positive assessment of specific religious groups. The so called religious bridging correlates with positive assessment of people of other religious groups[98] and may lead to the spillover effect as well, which means that this positive attitude

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[97] The course was welcomed by both political parties, as the significance of religion in the country's history and culture was well highlighted (Robert & Lester, 2006, p.8). The authors found that because of the current and still negative views Americans hold of Islam, in addition to the political issues intertwined with religion (Ibid., p.12) are reasons why a course like this is important.

[98] The percentile of 'true believers' who are the lest tolerant of other religions on non-religion is fairly low, only less than 15% compared to those who believe there are basic truth in many religions, about 80%, and less than 10% sees little truth in any given religion (Putnam & Campbell, 2010, p.543). Reportedly, religious people are not all kind towards one another and that secular people are not automatically more tolerant than others although American religious and secular citizens are on average quite tolerant of diversity (Ibid., pp.460-461).

may extend to such religious groups not included in one's network. While the bridging is not as consistent when considering Muslims, the negativity is becoming weaker (Ibid., pp.526-533). If bridging is in fact a somewhat effective process, and there is a noticeable change in attitude towards Muslims, culture-based extracurricular clubs where diverse groups of students attend could be a place in secondary schools to serve just that purpose.

Based on the conversation with one of the MSA sponsors, the participants in MSA are cultural groups from the Middle East. There are no religious activities; there is fundraising; there are 1-2 social events like a dinner or a potluck dinner or a bake sale. The members meet every other week for 50 minutes, 1/3 is boys and 2/3 is girls, who are first and second generation immigrant students whose parents were not born in America. There is usually an agenda that they discuss, it is open to everybody – thus one technically does not have to be a Muslim. The MSA sponsor said that in line with government rules, they cannot talk about religion at school even if students ask about it or even is students have facts wrong about Islam (MSA Sponsor Interview, ESOL/ELL Student Interview). Religion is a sensitive topic in contemporary American schools as it was earlier discussed in Ch 4.1.1. While interviewing the MSA sponsor, who is a content teacher at the school, she consistently lowered her voice when she was asked about the role of religion in school or in the MSA.

Discussion about cultural heritage, which includes religion as well, does not seem to be forbidden, though. Apparently, the approach of the American educational system to accommodate the needs of cultural minorities is mainly surface-level cultural pluralism, which consists of occasional study materials depending on teachers' involvement, the annual International/Multicultural event, and ad hoc prayer facilities. In short, cultures do not receive equal or sufficient attention in the schools.

All participating schools have an MSA where the sponsor (a teacher) is typically of Muslim religion. Several parents who participated said that their children are a member of MSA, which was confirmed by students' answers. Some of these students also belong to the Multicultural Club. They described activities carried out in MSA similarly: "Yes, it is like a religious club, you talk about your country, bring your food, clothes, talk about your culture the way you dress, what's your nature is like. I am in SEA…There is also another club MSA that is for Muslim society cultures, and there we learn about Islamic stuff, like culture and religious stuff. It is the students who talk about them. We choose one president who knows the most about it and then he brings in professionals, teachers who teach us more. Tells us more about religion and then we have parties, and tell other schools to be with us meet with us." Also: "Yes, talked about Islam, religion, a Muslim teacher was the sponsor; we did fundraising and liaised with local Mosques. I was also helping newly arrived immigrant girls and explained them about school as the TA of the ESL teacher" (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys). The majority of the interviewed and surveyed students belong to the MSA or the Multicultural Club. Those who do not, mainly because of younger siblings, having to get home early or having priorities such as working on their English skills: "we have multicultural club and MSA but I don't go there. Because if I have more time I want to study, I don't want to waste time on all that" (ESOL/ELL Student Surveys).

National education systems and curricula have always aimed at representing its citizens and play a vital part in the "process through which one's consciousness of belonging to an imagined community of conationalists is encouraged" (Anderson as cited in Mandaville, 2007, p.226). Bowen

promotes the idea of encouraging students to leave their particular forms of identity, religion, religious signs, at the door and approach learning only as future citizens of the given country (2007, p.243). Sen affirms that although religion is a determinant in one's life, it does not have to be the sole marker of one's identity. For instance, he warns that giving priority to religion can create a singular identity and may even have negative outcomes such as violence or extremism (2006, pp.14-15). The purpose of teaching critical thinking skills is that students discuss what it means to be conationalists and future citizens of the country by looking at the range of identity markers including race, culture and religion instead of disregarding or superficially treating them. When examining the above statements closely and considering that there are school officials and teachers that think similarly, it becomes apparent that if one regards Islamic identity important, living an Islamic life in a secular society like the U.S. can be rather challenging.

The issue of multiculturalism, more specifically the concern about the cultural heritage of recent immigrant students, is still unresolved, as the currently existing practice is simply treating or celebrating other cultures superficially. The preparation for and the participation at special Festivals, art projects, and holiday celebrations are just not enough and mainly highlight differences that could lead to estrangements of other cultures and peoples. Along with this argument, it is suggested that "whatever is studied about one culture is also studied about the other" (…) "this approach allows for an in-depth comparison of cultures, with the aim being that students will come to understand why there are differences and value both ways of doing things" (Irujo, 1998, p.107). Sloan claims that besides one-day cultural celebration, multicultural education should mean integrating multicultural perspectives in lesson plans and activities having (2009, p.244). Schools can do a lot with little effort in order to maintain immigrant children's cultural and linguistic heritage. It needs to be considered as part of the learning process not an obstacle.

Those immigrant children, who seem interested in their cultural heritage and that of others, need encouragement to attend after school programs such as the Muslim Student Association, the Multicultural Club, or the Intercultural club so that they avoid exposure to doubtful objects that may be offered elsewhere, for instance, biased or unreliable Islamic education. If school officials are concerned about these students' successful acculturation as opposed to their possible marginalization and perhaps even about them turning towards extreme Islamic fundamentalism, they ought to promote and create a learning environment which is monitored and guided by school teachers/sponsors and a more thought-provoking curriculum.

Instead of leaving these students behind by offering them superficial validation or recognition of their heritage, in school, even completing a simple yet comprehensive project could provide continuity. The project template, which I tested on my college ESL students successfully, is in Appendix 11 called *Cultural Heritage Project*. Students need little guidance as the role of the supervisors or teachers is mainly to facilitate. The purpose of this project or coursework is to find out about students' cultural heritage as they concentrate on and discuss one topic per session. It can become a valuable strategy and intervention regarding multicultural pedagogy that engages students in critical thinking and can launch a discourse on cultures which are present in high schools within the school walls. With a critical question at the end of each section of the project, students can engage in a

productive dialogue. These questions provide the basis for classroom discourse. Since students would have already thought about them and written about them, it would be easier to speak and state opinions/perspectives based on facts they gathered. Students do not have to provide long responses (based on their English proficiency), but it will get to the reflection and application of the knowledge they gathered.

Through stories, pictures, personal items, music, books they will become fully engaged in the process to carry out an in-depth reflection which they can all share. There are 11 topics in my proposal, but it can be reduced or extended depending on the amount of time afternoon clubs can spend on meetings. Each topic helps explore students' cultural heritage below the surface. They should be encouraged to interview parents or guardians or family members, and then continue their search in the library or on the internet. My college ESL students were extremely proud of the end product and naturally of their own cultural background, as admittedly there were facts and figures they were unaware of, thus they felt they learnt a great deal about themselves and of course about each other's cultural heritage. I presented parts of this research (templates and already-completed Cultural Heritage Project and the explanatory leaflet on First Language Maintenance) at the annual WVTESOL conference, April 2011 and the WATESOL Conference, October 2011 where the central theme was advocacy. Teachers in the audience seemed fascinated and left with the intent of trying it out in their own courses and found it also applicable for Adult ESOL.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to pay particular attention to the question of provision pertaining to first generation Muslim immigrant students from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa during their high school years in the United States for the reason that few research studies have been conducted on such experiences. There is still lack of information about and therefore unfavorable view in the U.S. towards Muslims. Sound teaching about Muslim cultures might shift such perceptions. Recent immigrants are not necessarily following the traditional assimilation – there is a newer form of adjustment, more of a laissez faire form, as immigrants keep random layers of the iceberg (Peterson, 2004) that represents their cultural heritage. That affects the U.S. society which needs to acknowledge the new trend and react appropriately, namely value cultural conservation (Sen, 2006) and promote a sense of belonging (Abbas, 2005). Taken an iceberg as the symbol of a whole child/person's cultural identity, a more thorough discovery of the iceberg needs to be done at school to validate and engage the whole student through that process. Peterson's (2004) iceberg theory was chosen as a guiding principle regarding cultures, as this descriptive and clear-cut analogy makes it easy to visualize and understand why the underlying components are so important to recognize the complexity of a culture/one's cultural heritage.

The roles of schools related to bicultural and bilingual maintenance have not been propagated successfully. Few studies would explore strategies for recognizing and bridging obvious gaps between teacher and student expectations regarding first languages, religion and the provision in the form of a culturally responsive curriculum. In the 21st century USA, immigration is still an issue, and although more attention is paid to immigrants themselves, especially the school environment in general and their English language acquisition, there are still misconceptions, for instance, regarding first language maintenance. Schools have not reached their full potential and have no clear stance on catering for cultural pluralism; they often fail to discuss and arrange for the continuity of students' heritage/first language and cultural maintenance.

Suitable provision is still missing given that ethnically and culturally diverse immigrant students' experience is not implemented as it should be. Pragmatic solutions which help move away from ethnocentrism in curriculum need to be propagated. Amongst characteristics of most recommended multicultural curriculum, there is no reference to ethnicity and religion in schools. Mainly communication styles, collaboration and learning styles are highlighted (Edchange, 2011, online); consequently, it appears as if the most important issues are being left out. Research questions in this study aimed at their adjustment in the new cultural setting and the strategies schools utilize to maintain students' cultural and linguistic heritage if they aspire to do so. The participating high schools, students, teachers and parents seemed to share the experience regarding the sociocultural adjustment of first generation immigrant Muslim students from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, which lead to the several conclusions and recommendations regarding the assistance students receive to effectively maintain their first language and cultural heritage. Raising awareness about several main issues and enhancing forms of provision are places for improvement.

One of the findings is that cultural difference undeniably exists between the societies of the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, and the USA. However, while cultural traits are very useful and important in understanding others, they should not necessarily be the only reliable source as individuals differ on many levels. In identifying the difference, the role of the individual within the society as a whole, the importance of spiritualism and secularism, the exploitation of democracy and within the equality of girls/women, and racism and the acceptance of multiculturalism were considered. Religion could be an important test case in the process of the socialization of the recently arrived in America since moving away from one's country of origin, traditions and culture do not get left behind. This study proposes, in line with arguments of other researchers that concerns regarding cultural heritage including religion need to be addressed by the introduction of an in-depth analysis of world religions and the broadening of culture-related social clubs in high schools which could offer a place for such discussions.

The findings reveal that some of these students and their families reserve faith to their private sphere having reexamined the role of religion in the American society, partially because there is an overwhelming influence of the American culture. As a result, some Muslim students neglect customs that include praying, fasting or wearing traditional dress. According to the survey results, parents are more lenient and may sacrifice religious observations on the altar of integration/acculturation and successful educational outcomes. Based on the students' responses, their parents only give tentative advice about dress code, eating, or praying habits at school. There is pressure from schools, especially if these students may be allowed to pray in school but cannot really find designated prayer rooms except for during Ramadan. The issue of religion emerges again regarding religious education which could perhaps eliminate forms of bullying (in reference to pulling girls' headscarves) in school settings as through religion, students' culture could be understood and validated. The complications for future research along this topic are caused by political issues, specifically sensitive topics like religion in schools and the Muslim diaspora in the U.S., which definitely made school counties reluctant to participate in this research study and interfered with discovering more comprehensively about forms of current provision.

The next conclusion is related to students' acculturation which seems to depend on the person, just as much as on a variety of circumstances such as age upon arrival, level and form of education in country of origin, prior English language acquisition, parental help, and finding friends from the host society. Nevertheless, speeding up or forcing the process does not ease the anxiety and frustration caused by culture shock, and eventually immigrant Muslims tend to identify themselves through "hyphenated selves" (Muslim Afghan-American). Part of the process is learning to communicate effectively which is an extremely complex issue to handle, during which numerous mistakes can be made. Ineffective communication may occur due to lack of fluency in language of the host culture, pronunciation, grammar, unfamiliarity with topics being discussed, or social factors.

The key aspect in communication is one's language acquisition, and most children who arrive during high school years will have to face challenge as they tend to pass the critical period for second language acquisition (as children get older there is a decline in performance particularly in phonology acquisition). ESOL/ELL and content teachers do what they are professionally expected to in order to

fulfill their roles by giving students proper and even extra ESOL/ELL provision, but mainly to develop communicative competency in English, and to prepare for standardized annual tests. They are usually concerned with the linguistic needs of these students and their accomplishments to rapidly meet the requirements of the curriculum.

No Child Left Behind is a partially successful program. The students are given proper and even extra provision in order to learn the English language and be able to join mainstream classes to continue with their academic attainment in English. The constant modification can only suggest that instructional designers aim at betterment and that the number of such students is growing. The weakness of ESOL/ELL provision is that it is more content based rather than culture based as it is designed to help students achieve satisfactory test scores on standardized tests. The consequence of *NCLB* is that while there is attention and constant revision on English language teaching, at the same time, as a consequence of the pressure on language learning and content knowledge, the system does not take the whole child or their intellectual wellbeing under consideration thus wholesome education is not delivered.

School officials have created ways even for ESOL/ELL parents to participate or contribute to the learning experience of their children via a program called PEP, where participating parents are shown how to identify specifics, and essential information in their child's school. The materials are suitable for parents with a variety of English proficiency. The data gained from the field work research shows, however, that a lot of mothers do not speak English at all and do not participate in the program. There is an effort to bring ESOL/ELL parents together yearly at an ESOL or ELL dinner, breakfast in schools. Due to its infrequent occurrence, the attention mainly goes to regulations and rules about ESOL/ELL teaching, and parents who attend there can hardly exchange meaningful information about additional issues.

It is necessary for parents and teachers to recognize that they are all responsible for the intellectual wellbeing of these students to a large extent, especially regarding the simultaneous learning of English and maintaining their heritage language. Teachers, parents still lack the knowledge and advice on how to address that. One of the most important findings is that there is a lack of addressing the missing heritage/first language support. For the teachers it is unclear when, where and how they should encourage mutual bilingualism because they perhaps do not identify with that role. For the parents it is lack of clear strategies and too many precarious ad hoc solutions to help maintain their children's heritage language. Also, students' first language literacy skills are rarely evaluated upon enrollment, let alone being repeated annually. Without such assessment, their first language proficiency can go undetected and can fade away. The first language need of these students do not receive as much of attention as, for instance, that of the Spanish speakers (*Spanish for fluent speakers).* The U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition is looking for effective educational programs to promote multilingualism for all students throughout the country and is looking for ways to supplement the native language support; however, even at this administrative level it is the top 5 languages only that receive special attention.

Further research aiming at how to expand first language provision is needed as the U.S. Department of Education OELA clearly supports no more than the top five languages. Parental

practices regarding heritage/first language maintenance and English Language learning practices in households also need to be topics of additional research. The role of schools must be discussed and clearly identified how to educate parents and communities regarding the value of first language, and provide guidance, support, and resources. That way the issue of language prestige will be tackled. The interview answers show that students see no relevance in their first language and being fully literate in it on an academic level. The theoretical discussion in Chapter 3.4 emphasizes the importance of written language besides the oral language (Baker, 2006). The participating students in this study often do not realize the worthiness and the relevance of their first language(s) and want to focus on learning Spanish or French as an additional language at school because of globalism and better jobs as their reasoning indicated.

Many other misconceptions on the topic of first/heritage language and bilingualism were discovered during the interviews and in the surveys. For instance, some parents believe their child will master or improve their first language during summer visits to countries where it is spoken or that it can be quickly restored once parents realize that it is fading away. Some are convinced that children could act as quasi tutors at home, but they do not always allow corrections. Others promote assimilation to fit in and neglect their first language. Students also had various attitudes towards how to successfully maintain their first language; for example; by reading in it for a couple of hours at the weekend. They felt it is enough to be passionate about it, and that they can master it if it is only spoken in the household. Some also felt that it is reasonable to neglect it to "improve my English" or "want to learn English first" which shows the presence of language prestige and that this phenomenon is not managed or treated as it should be.

ESOL/ELL teachers are supportive but focus mainly on English Language teaching and academic attainment. Through providing advice they could become active advocates for bilingualism. The influential roles should be divided in a way that teachers efficiently promote and parents assist with bilingual learning. Educators, parents and students should not ignore the fact that in a shrinking world increasing number of jobs require bilingual skills, and that it may also affect earnings. The basics of the *Preview/Review technique* is explained so that all participants become aware of the fact that learning does not have to be exclusively done in English. The two informative and educational leaflet samples provide information for ESOL/ELL parents and teachers about ESOL/ELL students in the U.S. in general, and highlight and refute misconceptions about first/heritage language maintenance and second language learning, and recommend practical ways to achieve bilingualism. Since parents' educational level determines their children's educational success, further research is necessary on practices that less educated parents can utilize if they intend to raise their children balanced bilingual and/or bicultural individuals.

What multiculturalism in America represents is the freedom of religious observation and attire of immigrants; however, integration and the acceptance of the U.S. American values are expected from them. Multiculturalism is represented in a very limited form in school curricula and educational institutions have not moved away from ethnocentrism and the promotion of commonality, yet. This study found that vision on multiculturalism is still nebulous and it has not been addressed adequately. Teachers, students and their parents are equally uninformed about the nuances of multicultural

153

education, hence the newcomers do not know what to expect and the schools do not know how to cater for it. ESOL/ELL teachers and content teachers alike seem not to have a uniform position on how far they should go in order to provide a multicultural environment for immigrant children for their survey responses showed inconsistencies. It was observable that the curriculum itself is not multicultural and that to how extensively a range of cultures are taught about depends on individual teaching effort. Hence the role of teachers as culturally responsive educators and communicators can most definitely be further enhanced.

Although parents did find the school environment multicultural based on student diversity, there was parental dissatisfaction about heritage and religion which points to the fact that the curriculum is obviously not all-embracing. Schools should be a place for cultural pluralism; therefore, students would not have to establish a parallel system that caters for their cultural needs. Chapter 3.3 emphasizes the compassion about the acknowledgement of co-cultures in a society (Samovar, 2007) and that of the conflicting values. Chapter 3.2 draws attention to active strategies (Gudykunst&Kim, 2003) on the subject of collecting information on immigrant children's culture and the teaching about co-cultures. The chapter also explored the importance of social validation (Riley, 2007 and Brah 1996) or recognition of immigrant students at schools in order to prevent their social identity loss (tradition, religion and language are substantial components). The active strategies include the discussion of and the questioning of various cultures (including tradition, language and religion).

Claims of multicultural education from several scholars are discussed in Chapter 3 amongst which Hague (2004) pointed out identity crisis which with the help of a critical curriculum, the affirmation of one's culture at school, could be less intense. Others (Grant 2006, Rong&Preissle 2009, and Nieto 1991) emphasize constructing wholesome social and cultural identities via empowering school culture (Banks 2010) with genuine multicultural activities. As discussed in Chapter 2.4 effective multicultural education teaches how to think not what to think, and how to negotiate and harmonize one's social and cultural identity. Whereas extracurricular clubs such as the MSA, Multicultural or Intercultural Clubs offered in high schools sound promising, in reality they are very shallow. GATP has substantially more potential, only limited schools (FCPS) and age groups (9th grade only) are involved.

Immigrant students' cultural heritage should also be a genuine point of interest to promote equal treatment among the student population of any given school. The field study findings indicate that teachers could find out more about the cultural heritages and that there is not enough done about expanding the curriculum to be more inclusive regarding other cultures represented in schools except for extra-curricular activities. ELL/ESOL teachers in general believe that the role of secondary schools in the process of cultural adjustment is simply to help educate about American culture while respecting the heritage culture. Teachers, parents and students tend to think that the mere presence of cultures or the option to sign up for certain culture-based after school clubs is enough to declare a school multicultural. With a proper insight into what multiculturalism actually entails, they could maintain their cultural heritage. With the implementation of the proposed and tested Cultural Heritage Project in such after school clubs like the MSA, students could find out more about their cultural heritage as they explore it deeply below the surface.

There are many existing programs that, if implemented properly, could make changes in lives of these people. For instance, the MSA program should go beyond its superficial existence, reduced focus on awfully few layers of objective culture, and expand it to subjective culture (Brislin, 1996) and should fully explore cultures of participants as it is meant to be a culture based club. (Similarly to MSA, multicultural clubs can do the same.) Culturally responsive educators will go beyond their assigned roles and will pursue professional development to educate themselves, the students and their parents. Through the Cultural Heritage Project, advocated in this study, teachers can become collaborators and part of the culturally responsive system.

Raising awareness about the main issues (religion, language, culture) and enhancing forms of provision are all places for improvement. This study proposes putting multiculturalism in schools without having to require major curricular changes; instead, through the involvement of teachers and parents as facilitators maximize learning opportunities and most significantly allow the students themselves as researchers to take advantage of what is offered. This type of multicultural education could be done somewhat implicitly promoting cultural pluralism and offering validation. The above recommendations could have positive implications on students in this system because parents and schools can affect the way students negotiate and construct their bicultural and bilingual identities. This research contributes to the field of ESOL/ELL by filling in the gap in critical pedagogy: raising awareness about the role of religion and how it might be interwoven in one's identity, therefore, highlighting the importance of teaching about it besides the enhancement of extracurricular activities promoting advocacy among ESOL teachers and parents.

This study established clear expectations and strategies, identified roles and responsibilities, options and consequences and offers pragmatic implications on heritage culture and language maintenance among Muslim students in the U.S. The efficient interventions are offered through an explanatory leaflet regarding first language maintenance and bilingualism written for parents and teachers so that they can become advocates themselves; and the Cultural Heritage Project which engages students in critical thinking and can launch a discourse on cultures which are noticeably present in schools and specifically in culture-based after school clubs. Commitment is needed from students, their parents and from teachers, school staff along with meaningful school projects, or assignments. The research aspires to have an impact on current educational practice. The Cultural Heritage Project is applicable to many forms of ESOL and has already been piloted successfully on college level. It promotes teacher-student-parent collaboration. It teaches critical thinking skills via self-reflection, meaningful discourse on cultures, and the negotiation/creation of identity construals. It allows participants to dig deep below the tip of the iceberg as there is more than meets the eyes.

Based on the verbal feedback from educators seeking professional development at the 2012 WATESOL and 2012 WVTESOL conference sessions (title of presentation: *Addressing the Absence of First/Heritage Language Support and the Promotion of Multicultural Growth among Immigrant Students in the Secondary School Environment*) and the 2011 findings from dissertation field work interviews and surveys, I decided to conduct further research into parental practices regarding first language and cultural heritage maintenance. This new effort called *Language and Cultural Heritage Maintenance Practices and Objectives among Immigrant Parents of EHLS (English for Heritage Language Speakers) Children in the U.S.* is an extension of the original research that highlighted an obvious gap in knowledge and misconceptions among parents and educators alike, which need to be addressed. The participants are immigrant parents who are English Language Learners themselves and the new research aims at addressing preservation techniques (heritage language and culture) utilized in their household. There have been several recent publications advocating bilingualism and cultural preservation, and there is a positive indication of an emerging interest at the federal level in bilingual speakers in the U.S.:

> "Native speakers of critical languages are in high demand in the U.S. government. EHLS trains advanced English speakers to be effective communicators and strong candidates for federal jobs. The 2014 EHLS Program is open to native speakers of Amharic, Arabic, Balochi, Bambara, Dari, Hausa, Hindi, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mandarin Chinese, Pashto, Persian Farsi, Punjabi, Somali, Tajik, Tamashek, Turkish, Urdu, Uzbek or Yoruba." (Center for Applied Linguistics, EHLS Program, online, 2013)

However, as the original dissertation research presented, practical steps have not been taken towards a thorough reflection on current practices and attitudes regarding change in future directions of this subject matter. Moreover, a consensus of opinion among researchers, policy makers, educators, and immigrant parents is still absent. The new survey results are expected to provide insight into current practices and objectives among immigrant parents and the school experiences of their EHLS (English for Heritage Language Speakers) children in the U.S. In turn, policy makers and educators who are already advocates themselves can recognize which applied practices must be reformed and communicated clearly to parents of EHLS children, as well as educators who are still dubious. It is anticipated that the impact of this new study will positively affect and sway the false beliefs of unconverted educators, along with the practices and the philosophies of schools regarding the preservation of one's heritage language and culture.

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Newly Arrived/First Generation ESOL/ELL Students in American Secondary Schools—a Comparative Study of Sociocultural Adjustment and Provision

A research project
May-December 2011

This is a leaflet for children aged 14-18 years and their parents

Please will you help me with my research?

Will you take part in a group discussion and/or fill in a questionnaire?
Will you let me observe your teacher and class in your classroom?

This leaflet gives some details about the project.
I have set out the questions you might want to ask, with my answers. You can talk about them together before you decide if you would like to take part.

Please contact me (Krisztina) if you want more details and/or if you would like to join the project.

Krisztina Domján
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Why is the research being done?

Many students receive education in American secondary/high schools whose first language is not English.

As you know, your secondary education is very important to help you gain a variety of skills so that you have an enjoyable and balanced future as an adult. So far, researchers have not asked a great variety of newly arrived English as a Second Language (ESOL/ELL) students much about how they see their secondary education. I plan to listen to boys and girls, parents/carers, and staff and write about their views. The aim is to discuss a number of issues and let teaching staff in secondary schools know more about the type of provision that ESOL students and their families find work extremely well in these two countries. I would also like to see what could be improved. It is important to see what should improve so that students receive the best education they deserve. *You are selected to take part because you have first-hand experience in this topic.*

What questions will the project ask?

- What do you find works well?
- Do you have any problems with your studies? And, if so, how do you and your parents try to solve them?
- Do you remember what happened to you when you first arrived to your secondary school? Have there been any changes in provision ever since? Would you like to make changes?
- How would you advise someone who arrives to your school (someone from the same background)?

Who will be in the project?

- Boys and girls from US American secondary schools and their parents.
- The age groups are 14-18 years. (Grades 9-12)
- I will talk to boys and girls in separate groups and I will talk to their parents separately, too.
- It will happen once during your ELL/ESOL lesson.

Do I have to take part?

- You have time to decide if you want to take part or not.
- You can talk to a friend or other person before you make a decision.
- You can ask any questions and discuss your views with me.
- If you do not want to answer a question, just say "pass".
- You do not have to tell me anything unless you want to.
- You can tell me if you want to have a break or stop.
- You can refuse or drop out at any time without needing to give a reason. (But, if you give one that would help my research project.)
- This research project will not affect any care/services that you are having now.
- You will still get the best possible education in your school.

What will happen to me if I take part?

- If you agree, I will observe you and your classmates during various lessons.
- If you agree, I will meet you in your school to talk to you and your schoolmates in a group.
- I will talk to boys and girls separately.
- I would like to record our discussion.
- There are no right or wrong answers; it is your views that matter.
- Your answers and views might not be included in the final notes.
- Later, if you want to, you can comment on my conclusions about the project.

Would there be any problems for me if I take part?

- I hope you will enjoy this group discussion.
- Some people might get upset when talking about their lives. So, if you want to stop at any time, we will stop.
- If you have any complaints about the project, please tell me, or Dr Sebastian Rasinger.

Will doing the research help me?

- I hope you will like helping with this project.
- The main aim is to write down what will help very many newly arrived ESOL students and their families in the future, and to see what works well in secondary schools.
- Maybe you too will find the results useful.

Who will know if I am in the research, or what I have talked about?

- **Your ESOL/ELL teacher and your parents will know that you participate in the project. <u>But, they will not see or hear your comments or views.</u>**
- **<u>You will not hear their comments.</u>**
- **I will not mention/write down your name in the project.**
- **I will have a list of the names of students who participate in different secondary schools, but I will keep that list, my notes, and the tapes in a safe place that is locked all the time.**
- **I will delete details about you after the project.**
- **When I write about your views, I will not say your name, so no one will know that you said that.**

Will I know about the research results?

I will contact your ESOL/ELL teacher when the project is finished, so he/she can talk to you about it. You can read my conclusions and comment on them if you want.

If you take part, please keep this leaflet with the copy of your consent form.
May 2011, leaflet version 1.

Thank you for reading this leaflet

Anglia Ruskin
University
Cambridge & Chelmsford

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Title of the project:

First Generation ESOL Students in American Secondary Schools: a Comparative Study of Sociocultural Adjustment and Provision

Main investigator and contact details:
Krisztina Domján (Anglia Ruskin University)
Email: Krisztina@heychad.net or kdomjan@nvcc.edu
Phone: 703-945-6896

1.   I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

2.   I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.

3.   I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.

4.   I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5.   I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the University[99] processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Name of participant (print)………………………….Signed………………….…………..…..Date………………

Name of witness (print)…………………………..Signed………………….….…..…..Date………………

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

Title of Project:
First Generation ESOL Students in American Secondary Schools: a Comparative Study of Sociocultural Adjustment and Provision

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____   Date: _____

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[99] "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner colleges

APPENDIX 2: Student Survey

Your School Experience: Questionnaire for Students

1. Your Background Information

How many countries have you lived in?

How old were you when you arrived to this country?

How soon did you start school here? (after a week, weeks, a month, months)

In what grade were you in your home country when you left?

Did you study a second language in your home country? Which?

What did you expect when you started in this school? (it would be a little bit/very different)

Do you have brothers or sisters?

2. Your First and Additional Languages

Are you studying the English language in this school? How often?

Which languages are used in your house?

With whom do you speak in English?

Which language do you speak best?

Which language do you like to speak most?

Which language(s) would you like to learn at school?

Which language(s) do you learn at school?

Can all your family members speak English? (If not, who does not speak English?)

Do your parents take ESL classes, or did they in the past? Was/is it helpful?

What kind of tests/exams have you taken since you started in this school?

What are your favorite American TV shows, movies, radio programs, and internet websites?

3. Your Teachers

How do you learn/do your homework every day? (What is your learning technique?)

Do your teachers give you homework/schoolwork/coursework that you can do quite easily? If not, what do you do about it?

Can your teachers understand you and communicate with you?

Do you talk about learning styles, expectations with your teachers?

Is there a teacher/staff member who supports/encourages you (or can be your role model)? Who and why?

Is help/counseling available when you have special problems or difficulties? Who do you talk to?

In this school, who is teaching you helpful new words (vocabulary), important information about school, how to listen in class, how to get the teachers' attention, the correct tone/voice level in class?

(Circle your answers, please) Does the school have: prayer rooms, *halal* food; understand the needs of fasting, Muslim teachers, Islamic studies, Arabic language teaching?

Do your parents or guardians give you advice about dress code, eating, praying habits at school?

Are you doing well at school? (Yes…No…Can be better) Why?

Do you participate in any extracurricular activities?

Are you a member of the MSA?

Do you always understand what happens around you in school?

Do you think that your school is a supportive environment?

Do you like coed or would you rather attend a school where boys are separated from girls?

What do your parents do (jobs, other people in your household)?

4. Your Culture and Your Friends

Explain a typical day at school in your country of origin from the morning until the afternoon (shortly):

What subject(s) did you study in your home country?

What are the responsibilities of teachers in school in your home country, how do they behave?

What do you miss and what do you not miss at all? Why?

What are the cultural differences between the American and your home country's schools?

What (do you think) is important for most students and what is for you at school?

Who has (has anyone) asked you about your culture/home country at school?

Do you have friends from the American culture?

Compare the meaning of American friendships and friendships in your country:

Have you experienced judgment from other students, how, in what form?

How does this school deal with bullying?

Do you ever have a sense of not fitting in/ you are not welcomed here? If yes: how, when?

Are you a member of any after school (extra-curricular activities) clubs? Which one? If not, why not?

(Circle the true statements) In my school I feel safe enough to:…Be myself…Choose what I want to do and to do it…Go wherever I want to…Give my opinion

5. Your School Plans

Is this secondary school (and each classroom in it) inviting?

What do you find strange (weird - and wonderful +) about American schools?

Is this your first school in America? What schools have you attended before?

Have you attended private faith schools in the USA?

Are you planning to change schools in the near future? (If so, why? If not: why not?)

If this isn't your first school, why did you leave the other school? Is the new one better or worse?

<u>Survey questions—Parents</u>

Can you understand/speak/read/write in English?

Do you attend or have you attended any ESL classes?

What did you expect (on the grounds of reality) when your child enrolled in an American school?

Is this high school inviting (make parents feel comfortable, welcome)?

Do you consider this school inter/multi-cultural? Do all cultures receive equal attention in the school? How?

Is your child a member of any clubs at school (extra-curricular activity) ? Which one? If not, why?

Are you happy with the ESOL/ELL program in this school?

Do you receive feedback about the performance of your child (e.g. test/exam) and how?

 Who is responsible for teaching your child the accepted vocabulary, what information is important, the appropriate way to listen, methods of getting attention, tone/voice level, or to read kinetics codes?

Does the school or the content teachers provide your child with tasks that he/she can do/accomplish?

Has your child experienced discrimination from other pupils, how, in what form?

Does the school tackle bullying adequately? (Bringing in both parents, follow up, instead of scolding, detention)

Is counseling available for your child whenever he/she has special problems or difficulties?

How does the school meet the specific needs of Muslim students? (Prayer facilities, daily Slat, Friday prayer, *halal* food, understanding the needs of fasting, extra-curricular activities, assembly, Muslim teachers, Islamic studies, Arabic)

Are there adult role models for Muslim students in this school?

How does the school make your child confident in his/her Muslim identities? (Do subjects such as History, Literature, Drama, etc. offer children a clear and positive sense of identity?)

What educational opportunities did your child have in your home country (highest level reached, significant interruptions, literacy, and second language acquisition)?

Have you experienced multiple migrations?

Is it easy for you to understand/appreciate cultural differences? Why?

Are you satisfied with the level of your child's education attainment?

Is this your child's first school in this country?

If this isn't your first, why did you switch last time? Is the new one any better? How?

Are you planning to switch schools in the near future, why, why not?

APPENDIX 4: ELL/ESOL Department Survey

Survey and/or Interview questions—ELL/ESOL Department, or MSA

A

What are the explicit and implicit goals of education in this institution? (Ethos)

Does the school use an inter/multi-cultural curriculum or modified national curriculum due to the presence of immigrant students? What provisions of inter/multi-cultural education exist in this school?

How does this education system meet the specific needs of Muslim students? How do schools make students confident in their Muslim identities or offer children a clear and positive sense of identity?

For instance:
- Prayer facilities, daily Salat, Friday prayer
- *halal* food
- Understanding the needs of fasting
- Special Curriculum (Islamic studies, Arabic)
- Extra-curricular activities
- Special assembly
- Special assistance—is counseling available for ethnic minority pupils whenever they have special problems or difficulties?

B

Are there adult role models for Muslim students in schools? ("…how narrow-minded it is to believe that people can be inspired only by those who are exactly like them in race and ethnicity" p276, Race and Ethnicity in the US by Steinberg)

Is there ESL teaching in the community? What types and do parents take them?

Are parents encouraged to take ESL classes?

How much interest do parents show in their children's progress at school?

How do schools make parents feel welcome, comfortable within the school context?

Are there any parental (Middle Eastern and African) concerns from parents regarding Health education?

Is there a school-home/community liaison?

Who else (should) assist such students besides schools?

Is special attention paid to the performance of first generation immigrant students and how? Who is in charge?

C

How satisfied are you with provisions for teaching ethnic minority students? Any modification in the future?

Are there any intercultural workshops available for staff/teachers?

What is the school's attitude towards the recruitment of teachers from ethnic minorities?

Are there any Muslim teachers or teachers of Middle Eastern and/or East African cultural heritage?

How do all cultures receive equal attention in the schools (a "culturally competent system of care" (Delgado))?

What should be the role of secondary schools in the process of intercultural adjustment? Where to draw the line?

How can the school, staff, or others minimize the potential pitfalls, and emphasize the potential benefits in the process of engaging these students, communities?

How do schools assist in increasing students' functional fitness, communication competence in the new educational setting?

Do immigrant children (from culturally diverse background) affect the way in which the school functions?

Does the school or the content teachers provide students with a sense that they can accomplish the tasks they asked them?

D

Who is responsible for teaching the newly arrived students the accepted vocabulary, what information is important, the appropriate way to listen, methods of getting attention, tone/voice level, or to read kinetics codes?

Who have responsibility for developing pupils' competence in English, both written and spoken?

What qualifications do you expect from staff that is appointed to work with newly arrived students?

What is your plan to integrate the various cultures in a multicultural classroom into a classroom community?

What is the admission policy of ELL students?

What/how much do you know about the cultural backgrounds of the students (the education structure of their cultural heritage, learning style preferences, nonverbal behaviors, and gender role expectations)?

How many times have guidelines changed regarding ELL students in the past 10 years or since you are in charge?

Do you encourage ELL students to read (and write) in their languages and maintain their cultural heritage?

Is wording on tests simplified for ELL students in various subject areas?

Who makes sure in school that students understand what happens around them?

Are students' first language literacy skills evaluated upon enrolment as well as English?

It is suggested to be helpful to learn about newly arrived immigrant children's background.

Teachers are to ask a list of questions including but not limited to:

- If the child was schooled or unschooled before entering the host country
- If the child's education was continuous or fragmented
- If there is clear communication between school and the child's home and the status of the parents
- If the child has independent learning skills
- If the child has participated in bilingual education before
- If the child has experienced multiple or single global, interstate and intra-school mobility
- If the child has learned a second language before
- If the child has learned English before entering the host country
- If the child is literate and academically advanced in his/her own language

E

How do schools maximize the significance and value of cultural and ethnic diversity?

What is the school's strategy for protecting students from racial atrocities? How do you challenge racism?

How are minority ethnic pupils encouraged to appreciate and express important aspects of their identity and heritage?

In general, how do mainly white schools adequately prepare their pupils for adult life in a society that is culturally and ethnically diverse and promote cohesion?

Is there a copy of anti-bullying policy that I can see? What was the name of that presentation in your school? Is it available in any other languages? Is it explained to ELL or mainstream students?

Who makes sure that ELL students receive pastoral provision (not necessarily the guidance counselor) if needed?

Is there a mentoring system in the school (either teachers or older students, external person)?

F

Is there IMLI (Immigrant Minority Language Instruction) in compulsory education, in this school county or in this specific high school?

Does the institution have an explicit/implicit policy with respect to the role of language in education, and how would multilingual education fit/not fit with existing policy? For example:

Are there sufficient core and reference material available for teachers and for students in the language(s) of instruction?

Are there a sufficient number of trained and experienced teachers who are fluent speakers of the languages of instruction and who are trained to teach via those languages or who can prepare such materials?

How leniently do you handle student evaluations or test? How subjective can you be during the interpretation of test scores?

Is there a 3 year limit for ELL students?

Is it only the annual WIDA tests or are schools encouraged to use any other formal or informal assessments throughout the school year?

What is the number of ELL hours students receive per week: for the low level, high level?

Do you keep track of how well ELL students do on test having joined mainstream classes?

Do content teachers communicate with you if they have ELL students in their classes? What are typical concerns?

APPENDIX 5: Content Teachers Survey

Survey or Interview questions—teachers

In the school…

What provisions of multi-cultural education exist in this school?

How does this school meet the specific needs of Muslim students (to make them confident in their Muslim identities, to offer children a clear and positive sense of identity)?

Prayer facilities,
Halal food
Understanding the needs of fasting
Curriculum (multi/inter-cultural)
Extra-curricular activities
Assembly
Muslim teachers
Special assistance
Content subjects…

Is ELL/ESOL teaching provided for non-native speaker students? How?

Are the role models for Muslim students in schools? ("…how narrow-minded it is to believe that people can be inspired only by those who are exactly like them in race and ethnicity" p276, Race and Ethnicity in the US by Steinberg)

Who monitors the performance of first generation immigrant students and how?

Is there a difference between tests/exams for native speakers and ESOL/ELL students?

How adequately does this school tackle bullying, discriminative/prejudiced behavior?

Is counseling available for immigrant ethnic minority pupils whenever they have special problems or difficulties?

What is the school's strategy for protecting students from racial atrocities?

How much interest do parents show in their children's progress at school?

Do immigrant children (from culturally diverse background) affect the way in which this school functions?

Who is responsible for teaching the newly arrived students the accepted vocabulary, what information is important, the appropriate way to listen, methods of getting attention, tone/voice level, or to read kinetics codes?

What qualifications do you expect from staff that is appointed to work with newly arrived students?

How does the school assist in increasing students' functional fitness, communication competence in the new educational setting?

Are there any intercultural workshops (professional development) for staff/teachers?

Languages:

Are sufficient core and reference material available for teachers and for students in their first language(s)?

Are there trained individuals available who can prepare such materials?

Are there a sufficient number of trained and experienced teachers who are fluent speakers of the languages of instruction and who are trained to teach via those languages?

Are there teachers at secondary level teaching community, and standard language and literature to examination levels?

Are you satisfied with the provisions for teaching ethnic minority pupils?

In the classroom…

Is it easy for you to understand/appreciate cultural differences?

What do you expect (on the grounds of reality) when a Muslim ELL/ESOL student enrolls in the school?

What is your competency of intercultural communication?

What/how much do you know about the cultural backgrounds of your students (the education structure of their cultural heritage, learning style preferences, nonverbal behaviors, and gender role expectations)?

How much time do you give them to "warm up", to become familiar with the new culture?

Do you discuss/negotiate leaning styles, expectations?

How much of a work load is it on you as an instructor?

Does your current classroom setting embody only American cultural values?

Do all cultures receive equal attention in the schools? Why, how?

How do you make sure that you provide ELL/ESOL students with tasks that they can accomplish?

How/Can a multicultural education be effective if it must deal with a large variety of learning styles and language differences?

How can you minimize the potential pitfalls, and emphasize the potential benefits in the process of engaging these students?

Do you make sure that the student develops a secure ethnic identity and is able to establish genuine interpersonal contact with members of the dominant group?

How do you develop some classroom exercise that might help students in a multicultural classroom overcome ethnocentrism?

What is your plan to integrate the various cultures in a multicultural classroom into a classroom community?

How do you challenge racism? (Zero tolerance?)

Number of workshops you attended about inter/multicultural education or communication regarding ELL students?

Do you encourage ELL students to read (and write) in their languages?

Is wording on tests simplified for ELL students in your subject area?

Do you communicate with ELL teachers on a regular basis if you have ELL students in your class?

Do you always make sure that ELL students understand what happens around them in your class?

Are you involved in pastoral provision in school at all?

Are you satisfied with the level of or the number of opportunities to enhance your professional development regarding dealing with ELL students?

Who have responsibility for developing pupils' competence in English, both written and spoken?

Is there a mentoring system in the school (either teachers or older students)?

In the community…

Which multicultural organization works with the school?

Do you liaise with nearby mosques? How?

How many languages do you speak?

How often do you travel abroad? Where?

APPENDIX 6: Student Survey in Arabic

1- معلومات عن حياتك السابقة .

- كم عدد الدول التى عشت بها فى الماضى ؟
- كم كان عمرك عندما وصلت لهذه البلد ؟
- متى بدأت دراستك بعد وصولك (بعد أسبوع /أسابيع / شهر / أشهر) ؟
- فى أى درجة دراسية كنت عندما تركت دراستك فى وطنك (9،8،7، 10 ، 11 ، 12)؟
- هل درست لغة أجنبية فى مدرستك التى فى وطنك الأصلى ؟
- ما هى توقعاتك عندما بدأت دراستك فى هذه المدرسة (ستكون مختلفة (جدا أو قليلا) عن دراستك فى وطنك الأم ؟
- هل لك أخوة أو أخوات ؟وكم

2 – لغتك الأولى والثانية

- هل تدرس اللغة الأنجليزية فى هذه المدرسة ؟ وكم عدد ساعات الدراسة ؟
- هل تدرسها فى مدرسة بعد مدرستك تلك أومع مدرس خاص ؟
- ما هى اللغة المستخدمة غالبا فى منزلك ؟
- مع من تتكلم الأنجليزية بصورة دائمة ؟
- ما هى اللغة التى تتكلمها بطلاقة أكثر ؟
- ما هى اللغة – اللغات ـ التى تريد أن تدرسها فى مدرستك هنا ؟
- ما هى اللغة – اللغات – التى تدرسها هنا فى مدرستك ؟
- هلى يستطيع أفراد أفراد أسرتك تكلم الأنجليزية ؟ أو من منهم لا يستطيع ؟
- ما هى أنواع الأمتحانات التى خضتها منذ أن بدأت دراستك فى هذه المدرسة ؟
- ما هى (برامجك التلفيزيونية / الأذاعية / الأفلام / مواقع النت) الأمريكية ؟

3 – مدرسيك

- كيف تتعلم / تقوم بواجبك المدرسى يوميا (ما هى خطتك للمذاكرة)
- هل يقوم مدرسوك بإعطائك واجب مدرسى أو واجب بعد دوام الدراسة سهل أم صعب ؟ وإذا كان صعبا ماذا تفعل للتغلب على ذلك ؟
- هل يستطيع مدرسوك فهمك والتواصل معك ؟
- هل تتكلم مع مدرسيك على طريقة التعليم وتوقعاتك بشأنها ؟
- هل هناك مدرس أو عضو فى المدرسة يساعدك ويكون بمثابة مثل أعلى لك ؟ كيف ولماذا ؟
- هل تتلقى المساعدة أو المشورة عندما تواجهك مشكلة ما ؟ ومع من تتكلم ؟
- فى المدرسة ، من الذى يعلمك مفردات لغوية جديدة ، أو معلومات مهمة عن المدرسة مثل كيف تفهم شرح المدرس ، أو كيف تجذب أنتباهه أو كيف يتم ضبط طريقة التحدث فى الفصل ؟
- من فضلك ضع دائرة حول الأجابة التى تريدها : ـ هل المدرسة بها مكان للصلاة ، طعام على الطريقة الإسلامية ، تفهم لعادة الصيام عند المسلمين ؟
- هل أن راضى عن مستواك الدراسى (نعم ، لا ، بعض الشىء) ؟

4 – بيئتك الثقافية وأصدقائك .

- تكلم عن يومك الدراسى العادى فى بلدك الأصلية (من الصباح وحتى الظهيرة)
- ما هو التخصص الذى درسته فى بلدك الأصلية ؟
- ما هى المسئوليات التى يقوم بها المدرسون فى مدرسة بلدك الأصلى وكيف يتصرفون فى المدرسة ؟
- ما الذى تفتقده ولماذا؟
- ما هى الفوارق الثقافية بين مدرستك الأمريكية ومدرسة بلدك الأم؟
- فى إعتقادك ، ما هو الشىء الأكثر أهمية لك ولبقية الطلاب فى المدرسة؟
- من فى المدرسة قد سألك عن عاداتك وتقاليد وطنك ؟
- هل لك أصدقاء من بيئة أمريكية الثقافة ؟
- قارن بين مفهوم الصداقة فى أمريكا ومفهومها فى بيئتك الأصلية ؟
- ها تعرضت لأى إضطهاد من قبل التلاميذ ؟ كيف وبأى شكل ؟
- كيف تتعامل المدرسة مع البلطجة

190

- هل ساورك من قبل شعور بعدم الإندماج أو أنك غير مرحب بك ؟ ومتى ؟
- ضع دائرة حول الجملة الصحيحة (فى مدرستى أشعر بالأمان عندما .... أكون نفسى / أختار ما أريد عمله وأعمله / أذهب للمكان الذى أريد / أعبر عن رأى)

5 - خططك المدرسية

- هل تشعرك المدرسة وفصولها أنك مرحب بك
- ما الذى تجده (غريب / رائع) فى المدارس الأمريكية ؟
- هلى هذه مدرستك الأولى بأمريكا ؟
- هل تريد تغيير هذه المدرسة والذهاب لمدرسة أخرى على المدى القريب؟ ولماذا ؟
- إذا لم تكن هذه المدرسة هى مدرستك الأصلية ، لماذا تركت مدرستك الأصلية ، وكيف ترى المدرسة الجديدة ، هلى هى أفضل من القديمة أم أسوأ ؟

6 – مقابلة الوالدين

- هل تستطيع فهم / كتابة / قراءة اللغة الأنجليزية ؟
- واقعيا ، ما الذى توقعته على أرض الواقع عندما أنتسب طفلك / طفلتك لمدرسة أمريكية إنجليزية ؟
- هل تشعرك المدرسة الأنجليزية الأمريكية أنك مرحب بك
- هل تعتبر هذه المدرسة متعددة الثقافات ؟
- هلى أنت سعيد ببرامج ESOL بهذه المدرسة ؟
- هل تتسلم تقارير من المدرسة تعكس مستوى نجلك الدراسى؟
- هل تستجيب المدرسة لإحتياجات الطلبة المسلمين (أماكن للعبادة / طعام حلال / تفهم لعادة الصيام / توفير مدرسين مسلمين) ؟
- هل هناك طلبة مسيمين يمثلون قدوة فى المدرسة ؟
- من المسئول عن تعليم أبنك مفردات الحديث الملائمة ، المعلومات الأساسية ، الطريقة المثلى للإستماع والحديث وكيفية النقاش وضبط مستوى وصوت المحادثة ؟
- هل تقوم المدرسة ، أوالشخص المسئول بها بإعطاء طفلك واجب مدرسة يستطيع أبنك إنجازه ؟
- هل تعرض طفلك لإضطهاد من قبل التلاميذ ؟ كيف وبأى شكل ؟

- هل تعالج المدرسة البلطجة أو العنف بشكل كاف هل يتم إستدعاء الوالدين / الحرمان من الدراسة / متابعة الطلبة
- هل تكون الأستشارة أوالنصيحة متاحة لطفلك فى المدرسة عندما تواجهه صعوبات أو مشاكل ؟
- كيف تساعد المدرسة طفلك على الشعور بهويته المسلمة مثلا (التاريخ / الأدب / هل تقوى المدرسة حاسة الهويه الثقافية عند طفلك
- هل هناك مدرسين يساعدون طفلك على التأقلم فى المدرسة ؟
- ما هى الفرص التعليمية التى حصل عليها طفلك فى مدرسة وطنه الأم؟ مثل (أعلى مستوى علمى وصل له / الثقافة الأدبية / مساهمة مؤثرة فى عمل تعليمى أوثقافى / تعلم لغة أخرى)
- هل هذه مدرسة أبنك الأولى فى أمريكا ؟
- هل هاجرت أكثر من مرة؟
- ما الذى تجده غريب أو رائع فى المدرسة الأمريكية ؟
- هل من السهل عليك تفهم وتقدير الإختلافات الثقافية ؟
- هل ترى أن كل الثقافات تأخذ حقها من الإهتمام فى المدرسة ؟
- هل أنت راض عن المستوى التعليمى لطفلك ؟
- هل تنوى تغيير المدرسة لطفلك على المدى القريب ؟ ولماذا ؟
- إذا لم تكن هذه هى المرة الأولى ، لماذا غيرت مدرسة أبنك ، وهل وجدت المدرسة الجديدة أفضل أم لا ؟

Waxaad Iskuulka Kala Kulamatay: Suaalo Kusaabsan

1.Warbixintada

Imisa wadan ayaad ju nolayad?
Imisa jire ayaad ahayad markaad wadankaan timid?
Isla markii meyaad bilab day iskuul halkan (isbuuca, dhoora isbuuc, bil, mese bilooyin)
Faslakee/sanadkee (7/8/9/10/11/12) faslakeed ahayad markaad wadankaaga katagtay?
Mabartay luugad kale markaad wadan kaaga joogtay? Keed bartay?
Maxaad kafilanaysay markad bilaabtay skuulka (waxyar ma kuuga ad kaatay/maka duwanaa)?
Walalo maledahy? (Abayo amo aboowe)?

2. Luugadaada Uguhoresysa

Skuulkaan aad tagtid mabarataa luuqada inglishka imisa mar?
Markaad iskuulka katagtid macalimada guriga makuugu timaada oo kubarta luuqada?
Afkeed gurigiina ku hadashaan?
Yaad kulahadashaa ingriska?
Luuqadeed aad ugu hadashaa?
Luuqadeed ayaad kaheshaa inaad kuhadashid?
Luuqadeed rabtaa inaad iskuulka kabaratid?
Luuqadeed iskuulka kabartaa?
Reerkiino dhan maku hadli karaan afkaa ingriiska? (hadaya su aashu tahay maxay ubran waayeen ingriskaa?
Intaad hada iskuulka dhiganaysay imisa itixaamo kala duwan ayaa lagaa qaaday?
Markaa daawanaysid teefiga Amerikaanka maxaad jeceshahay inaad dawatid mawarka, radiyah mariwaaydo ma kumbuyuutarka ayaad gasha?

3. Macalimadaada

Sideed wax ubarataa/wajibkaa malinkasti masamaysaa? (sideed wax ubartaa?)
Macalimadu makusiisaa wax aad kasoo shaqaysid (iskuulka kusaabsan yahay, aada sifudud ama amusnaan aad kubarankartid)? Haday suaashu tahay may, maxaad samaysaa?
Macalimadadu makufahmikartaa mana kula hadashaa?
Makala hadashaa xaga waxbarshada iyo sidaad wax ubaran lahayd iyo wax aad filanaysid?
Maledahay macalimad kudhiiri galinaysa oo kutiraahda wax baro (ama aad kudayto? Yay tahay? Sabab?)
Markaad dhib qabtid kaansularka maku caawiyaa oo diyaar makuu? Yahay maxood kala hoda shaa?
Iskuulkan makuu baraan ereyo mana u argataa inaya kucaweyaan wax yabaha ugumuhiinsanoo ahkamid tahay sida macalimad loola hadalo,sida fasalka wax loogu dhagaysto iyo wax yaabo kala duduwan?
(Fadalan goobabin galey su aasha) iskuulku maleyaha meel aya ardayad musliminta kutukadaan iyo cuntada xalaash ah, mafahamaan wax ay ardayada musliminta ubahan yihiin?

Sifiican wax ma ubarataa markaad iskuulka joogtid (hay, may, sificaan) sabab?

4. Dhaqankaaga iyo saxiibadaa

Warakabixisidaad ku ahayad wadan kaaga subaxii ilaa iyo habeenki, (soo gaabe)
Madadeed kabartay wadankaaga?
Maxaay samayaan macaliminta somaalida markaad wadan kaaga joogtay, edabtooda siday yihiin?
Maxaad uxiistay ama aadan uxiisin? Sabab?
Maxay kukala duwan yihiin wadankaaga iyo amerika iskuulad kooga?
Maxaad umalaysaa oo ogu muhiinsan ardaydoo dhan siduu adiga iskuulku kuu yahay?
Yaa kuwaydiiya iskuulka dhaxdiisa dhaqankaaga?
Saaxibo amerikaan ah maleedahay?
Isku daya labada saaxibo kuwa amerikaanka iyo kuwa soomalida?
Midab takoor mala kulantay aydadka kale kugu samayeen side ka mid ah?
Maxay iskuulku ka qabtaan ardayda wax dandansata?
Madareentay inaadan ka mid aadan ahayan ama aysan kusoodhaweyan. Haday arintu tahay haa, maxaa ka mid ah?
(goobo gali tii runta ah) warkaan iskuulka nabad aad ubadan kudaremay naf ahantay waxaan rabo ayaan samayan karaa, meeshan rabo ayaan tagaa, waxaan rabo ayaan iraahdaa.

5. Barnaamijaka Iskuulkaaga

Dugsigaan sare (fasalkasti ma kusoo dhaweeyeen?)
Maxaad kayaabtay (xuna ama wanagsan) iskuuldka Amerikaaan ka?
Iskuulkaan maa kuuga horeyay Amerika?
Mustaqabalka maisku dayaysaa inaada kabadalto, hadii aad isku diyaarinasid sababto maxay tahay, maxaase kuuga wacana?
Haduu iskuulkaani ahayan kii kuugu horeyay, maxaada kii kuugu horeyaa uga tagatay, kana ad hada dhigato maa fiicaanyahay ama xunayahay?

APPENDIX 8: Student Survey in Amharic

የተማሪ ቃለ መጠይቅ

1. በእንግሊዝኛ መስማት/ማንበብ/መጻፍ ትችላለህ/ሽ?

2. ምን ሃይል ማንበብ/ጽ ትችላለህ የኢንግሊዝ ማንበብን ቤት አየገባ?

3. የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ማንበብ ቤት ከመስማት የማይወድ/ና ከመዛፍ የማታጠፍ?

4. ማንበብ ቤት የሁለተም ባህል የማይመለከት ነው?

5. እንተኛ ናሁ ማንበብን ቤት "ESOL" ናመላ እያለው?

6. ኢማንበብን ቤት እለ እኔጃቸ .... የሌላ ሀገ እንተ... ...ነደ...?

7. ማንበብን ቤት ከ .... ተማረን የማይመስ ......?.ከማ.....- ...... የማይመስ ...., ...ማ... ....,.... ......, ...?

8. ከመእም ተማረን ..... የ..... ... ...?

9. ....?

10. ማንበብን ቤት መ..ም ..ተማረ.. ከ.... የማ.... የ.....?

11. ....

12. ....? (..... ...., ...?)

13. የማ.. ....?

14. ....

15. ....?

16. .... (....... ...., ...?)

17. ንንጻዬ ጋዬ ሰጊዉ ወለስቶ ጉንጓምኝ ነይፀ?

18. ዛዩ የፍሬዉ የወፈወሊ ጉምዚርፉ ሰፆ ነዉ?

19. ም ተጄ ጓር ጉጻዓፆ ወዉዉ ወሊ የዉሊ ኔን ኔጉሀሰን የጉምዚ ንዬቶ ጉዶ ዉፉ ነይፀ?

20. ከንቶ _____ ከወለዓፉ ከዉዉከዓ፤
የሰዉ ዔዶዓቶን ከወለዓፉ ሰዉዉቱ ሰኞቆ16 ነዉ ዉዬ?

21. ሀተዉ ነዉዉሀ፤ ነጉምዚርፉ ከቶ ተቀዉዉፉ ንጐፉዉ?
ሐኞቆቶ

22. ዓፉፉ ገዉፉ ዉዉ ሰዬ የፉጉምዚቶ ዉኔ?

23. ጉምዚርፉ ከቶ ከወቀፀር ጉኔከዓ? ከም? ንዑዉሀ ከም?

24. ዛዩ የወፀ,ዉፀ ጉምዚርፉ ከዉዉ ንዑዉ ከም ቀዉዉ ወወ?
ንዶ ጉምዚርፉ ከቶ የቶዕከ ነዉ? ሰም ወዶሀ?

①

1፦ ስንት እገር ወሪሻል፡

2፦ �42ኪ እበ264ን እገር እተወጣ እን7 እበ07ሽ ነው

3፦ በእንተ 246ሽ 7ም ሠር7 ይ07ሙ ሠዚ እገር

4፦ እንተ5 ጓ2ሰ5ክበርግ እገርሽ እተ077 በ075ው እበ0+ም27

5፦ እገርሽ ነው ወም፡ ሁተዘተ5 ቄንቷ ይ0077ሽው (ይ75ውን

6፦ ም0ን2ን እገር ይ00ብ2ሻው �42ኪ እገር እተ007ው

7፦ ወንጿም5 42ወ7 እከሽ፡

② ይ00ይ00ለ5 ቄ2ተ5

1፦ 42ኪ 7ም4ሀ2ር7 በ7 ነው 42ንግ0ከዘ5 ይ+0ይ2ሽ ው፡ እን7፡246፡፡

2፦ ይ2ን2 7ም4ሀ2ር7 በ7 ነው ይ+0ይ2ሽው ወ00ት፡እ0+07ይ6፡በ0ባ0ሽ፡+ቀ
    ዮ0ሽ ነው ?

③፦ ም0ን ቄ7ቷ ነው ይ7007ቀበ0ው በ7ሽ ውን3ት

4፦ ይ7በ7 ነው 42ንግ0ከዘ5 ቄንቷ ይ007007ቀበ0ው፡፡

5፦ ይ7ኛ00ን ቄንቷ ነው በይ2ንከ ይ007ኛ 760ው

6፦ ይ7ኛ ወ2ን ቄንቷ ነው ወ2ንግር ይ007661200ው

7፦ ቅ007ር7 በ7 ወ0007ር ይ007661200ው ቀን2ቷ ይ7500ን ነው

8፦ ም0ን ቄንቷ ነው ይ+0ይ2ሽ ቀ0ም4ሀ2ር7 በ7

9፦ በ7እከበ0ሽ ሁ-ኩ 42ንግ0ከዘ5 ቄ2ቷ ም27ከ0ት፡ም0ኛ00 ይ00ይ0ም
    57ረ0ው 42ን3ትበ7፡፡

10፦ ም0ን እ ይ07ት እ+5ኛ 7ው ይ00ከ2ሽው 4ዚተ007ር7በ7፡ከ7ሽ0ም

11፦ እከ0026ሰ7 ቃከ0ሽ2ን ም0ን ቻ5ሰ 7ው ይ007ቀ2ም0ው
    ወ0ሽ ነው ወ0ም ከ2ም ወ0ም 42ንተ2ኮ7፡ይ7ኛ ወ2 ነው

③ ፦ እከ+0007 6ሽ

1፦ ሠ0ይ00ር2ከ0ሽን ሁ0ባ0ዚ 7ር2ር ይ2ከ6፡ ም0ን 2ም027 ትቀ2ዚ0ን 7007ርከ0ሽ

2፦

APPENDIX 9: Information Leaflet for Parents on First Language Maintenance

"Bilingualism and biculturalism are gifts that everyone should be lucky to receive" (Else, 2001).

Information Leaflet on First Language Maintenance for ESOL/ELL students and their Parents

o   Over 400 languages are spoken by students in American schools
o   20 million immigrant children speak languages other than English, millions have difficulty learning English
o   In American high schools, 44% of ELL/ESOL students were foreign born in 2005
o   1 in every 5 children grows up in an immigrant family in the USA—Unfortunately, their first language is still considered as a 'minority thing' or a 'cultural thing' celebrated once a year on 'multicultural night' or 'international days'
o   Immigrant children in the USA are often encouraged to give up their first language and focus on the English language
o   Losing proficiency in one's first language reduces the chance of looking at the world from different viewpoints
o   Students might drop communication with family members, ethnic community friends, and lower their self-esteem

Myths (*not true*):

*   American English is a strong unifying factor and other languages are a threat to commitment and social cohesion
*   Students will pick up or improve their first language during summer visits back home or to countries where it is spoken
*   Students can maintain their first language by reading in it for a couple of hours at the weekend
*   Student will not forget it if it is spoken in the household
*   First language can be quickly repaired once parents realize that it is already gone
*   It is enough if a student is passionate about their first language
*   The best way to fit in is to quickly assimilate and neglect heritage culture and language
*   It is ok if children teach their parents at home, or it is ok to tell my children not to correct me,
*   It is Ok to talk in broken English at home to learn it and progress together

Truths (true):

✓   ESOL/ELL teachers can give specific advice to students on proper first language maintenance
✓   Becoming monolingual in English; dropping language and cultural heritage often affects teenagers
✓   Students learning English could experience "language shock"
✓   The process of mastering English takes years:
    ▪   Up to 5-15 years, for Gifted children: 2-3 years
    ▪   Those learning English before the age of 12 tend to master native-like fluency as the children get older, the performance declines
    ▪   Oral/social proficiency in 1 year vs. academic proficiency in 5-7 years
✓   Bilingual dictionaries help only little and become counterproductive during testing
✓   Students often do not appreciate their first language and want to focus on learning Spanish or French as an additional language at school
✓   Parents and students need to understand that the 2 languages are not competing but harmonizing with benefits
✓   Students need bicultural or bilingual role models
✓   Bilingualism leads to academic and personal benefits for students
✓   Periodically children's bilingual ability should be tested
✓   Parents should ask professionals about first language maintenance
✓   Students, parents, teachers alike need to become aware that learning does not have to be exclusively done in English
▪   If parents are not fluent in English, they should not use or force incorrect English ('let's learn it together') at home – it will have a negative effect
▪   Conversing in first language will provide opportunity to discuss a variety of topics more in depth and to improve academic attainment
▪   The importance of bilingualism and biliteracy with the help form parents and teachers: a positive self-esteem, positive attitude towards both languages, avoiding language prestige
▪   Literacy skills, concepts and skills learned in one language will transfer to the other
▪   *Preview/Review technique*: the preview/introduction of a lesson in L2, the teaching of it in L1, and then the review of it in L2, or vice versa. This way, the two languages are not only separated but the information (content, sophisticated concepts and vocabulary) is taken in two languages attaining greater student understanding

L1: first language
L2: second language (English)

APPENDIX 10: Information Leaflet for Teachers on First Language Maintenance

"Bilingualism and biculturalism are gifts that everyone should be lucky to receive" (Else, 2001).

First Language Maintenance:

ESOL students in the U.S.:

o Over 400 languages are spoken by students in American schools (Rong&Preissle, 2009)
o 20 million immigrant children speak languages other than English and millions have difficulty learning English (Rong&Preissle, 2009)
o Learning a second language (English) is part of a long-term adjustment process for students whose first language is not English (Cushner&Brislin, 1996)
o In the American secondary education, 44% of ELL students were foreign born in 2005 (NCELA, online).
o At the national level, the foreign-born LEP population increased to 15,672,816 by 2008. In Virginia foreign-born, limited English proficient population of age 5 + increased by 42.3 percent between 2000 and 2008 out of which 2.8 percent were linguistically isolated (MPI, 2011, online).
o 1 in every 5 children grows up in an immigrant family in the USA--L1 is still considered as a 'minority thing' (Souto-Maning, 2006) or a 'cultural thing' celebrated once a year on 'multicultural or international days' (Sook Lee&Oxelson, 2006)
o Immigrant children in the USA are often encouraged to give up their first language and focus on English language acquisition (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008)
o Losing proficiency in one's heritage language diminishes the prospect of viewing the world from different perspectives, and can result in communication breakdowns with family members, alienation from ethnic community networks, and lower self-esteem (Sook Lee & Oxelson, 2006)
o In American public schools immigrant families cannot typically find bilingual instruction and/or multicultural curricula, but Anglo-Saxon culture, the English language, and the pressure to score high on the annual test

Myths:

• American English is a strong unifying factor and other languages are a threat to commitment and social cohesion (Huntington, 2005)
• Students will pick up or improve L1 during summer visits back home or to countries where L1 is spoken (Domján, 2011)
• Students can handle maintenance by reading in L1 for a couple of hours at the weekend (Domján, 2011)
• Student will master it if it is only <u>spoken</u> in the household (Domján, 2011)
• L1 can be quickly restored once parents realize that it is already gone (Domján, 2011)
• It is enough if a student is passionate about L1 (Domján, 2011)
• Parents do not care, they promote assimilation to fit in (Domján, 2011)
• It is ok to neglect L1 to "improve my English" or "want to learn English first" as if there is an order of importance (Domján, 2011)
• It is ok if children act as quasi tutors at home for their parents, who do not always allow corrections (Domján, 2011)

Truths:

✓ Teachers typically do not give specific advice to students on L1 maintenance-they do not know how (Domján, 2011)
✓ Students, learning L2, in the process of linguistic adaptation (Rong&Preissle, 2009) often become monolingual in English; drop L1 and cultural heritage – affecting teenagers especially
✓ L1 is not an obstacle of national unity or commitment to one's social group or country of residence (Gadelii, 2004)
✓ L1 should not result in isolation, be a source of conflict, be made inferior to the official language (Gadelii, 2004)
✓ Focusing on L2 carry the risk of losing L1 or not developing L1 fluency (Garrett et al., 1989)
✓ Students learning L2 and facing limits experience "language shock" (Olsen, 2008)
✓ The process of mastering L2 takes years:

- - 6-7 years, for Gifted children: 2-3 years (Suarez-Orozco, 2002)
    - Up to 7-10 years (Suarez et al., 2008, NALDIC, 1999)
    - 5-15 years; and as the children get older, the performance declines (Butler-Hakuta, 2006)
    - Those learning L2 before the age of 12 tend to master native-like fluency (Rumbaut, 2009)
    - Oral/social proficiency in 1 year vs. academic proficiency in 5-7 years (Rong&Preissle, 2009)
    - Under the age of 10: 60% + chance of mastering L2, over the age of 10 less than 40% (Rong& Preissle, 2009)
  - ✔ Bilingual dictionaries help only little and become counterproductive during testing (Ballantyne, Sanderman, Levy, 2008)
  - ✔ While learning L2 there might be a silent period lasting up to 3 months (Rong&Preissle, 2009)
  - ✔ Some students tend to keep silent in public due to linguicism: students might be ridiculed for their accent (Rong & Preissle, 2009)
  - ✔ L2 acquisition is influenced by factors: age, motivation, identity, cognitive ability, similarity between L1-L2 (Gudykunst, Kim, 2003) or individual uniqueness (Samovar, 2001): attitude, social circumstances
  - ✔ Educators need to show relevance and validate students' L1; for instance, pointing out globalism, job market demands, etc.
  - ✔ Students often do not realize the worthiness and the relevance of L1 and want to focus on learning Spanish or French as an additional language at school because of globalism and better jobs (Domján, 2011)
  - ✔ Educators, parents and students need to realize that L1 and L2 are not competing but harmonize with benefits (Agirdag, 2009)
  - ✔ For linguistic and cultural heritage maintenance students need bicultural or bilingual role models
  - ✔ Educators should stress the idea of positive mutual influence of the American culture and one's cultural heritage (Brah, 1996)

Achieving bilingualism:

- Bilingualism is not and should not be a burden (Gadelii, 2004)

- Heritage language maintenance in the form of *additive bilingualism* leads to academic and personal benefits for linguistic minority students. (Sook Lee & Oxelson, 2006)

- Periodically first generation immigrant children's bilingual ability should be tested using perhaps the Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test (BVAT).
- Parents could be encouraged to form focus groups and be educated about L1 maintenance (Domján, 2011)
- ESL/ELL children should read in English at home to parents/guardians even if they have limited English proficiency (Becker, 2001)
- Academic vocabulary can transfer from L1 to L2 if nurtured (Tucker, 1998)
- ESL/ELL children should read with their parents/guardians together in L1 regularly to reveal the connection between oral and written language (Becker, 2001)
- If parents/guardians are not fluent in English, they should not promote using incorrect English ('let's learn it together') in the household (Becker, 2001)
- Forcing limited and/or incorrect English in the household could have a negative effect on learning (Becker, 2001)
- Conversing in one's strongest language will provide opportunity to discuss a variety of topics more in depth and to cultivate cognitive development, will enhance academic attainment (Becker, 2001)
- Topic learnt in school in English could be discussed in the household in L1: to enrich L1 vocabulary and to receive confirmation of their understanding of the given topic (Irujo, 1998)
- Via transferring values, beliefs, practices in 2 languages one can attain bilingual competence and a bicultural state of mind (Byram, 1998)
- The importance of bilingualism and biliteracy with the help form parents and teachers: a positive self-esteem, positive attitude towards L1 and L2, avoiding language prestige (Irujo, 1998)
- Literacy skills, concepts and skills learned in L1 will transfer to L2 (Ballantyne & Sanderman, Levy, 2008)
- "Literacy in one's home language is the best basis for developing literacy in a second language" (Olsen, 2008)
- Students, parents, teachers alike need to become aware that learning does not have to be exclusively done in English (Irujo, 1998)

- *Preview/Review technique*: the preview/introduction of a lesson in L2, the teaching of it in L1, and then the review of it in L2, or vice versa. This way, the two languages are not only separated but the information (content, sophisticated concepts and vocabulary) is taken in two languages attaining greater student understanding (Irujo, 1998)
- Multiple types of bilinguality (17) exist (Hamers and Blanc, 2000)
  True bilingualism: fully functioning in both languages, *pseudo-bilingualism*: preferring one language, *alinguisticism*: lack of competence in any given language (Rong & Preissle, 2009)
  Dormant bilingual: can express emotions, converse, write academically in one language but do the same on a superficial level in the second. *Balanced bilingual*: can do the same in both languages. An *elite or elective bilingual l* learns L2 to expand academic repertoire. A *folk or circumstantial bilingual* speaks L1 and L2 but is most likely discouraged to maintain L1 (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008)
  Circumstantial bilinguals are immigrants who learn L2 to function in a new society and reserve L1 for particular societal functions (Baker, 2006)
  Nonfluent bilingual: prefer the stronger language; fluent *bilinguals:* both languages mastered equally (Irujo 1998)

L1: first or heritage language
L2: English language

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Cultural Heritage Project

Author(s):

_____

Cultural Heritage:

_____

1.LANGUAGE

How is your language different from English? Is there a different writing system[100]? Can you find different sentence structures or verb tenses? How is the sound system different? Give examples as you describe your language.

Your name in English:

Your name in your language(s):

How old is your language? Write about the historical background of your language.

Did the language experience evolution or language change?

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[100] Web link to the Arabic writing system:…

2. History

In bullet points highlight important events in your country's history (use a clear timeline or chronological order, start with the most recent). Include names, dates and paste pictures if you can.

For example:
2012 November Barack Obama was re-elected as the first African American President of the USA.
…
…
1492 C. Columbus arrives to the shores of today's America – the land is discovered
…

3. Celebrations and Festivals

Is your calendar similar to the one Americans use? If not show us what it looks like.

Following the calendar please highlight and explain important events that are celebrated in your culture or country. Add pictures if you can (typical clothing/food people wear/eat on those occasions, pictures of places where celebrations are held).

4. Literature – Poetry-Art

Who are/were the celebrated poets, authors, writers, artists in your country or culture?

What are compulsory readings, books in school that all students must read and discuss?

Which museums or tourist attractions do people typically visit in your country?

Can you bring books with you and discuss the plot?

Can you share a poem, show a painting, statue, or provide titles of books, novels or short stories?

Would you like to do a book club session during which everyone reads the same book, and then you talk about the story and the characters?

5. Science (Math, Physics, Biology, Chemistry)

Are there famous scientists in your country of origin who have contributed to science? Illustrate with pictures if you can.

Are there Nobel Prize winners or winners of other national or international reputable prizes?

6.Technology

Are there famous inventors in your country now? Were there any in the past? Illustrate the inventions please.

Think about the fact that the Middle East and the Far East played a big role in establishing ancient civilizations and tools used there.

7. Sport

Which sports are practiced in schools?

Who were or who are famous sport figures in your country that other people look up to?

Do not forget about the Olympic or Paralympic Games or other national/international championship winners.

8. Music

Who are famous composers or famous musicians in your culture/country now (or were in the past)?

You may discuss traditional or popular music.

Which musical instruments do musicians typically use?

Share pictures, music, or videos with your group members please?

9. People and their behaviors

How do people dress? Add pictures if you can.
How do people behave in your country or culture?
Describe interpersonal interactions (between strangers, friends and family members), customs and habits please in a variety of settings/situations.

Who are the minority? Is there any form of discrimination (classism, sexism, ageism, racism, linguicism, nepotism, homophobia)? Why?

10.   Religion

Describe the main religion(s) in your country/culture.

What is the people's attitude towards it?

What role does religion play in your society/country?

What role does religion play in your life (then and now)? Explain.

11. Contemporary Events

Describe your country in its current state.

Who are the leaders?

What does the political system look like (one-two-multi party system, who are they? elections – how often)?

What are they trying to achieve?

What changes have been made since you left (new rules, regulations and laws)?

What kinds of jobs are well paid these days?

What are trendy hobbies or activities?

What does the school system look like?

Explain the school calendar, school week, days, the frequency and difficulty of tests/exams and subjects taught there.

<u>Guidelines:</u>

- The purpose of this coursework is to find out more about students' cultural heritage and find continuity.

- Students should concentrate on and discuss one topic per session.

- Each topic helps explore students' cultural heritage.

- Students should be fully engaged voluntarily in the process to carry out an in-depth reflection.

- Students should interview parents or guardians or family members first to start their search.

- Then, they should continue their search in the library or using the internet.

- Students should be encouraged to bring pictures, personal items, music, books, etc. to their meeting to share

- Students must add/cite all sources at the bottom of each page as a footnote.

<u>Thought provoking questions at the end of each topic: (subject to what students discover and reveal)</u>