Exploring a Transnational Core French Teacher's Personal Practical Knowledge and

Classroom Practice Growth Process

By

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

Department of Curriculum Teaching and Learning

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

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Abstract

This thesis explores my knowledge, classroom practice, experience, development, and growth as a French as a Second Language (FSL) teacher in two culturally contrasting national educational contexts during three distinct time periods of my teaching life. The aim of the study is to investigate a transnational teacher's classroom practice and personal practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) with respect to second language (FSL in this case) teaching and learning. The theoretical framework for this study draws from Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist perspective on learning and teaching, Dewey's (1938) principles of interaction and continuity in experience, Clandinin's & Connelly's (1985) concept of personal practical knowledge (PPK), and Mezirow's (1978) notions of transformative learning and perspective transformation. This autoethnographic study explores how my understanding of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching approaches have shifted over time. I am the primary participant in this qualitative study. Additionally, reflections on my home and classroom language learning environment inform my teaching practice. The study draws mainly upon personal and teacher diary entries, reflective journals, and artefacts that enable me to craft stories that express my lived experiences and to examine the development of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and the growth process associated with my teaching practice. Analysis of the data is represented through narratives of my lived experiences and a thematic discussion of the transformations in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice. Findings from this study can inform educators of the need to challenge their own understanding of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and second language learning and teaching theories and to critically reflect on their past and current practices to effectively construct their future practices (Dewey, 1971) to better student learning.

Acknowledgements

Looking back on my journey of challenges and triumphs, I relish this moment to express my utmost gratitude to several people who have helped me to successfully achieve my goal.

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Clea Schmidt. Thank you for your relentless guidance, support, advice, patience, and commitment throughout this long journey. I appreciate the flexibility you gave me to complete the entire writing process in my own time, alongside balancing taking care of my family, coping with my personal struggles, and having a full-time teaching job. Thank you for your time and your flexibility to meet around my schedules, for introducing me to my research pursuits, and for believing in me as a graduate student. I could not have asked for a more supportive advisor. I will forever be grateful to you.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Thomas Falkenberg and Dr. Gail Cormier. Thank you for your time, support, commitment, insight, critical eye, attention to detail, and valuable feedback during this whole process.

To my husband, thank you for your unwavering love, support, understanding, and patience through my challenges and successes. Thank you for being my rock throughout this long, exhausting but rewarding journey. To my children, thank you for your love, snuggles, and sense of humour that have helped me push through. To my parents, thank you for everything you have done for me since birth, and I am eternally grateful for your unconditional love, care, support, and encouragement. To my siblings and all my extended family and friends, who have endured the whole process, thank you for your support and encouragement.

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"*If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn.*"

~ Ignacio Estrada

Chapter One: Introduction

Narrative Beginnings: Exploring My Interest in Becoming a Teacher and My Transition from Learner to Teacher.

I always knew I wanted to teach. You could even say that I went into the family business; my father, many of my paternal uncles, aunts and cousins are all teachers. Being surrounded by so many teachers throughout my life, I was very attracted to the teaching profession, and I weaved a dream of joining the teaching profession one day. My teacher dream was to put my passion for languages in the forefront. There is no doubt that the experience of growing up in a lively and rich linguistic environment triggered much of my interest in languages. Even before my formal introduction to language learning in school contexts, I had developed a keen sense of awareness and interaction with the three main linguistic groups around me: English as the official language imposed via colonisation; the lingering legacy of French, anchored in the local landscape; and the vibrant expressiveness of Creole, born organically on the island.

Intriguingly, my interest in languages and teaching goes back to my childhood days. The desire to teach has been in me since I was a little girl. I reflected on this during my two-year After-Degree Bachelor of Education program:

Growing up in a rich linguistic environment, I was fascinated with languages. I guess it is because my father was a French language and literature teacher. My passion for French was heightened when my father encouraged me to participate in French speaking contests, writing contests, and debate competitions … My mother's stories of me playing 'school' triggered a flood of memories and highlighted my fascination with languages

and my early interest in teaching. According to my mother, I was modelling my teaching

after my father and most likely, my schoolteachers, but she felt that I was also developing

my own identity as a teacher (Reflective journal, January 2007).

Throughout my elementary school years, playing 'school' was my favourite pastime.

Since I would not let my siblings have turns being the teacher, they refused to play with me, and

my mother's flowerpots were my students. When I played 'school' with my mother's flowerpots,

not only did I teach mostly English and French, but I also kept a teacher planner, I prepared and

corrected tests, I provided feedback, I wrote reports, I read out loud to them, and I even told them

stories and shared jokes with them. I was enacting my dream of becoming a teacher. While I had

a strong inclination from a very young age to become a teacher, this desire did not become

concrete until after my three years of undergraduate schooling and secondary school language

teaching experience in Mauritius, a small multicultural island situated in the heart of the Indian

Ocean. The following narrative provides a glimpse of my journey.

My final year of secondary school was imbued with frustration. While I was excited

preparing for university, I was also very frustrated and confused about which field of studies to

choose. From about Grade 10, I had planned to complete a Bachelor of Arts (Joint Hons.) in

English and French at the local university as well as a Bachelor of Education program abroad. I

would then become a secondary school language teacher. However, when the time came to begin

my university application process, I was filled with frustration because many people in my circle

gently pressured me to accept the scholarship that was being offered to me to go to Law School.

While assuming that it would be a 'prestigious' choice for me, they were not inclined to listen

when I voiced my desire to explore the languages. Flashback to 1999 and you would see a

teenage girl walking the halls to submit her university application with so much going on her

mind. The big pressing question? Should she pursue her dream of becoming a teacher, or go into Law School, as her family and school circle had gently suggested? I decided to pursue my dream with the blessings of my parents.

Being very academic, my undergraduate degree involved tutorials, workshops, lectures, note-taking, assignments, tests, examinations, and presentations. Every year, during the summer break, I had the opportunity to go on a Small Working Experience Project (SWEP) in a privately owned co-educational Grades 7-11 secondary school wherein I taught English and French to students aged fourteen to eighteen years old. I was hooked. I had no doubt that I made the right career choice. Thus, my choice for teaching high school students is primarily due to the higher maturity and responsibility level of this student body based on my acquired teaching experience. In June 2002, I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Joint Hons.) in English and French.

Following the completion of my undergraduate degree, I transitioned into working as a secondary school language teacher. I taught Grades 9-11 English and French languages and literature in that same privately owned co-educational secondary school for three consecutive years. The school hired me even though I did not hold an education degree since there was a lack of language teachers at the time. My job involved thirty hours of teaching weekly to class sizes ranging from 30 to 40 students. Part of my job was to also coach my Grade 11 students to prepare them for the University of Cambridge School Certificate (SC) examinations at the end of their school year, and to get accepted in a University of Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC) School. Each year offered a new challenge, and I learnt so much from the different situations. I experienced so much growth as well. What made it worthwhile and enjoyable is that the students wanted to learn, and I tried everything I could to inspire them. What I found is that they valued the guidance provided through unknown waters: they were willing to paddle if I

pointed the way. I knew I had made the right decision then. This was and remains where I belong: in a language classroom.

Overall, I had a wonderful three-year teaching experience, and I was proud to know through regular feedback and evaluations that my students really enjoyed my classes. By having an open-door policy and encouraging ongoing communication, I created an environment that was friendly, accessible, and helpful to the student body. In addition, being the secretary of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) for two years, I felt a higher connection with the students while dealing with their issues at a more personal level. I was also highly active in several extra-curricular activities such as helping to organise the Annual Sports day, Music Day, Prize Giving ceremony, Flag-raising ceremony, and participating in the Drama Festivals. Though extremely challenging and time-consuming, it was one of the most exciting and rewarding periods I have had, as it involved a great deal of challenges along with opportunities for growth.

The experience I gained was even more amazing and enriching in that more challenges were yet to come. I gave my best each year, but at one point, I was not fully content with what I was doing at the school. Year in and year out, it was the exact same thing. There was no innovation at all in my teaching, and the emphasis of the national program of studies was more on a deductive approach to the teaching of grammar, and far more attention was given to reading and writing activities rather than teaching the language as a means of communication and interaction. I felt like I was coaching my students to complete their standardised examinations and producing students that were more accurate than fluent in the language. Even though I was also a product of that same type of education system, I started to feel stagnant and dissatisfied with my teaching style. This was not the teaching style I wanted to maintain. I made up my mind. I was not going to pursue my teaching career like this. I had to do something about that

disconnect I was feeling. I fidgeted for something new to fall in my hands until I decided to withdraw from teaching and move to Western Canada in 2006 to complete my two-year After-Degree Bachelor of Education program.

Exploring My Personal Practical Knowledge

Throughout my career in education, I have had the good fortune of taking on a variety of roles: Grades 9-11 French language and French literature teacher, English language and literature in English teacher, Social Studies teacher in a privately owned co-educational Grades 7-11 secondary school in the Mauritian context, and Grade 7 Social Studies and Science term teacher in a French Immersion Middle School, Grades 9-12 Core French teacher and Grade 9 English Language Arts teacher in two independent schools in the Canadian context. Each position has its different rewards and challenges, yet collectively they have all influenced my personal practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and growth as a teacher. Even if my interest in exploring my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), classroom practice, and teacher growth did not surface until after a few years of teaching as a certified teacher in Western Canada, I reflected on my journey upon graduation from my two-year After-Degree Bachelor of Education program:

I am very intrigued about how and why we decide who we want to be when we grow up. I am fascinated about the development and growth process we go through. I weaved the dream to be a language teacher at a very young age. I remember saying things like, "I want to be like Mrs. Wong" or "I want to be like Madame Bérenger" [pseudonyms for my elementary teachers at the time]. Enticed by them, I wanted to replicate exactly how they were and what they did in the classroom. But what is it that they bring to the classroom? Little did I know that their knowledge, their methods, their identity, and the

characteristics they possessed were not acquired overnight. I dreamed of being like them

at the right place at the right time with the right students. And as I grew and met more

teachers, I realised that that was not always the case. Reality is different, and we need to

be flexible. I also started to recognise that I wanted to be able to do what they did while

preserving my individuality since I did not always agree with all their methods. I

pondered about what it was that I could bring to the world of teaching and learning; what

it was that I could do to be a good teacher; and what is it that I could do to make a

difference. And maybe that is why I opted to take a 'break'. And here I am, already

graduated from the Faculty of Education (Personal diary, June 2008).

The 'break' refers to my decision to disengage from teaching in Mauritius and embark on

a new adventure in Canada to complete my two-year After-Degree Bachelor of Education

program, with French as my major and English as my minor. I am originally from Mauritius

where I did all my elementary and secondary schooling, my Bachelor of Arts (Joint Hons.) in

English and French as well as three years' of teaching the languages in a privately owned co-

educational secondary school. Where is Mauritius? A place far, far away, that few people in

Canada have heard of. The first question I always get is, "Why did you come out here to go to

university??" The frequent answer is that I got married and came here. This usually satisfies

people.

But it is not the only answer. I had lived in Mauritius all my life. I wanted to see novel

places, meet new people, explore new challenges, and seek a change. Some people cannot

manage being away from home or their family. It just makes them uncomfortable and causes

profound stress. I was one of them, until I felt the need for a break. I lived a structured life, and I

was close to my family and friends. So, leaving the country for a completely unknown country

where the days would be unpredictable, and the culture unknown did not seem to fit in with my structured life. I was certainly jumping out of my shell for this experience. Breaking the language barrier was the hardest part of living in Canada but served to adapt to the new culture. I experienced so much growth as a person. It forced me to take on new things and be more independent, open-minded, flexible, and responsible. Overall, my transition to Canada was an interesting process, and it kept progressing through my years here.

My return to university in 2006 was indeed satisfying. Even though I was happy at the fact that I was achieving successful results, the teacher education program presented me with a whole new challenge, and the two years were a huge learning curve for me. Everything did not come easy. It came with a roller-coaster of mixed emotions, challenges, tensions, adaptations as well as content and proud moments. I was incredibly nervous on my first day of university. To be honest, I have never felt such tightness in my chest that could only be explained as sheer anxiety. Not only did I look different, but I also sounded quite different. This really became accentuated for me when I started to repeat myself or instinctively change my English or French accent for people to understand me.

Right from the beginning, I had this horrible fear that I would struggle as a linguistically and culturally different learner as well as a woman of colour in a white English-speaking milieu. In the Mauritian context, I was used to saying that I am learning or teaching English and French, and everybody understood what I meant. The reality was different in the Canadian context. Each time, I needed to specify whether the 'English' that I was referring to was English Language Arts (ELA), English as a Second Language (ESL), or English as an Additional Language (EAL) and whether the 'French' that I was referring to was French as a Second Language (FSL), Core French (CF), French Immersion (FI), or Français. Back then, I had no clue what the difference

was since I did not grow up learning and knowing about those distinctions. Even if English is not

my first language, I was never termed an ESL learner. Even if I was teaching English to non-

native speakers of English or French to non-native speakers of French in Mauritius, I was never

called an ESL or FSL teacher. Gradually, I came to realise that these terms play a key role in the

linguistic, sociocultural, and political aspects of the local education system. This prompted a shift

in my understanding of second language (L2) learning and teaching as well as teacher identity.

During the two years of my B.Ed. training, my French courses were focused on teaching

FSL in a CF milieu, and my English courses were focused on teaching ELA in a high school

setting. I also took a couple of ESL literacy courses to deepen my knowledge of ESL learning

and teaching in case I got the opportunity to teach ESL. As I reflect on my ESL literacy courses,

my initial expectation was to acquire the comprehensive skills and knowledge in developing a

concise methodology to teach ESL students. That would be a great asset for me if I were to teach

not just ESL, but FSL in my case. Value added activities, such as heightened interactions among

students working in pairs/groups, focused accuracy and fluency activities, brainstorming

sessions, role playing, class discussions, and oral activities, have opened my eyes to another

dimension in second language learning and teaching. I must admit that I have gained such an

enriching experience from my ESL literacy courses that I felt more confidently equipped with

tools to address an ESL or FSL class. The thought process involved in the presentation phase,

pre-activity, activity, and post-activity of any lesson would later become part of my routine in

preparing ESL or FSL lesson activities.

The irony is that I taught neither CF nor ESL during my teaching practicums. I ended up

teaching FI in a high school setting and ELA in a middle school during my practicum blocks. My

initial apprehension was how I was going to teach FI to high school students or ELA to middle

school students when I was being exposed to methodologies to teach CF and ELA to high school students. Coming from a rigid system where a teaching licence would clearly stipulate which subjects and at which levels of education a teacher is entitled to teach, I was very worried about how I was going to cope during my teaching practicums. I quickly learned that it is a customary local practice: any holder of a permanent professional certificate of teaching is certified to teach K-12 within the province. Another epiphany was thrust on me. I had no other choice, but to jump in for the experience. To a significant extent, the memories of my teaching practicums are those of a fruitful experience.

During my first teaching practicum at a French Immersion high school in an urban school division, I discovered the French Immersion program for the first time and learned key things in connection with FSL learning and teaching. To tell the truth, I did not feel ready to teach FI because the program and culture of the school were not at all familiar to me. One of my biggest fears was how I would help the students to enrich their Francophone cultural background when I was still at a phase where I was exploring the local Francophone culture. I found it difficult at that point to connect the students with people or news or activities in their daily reality for them to value the local Francophone cultural heritage. It was during my first practicum that I became even more aware of the gap in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

However, little by little, I quickly integrated into the system. The more I observed my collaborating teacher at work, the more I absorbed and learned. This practicum became the first step in my journey into broadening my knowledge of the local Francophone culture and sharpening my understanding of L2 learning and teaching. To my delight and with the help of FI teachers at the school, I discovered what and how to teach FI students, how to hone my knowledge of the local Francophone culture, and how to make the FI class interesting and fun.

This also included a surprising exploration of pedagogical practices, teaching approaches, and methods of evaluation at the high school level. Having acquired a working method based on pedagogical approaches to the experiential communicative approach of the FI program, towards the end of my first internship, it was easier for me to express my sense of relief, well-being, confidence, and stability vis-à-vis teaching in a FI milieu.

During my second teaching block at a dual track middle school in another urban school division, I was a little disappointed not to have had the chance to teach CF or ESL. However, an interesting challenge awaited me: teaching ELA to eighth grade students in the French Immersion track. Each day was filled with explorations, tensions, learning and rewarding experiences. I discovered the Grade 8 ELA program for the first time and learned a great deal about language learning and teaching to a culturally diverse group of students in a middle school context. I will just point out that during my internship; I enjoyed my teacher role as a guide and facilitator of learning even though it is much more demanding than the traditional teacher role of the diffuser of all knowledge and front-of-the-class approach (Hares, 1979), one I was accustomed to when I was in eighth grade. This experience prompted a change in my understanding of the teacher role and identity. I quickly realised that my professional role as a teacher was not just teaching content and preparing my students to challenge examinations. It goes beyond that. My task as a prospective teacher was to find interesting tasks to be conducted by the students to strengthen the autonomy, the dialogue, and the sharing of experiences of each learner.

Each year of my B.Ed. training, I experienced professional conferences and discovered the relevance of the different workshops. Having had the chance to attend rewarding workshops, I also had the pleasure of making new friendships, learning more about the local Francophone

culture as well as local school culture in general, and establishing new links at the professional level. This helped shape my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). I discovered resources that could help me in the teaching situation of FSL in a Core French milieu and ELA in a high school setting. As a student teacher, I felt very spoiled at the conferences because I got plenty of activity books, sample activities, classroom posters, and information on professional organisations and essential links.

Upon my graduation in 2008, I was immediately hired to teach in an independent school in Western Canada. In September 2008, I began my professional career as a high school FSL (Core French) teacher. I was surrounded by many colleagues whom I admired and from whom I continued to learn my craft as a teacher. I honed my craft as a teacher for two and a half years in this setting, building my knowledge, skills, and practice, and then went on parental leave. As I was then a teacher-mother and had been teaching since I was 20 years old, I decided to secure an extended leave of absence from work to have balance in my life. This event prompted a major shift in my thinking. I realised that my understanding of FSL learning and teaching had been changing as I transitioned from learner to professionally untrained teacher in the Mauritian context, from teacher in Mauritius to student teacher and professionally certified novice teacher in Canada, and now from teacher to teacher-mother.

In September 2013, I resumed my professional career as a high school FSL (Core French) teacher in a different independent school. After a year of teaching in this setting, I decided to pursue my Master of Education in Second Language Education (SLE) on a part-time basis. I registered for one course in September 2014 and completed all my coursework by December 2016 before I went on parental leave in January 2017. I resumed my graduate studies in January 2018 with some personal challenges along the way towards completion of my Master of

Education. I knew going into this adventure that my view of FSL learning and teaching had been transforming as I reflected upon my teaching through my identity as a mother of two children, and that a similar shift was occurring again when my researcher role was added to my teacher, mother, and adult learner roles.

Through the pursuit of my Master of Education degree, I have found enlightenment and hope in my meaning-making journey (Vygotsky, 1978). As a master's student, I seized the opportunity to craft some of my papers around understanding my professional identity as an FSL transnational teacher. Questions about my FSL teacher identity elicited questions about my teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my classroom practice as I began to work under the assumption that it is what I know that informs who I am and what I do in my practice. And it has led me to this self-study, as I explore how my lived experiences have informed, shaped, and shifted what I know about FSL teaching and learning, what I value as teaching approaches, and the actions and decisions I make in my teaching practice.

Coming to Canada has offered me opportunities for growth in distinct facets of life. I have had overpowering experiences in my on-going encounters, struggles and triumphs as a new immigrant, visible minority adult learner, student teacher, novice teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher. Stories selected from these lived experiences inform this self-study since these experiences have played a significant role in shaping my teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my teacher actions and pedagogical decisions as an FSL transnational teacher.

Positioning Myself as a Researcher

Throughout my journey, I have become increasingly aware of the notion that we cannot know where we are going unless we know where we have been. This is an opportune moment for

me to highlight the key experiences which have contributed to my current research pursuits. I have been exposed to a variety of opportunities and contextual experiences which have influenced, shaped, and served to enhance my teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and an evolving understanding of FSL learning and teaching. My lived experiences have also shifted my teacher identity, PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice along the way. This entire process has enabled me to have a greater appreciation for people, places, languages, cultures, and relationships, which have all contributed to this research study. How am I positioned in relation to the study? Although it seems apparent, it is important for readers to understand that I am analysing the data from a position of self-study. This thesis chronicles my journey as an FSL transnational teacher wherein I share my experiences of development, growth, introspection, and transformation within distinct sociocultural contexts. While my intention is to provide an informed interpretation of the data, readers may interpret the same data differently because of different meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981) and experiences.

The aim of this self-study is to use my life stories to explore my evolving understanding of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and how it shapes, impacts, and transforms my classroom practice. Due to the research methodology of autoethnography that I have chosen for this self-exploratory study, readers need to understand my identities as teacher, mother, and researcher. Inspired by the work of Shearer (2014), I have structured this exploration of self by illustrating three distinct eras in my life: teacher (2002-2010), teacher-mother (2011-2014), and teacher-mother-researcher (2014-to date). I have identified critical moments within each period in which I have explored my evolving understanding of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice. I have selected stories from my teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher eras that provided me with an opportunity to reflect on my evolving PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), which is informed, shaped, and transformed by my lived experiences. I have done this by examining my personal and teacher diaries, journals, artefacts, and reflection logs collected from my lived experiences.

Each of my teacher eras is defined by how I critically reflect on my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) that impacts my pedagogical decisions and teacher actions. Mezirow (1991) states that when "individuals cognitively reflect on their own fundamental understandings, they transform these basic knowledge structures or meaning perspectives to become more inclusive, differentiating, permeable, critically reflective, and integrative of experience" (p. 14). Each of my teacher eras was shaped around my basic knowledge structures and meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981) acquired and evolved through my lived experiences.

As my life experiences, roles, situations, and circumstances evolved, I began to see that there were transformations to my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981). This is what Mezirow (1981) would term a perspective transformation within a transformative learning experience, which refers to the learning experience that shapes the learner and produces a significant impact, or change in basic assumptions, which affects the learner's subsequent experiences.

Introducing the Research Context

Research Purpose

My primary research purpose is to explore my teaching practice and my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as exposed through my life stories; to demonstrate how my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my classroom practice have been informed and shaped by my lived experiences; and to understand how my experiences of developing and growing as an FSL

transnational teacher have transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice. My understanding of FSL learning and teaching has an impact on the pedagogical decisions and choices that I make. It evolves and grows through lived experiences, professional learning and development, and reflective practice. This evolution and growth process is seldom recognised and considered as a means for improving practice and professional development. My hope is that my lived experiences, my challenges, and my triumphs will be brought to light so that other educators may gain awareness concerning their experiences, their practice, and their professional learning and development.

Clandinin and Connelly (1995) postulate the composition and the telling of a story is an educative act for the narrator. Through a process of storying, self-exploration, self-introspection, self-examination, and critical reflection, I hope to discover the meaning that can emanate from the relationships between my lived experiences, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my classroom practice. I hope to be able to help educators understand enough of my lived experiences and help them raise questions about their own practice through critical reflection. It may not only provoke the reader to reflect, but also appreciate the power of self-introspection and critical reflection in examining and enhancing their own practice.

A common practice as educators encompasses sharing stories about challenges, successes, and teaching approaches. My hope in sharing my journey is that I may connect with educators, novice and prospective teachers who may feel reassured and encouraged knowing that they share similar experiences, who may find a helpful approach or method, who may make sure to have the right support in place for beginner teachers, who may start intentionally reflecting on their practice, who may make changes to their practice, who may recognise that they are making

an impact, or who may critically reflect on their past and current experiences and teaching approaches to better shape their future experiences and approaches (Dewey, 1971).

Research Questions

Inspired by the work of Dawe (2012), I structured the key questions that guide this research study as follows:

- What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories?

- What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice?

- How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?

Significance of the Study

Research on what constitutes teachers' knowledge base "has helped to capture the complexities of who teachers are, what they know and believe, how they learn to teach, and how they carry out their work in diverse contexts throughout their careers" (Johnson, 2009, p. 10). While this is an evolving area of research where many areas of investigation are unexplored or underexplored (Borg, 2006, 2009), existing research has facilitated in increasing awareness of the intricacy of teaching practice, and of the factors informing, impacting, and shaping teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), classroom practice and pedagogical decisions.

However, research that seeks to shed light on connections between L2 teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice continues to be limited (Tsang, 2004). Key work regarding PPK has stemmed from first language (L1) literature, but L2 teacher PPK has not received the same attention (Shulman, 1987). This thesis contributes to this body of research. Further inquiry into what constitutes an FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and how it is influenced and shaped will allow for better understanding of what being an FSL teacher entails:

> Specifically, we need to understand how [second] language teachers conceive of what they do: what they know about [second] language teaching, how they think about their classroom practices, and how their knowledge and their thinking processes are through formal teacher education and informal experience on the job (Freeman & Richards, 1996, p. 1).

Understanding L2 teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is an important aspect of supporting both prospective and in-service second language teachers. This thesis, which examines FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as manifested in the life stories of an FSL transnational teacher, is one attempt to add to this literature.

In a research review, Ben-Peretz (2011) addresses the issue of what constitutes teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and its implications for schooling. She notes how it has evolved recently to include global issues like environmental issues, cultural differences, technology, and a growing focus on the personal, contextual, practical aspects of teacher PPK. Ben-Peretz (2011) also reveals that existing research is mostly based on Western cultures. She encourages further cross-cultural research to be conducted to present "a different view of teacher knowledge" (p. 9). Alongside this research, Breen et al. (2001) also call for studies in other

cultures to be conducted to develop greater awareness of factors influencing classroom instruction for other languages. This thesis, which examines an FSL transnational teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice, is one attempt to add to the literature.

Related to my research is the study done by Ariogul (2006), who examined Foreign Language (FL) teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and the factors influencing their PPK and teaching practice in Turkey. Ariogul (2006) found that teacher PPK is fluid, always evolving and shifting through ongoing experiences. In that development and growth process, teachers adjust and readjust their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) based on their teaching contexts, the learning needs of their students, and their accumulated experiences.

In addition, Tsang (2004) found that PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) impacted the FL teachers' classroom decisions and actions, and it informed their future practice and pedagogical decisions. Sun (2012) conducted a case study of an immigrant Chinese secondary school language teacher's PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). The study presents an Eastern view of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), illustrates how PPK and identity are intertwined, and demonstrates "how profoundly an immigrant teacher's identity and cultural heritage can shape personal practical knowledge and teaching practice" (p. 766). Sun (2012) reinforces "the need for cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary studies to broaden our view of teacher knowledge" (p. 766). Responding to these calls, this thesis will add to this literature and expand the scope of FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) research.

Also intricately connected to my thesis study is the work of Golombek (1998), whose research concerning ESL teachers, examines teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and sheds light on the impact of experiences and PPK, and its significance in the teaching contexts. Golombek (1998) affirms that

a moral and affective way of knowing is permeated with a concern for community, for

how teachers' knowledge and action affect others. Through the stories they tell, teachers

can learn not only what they know but also what the moral and affective consequences of

their practice are (p. 449).

Golombek (1998) conducted a study of how two in-service ESL teachers' PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) informed their practice, and it was shaped by their lived

experiences. The study presents the tensions each teacher faced in the classroom and the

strategies used in response to the tensions upon reflection and dialogue. The results suggest that

"L2 teacher educators should recognize that L2 teachers' personal practical knowledge is

embodied in people; fluid in response to the particulars of context; and permeated with moral,

affective, and consequential concerns" (Golombek, 1998, p. 461). For this reason, Golombek

(1998) calls for PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) to be recognised and acknowledged in L2

teacher education practice and research. Along with this acknowledgement, Golombek (1998)

calls for the need to examine teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) through sharing of their

lived experiences and how their heightened awareness of these experiences affects them, their

practice, and their students. This thesis research will respond to these calls.

Of particular interest to my thesis inquiry is another research done by Clandinin and

Connelly (1986) who explored experienced and novice teachers' PPK using narrative inquiry.

The study highlights the rhythms, growth, changes, and tensions in classroom practice. Findings

from the study call for "teacher educators to consider what would constitute significant support

for novice teachers" (p. 386). The study also intends to help readers understand enough of the

experiences of the participants to raise questions about their own practices through reflection.

This goal closely relates to this self-study, findings from which can inform educators of the need to challenge their own understanding of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and second language (FSL in this case) learning and teaching theories as well as to critically reflect on their current and past practices to better inform their future practices (Dewey, 1971). As educators connect to aspects of my lived experiences, this research may foster their critical reflection upon their practice and nurture the growth of their awareness and interpretation of their own PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). This thesis reinforces Clandinin's and Connelly's (1986) suggestion "that providing opportunities for reflection upon their practice particularly at moments of contradiction and discontinuity would allow novice teachers to begin reconstruct their narratives of experience, in order to regain balance in their knowing of teaching" (p. 386). It also supports their call for programs of mentorship or networking, which would encourage reflection on practice, to be put in place for novice teachers.

This self-study adds to the body of research related to a balanced literacy approach to teaching (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014) based on principles of social constructivism and experiential learning in an FSL setting. It sheds light onto FSL learning and acquisition in an FCC classroom setting using meaningful interactions, authentic classroom experiences, collaborative learning opportunities, group projects, games, and technology. To attend to the child as the focal point in FSL classroom practice is a practically unexplored notion in the field of FSL teaching and learning (Cummins, 2000). Therefore, when teachers honour students' interests and prior experiences, craft collaborative learning opportunities, encourage meaningful conversations, and develop authentic classroom experiences, it demonstrates a "commitment to educate the whole child rather than just teach the curriculum" (Cummins, 2000, p. 6). Shifts in FSL teaching approaches, philosophies, beliefs occur as FSL teachers are willing

to try approaches to tap into students' prior knowledge and honour their lived experiences in the classroom. When students feel valued and appreciated in the classroom, feel that they have a voice in the classroom, feel that their perspectives and opinions are being heard, see relevance and applicability in their learning, it shows a real commitment to engage them in their own learning and it allows them to take ownership of their learning (Dewey, 1971). It inspires learners in noticing themselves as accountable, responsible, critical citizens capable of making a difference in the world around them.

This study of self also sets out to illustrate how to consider L2 teachers' histories and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and how they influence the decisions made in classroom practice. The way teachers engage and communicate with their students, design, and organise their classroom spaces, plan their lessons, design assessments, allot time for classroom dialogue, collaborative work, etc. reflects their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and philosophies about teaching and learning. Through this study of self, I intend to develop a thorough understanding of what constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher, as well as how it is informed, shaped, and transformed by my lived experiences. My goal is to examine how my lived experiences have influenced and shifted my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice, and to understand how these transformations in my meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981) can potentially impact my pedagogical decisions and enhance my teaching approaches to benefit my students.

Clearly, we need to consider both personal and professional lived experiences of L2 teachers to better understand how L2 teachers develop, adapt, and shift their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). We also need to recognise and acknowledge their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) in L2 teacher education practice and research to provide necessary support to novice and

prospective teachers. This thesis contributes to the body of research attempting to offer new understandings of how a transnational FSL teacher's PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice have been informed, shaped, and transformed by lived experiences. Aligning with contributions by researchers in the field, this study sets out to offer a "new sense of meaning and significance" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 42) of teacher PPK, its development and growth process, and it also presents professional development and teacher growth as an ongoing process.

On a professional level, this thesis also expands the scope of PD opportunities for FSL educators. Traditionally, FSL PD opportunities emphasise on FSL teaching methodologies, FSL teaching materials, teaching the curriculum, and so on. Acknowledging that "teaching and teacher development are rooted in the personal" (Cole & Knowles, 2000, p. 2) adds a valuable dimension to FSL PD opportunities. The reflective and self-exploratory aspect of this thesis offers a meaningful form of FSL teacher professional development and growth. It reinforces the need to reconceptualise professional learning and development to recognise the intricacy and personal nature of an FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

In addition, it asserts that the examination of lived experiences is a valuable form of professional learning and development for teacher professionals. The findings of this self-study will hopefully enlighten education leaders regarding FSL teaching and learning and the importance of putting in place programs of mentorship, networking, and professional development for prospective and beginner teachers.

Overview of Thesis Structure

This self-study is presented in seven chapters. Chapter one introduces the study. My introductory narratives offer an insight into my lived experiences that have informed, shaped, and shifted my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my teaching practice, and how I position myself as a teacher-mother-researcher. In addition, Chapter one establishes the research purpose, guiding questions, significance of the study, some key words, and overview of the thesis structure.

In Chapter 2, entitled Literature Review, I outline scholarly literature developed around FSL learning and teaching, social constructivist perspective on learning and teaching, principles of interaction and continuity in experience, teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), teacher identity, and teacher growth and change.

In Chapter 3, entitled Methodology, I explain the specific research design and procedures for this qualitative study. The research methodology and methods are laid out, including the settings, data sources, procedures for data collection and analysis, along with trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter 4 through 6, entitled Findings, communicates the narrative accounts of my teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher era stories, followed by an analysis and discussion of what emerged through my life stories as framed by my theoretical lens.

In Chapter 7, entitled Narrative Conclusions, I give my interpretation of my findings and their implications and limitations, as well as indicating directions for further research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

As I embarked on this journey into exploring my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice, I chose to enhance my knowledge of what prior research has previously exposed. I examined several areas supporting my research interests. First, I researched second language (more specifically on FSL) learning and teaching. Second, I delved into how teaching and learning occur in socio-constructivist and experiential contexts. Third, I looked at what research was accessible on the changing dynamic of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). This literature is articulated around the following themes: FSL learning and teaching; Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist perspective on learning and teaching and Dewey's (1938) principles of interaction and continuity in experience; and teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) with references regarding teacher identity, teacher growth and change.

French as a Second Language Learning and Teaching

Canada is officially a bilingual country. English and French are the two official languages (Official Languages Act, 1988). While language policy in Canada is the responsibility of the federal government, education policy is decided at the provincial level of government. (Official Languages Act, 1988). In its status as one of Canada's official languages, the French language is taught in public and independent schools in all provinces across the country. However, there is general dissatisfaction with proficiency levels in the French language and FSL programs across Canada (Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training, 2004; Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2002). FSL programs refer to any program designed to offer students exposure to and proficiency in the French language as an additional language. It is offered across all levels of the school system: Early, Middle and Senior Years.

To be taught FSL at any level of education, students can enrol in one of three FSL streams that are "available to varying degrees of intensity and entry grades" (CASLT, n.d.) depending on the province: Core French (CF), Extended French (EF), and French Immersion (FI). This self-study will restrict itself to the CF program (now French: Communication and Culture) in the English language school system. In CF programs, only one subject is taught in French for one class period a day. All other subjects are taught in English (Canadian Parents for French, 2018). LeBlanc (1990) defines CF as "a basic program in French as a second language where French is the subject being studied and the language is taught in periods that vary between 20 to 50 minutes a day" (p. 2). It "is the most commonly used method for teaching French as a second language" in Canada (Quiring, 2008, p. 27). More precisely, "almost 90% of FSL students in Canada" are enrolled in a CF program (Canadian Parents for French, 2004, p. 50).

Nonetheless, the CF program in Canada is not well liked: "Core French enrolment continues to decline, and analysis of enrolment patterns suggests that current Core French programs are not successful in retaining students to the end of high school" (Shea, 2004, p. 60). Despite the advantages of additional language learning, studies have revealed that there is a huge challenge for educators to maintain high school students' enthusiasm, engagement, commitment, and retention in FSL programs across Canada (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2002; Canadian Parents for French, 2004; Shea, 2004). There is evidence that students negatively view secondary CF programs: "When asked how they and their peers viewed Core French courses in high school, the majority reported they had not had a good experience in the program" (Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training, 2004, p. 38).

One big reason for students' dissatisfaction is their incompetence to express themselves in French (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2002; Canadian Parents for French, 2004;

Shea, 2004). Students "complain of a lack of French speaking and listening practice and most felt that they were not able to hold a conversation with francophone peers" (Shea, 2004, p. 60). Due to their incompetence or their lack of confidence in using the language orally, FSL students question the relevance of learning French. This is indeed a critical concern since not only does it question current FSL pedagogical approaches, but it also raises the question of how our FSL programs can attract and sustain the interest of students, especially in the context of secondary school (Canadian Parents for French, 2004).

In his study, LeBlanc (1990) determined that previous traditional CF curricula did not support students' oral proficiency as the CF programs focus more on the written grammatical components of the language. Since the previous CF curricula did not offer ample opportunities for oral communication, authentic learning experiences, and meaningful interaction (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971) in the language, it did not meet FSL learner needs and interests. According to a study conducted by Canadian Parents for French (2004), there were several grievances regarding their CF classes: too many drills and repetition, confusing grammar rules, translations, conjugation of verbs, too much writing, too many review worksheets, boring classes, unexciting textbooks or reading materials, minimal listening comprehension exercises, no opportunities for oral communication, and memorising vocabulary lists. In addition, a study of Grade 11 students, who had dropped out of CF programs (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2002), concludes "that a paradigm shift in methodology and curriculum content of the CF program is required. French must become more interesting, more relevant, and more oriented toward the goal of learning to speak the language. This is the obvious first step toward motivating students to continue their study of French" (p. 19).

Considering the above, it is obvious that traditional instruction has prevailed in CF classrooms with a focus on the grammatical components of the language (LeBlanc, 1990). If the goal is for students to be able to converse in French or gain oral proficiency in the language, CF teachers must bear in mind that studies such as the one conducted by Canadian Parents for French (2004) show that most students do not gain oral proficiency in the language when CF teachers stick to classroom instruction. Since few students gain oral proficiency in the language, the obvious question that arises is: What is the purpose of the CF program? With so many students disinterested in the traditional model of the CF program, the program beckons change.

The Canadian Parents for French study (2004) concludes that there is a need to bring about changes to the traditional teaching of the CF program and to promote innovative teaching approaches to increase students' French speaking ability. This is intriguing because the CF curriculum document (1978-1996, revised in 2003) does not stipulate a specific instructional approach. Therefore, FSL teachers can opt for a teaching approach that best suits them or their instructional purpose. For example, some teachers may teach the CF curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) with a large emphasis on grammar and vocabulary while other CF teachers might instruct via a more project-based approach, task-based approach or story-based approach, or others might even opt for a communicative approach, such as the Accelerated Integrated Method (AIM) developed by Wendy Maxwell (2001).

Traditional FSL classroom practices tend to be highly teacher-centred and transmission-oriented (Cummins, 1996, 1998) wherein the emphasis was mainly on grammatical accuracy in the language. Traditionally, FSL teachers were expected to adhere to the "explicit teaching of grammar rules that students were expected to memorise and then apply as best they could to translation tasks" (Danesi, 2003, p. 4) that did not foster authentic communication and

meaningful interaction in the language. Much of the discussion surrounding the barrier to

effective communication and authentic interaction in French has stemmed from what Paulo

Freire (2000) refers to as the "banking concept" where:

> Education becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories, and
>
> the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués
>
> and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorise and repeat…the scope
>
> of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filling, and storing the
>
> deposits (p. 72).

Freire's view of the banking concept is prevalent in traditional L2 teaching approaches

where students are expected to repeat and memorise words and grammatical rules without much

comprehension. Additionally, Cummins (2001) points out that traditional classroom instruction

"decomposes language into its component parts (e.g., phonics, vocabulary, grammatical rules),

which are then transmitted in isolation from each other" (p. 218). Students are offered minimal

opportunities for authentic learning experiences, interactive activities, collaborative learning

opportunities, and creative outlets for oral and written French (Cummins, 1998).

This traditional model of FSL pedagogy often results in a lack of engagement and

boredom among students since they cannot see the link between the parts and the whole, and

they fail to reconcile this "fragmented view of reality" (Freire, 2000, p. 73) to make meaning of

their learning. This yearning for meaning-making and fuller engagement of students is reflected

in a range of L2 study findings (Crawford, 1989; Cummins, 1998; Hares, 1979; Iannone and

Obenauf, 1999). For instance, Iannone and Obenauf (1999) note that: "Our instincts tell us that

there is something more meaningful that we should be doing with education and the curriculum

to engage students with the world" (p. 743).

Given new insights into L2 learning and teaching, research supports a shift in FSL pedagogy. The implication is that opportunities should be created in the classroom space to enable students to "communicate powerfully in the target language if they are going to integrate their language and cognitive development with their growing personal identities" (Cummins, 1998, p. 40). Designing opportunities for meaningful interaction, collaboration, authentic conversations and learning experiences would allow learners "to generate new knowledge rather than just consume information" (Cummins, 1998, p. 39). Thus, students would see relevance and applicability in learning the language (Dewey, 1971). Encouraging the sociocultural aspect of learning and teaching (Vygotsky, 1978) and intentionally creating space for student voice, authenticity, collaborative learning experiences, meaningful interaction, meaning making and independence in language learning had been well advocated for years (Crawford, 1989; Cummins, 1998; Hares, 1979).

However, this shift in FSL pedagogy also requires a shift in the role of the teacher. Hares (1979) declares that "to change from a teacher-based, front-of-the-class approach to that of groups working independently, with the teacher taking on a monitoring and servicing role for a large part of the lesson is a mammoth change" (p. 1). Teachers' perspectives, beliefs and values play a significant role in the acceptance of innovative approaches (Freeman, 1991; Prabhu, 1990). Therefore, understanding L2 teachers' perspectives, values, assumptions and philosophies about teaching and learning is key to implementing innovative approaches in FSL education.

The countless benefits of innovative approaches in FSL education lie in their power to foster real interactions, encourage meaningful conversations, foster authentic experiences, make connections, and build relationships in the classroom. Savignon (2007) states that "where two or more languages come together, two or more persons come together" (p. 210). Thus, language is

an essential medium of communication which helps people to communicate and interact with one another. However, this can get easily neglected: "our foreign language instruction may produce passable reading and writing skills; rarely does it equip us to communicate" (Crawford, 1989, p. 97). The Hall-Dennis Report affirms "the educational value of acquiring an additional language as a communicative tool to reach people better" (Hall & Dennis 1968, p. 8). Therefore, communication is an indispensable tool that should be offered to FSL students.

As stated earlier, the emphasis in FSL teaching and learning tends to be on grammar and vocabulary, which occurs at the detriment of authentic oral and written communication. Rehner (2014) explains that current FSL instruction should lay more emphasis on approaches to enhance students' oral proficiency and confidence in the language. If communication is the main goal, teachers can create safe spaces in the classroom to encourage learners to take risks, have fun learning the language, have a voice, and not be afraid to voice their thoughts and opinions. Conversation and collaboration should then be the focus in FSL classroom practice because it is through communication and interaction that students achieve proficiency and confidence in conversing in the language.

The need to revitalise the teaching and learning of FSL is obvious. The new French: Communication and Culture (FCC) provincial curriculum (2014) was thus developed to provide an impetus for FSL teaching and learning in the English program in our schools. The framework of outcomes for Grades 4 to 12 is divided into four strands: oral communication, reading, writing and culture. The new curriculum (2014) places key emphasis on oral communication and a balanced literacy approach to teaching which includes the integration of francophone cultures:

French is used as the language of instruction; language knowledge and skills are

developed through themes and students' active participation in activities and projects

based on the interests and life experiences of the students. Cultural activities are infused in order to enrich the students' learning experiences as they begin to grow as global citizens. To learn a language is to learn its culture; the two are intricately woven. In the context of this natural cycle of language acquisition, learners build on and transfer skills that they already possess in their first language to develop skills in the second language (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 1).

It is evident that there has been a steady shift away from the fragmented view (Freire, 2000) of teaching and learning in our local CF contexts with the implementation of the FCC provincial curriculum (2014) which now focuses on fluency-based learning rather than accuracy in the language. The curriculum document (2014) stipulates that learner engagement needs to be supported with meaningful authentic tasks and projects. It proposes an innovative method of teaching via a balanced literacy approach based on principles of social constructivism and experiential learning. McBrien (1997) defines constructivism as a principle where students are encouraged to experience learning in their own way, think critically instead of rote learning and memorisation of rules, and construct knowledge through exploration, interaction, collaboration.

According to Dagar and Yadav (2016), within a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, students are provided with authentic activities and "opportunities to construct their own understanding on the basis of an interaction between what they already know" (p. 1). That is, meaningful student learning builds on prior knowledge, develops through authentic tasks, and is enhanced by social interaction and collaboration. Learning is centred on authentic interactions and experiences rather than isolated information.

In the FCC course, oral communication is the focus of the balanced literacy approach, through which students interact, talk about their experiences, and share their opinions in

spontaneous and natural ways, individually, with partners, and in small collaborative groups (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014). Thus, constructivist ideals seem a natural fit to revitalise the French language instruction in our schools. With a constructivist CF classroom, students might be more encouraged and confident to speak French.

Social Constructivism and Principles of Experience

In this self-study, I focus on how the principles of social constructivism and experience can support the learning of FSL. The theoretical framework for this self-study draws primarily from Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist perspective on learning and teaching and Dewey's (1938) principles of interaction and continuity in experience. Both are acknowledged in educational research as there has been a gradual shift from a traditional approach in language learning towards a more collaborative, authentic, social process of learning (Palincsar, 1998). The following section presents an explanation of the two theories.

Social Constructivist Framework

This self-study draws primarily from Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist perspective on learning and teaching wherein learning occurs in a highly collaborative, interactive social context under the influence of external factors in the classroom context (Palinscar, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978). It works from the assumption that students are social learners who are actively engaged in their own learning as they construct their knowledge by making meaning of their experiences based on interaction with their peers and learning environment and guidance from the teacher (Vygotsky, 1978). It is this perspective that informs my own approach to exploring the growth of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice.

Vygotsky (1978) indicates that learning "is a complex dialectical process characterised by many factors, such as time, complexity, change, interrelations, connections, and adaptation" (p. 73). According to the Vygotskian approach, the locus of knowledge is a social construct, and the role of collaborative learning and social interaction is key in the learner's construction of knowledge. Thus, rather than a passive recipient of information, the learner plays an active role in their own learning. And rather than a 'dispenser of knowledge', the teacher is seen as a guide and facilitator who encourages students to think critically, challenge assumptions and formulate their own opinions (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) also argues that learning relates directly to development and begins even before a child enters school in the "preschool years" (p. 84). This notion germinated in his conception of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), a term that describes "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p, 86). The support and guidance offered by the adult is called scaffolding which is necessary to help the student to pass the ZPD.

With this perspective in mind, the provincial French: Communication and Culture curriculum (2014) postulates that:

it is essential that teachers are aware of the concept, the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development represents the gap between what the learners can accomplish on their own and what they can accomplish in collaboration with an adult. Children will not learn by doing tasks that are too simple or by attempting tasks that are beyond their zone of proximal development. Therefore, teachers should plan and create interactive and differentiated situations in order to meet the varied needs of all learners

that also take into account their zones of proximal development. The logical scaffolding

of activities, which follows the learning cycle from oral communication to reading and

writing, allows students to try progressively more difficult tasks, which enhances their

language and cognitive development. By talking about their lives in the classroom and by

making personal connections to learning French, students are able to go out in the world

and communicate in French in real and meaningful ways (p. 5).

Therefore, in the newly revitalised Core French classroom, the teacher guides the

students through their learning journeys and facilitates their learning through collaboration and

interaction in the social milieu of learning. Through an interactive and collaborative process, the

social context of the classroom is given limelight, wherein constructivist teachers act as guides

and facilitators of learning and students construct and refine their own meanings based on their

prior knowledge and experience and help others in their learning environment find meaning.

Additionally, Donato and Adair-Hauck (1992) articulate that constructivist teachers use

"formal instruction in collaboration and negotiation with" their students to develop and shape

meaningful lessons and activities (p. 83). In line with Vygotsky's socio-constructivist theory

(1978), language skills are acquired within the social milieu of learning by means of interaction

between students and peers as well as between teachers and students. Thus, creating space for

opportunities to use the language in a variety of authentic contexts is key. The social aspect,

which includes working collaboratively, interacting with one another, formulating ideas, sharing

opinions, comparing, and contrasting ideas, is significant to second language learning.

In a social constructivist milieu of learning, the role of the teacher needs to shift from the

sole dispenser of knowledge to a guide, facilitator, and co-explorer. Students are engaged as

active participants in constructing knowledge and making meaning of their own learning. It

means that students are not mere spectators or "depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (Freire, 2000, p. 72). Rather, the emphasis is on a highly interactive, collaborative, learner centred approach wherein learning is supported by teacher scaffolding and authentic learning experiences. The gradual release of responsibility by the teacher allows students to become independent learners (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014).

Principles of Experience Framework

Besides using the social constructivist perspective on learning (Vygotsky, 1978), this research study also draws from Dewey's (1938, 1971) principles of interaction and continuity in experience, in which an individual develops knowledge out of continuous interaction with their surrounding environment and constructs meaning out of experience. Under this principle, a person learns from their past experiences as they move towards the future. It is an ongoing cycle wherein past experiences impact present experiences, and present experiences impact future experiences (Dewey, 1971).

Dewey (1938) defines experience as a course of action, interaction and negotiation that take place between a person and their sociocultural context. A person learns and grows from experiences as they interact with the multiple facets of their contextual environment on an ongoing basis (Dewey, 1938). As they interact with their social milieu of learning, they are actively engaged and experience learning in their own way. When learners can connect their learning activities to their lived experiences, to their current lives and to what is happening around them, authentic learning occurs, and their learning becomes more meaningful to them. And under this philosophy (Dewey, 1938), authentic learning is associated with interaction,

collaboration, exploration, and making connections within the sociocultural context of the learning environment.

For Dewey, knowledge is experiential and is demonstrated during critical reflection on experience, which informs and influences future action (Vanderstraeten, 2002). This corresponds with roots of constructivism in that we construct knowledge while interacting with aspects of our learning context, gain new experience, and interpret meaning out of experience based on past experiences (Rockmore, 2005). According to Freedman (2003), Dewey's pragmatic approach to creating authentic real-life, hands-on experiences for learners is associated with a constructivist educational environment. Hence, the term "direct living" was coined by Dewey (1938) wherein learners engage in hands-on activities, developing skills and constructing knowledge through authentic, practical experiences, critical reflection on experience, collaborative, interactive and creative outlets, and valuable support, resources and guidance offered by teachers.

Through this empowerment of learners in the learning process, they can find meaning and relevance in what they are learning. Dewey (1938) indicates that learners value their learning when they recognise relevance, pertinence, practicality, and applicability in their learning. When they encounter learning in their own way that fits their learning pace, style, needs and interests through meaningful experience, they feel more invested in their learning. Dewey (1938) affirms that "all genuine education comes about through experience" (p. 25) and relates growth to experiences. For Dewey, "experience in education is activity in which the link between action and consequence is interconnected with previous and future activities" (Glassman, 2001, p. 8). This is precisely linked to Dewey's (1938) perspectives on the connections between past, present, and future experiences. This notion informs my approach to exploring my lived experiences as well as examining the evolution and growth of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985) and teaching practice. As I engage in continuous interaction with my lived experiences within distinct sociocultural contexts, I critically reflect on my pedagogical actions, decisions, and choices in my practice by turning to my past lived experiences to better inform and impact my current and future practices (Dewey, 1971). Hence, I work under the assumption that teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) evolves through ongoing lived experiences in distinct sociocultural contexts and reflection on those experiences.

Teacher Personal Practical Knowledge

What constitutes the knowledge base of teachers has become a growing focus of attention and interest to educators, researchers, and professionals in the field (Shulman, 1987). In the literature, we can see various tendencies in the development of the knowledge base of teachers. But what constitutes the knowledge base for FSL teachers to be effective in their professional life? In this self-study, the focus is on the PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) of an FSL transnational teacher in two distinct sociocultural contexts.

Grounded in experience is Elbaz's (1983) concept of personal practical knowledge, which encompasses these categories: knowledge of self and milieu, knowledge of subject matter, and knowledge of curriculum and instruction, as well as these five orientations: situational, personal, social, experiential, and theoretical. Clandinin (1985) extend Elbaz's concept and define the term PPK as "knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person's being. Its meaning is derived from, and understood in terms of a person's experiential history, both professional and personal" (p. 363). Two years later, Clandinin & Connelly (1987) further define PPK as "knowledge which is experiential, embodied, and reconstructed out of the

narratives of a teacher's life" (p. 490). These interpretations of PPK resonate well with my

research study.

Well along, Clandinin and Connelly (1995) refer to PPK as "that body of convictions and

meanings, conscious or unconscious, that have arisen from experience and that are expressed in a

person's practice" (p. 7). Inspired by the works of Clandinin & Connelly (1985, 1986, 1987),

Tamir (1991) refines a clear distinction between the personal and the professional knowledge of

teachers and explains the concept of PPK as follows: "By professional knowledge we commonly

refer to that body of knowledge and skills which is needed in order to function successfully in a

particular profession" (p. 263). Personal knowledge of teachers is viewed in terms used by

Connelly and Clandinin (1988):

> Personal practical knowledge is a term designed to capture the idea of experience in a
>
> way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons.
>
> Personal practical knowledge is in the teacher's past experience, in the teacher's present
>
> mind and body, and in the future plans and actions. Personal practical knowledge is found
>
> in the teacher's practice (p. 25).

Connelly and Clandinin (1988) understand that PPK is "a particular way of

reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to deal with the exigencies of a present

situation" (p. 25). It has personal, moral, emotional, educational, contextual, practical, and

professional dimensions (Clandinin, 1986). It forms the base of teacher actions and decisions in

practice. Clandinin (1992) points out that PPK lies in teachers' past experiences, present

thinking, and future plans:

> It is knowledge that reflects the individual's prior knowledge and acknowledges the
>
> contextual nature of that teacher's knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge carved out of,

and shaped by, situations; knowledge that is constructed and reconstructed as we live out our stories and retell and relive them through processes of reflection (p. 125).

Throughout this self-study, I work from the assumption that this notion of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is the knowledge, beliefs and values that form the base of teacher decisions and actions in classroom teaching. It develops and grows because of lived experiences over the course of life. These assumptions and my approach to exploring and understanding my PPK are most informed by Clandinin & Connelly (1985, 1986, 1987, 1995) and Tamir (1991), with a focus on PPK developing over the course of time with lived experiences in different sociocultural contexts.

Clandinin's and Connelly's (1985) concept of PPK is key to the explorations undertaken in this thesis research. As my investigations progress, I become more cognizant of my PPK, of how my life experiences help influence and shape my PPK, and of how my lived experiences and the stories that I have chosen to tell are situated in distinct personal and professional sociocultural contexts. Who I am as a person shapes who I am in my professional life and how I communicate and interact socially in my professional landscape (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995) from the midst of my lived experiences. The experiences I have in my personal life influence and shape the actions and decisions I take and the choices I make in my classroom as a professional. As a transnational FSL teacher, I revert to Clandinin and Connelly (1985) to frame a foundation to explore my evolving understanding how my PPK has been formed, shaped, and shifted on both personal and professional landscapes (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995).

As I am looking to discover what constitutes my PPK as a transnational FSL teacher as uncovered by means of my life stories, this notion of PPK by Clandinin & Connelly (1985, 1986, 1987, 1995) and Tamir (1991) resonate most with me. I opt to enter my PPK landscapes

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) without a preestablished set of categories of PPK to search for in my life stories. Instead, I choose to concentrate on the aspects of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) that emerge from the stories that I have chosen to tell.

Teacher Identity

Teaching is complex in that it involves the personal, moral, social, professional, the whole being of the teacher (Cochran-Smith, 2005). Who is "the self that teaches" (Palmer, 1998, p. 4)? Over their teaching years, teachers construct and reconstruct a sense of self, and this is expressed through their actions, choices, and decisions in practice. Teacher identity includes how teachers recognise their roles and entails their beliefs, values, philosophies, and assumptions about pedagogy and being a teacher. My thesis research does not explicitly focus on teacher identity, but my research interests address the implicit interconnectedness between the personal experiences and the professional lives of teachers. While the literature on teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) connects with my research study regarding what we know and understand as teachers, the identity literature coincides with my research study with reference to assumptions about what we value and how we develop into who we are as teachers. In the following section, I outline existing literature on teacher identity, and then, I turn to the body of knowledge on teacher growth and change.

Varghese et al. (2005) uphold that, "in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim, or which are assigned to them" (p. 22). Those evolving identities inevitably guide teacher decisions, actions, and choices in the sociocultural context of their teaching practice. I concur with Connelly and Clandinin (1999) that professional identities, PPK

and teaching practice are intricately connected. Xu and Connelly (2009) indicate that "teacher identity expresses personal practical knowledge gained in experience, learned contextually, and expressed on landscapes of practice" (p. 223). Teacher PPK, therefore, is at the core of teacher identity (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000).

The research work of Clandinin and Connelly (1986), Golombek (1998), and Sun (2012) focus on the experiences of individuals as they engage in narrative accounts of constructing, negotiating, and reconstructing their identities as teachers amid social forces in different contextual situations. In my view as a transnational FSL teacher, a teacher's background and lived experiences influence and shape their teacher identity, beliefs, values, knowledge, assumptions, pedagogical approaches, and the way they view and handle classroom situations. Hence, teacher identity and teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) are by no means static. Teachers adapt and readapt their identities to adjust to various contextual situations based on how they construct meaning out of their lived experiences and ongoing acquired PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). The connection between "the self that teaches" (Palmer, 1998, p. 4) and the contextual situation creates a process of constructing and reconstructing teacher identity and their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

An evolving line of research on language teacher identity puts emphasis on language teachers' experience in educational reforms (Liu & Xu, 2011; Clarke, 2008; Tsui, 2007). In their study, Liu & Xu (2011) investigate how an EFL teacher negotiates their identity to adjust to institutional and educational reforms. Clarke's (2008) research examines how a group of pre-service teachers in the United Arab Emirates experience tensions and negotiate their identities of being "new teachers of the present and future" and "traditional teachers of the past" (p. 106) in the context of educational reforms and a shifting environment "where aspects of traditional and

Bedouin culture coexist with the immense changes resulting from the forces of globalisation" (p. 2). Similarly, Tsui's (2007) study is situated within the context of language teaching reform and investigates the complexity of "identity formation within a complex relationship of place, space and time" (p. 657). These studies shed light on the intricacy of teacher identity in the context of institutional and educational reforms wherein teacher identity is not static but shifting. Their findings show that teachers need to negotiate and shift their identities to survive change (Liu & Xu, 2011; Clarke, 2008; Tsui, 2007) and the process involves "institutional construction" and "personal reconstructions" of identities (Tsui, 2007, p. 658). This common thread echoes in this self-study.

Identity shifting or teacher identity change may involve identities of two kinds – the 'imagined identity' and the 'practised identity', is an emerging area of inquiry (Clarke, 2008; Tsui, 2007; Liu & Xu, 2011). The introduction of the concepts 'imagined identity' and 'practised identity' has aroused high attention in the language teacher identity research realm (Norton, 2000). The source of 'imagined identity' is the individual's imagination about the connections between them and their surroundings and 'practised identity' stems from real life interactions in communities of practice (Norton, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Wenger et al. (2002) point out that identity develops through everyday experiences that occur through communities of practice which are "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (p. 4). Imagined identity draws on the individual's imagination of teaching practices rather than actual engagement in these practices. The individual's imagination is explained by Wenger (1998) as:

… a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new

images of the world and ourselves. Imagination in this sense is looking at an apple seed

and seeing a tree (p. 176).

Imagined identity in this sense stems from the way people create visions of the world and themselves based on their lived experiences. It is who they imagine themselves to be as opposed to who they are or become in the real outside world. A closer look at the characteristics of the concepts 'imagined identity' and 'practised identity' can enhance our understanding of teacher identity shifting which, in turn, inevitably impacts on pedagogical decisions, actions and choices. In this self-exploratory study, I use the concepts of imagined and practised identities as a conceptual framework to explore how my lived experiences have influenced, shaped, and shifted my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teacher identity and classroom practice.

This self-study therefore endeavours to focus on not only what I do as a transnational FSL teacher, and how I teach, but also on "the self that teaches" (Palmer, 1998, p. 4), that is, who I am: my feelings, insights, beliefs, values, assumptions, PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), and so forth, which shape my classroom practice, which influence my pedagogical decisions and actions, and which are critical in my drive for generating change and transformation in my practice. As Palmer (1998) appropriately points out, the lenses through which teachers perceive and enact curriculum objectives vary from teacher to teacher and from context to context, but little attention has been given to "the self that teaches" (p. 4) even though we are aware of how central teachers are when considering pedagogical choices, curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Essentially, "educators not only make pedagogical choices, but they also make identity choices with respect to where they position themselves in relation to the power structure of the society" (Cummins et al., 2007, p. 42). Cummins et al., (2007) established three pedagogical

orientations that distinguish how a teacher understands, interprets, and implements pedagogy. The three pedagogical orientations are: Transmission Orientation, Social Constructivist Orientation and Transformative Orientation. Teachers may choose to adopt one or more than one pedagogical orientation based on their contextual teaching situation, their available resources, their learner needs and interests, and their own beliefs, values and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

The transmission orientation is referred to as the "traditional pedagogical orientation" (Cummins et al., 2007, p. 38), and it encompasses "the narrowest focus" (Cummins et al., 2007, p. 44) to pedagogy. Teachers reflecting this type of orientation tend "to transmit information and skills articulated in the curriculum directly to students" (p. 44). This orientation stresses student learning through a passive acquisition of knowledge and skills. It also focuses on teaching strategies by means of a one-way flow of teacher explanations, lectures, notes, textbooks, and rote learning. Within this orientation, the teacher's role is to "transmit" (p. 44) knowledge and skills to the learner, who is viewed as a passive recipient of information.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) coined the phrase "teacher as passive technician" which can be paralleled with the transmission orientation wherein Kumaravadivelu (2003) indicates an accentuation on "content knowledge" which is organised into "easily manipulative … items and presented to the teacher in what might be called teacher-proof packages" (p. 8). Teachers are expected to trust the privileged experts in the profession, use the "teacher-proof packages" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 8), and thus become "passive technicians" who transmit knowledge to students. Kumaravadivelu (2003) explains the "teacher as passive technician" or transmission orientation as a position in which teachers are "constrained to operate from handed-down, fixed pedagogic assumptions and to seldom question their validity or relevance to specific learning contexts" (p. 9). He further signals that this approach brings about the "disempowerment" of

teachers whose role "so passive, so unchallenging, so boring that teachers often lose their sense

of wonder and excitement about learning to teach" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 9). Teacher

enthusiasm along with this sense of wonder and excitement in classroom practice set out to

establish the tone for a rewarding experience for teachers and students (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

With the transmission orientation, the teacher perceives and enacts pedagogy with a drill-

based grammar approach focusing on rote learning and grammatical accuracy in lieu of verbal

fluency. In my view as an FSL transnational teacher, a teacher, with solely a transmission

orientation, may find it challenging to navigate distinct contextual teaching situations. For

instance, given that the FCC curriculum (2014) places emphasis on oral communication and a

balanced literacy approach to teaching which includes the integration of francophone cultures, I

believe that a teacher with a transmission approach may struggle to implement the curriculum

and enact pedagogy as stipulated in the curriculum document (2014). A transmission-oriented

teacher might also find the reflective process involved in teaching the new provincial curriculum

time-consuming and uncomfortable.

Within the social constructivist orientation, there is a prominent sense of exploration

(Wink, 2011). A teacher with a social constructivist approach perceives and enacts the

curriculum in a way "to include the development among students of higher-order thinking

abilities based on teachers and students co-constructing knowledge and understanding"

(Cummins et al., 2007, p. 44). This orientation is where the transmission and transformative

orientations intersect. For instance, with the implementation of the FCC curriculum (2014), a

social constructivist teacher may experiment with innovative resources to implement the

curricular objectives (2014) while maintaining appropriate, meaningful activities from a past

textbook. They may also want to interact in communities of practice (Norton, 2000; Wenger et

al., 2002) to discuss innovative ways to implement the new curriculum and critically reflect on their practice. Forming part of a community of reflective teachers, as well as an amalgamation of old and new teaching approaches and resources with an awareness that a shift is required to implement the new curriculum (2014) is key. The role of the teacher as a guide and facilitator, crafting authentic learning experiences for the learners, encouraging collaborative learning and interaction, and honouring the needs and interests of learners in the classroom, take centre stage within this orientation.

However, a teacher with a social constructivist orientation may not necessarily facilitate learners to question their learning materials, activities or what they are learning and to think critically about social inequities (Cummins et al., 2007) like a teacher with a transformative pedagogical orientation would. Influenced by the works Auerbach (1993) and Giroux (1988), Kumaravadivelu (2003) points out a transformative pedagogical orientation where teachers are seen as being "transformative intellectuals" (p. 13). In line with this position, Giroux and McLaren (1989) view teachers as "professionals who are able and willing to reflect upon the ideological principles that inform their practice, who connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues, and who work together to share ideas, exercise power over the conditions of their labour, and embody in their teaching a vision of a better and more humane life" (cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p.13).

Correspondingly, Cummins et al. (2007) posit that a teacher, with a transformative pedagogical orientation, welcomes change and opportunities to further professional learning, supports differentiation and inclusion in the education landscape, engages in wider social issues and critical reflection on their practice, and focuses on "enabling students to gain insight into how knowledge intersects with power […] to promote critical literacy among students" (p. 45).

They define critical literacy as "the ability to read between the lines rather than just skim over the surface structure of texts" (p. 39). It is understood that when teachers decide on critical learning activities and materials to raise and foster their learners' critical literacy, learners become better equipped "for participation within a democratic society" (p. 39). For instance, with the implementation of the new FCC curriculum (2014) with a focus on the integration of francophone cultures around the world, an FSL teacher, with a transformative pedagogical orientation, may choose learning materials and critical resources from different francophone cultures to present different global perspectives to their learners and promote critical awareness. They would also likely adopt a positive attitude to trying innovative strategies and adapting their lesson planning, as they expect challenges and tensions during the implementation.

It is important to note that Wink (2011) reminds us that each pedagogical orientation has its pros and cons depending on the contextual teaching. In addition, Wink (2011) makes clear that teachers, sticking to a transmission pedagogical orientation, may be limiting the learning of their students by not creating the space for authentic learning opportunities, exploration, fun, interaction, collaboration, inquiry, and reflection as manifested in the other two orientations. I agree with Wink's (2011) viewpoint. And I perceive it as being futile for teachers to adopt and maintain only one orientation throughout their teaching journey. Rather, an effective teacher should be able to approach their teaching practice from the various pedagogical orientations as the need arises within the sociocultural context of their teaching.

Considering the above orientations, it is evident that how a curriculum is perceived and implemented is based on the teacher's core values, beliefs, assumptions, and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). Researchers in the field, such as Greene (1973), posit that teacher beliefs are at the core of what teachers do, why teachers do what they do, and who they are as professionals:

Teaching is purposeful action . . . [the teacher's] intentions will inevitably be affected by the assumptions he makes regarding human nature and human possibility. Many of these assumptions are hidden. Most have never been activated. If he is to achieve clarity and full consciousness, the teacher must attempt to make such assumptions explicit; for only then can they be examined, analysed, and understood (p. 69-70).

A teacher's lived experiences inform and shape the way in which they perceive and implement a curriculum (Richards & Pennington, 1998; Richards, 2012). Depending on their core beliefs, teachers may discard revitalised L2 teaching approaches (Numrich, 1996) or they may tend to slip back to the learning and teaching styles they are most acquainted with (Richards & Pennington, 1998). Teachers may also be compelled to adopt a particular pedagogical orientation depending on their contextual teaching situations or in the context of institutional and educational reforms (Liu & Xu, 2011; Clarke, 2008; Tsui, 2007). Hence, beliefs concerning the way in which a curriculum is perceived and implemented are unique to every teacher with a unique PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and evolving within distinct sociocultural contexts. How a teacher chooses to implement the curriculum is therefore a personal choice depending on the "teacher's own experience of what works in the classroom, in addition to life and other non-teaching work experience" (Borg, 2004, p. 275). While recognising that my interpretation of the pedagogical orientations may not reflect the viewpoints and beliefs of my readers, I also acknowledge that the process teachers go through when adopting pedagogical orientations to implement a curriculum is a complex, situated and unique individual process.

In keeping with the above interpretations, it would be no overstatement to point out that effective teaching involves supporting students to develop an enjoyment for life-long learning, build relationships and make connections in the classroom. Researchers (Cummins, 2001;

Cummins et al., 2007, 2009; Freire, 2000; Noddings, 2003; Palmer, 1998) have argued that these can simply flourish in a loving and caring environment with a focus on student well-being. Noddings (2003) is a strong advocate of the ethics of care in educational institutions and he emphasizes that "educators must recognize that caring for students is fundamental in teaching and developing people with a strong capacity for care is a major objective of responsible education" (p. 63). The role of care, love, and well-being in the classroom is seldom recognised and documented. However, scholars such as Noddings (2003) have asserted "the value of care and love, accepting students, caring about their learning and well-being, and wanting the best for them, as part of an engaged pedagogy" (p. 2). This is relevant to my self-study given my pedagogical drive to honour my students' needs and interests in the classroom amid the reality of our modern fast-advancing world, our post-pandemic reality, and the diversity among our student body.

Teacher Growth and Change

Throughout my career as an FSL transnational teacher and especially over the last six years, I have truly felt that I am going through a dynamic process of growth and change in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), teaching philosophy, pedagogical approaches, and classroom practice. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) claim that "change is identified with learning, and it is regarded as a natural and expected component of the professional activity of teachers and schools" (p. 948). Therefore, teacher change is intricately connected to the growth of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), shaped through lived experiences and social interactions (Pelech & Pieper, 2010).

Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) also put forward that growth of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and changes in teacher beliefs and attitudes will subsequently impact on teacher actions and pedagogical decisions. I can relate to that on many levels. My teaching career has faced challenges and triumphs. It is like I am perched on a ladder. Over my teaching years, I have experienced epiphanies, made new discoveries, negotiated my professional self, and overcome challenges through ongoing professional development sessions, university courses, readings, workshops, conversations, collaboration with colleagues, and critical self-reflection. This has allowed me to climb that ladder to a new enhanced level of teaching. But, at times, I find myself slipping down that ladder to old habits, traditional methods that do not necessarily support my current beliefs and enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). Up and down that ladder I go, but I do feel that, with experience, my pedagogical choices and decisions end up gearing towards keeping my students as actively engaged as possible in their own learning as they construct their knowledge by making meaning out of their learning experiences under my guidance (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1938).

This self-study is rooted in the assumption that teacher growth and change is a process that occurs over time and is not restricted to conventional undertakings such as teacher education programs, professional development opportunities, and advanced learning prospects. It is a metacognitive, deeply reflective and experiential process. The concept of teacher growth as put forth by Goodson & Cole (1993) resonates well with me:

> Our concept of teacher development and growth is rooted both in the personal and the professional. We consider teachers as persons and professionals whose lives and work are shaped by conditions inside and outside of school. Events and experiences, both past and present, that take place at home, school, and in the broader social sphere help to shape

teachers' lives and careers. How teachers construe their professional realities and how they carry out their lives in classrooms is an ongoing process of personal and contextual interpretation. (p. 74)

In this self-exploratory study, I work from the assumption that the process of reflecting on experiences, sharing stories of lived experiences and learning from valuable lessons would lead to growth as a teacher is a constructivist one. In sharing my journey of growth and change, I can reflect on the process itself. It is through this reflexive process that I gradually construct and reconstruct my teaching self amid my lived experiences. The need to construct meaning within my lived experiences is deeply related to my teacher growth and change. It requires me to construct and reconstruct new meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981) that help me perceive and make sense of my ever-evolving teacher world. Consequently, I learn to shift from my old habits of making sense of my lived experiences, as well as my perception of self, and to move towards a new construction of self. Therefore, I realise that transformative learning would be a good theoretical framework in which to investigate my evolving PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), lived experiences and teaching practice.

Mezirow (1978) introduced the theory of transformative learning that describes the adult learning process of constructing, negotiating, and adapting new interpretations of the meaning of their lived experiences: "learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation on the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow, 1996, p. 162). The key concepts of theorists such as Kuhn's (1962), Freire's (2000), and Habermas' (1971) informed Mezirow's transformative learning theory and the concepts of meaning schemes, meaning perspectives, perspective transformation, disorienting dilemmas, habits of mind, and critical self-reflection.

Transformative learning is "a deep, structural shift in basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions" (Transformative Learning Centre, 2018). The theory is described as "constructivist, as an orientation which holds that the way learners interpret and reinterpret their sense experience is central to making meaning; and hence learning" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 42). Two of the theory's major components are the meaning perspectives and meaning schemes. A meaning perspective is defined as "the structure of cultural and psychological assumptions within which our past experience assimilates and transforms new experience" (Mezirow, 1985, p. 21), while a meaning scheme refers to "the constellation of concept, belief, judgement, and feeling which shapes a particular interpretation" (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223). Meaning perspectives are the target of the transformation (Mezirow, 1985) that happens over the course of life through lived experiences. Mezirow (1981) established the concept of meaning perspectives as a general worldview, and that of meaning schemes as the smaller elements which encompass specific individual beliefs, values, experiences, and knowledge. It is understood that meaning schemes are habitual, implicit rules for interpreting, and a series of meaning schemes serve to bring about a meaning perspective. In a nutshell, a meaning perspective is a frame of reference consisting of an array of meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1985).

In Mezirow's (1996) view, the transformative process is formed and defined by a frame of reference. Frames of reference consist of assumptions, interpretations and expectations that shape the way an individual perceives and interprets their lived experiences, forms their beliefs and opinions, and influences their decisions and actions. When a person encounters a new or revised frame of reference because of their lived experiences and upon critical reflection on their experiences, that person undergoes a perspective transformation or transformation in meaning perspectives. This perspective transformation or paradigm shift occurs by means of a series of

collective transformed meaning schemes and leads to "a more fully developed frame of reference

… one that is more inclusive, differentiating, permeable, critically reflective, and integrative of

experience" (Mezirow, 1996, p.163). Thus, perspective transformation involves the process of

becoming critically aware of the way in which we perceive and interpret experience; of

transforming our assumptions to allow "a more inclusive, discriminating, permeable and

integrative experience" (Mezirow, 1996, p. 163); and of acting upon our new interpretations and

frames of reference (Mezirow, 1996). Therefore, transformative learning and growth occur either

by growing existing frames of reference, by learning or discovering new frames of reference, by

transforming viewpoints and beliefs, or by reformulating habits of mind through the process of

critical reflection (Mezirow, 2000; Taylor & Cranton, 2013).

There are new understandings about the importance of critical reflection (Mezirow, 1995)

in teaching contexts that suggest that critical reflection is grounded in experience, and it relates

to growth. Mezirow (1995) claims that "reflection involves a critique of assumptions to

determine whether the belief acquired through cultural assimilation in childhood, remains

functional for us as adults" (p. 49). Additionally, Mezirow (1995) identifies three types of

reflection and how they play a key role in reformulating or transforming meaning schemes and

perspectives: content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection. Content reflection

involves pondering back to what was done, and this may involve a transformation of a meaning

scheme. For example, as an FSL teacher, I can ask, "What can I do with Google Slides in my

Grade 10 FCC class, given my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and lived experiences?"

Process reflection requires an individual to think about the origins of their actions and related

outcomes; this form of reflection may also transform meaning schemes. For instance, I can ask,

"When my Grade 10 FCC students created their Google Slides projects, what were the positives and negatives that will inform and shape my future lesson planning and teaching?"

Kreber (2004) states that premise reflection involves critically "questioning our presuppositions underlying our knowledge" (p. 31). Premise reflection requires the individual to see beyond what is occurring within their teaching sphere and the realm of their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), and to ask themselves critical questions in the process of critical reflection. This form of reflection may transform a meaning perspective rather than a meaning scheme. For example, I can ask, "Why is experimenting with innovative approaches such as using Google Slides important to me when I could use the same old approaches that I have used in the past?" Kreber (2004) even suggests that teachers may want to start with premise reflection, that is, asking themselves why they teach rather than with what (content) or how (process) they teach. Considering the above, while content and process reflection will bring about a transformation of a meaning scheme, premise reflection will generate a thorough transformation of a meaning perspective (Mezirow, 1995).

Chapter Three: Methodology

This qualitative research study draws primarily from Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist perspective on learning and teaching, Dewey's (1938) principles of interaction and continuity in experience, Clandinin's & Connelly's (1985) concept of PPK, and Mezirow's (1978) notions of transformative learning and perspective transformation to examine in detail my PPK, experiences and growth as an FSL transnational teacher. This chapter presents the methodology and methods selected for the current study. The first section outlines the qualitative research methodology of autoethnography. The second section presents the research setting and the participant. It also discusses data collection, as well as a description of the data sources and the process of data analysis. The concluding section explores the approach to increase the trustworthiness of the study.

Autoethnography

For this study, I opt to use the qualitative research methodology of autoethnography as described by Ellis (2004) as an approach to research that aims to thoroughly document and analyse personal experience to understand a sociocultural experience. As defined by Ellis (2004), it is "research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political" (p. xix). In this approach of researching, documenting, analysing, and storying, the researcher is the subject of the research work, and the data comprise of the researcher's personal experiences often documented in a personal journal (Sheridan, 2013). Autoethnography explores personal narratives to derive cultural and socio-political understandings of the self situated in distinct contexts (Chang, 2016). In addition, Maréchal (2010) identifies autoethnography as "a form or method of research that involves self-

observation and reflexive investigation in the context of ethnographic field work and writing" (p. 43) and Sheridan (2013) adds to this definition to indicate that it is a form of self-reflection that delves into the researcher's perspectives on their lived experiences.

According to Bochner and Ellis (2006), an autoethnographic researcher, who is primarily a communicator and a storyteller, depicts the subject amid their experiences, interactions, epiphanies, personal discovery, negotiating opportunities, and making choices. This offers insight into making meaning out of the tensions, dilemmas, challenges, and struggles that come to light. Documenting thought processes that involve the researcher's feelings, thoughts, observations, and reflections on those observations is vital to this research methodology. This process helps readers better understand what is being researched.

Considering this self-study's theoretical framework, autoethnography is the appropriate research methodology, given its subjective approach to research, to explore my research questions. It can be challenging for a researcher to identify a research focus. However, "for autoethnography, virtually any aspect of one's life can become a research focus" (Chang, 2016, p. 49). Chang (2016) posits that the unique voice of an autoethnographic researcher is a voice to which readers and researchers connect since "methodologically speaking, autoethnography is researcher-friendly" and reader-friendly (p. 52). Since my personal experiences are my primary data and I bring a unique voice to my research study, autoethnography is a relevant methodology that fits my research pursuits. Consequently, I concur that autoethnography is a pertinent methodology for highlighting a diversity of voices in educational research (Chang, 2016).

Using an "inclusive" research methodology, such as autoethnography, that "give[s] voice to the voiceless", Masta (2018) placed her lived experiences "at the centre of the research" (p. 843). She felt that autoethnography made this possible by creating scholarly space for her

personal experiences. Similarly, I feel that autoethnography has created such a space for my

lived experiences to be shared and investigated to self-identify the critical moments that

significantly impacted my teaching journey as a transnational teacher. As an autoethnographic

researcher, I use the methodological tools of this approach to investigate how the composed data

demonstrates realms of my sociocultural experience of how my teacher PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985), my classroom practice and my understanding of FSL teaching and learning

have evolved. This approach has been chosen as the research methodology as a means of

systematically analysing my lived experiences to understand my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985) more fully as an FSL transnational teacher and my evolving approaches to teaching in an

FSL classroom over time.

Research Design

Context and participants

This autoethnographic study explores how an FSL transnational teacher's understanding

of her PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and her beliefs in her own teaching approaches have

shifted over the course of life. The teacher is the primary participant in this qualitative study, but

her reflections on her home and classroom language learning environment inform her teaching

life. The context of the study is the FSL teaching and learning landscapes in two culturally

contrasting national educational contexts.

Data Collection

The present study adopts a qualitative approach to the data collection and its analysis. A

combination of different data collection methods is used to try to find answers to my research

questions and to better grasp the complex facets of FSL teaching and learning (Kagan, 1990).

The study draws upon reflective journals, personal and teacher diary entries and artefacts from

my lived experiences to craft stories that enable me to examine my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985) and teaching practice growth process. The data were collected from 2002 to 2021 during

my numerous years of teaching and learning in distinct cultural and socio-political contexts. The

methods or sources of data are defined in the following section.

Reflective Journals and Diary Entries

Bailey (1990), Bassey (1999), and Mackey & Gass (2005) have all used reflective

journals for their research purposes. A reflective journal is "a first-person account of language

learning or teaching experience, documented through regular candid entries in a personal journal

[that is] then analysed for recurrent patterns and salient events" (Bailey, 1990, p. 215). Typically,

data generated from teacher reflective journals and diary entries comprise of their "insights into

their own learning and teaching processes, their self and other comparisons, decision-making

processes, the process of development over time, attitudes toward classroom learning and

teaching, the use of strategies, and the recognition and use of feedback" (Mackey & Gass, 2005,

p. 103-4). Throughout the process of data collection, I wrote in my journal and kept notes in the

margins of my teacher planner and personal diary, reflecting on the observations I made and

highlighting topics for future inquiry. My hand-written notes, journal, and diary entries "provide

[me with] a reflective balance" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 104) for data analysis. This

became a record of memories, thoughts, feelings, and insights into my lived experiences as a

transnational teacher-mother-researcher.

I recorded the reflections of what I observed of my home and classroom language learning experiences in my teacher planner and diary, and they were primarily focused on describing my insights, thoughts and feelings about the interactions, behaviours, experiences, and events taking place in the learning environment. The written insights enhanced what stories emerge from those lived experiences. Connelly and Clandinin (2000) consider the written logs as field notes (or research texts) that enable the researcher to narrate their lived experiences. While reflecting on those countless hours spent in engaging with my home and classroom language learning experiences has offered me a wealth of data, the focus of my investigation is not on what occurs in my home and classroom learning environment but it is to examine how my accumulated PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) impacts learning in my classroom and how my students' learning needs and my evolving PPK help inform, shape, and shift my teaching practice and pedagogical decisions.

Artefacts

According to Webster's dictionary, an artefact is a symbol of a culture or group and can help researchers understand the belief, values, and behaviours of the group. An artefact can give specific information concerning the demography or history of a culture, society, or people. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) define artefacts of interest to researchers as things that people make and do. The artefacts of interest to educator-researchers often include textbooks, books, teacher planner books, curriculum documents, lesson plans, assessment plans, instructional materials, student work samples, and logs of meetings and activities. These types of artefacts remain valid for this self-study.

Data Analysis

Organisation of the Data

Data were collected primarily from reflective journals, personal and teacher diary entries. Artefacts were deemed secondary data. The data were organised in three sets to account for each of my teaching eras. I created a folder for the data attached to each teaching era, which involved my reflective journals, personal and teacher diary entries, and artefacts. Analysis of the data is manifested by means of narratives of my lived experiences and a thematic discussion of the transformations in my teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice as revealed through those life stories.

Data analysis included identifying narrative themes that emerged from my reflective journals, personal and teacher diary entries. Basically, I looked for "patterns, narrative threads, tensions, and themes" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 132) in the stories of my lived experiences that assist me in seeking answers to my first research question: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? As I read and reread my reflective journals, personal and teacher diary entries, I highlighted stories that revealed something about my PPK. Next, I grouped them within three distinct time periods in my life: teacher (2002-2010), teacher-mother (2011-2014), and teacher-mother-researcher (2014-to date). I then examined them to determine the key themes that would categorise my PPK (e.g., knowledge of self, teacher role and identity, subject matter and curriculum, instruction and pedagogy, etc.).

I then analysed my composed life stories to investigate my second research question: What lived experiences have informed and shaped my teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? The more I read and reread my original data as well as

the compositions of my life stories, the deeper my understanding of what informed, shaped, and

shifted my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice. Finding answers to my

third research question was natural: How have the experiences of developing and growing as an

FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and sociopolitical contexts, transformed

my PPK as well as my teaching practice? This facet of my experiences was explicitly revealed

by means of my life stories. Ultimately, a thorough examination and interpretation of the data

analysis brought about conclusions, revelations, and emerging questions, which I have presented

in chapter seven.

Interpretive Framework

As the objective of this investigation is to identify what constitutes my PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985), a set of categories is used as the interpretive framework. The categories reflect

a synthesis of the themes that emerged from my life stories and are based upon existing literature

and previous findings (Elbaz, 1983; Golombek, 1998). The categories are knowledge of self and

teacher role and identity, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum, knowledge of instruction

and pedagogy, knowledge of students and student learning, and knowledge of context.

Trustworthiness of the study

How much the intended audience trusts the findings of a study poses more challenges to

gain in qualitative research than in its quantitative counterpart (Willis, 2007). However, in

qualitative research, it is not required to "eliminate all but one true reality from [a] study's

conclusions" because "reality is socially constructed, and thus there are multiple perspectives on

reality" (Willis, 2007, p. 220). So, how do we increase trustworthiness of a study? Bassey (1999)

advises that, throughout the entire research process, the researcher should remain mindful and reflective, and they should ask themselves reflective questions, such as, "Has there been prolonged engagement with data sources?" and "Has there been persistent observation of emerging issues?" (p. 75). These pertinent questions aim to ensure that the researcher has examined all aspects of data collection (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This involves how long the researcher has engaged with the data sources, ensuring that crystallisation or triangulation of data has occurred, making sure that the research findings are thoroughly detailed "to give the reader confidence in the findings" (Bassey, 1999, p. 75), and whether the findings can be challenged. I ensure the trustworthiness of this self-study by engaging in critical self-questioning, maintaining prolonged engagement with my data sources, making mindful choices and decisions, critically reflecting on them, and remaining cognizant of my choices and decisions throughout the course of my research study.

Crystallisation

In qualitative research, triangulation is a post-positivist process through which researchers validate evidence by means of different data sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Unlike triangulation, crystallisation, which is influenced by postmodernism, presumes that no truth exists 'out there' to uncover, but only multiple and partial truths exist (Richardson, 1994). Richardson (1994) articulated crystallisation in qualitative research as the possibility for researchers to get out of traditional limitations of conventional methods. As researchers construct and co-construct knowledge and interpretations through narratives and analysis, all reports are intrinsically partial, situated, contextual, and conditional. The term crystallisation was conceived

by Richardson (1994) as a method of analysis that uses crystals as a metaphor to illustrate the process of data analysis:

> [Crystallisation] combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionality, and angles of approach… Crystallisation provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know (p. 522).

> Informed by Richardson's (1994) idea of crystallisation and by analysing the data collected from reflective journals, personal and teacher diary entries, and artefacts as well as writing and analysing my narratives, a fuller picture of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) emerged.

Prolonged Engagement

I ensure trustworthiness by means of prolonged engagement, that is, spending ample time engaging with my data sources from 2002 to 2021 to understand my research interests. My prolonged engagement in the field and my reflections on those engagements were ongoing. This has enabled me to understand the contexts fully as well as my positioning as a mother-teacher-researcher. As an autoethnographic researcher, I am conscious and mindful that I bring bias to this research study.

Peer Debriefing

Creswell (2012) claims that the researcher, conducting a qualitative research study, should ensure that the "findings and interpretations [of the study] are accurate" (p. 259). This can be accomplished by peer debriefing. Peer debriefing is used as "a process of exposing oneself to

a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling analytical sessions and for the purpose of exploring

aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind"

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308). I used the technique of peer debriefing to make sure that my

analysis, interpretations, and conclusions were understandable to an outside reader. I used a peer,

who is a scientific researcher in the Canadian context, for this purpose and we had four

debriefing sessions, namely after I completed my teacher era stories and analysis, my teacher-

mother era stories and analysis, my teacher-mother-researcher era stories and analysis, and my

conclusions. This process of peer debriefing has provided me with valuable feedback regarding

my assumptions, biases, how I position myself as a teacher-mother-researcher as framed by my

theoretical lens, and whether my life stories manifested my evolving understanding of FSL

teaching and learning, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), and my teaching practice.

Thick Description

Geertz (1973) describes "thick description" as involving many details, conceptual

meanings, arguments, analysis, and interpretations key to a study, whereas "thin description" is a

factual report devoid of any interpretation. Within autoethnography, researchers use thick

description as a technique to establish credibility. For this self-study, I studied my PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice, and questioning and reflecting on them

have enabled me to generate thick description and to examine how they have impacted me.

External Audits

To establish trustworthiness, validity, and credibility, I used external audits as a

technique to engage others in examining my entire research process as well as the outcome of my

research study. For this purpose, I involved a teacher friend, who teaches at the secondary and post-secondary levels in the Canadian context, and my thesis advisory committee members to assess whether my findings, interpretations and conclusions are well established and supported by the data and theoretical framework. External audits can also serve to challenge the research process and its findings.

Chapter Four: Teacher Era Findings

Chapter Four through Six communicate the narrative accounts of my teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher era stories, followed by an analysis and discussion of what emerged through my life stories as framed by my theoretical lens. Each chapter is focused on a distinct era and responds to the three research questions guiding this self-study. They include the vignettes for each era (see Figure 1), the identified PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and lived experiences, as well as the growth and transformations in my PPK and classroom practice.
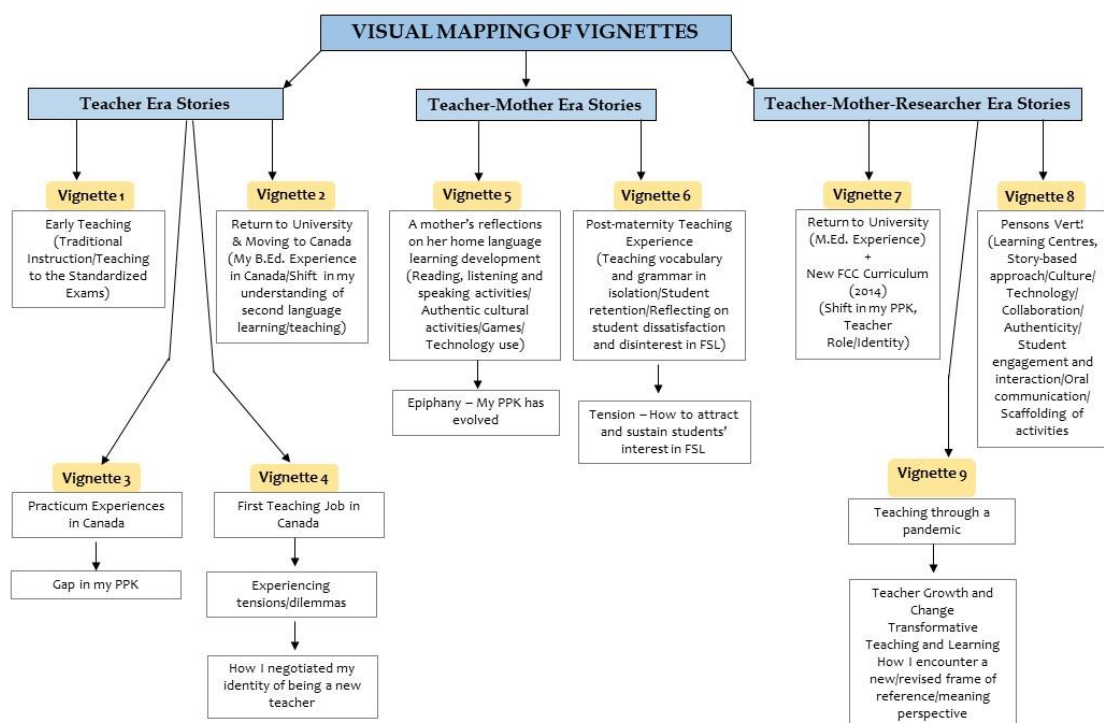

Figure 1. *A graphic organiser for the vignettes.* This visual and graphic display illustrates the 9 vignettes from my teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher eras.

Teacher Era Stories

There are 4 vignettes told and discussed in this section that illustrate my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), experience, and development as a teacher. I selected the following narratives because they were felt as salient elements of my lived experiences. Throughout this section, my life stories appear in italics.

Early Teaching Career

Vignette One illustrates my first teaching experience on a small multicultural tropical island. It is important to note that right after the completion of my first undergraduate degree, I was hired to teach in a co-educational Grades 7-11 secondary school without formal teacher training. I did not hold a Bachelor of Education degree at the time. For contextual understanding, it is also important to point out that it is considered a co-ed school, but it has two separate buildings – one for girls and one for boys; meaning the classes are not co-ed. Only the whole-school extra-curricular activities are co-ed.

June 2002. Pens down. I did it. I cannot not believe I just graduated with a B.A. (Joint Hons.) in English and French. Ready or not for the real world of work, here I am, immediately after graduation, hired as a secondary school language teacher to teach Grades 9-11 English and French languages and literature in a privately owned co-educational Grades 7-11 secondary school. The school makes speedy arrangements to obtain my teaching licence, which stipulates that I can only teach certain subjects at certain levels of education.

One might be wondering: How come the school hired me or I obtained a teaching licence even though I did not hold a teacher education degree? Well, it is because there was a lack of language teachers. And the school knows me and my family already. A lot of teachers in my family have taught at the school. During my undergraduate years, I was sent twice on a Small

Working Experience Project (SWEP) at the same school wherein I 'term taught' a variety of subjects at different levels and at both (girls and boys) departments of the school. So, here I am in my early twenties hired by the school to teach students not much younger than me. Time to pursue my passion! I am on cloud nine.

My first day at the girls' department of the school. Having volunteered and 'student taught' at the school before, I am not very nervous since I am very familiar with the school, administrative team, teachers, and students. My day starts with signing in at the office, after which the principal shows me the way to the staff room where every teacher owns their desk and chair. I find mine, make myself comfortable and I quickly learn that this is where I would spend my breaks, lunches, and prep periods. It is easy for me to mingle with the teachers since they are familiar faces. They are all very friendly, warm, and supportive. Many of them are distributing homemade snacks, sharing pictures of their holidays, laughing and cracking jokes. It is like a family gathering. It's a happy place. This really makes me feel comfortable and content. Many of the teachers give me unsolicited advice. One most common advice is to be strict on the first day, laying it on the line and stern discipline should be the order of the day. I am told this would serve me well at the school.

The school bell rings. It is time for the daily morning assembly. All students, dressed in their school uniform, start lining up in the school yard in an orderly, quiet fashion, according to their grade level. All teachers spread out through the crowd to supervise student behaviour during the assembly. It starts with the singing of the national anthem and a formal address from the principal welcoming everyone back to school. Then, there is a big welcome ritual for all new teachers and staff during the morning assembly. It is a little overwhelming, but it is amazing how a simple ritual like this could make one feel privileged and respected. Period one starts shortly

after. I do not have a Period one class. I watch other teachers as they grab their teaching materials and head to their class. Soon it would be my turn to teach my first class of the day.

Period two starts. There I am, heading for my Grade 11 French class on the first day of my teaching journey. As I make my way to my French class, it dawns on me that I am now a teacher. A lot of questions are swirling in my mind. What would my students think of me? Would I be up to the standard of their former French teacher? Would they like me? What if they ask questions that I could not answer? Wait a minute!! I am the authority figure, I think to myself, and nothing much can go wrong. Everything would go smoothly as planned. With this thought in mind, I enter the room.

Picture this. Desks and chairs in rows with students (only girls here) facing the front of the room where the blackboard, chalks, and duster are. All students stand up and wish 'Bonjour' to me, and they regain their assigned (by their form mistress) seats only after I greet them and let them know that they could be seated. I walk to my teacher desk in front of the room and settle in. And my first class starts with me very much duplicating my own schoolteachers' traditional approach. I briefly introduce myself, let them know that I am going to be their French teacher for the year and jump right into distributing the French prescribed textbooks, explaining the syllabus, and highlighting the classroom rules and expectations, as advised by my colleagues. The lesson then starts with me standing at the front of the room, directing learning with a 'chalk and talk' approach, controlling classroom activities, and ensuring a quiet, disciplined classroom environment. While sitting and listening, students were quietly and attentively internalising what is being taught. My class is going well, and I feel satisfied and positive.

The day progresses with me standing in front of my classroom, highly relying on the textbook and my notes, and teaching or explaining an activity. Each student is responsible to do

the same assignments, and whatever is not finished in class becomes homework. Large focus of the Grade 11 French program is on grammar, verb conjugation, translation, composition, and reading comprehension exercises. Memorisation of grammar rules and a lot of practice of past French exam papers are encouraged. And I am no stranger to the program since I am a product of it. Been there ... done that! Opportunity for group work and discussion is very rare. The main expectations in my classroom are speaking French all the time, raising hands to answer questions, and following task-specific instructions such as silently and individually working on the assignment.

Occasionally, my students are praised for their hard work, but overly praising students, especially those who under-perform, is non-existent in the context of my school. Most of my students want to learn and value their education as the gateway to a successful future. Most of them as well as their parents view learning as a 'sacred' door to opportunity. Not taking advantage of this opportunity is perceived as a 'failure' in our context. High expectations are the norm. There is a lot of societal as well as parental pressure to do well in school. And the parents have a profound respect for and trust in teachers, not only to teach their children but to discipline them as well. Classroom management rarely becomes an issue. And if it does, I make use of warnings, and if I do not want to further deal with it, I can send students to the office where the disciplinary officer would deal with them.

Overall, my job involves thirty hours of teaching weekly to class sizes ranging from 30 to 40 students: from teaching for all levels in the classroom, creating lesson plans, participating in school-wide activities, writing report cards, holding parent-teacher-student conferences, to participating in extracurricular activities, handling behavioural issues and being accountable to the administrative team, parents, and students. An important part of my job is to also coach my

Grade 11 students to prepare them for the University of Cambridge General Certificate of Education: Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS-level) examinations at the end of their school year. Paper 1 includes one translation from English into French and one composition of 250 words from a choice of four topics. Paper 2 includes open-ended comprehension questions on two set passages. Their good results would get them accepted in another school for another two years of schooling at the end of which, they would have to challenge the University of Cambridge General Certificate of Education: Advanced Level (GCE A-level) examinations.

Each day in the classroom runs the exact same way and I constantly look at the clock during class time to make sure I can fit everything I have planned into the teaching period. Why don't I hold something off until the next day instead of rushing through it? For some reason, I always feel crunched with time to finish the syllabus for my students to be ready in time to challenge their end-of-year school-based or standardised national examinations. Day in and day out, I feel that I am teaching the exact same thing and in the exact same way. I want to make it more fun, animated, and engaging. But the class must be run very stern-like and in a very structured fashion. There is little time set aside for playing games or watching movies. Tradition beckons it.

Overall, my students seem happy, and I feel that I connect rapidly with them. As I get to know my students, I attempt to bridge the distance in my teacher-student relationship. I want to duplicate what I witnessed from some lecturers during my undergraduate degree. I try to keep an open-door policy where I am willing to listen and support my students. I try to create an environment that is accessible and supportive with the belief that it would foster learning. Sometimes, I am seen as too friendly. My youth and inexperience are often to blame. Without any

complaint, I must revert to the teacher having to keep her distance from her students. This is the norm. Tradition and experience beckon it.

It has been a great, enriching experience. With all its ups and downs, it has shown me that teaching really is where I want to be. However, I feel that I must do something about the disconnect and disempowerment that I am starting to feel after three years of 'rote' teaching. The idea of pursuing my studies overseas strikes me and I perceive it as a way to fill that void that I am feeling. At the time, I feel that my experience stands me in good stead as I transition to a new phase in my life as an international adult learner.

In the following sub-section, I address my research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK along with my teaching practice? I recognise how teaching requires an ever-growing list of PPK to navigate the profession successfully. And the knowledge is contextual and situational. Based on the data collected and my findings, I propose five categories for the content of my PPK: a) knowledge of self, teacher identity and teacher role; b) knowledge of subject matter and curriculum; c) knowledge of instruction and pedagogy; d) knowledge of students and student learning; and e) knowledge of context.

My novice teacher era spans from January 2002 to December 2005. During this time, my teaching practice and my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) are based upon my experiences while interacting with my family of teachers, my experiences as a student in K-13, my undergraduate degree, my term teaching experiences as well as my full-time language teaching experiences in Mauritius and my interpretation and implementation of the Cambridge International 'AS' and 'A' levels French curriculum. While these experiences have helped

inform and shape my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and as I read my first vignette, a

picture of my PPK begins to emerge as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Identity/Role. We must acknowledge that not only do

students, but teachers also bring numerous ethnic cultures, languages, assumptions, approaches,

beliefs, values, perspectives to the classroom. Who is "the self that teaches" (Palmer, 1998, p. 4)

and what is her teacher role within this context? A very young teacher without formal teacher

training, but with a profound passion for teaching. My acquaintance with the school is

highlighted and this highly accounts for the reason why I am quite positive and "*not very*

nervous" on my first day of full-time teaching. Yet, a moment of self-doubt naturally kicks in

when I think about whether I am going to be "*up to the standard*" of the former French teacher.

Part of me knows that my lack of confidence in myself and my teacher abilities is the cause of

my lack of formal teacher training. However, this is quickly brushed aside with the thought that I

am the "*authority figure*" in the classroom. What I learn from the advice of experienced teachers

at the school is that I must be "*strict, laying it on the line*" and unbending on the first few days,

particularly in the assertion of authority and exercise of discipline over student behaviour. This

informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). What can possibly go wrong?

Practically nothing. I am the teacher in control. I lay out the classroom rules, pedagogical

choices, and curricular expectations for my students. I use warnings and the support of the

"*discipline officer*" at the school to deal with disruptive students. This is my role as the teacher

evolving within this sociocultural teaching context.

Is it going to be a challenge to get my students to acknowledge my authority? My lived

experiences within this school context clearly illustrate my institutional authority wherein my

students are automatically placed under authority by design. I feel that I have the power to issue

instructions and my students perceive an obligation to obey. As I explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I realise I have authority over my students because of the position I hold and the responsibility I have, a responsibility that not just the school institution but also the parent and student body expect me to fulfill competently. My teacher role is to also participate in school-wide activities and be accountable. My lived experiences at the school depict perfectly how institutional authority is rooted in social organisations like schools. Once a teacher, I automatically occupy a place as one chain-link in a long series of authorised positions in the education institution.

My classroom practices within this given context communicate my teacher identity and role: a transmission teacher (Cummins et al., 2007) who oversees the classroom activities and is highly reliant on the textbook and notes due to lack of experience. My traditional teacher role is to authoritatively train my students in a fast and accurate manner for their standardised exams. I feel "*crunched with time*" to cover the syllabus and make sure my students are well-prepared and ready to challenge the exams. No time to make it fun. As I maintain my role as a transmission teacher or a passive technician (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) at the school, I start to feel a disconnect between my practiced identity (Norton, 2000) and the teacher identity I had hoped for in my imagination. I want to add fun to my teaching and "*create an environment that is accessible and supportive with the belief that it would foster learning.*" But this is a challenge as the institution perceives me as too friendly and naive. Even if I conform to the norms and traditions without complaining, I know that I do not want to continue being a transmission teacher (Cummins et al., 2007) committed to rote teaching. I feel a strong need to do something about that disconnect I am feeling. Despite the challenges, I know that teaching is where I want to be. As I continue to

explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my love for teaching and my desire to improve my teaching practice are highlighted.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my linguistic and cultural knowledge of the French language as well as my knowledge of the Cambridge International 'AS' and 'A' levels French curriculum inform my teaching practice. As I explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I realise that the term FSL or second language learning and teaching is not generally in my vernacular or the vernacular of the education landscape. What I know is that I am teaching French. Is it French as a first, second or additional language? There is no distinction, and this is very contextual to the complex language situation in my home country. There is no single first or second language for all citizens. Some parents might choose to speak French to their kids at home, others might opt for English or Creole or even an Asian language, and to add to the complexity, some might choose to speak two languages at home. So, it is hard to identify a child's first and/or second language given the intricacy of the language situation in this context.

Therefore, even if for many of our students, French is learned in formal settings, we never term it a 'second language' in our school context. Teachers would teach it using a traditional approach without any adaptations or modifications whatsoever to the curriculum. Even though many teachers may not be happy with their teaching situation or teaching approaches, they choose to simply replicate the system instead of fighting it. Being a product of this system of education and my accumulated knowledge and experience largely influence my teaching practice. While in practice, I do not recall conversations regarding students' approaches to learning a second language or teachers' best approaches to teaching a second language. The teacher talk is mainly around fostering and assessing students' reading, writing, and speaking

abilities. Reading and writing activities, translation, grammar, verb conjugation, tests and exams were given greater time and importance, far beyond emphasising the development of the students' speaking and listening proficiencies. The Cambridge International 'AS' and 'A' levels French curriculum inform my teacher practices, and there is a huge commitment and focus on preparing students to challenge and succeed on the Cambridge International 'AS' and 'A' levels French standardised examinations.

      Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition, knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

      My brief description of my first lesson provides a picture of how my own educational experiences inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my classroom practice. What is my approach to teaching? It is pretty much "*duplicating my own schoolteachers' traditional approach*", standing at my desk in front of the classroom, and "*directing learning with a 'chalk and talk' approach*" since this is what mainly shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). Sticking to the textbook, my notes, and the Cambridge International 'AS' French syllabus as well as transmitting knowledge and skills directly to my students (Cummins et al., 2007), controlling the classroom activities and teaching to the exam become the norm for me. I do not question their validity and I simply mould myself into a "teacher as passive technician", a term coined by Kumaravadivelu (2003) which can be likened to the teacher with a transmission approach (Cummins et al., 2007). It is evident that my teaching approach largely stems from my own language learning experiences.

What do I learn from my own school experiences, my teaching context and advice from experienced teachers that shape my practice? The quieter my students are, the more disciplined my students are, and the more my students are working silently, passively, and individually on their assignment, the better. Repetitive practice of past exam papers, rote learning, memorisation of grammar rules, composition, translation, reading comprehension and grammar exercises form part and parcel of my classroom practice. With rote teaching, lesson planning becomes easy. After a while, teaching becomes so unchallenging that I want to innovate my teaching approach, add fun to my lessons, and try something different to address my feeling of "*disempowerment*". However, I always feel accountable and "*crunched with time to finish the syllabus*" and I quickly learn that it is better and easier to adhere to the program material and curriculum objectives "*in a very structured fashion*" while maintaining a traditional pedagogical approach. This is the pedagogic expectation.

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations, expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, what students know and how they learn.

Students are expected to be well behaved, disciplined, respectful and this is reflected in their routine school behaviour like "*lining up … in an orderly fashion*" for the daily morning assembly or their traditional teacher greeting. My students know that they need to be attentive and obedient in their classroom environment by "*sitting and listening … quietly and attentively internalising what is being taught*". In our traditional educational context, students are habituated to memorisation of grammar rules and an abundance of drill and practice assignments. They develop into passive learners who are accustomed to only a one-way flow of information from

teacher to student involving teacher explanations and rote learning (Cummins et al., 2007). As I explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I realise that there is no differentiated instruction, and no attention is paid to the differences among learners. Irrespective of their abilities, interests, or needs, all students learn the same content, complete the same assignments within the same amount of time, and must meet the same learning outcomes and expectations. It is like a one-size-fits-all kind of model (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) as illustrated in Figure 2.
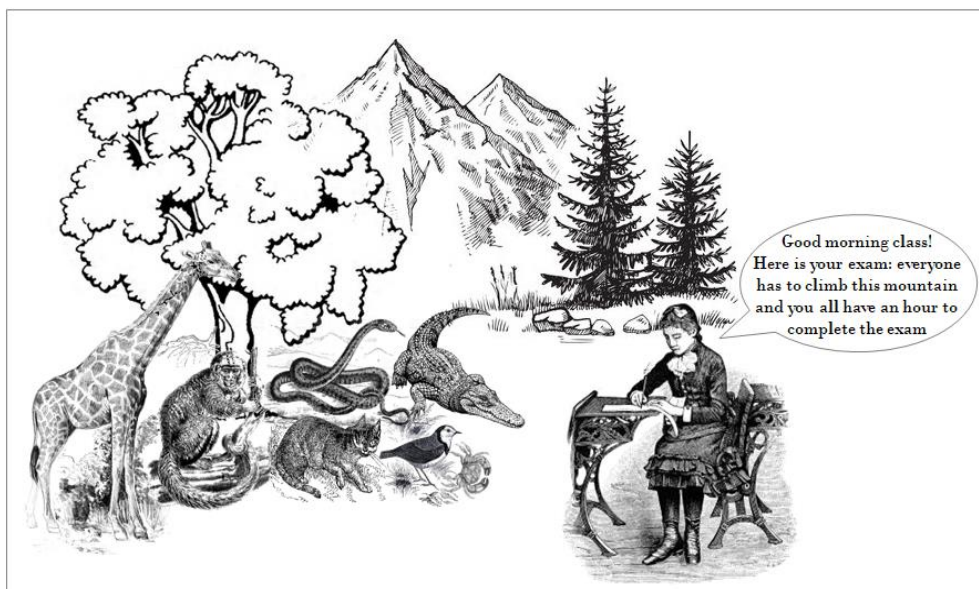
Figure 2. *Example of a one-size-fits-all kind of model with no differentiated instruction*. This visual representation illustrates a one-size-fits-all kind of model (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) where everyone, irrespective of their abilities, has one hour to complete the same examination, to climb the mountain. Courtesy of Vanessa Ramen. Adapted from Quick Meme and titled "Our Education in a nutshell" (http://www.quickmeme.com/p/3vpax2). In the public domain.

I further reveal my knowledge of students in the way I interact with my students and manage disruptive behaviour in my classroom. My warnings usually work since my students are

obligated to obey by design. Student-teacher interaction is highlighted in my effort to "*keep an open-door policy where I am willing to listen and support my students*" and "*create an environment that is accessible and supportive*" because I believe that it would foster student learning. However, I quickly learn that I cannot overly praise my students and be too friendly with them. I must revert to the teacher "*having to keep her distance from the student*" since this is more common institutional practice.

My awareness of my students is also evident in student-student interaction and the role my students play in their own success as language learners. They have a positive attitude toward learning and equate education to opportunity. Failure is not an option in such a competitive educational context and there are high expectations and pressure for them to do well. My students compete and work hard since they know there is a correlation between effort and grades and between grades and opportunity.

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

My awareness of the Cambridge International 'AS' level French program's policies and expectations is flagrant as I emphasise the "*examination-driven*" nature of the program and the importance of training students to be cognisant of how the exam paper is structured, what to expect on and how to tackle the exam successfully. I bring in my knowledge of context outside the French program as I express my comfort level regarding the staff room gathering which is likened to a "*family gathering*" and the familial bond and collaboration among teachers at the school. My knowledge of context is noticeable in my views concerning the support and the

"*unsolicited advice*" I receive from colleagues. I appreciate working in such a pleasant school environment where there is collegiality.

My knowledge of context is also present in my views regarding the daily morning whole school assembly which establishes a formal, strict tone wherein silence prevails. And silence equates order, discipline, and good behaviour. What does the "*big welcome ritual for all new teachers*" communicate about the school context? What does the parents' pure trust on teachers to not only "*teach their children but to discipline them as well*" reveal about the cultural context? Teachers are very well respected and venerated. It is culturally customary to consider them as 'gurus' and to trust (not to question) their approach to teaching, evaluation methods and decision-making in the classroom.

My knowledge of classroom context is highlighted in the traditional setup of my classroom as well as my "traditional pedagogical orientation" (Cummins et al., 2007, p. 38). I thrive in a classroom context where transmission of knowledge and a culture of quiet, submissive students is of the order. The big class size "*ranging from 30 to 40 students*" makes it impossible to spend quality time with each student. The setting encourages a culture of the teacher "*having to keep her distance from the student*" and a culture of yet again a one-size-fits-all model of education (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Return to University and Moving to Canada

Vignette Two illustrates my return to university in Western Canadian context, my experiences as an international visible minority adult learner and a gradual shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

September 2006. Ready for a change. Eager to embark on a new journey as an adult learner enrolled in a two-year After-Degree Bachelor of Education program. While making the decision to go back to university is very exciting, I do not fully comprehend how intimidating it can also be. I know that being an adult learner is going to be a different learning experience. However, I am naïve in appreciating that being an international visible minority adult learner would pose a unique set of challenges and apprehensions. I worry about sticking out, feeling out of place, in a classroom filled with 'Canadian' students. And I am right.

It is my first day of university. As I walk the halls of the building, I listen nervously to the hustle and bustle around and think to myself, "What type of English is this?" My level of anxiety is instantly heightened since I cannot understand a whole lot of what I am hearing. This is not the English I grew up hearing. I grew up with the thought that the British English I was hearing, learning, speaking, writing, using back home is the standard. What I fail to realise is that it is not the universal standard and there are varieties of the English language spoken around the world. What an epiphany! I carry that heavy weight with me as I continue walking.

As I enter the lecture theatre where the orientation session is going to take place, I take a seat next to a few girls who are busy chatting with each other, and they look like they are friends, or at least, they know one another from before. I smile at them and say, "Hello! Is it okay if I sit here?" And they reply, "Yes, of course." As I sit down, memories of my first day at my previous university come gushing to my mind. I remember how loud I was, busy socialising, chatting with my school friends and scanning the room for people I might recognise or know. And here I am sitting quietly, scanning the room to no avail. After a little while, the girls break the ice, introduce themselves to me and one of them asks, "Which stream are you in?" My face glows with elation since they address me, but it takes me a few seconds to respond. Not because I am so

happy, but because I must make a conscientious effort to process their question and understand what they are asking me. As I reveal to them that I am in the Senior Years stream with French as my major and English as my minor, I am pleased to learn that they are also in the Senior Years stream with French as their minor.

Immediately, I start speaking French. That is my comfort zone, at least that is what I think. As we start conversing, I think to myself, "What type of French is this?" I have that same thought again: This is not the French I grew up hearing. I grew up with the thought that the Metropolitan French I know is the standard. What I fail to realise is that it is not the universal standard and there are varieties of French spoken around the world. While I am starting to feel a little more comfortable with the girls, I realise that the language barrier is very real. I cannot understand a lot of what they are saying and vice versa, I suppose. I start to repeat or rephrase myself a lot during our conversation.

Out of the blue, a question surfaces: "The French you speak is different. Where did you learn your French? When did you start learning French?" A little stunned by the question, I answer, "I don't know when. I grew up speaking French at home, outside of home, at school, on the streets …" I anticipate that a similar question would arise regarding my English. I have an answer for this one. I started learning English in preschool. But to my surprise, the question never comes. I am tempted to ask them the same question about their French, but I refrain myself from doing it. I am reluctant to ask. I opt to keep silent.

As we carry on with our conversation, the obvious question arises: "Where are you from?" I respond with, "I'm Mauritian. I am from Mauritius, a small island off the east coast of Madagascar." Seeing the void on their face, I realise my answer is not good enough. It is evident that they have never heard of my country before. What seems like a simple question with a simple

answer turns out not to be that simple for me to explain further. It never occurred to me. It is not easy having to explain what being Mauritian is, especially since Mauritians do not fit under a general ethnic umbrella. But I just leave it at, "It's such a small island. Not many people have heard of it." Soon after, the orientation session starts, and we all listen in.

As my orientation day at the university comes to an end, I feel overwhelmed with so much information. My first few weeks of classes are even more overwhelming, with an introduction to new theories and approaches to teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation, aboriginal perspectives on education, a shift in my understanding of second language learning and teaching, and a reflection on my technology literacy skill set. And the "Where are you from?" and "Where did you learn French?" questions keep coming up. People also start asking me if I am from French Immersion or DSFM. I have no clue what they mean. What does DSFM stand for? I have no idea. Those questions just freeze me to death. Reluctant to ask what those terms mean; I just explain where I am from. Then, I start hearing the terms 'Core French', 'Intensive French', 'English Language Arts', 'English as a Second Language' in my courses. I do not know what they mean and their distinctions. Soon, I learn.

As the first few weeks go by, the main haunting thought in my mind is: "How am I going to survive as a linguistically and culturally different adult learner in this environment?" I have never experienced such a heightened level of self-doubt and nervousness during my prior academic journey. I have an intense feeling of not belonging, a feeling of being less than and a longing to fit in. I have never felt that way before. I immediately assume that the road ahead of me would be very bumpy. I hold that horrible fear that I would struggle as an adult learner. To overcome this, I try using positive self-talk regularly, by saying reassuring things to myself and reminding myself that with any new beginning or new adventure, the journey would certainly be

accompanied with not only challenges but also triumphs. I am very lucky to have the support of my family. It keeps me going. Determination, perseverance, resilience, patience, and an eye on my goal also keep me going.

As I plunge right into the heavy course load of each semester, I work very hard towards my goal and never look back. Having always been a high-achiever, I attend all my classes regularly, do all my assignments diligently, and I am very satisfied with my assessment results. However, I am not the same lively, outgoing, outspoken student that I was back home. Something has changed. For some reason, I feel more comfortable fading into the background of my classes, never raising my hand for fear of being wrong, and answering questions only when I must. I dread group work, group discussion and presentations. Until one day, one of my professors compliments me and talks highly of my style of presentation and my oratorical performance. It means the world to me. It awakens my self-confidence, my self-esteem, and my voice. That professor saw something in me, and this inspires something in me and sparks a desire in me to come out of my shell. And I slowly do. Forever grateful.

Most of the teacher educators that I meet are very friendly, approachable, and supportive. Many of them also echo the compliment of my professor. It helps boost my self-confidence and encourages me to thrive. I also start my old habit of journaling to work out my feelings and experiences. I see therapeutic benefits in doing that. It makes me realise that everyone has their strengths and weaknesses. There is no reason why I should feel like I am less than anyone else. I just need to find my 'niche'. It takes some time, but soon, I find myself cruising through the teacher education program. My class experiences, as well as the various Professional Development (PD) opportunities, expose me to different philosophies of teaching and practices related to those philosophies. My classes, workshops and conferences also expose

me to several resources and new links at the professional level. Class activities, such as brainstorming sessions, role playing, games, accuracy and fluency group activities, authentic projects and assessment methods during my Core French and ESL literacy courses have exposed me to a new facet in second language learning and teaching.

This whole university experience prompts me to reflect on my personal practical knowledge, philosophy of teaching and classroom practices in Mauritius. Do I need to change my old ways of teaching? Do I need to stop relying solely on the textbook to teach? Do I need to move away from the traditional assessment and evaluation methods? Do I need to encourage more collaborative work in my classroom? Do I need to reconfigure my classroom setup? Do I need to facilitate learning instead of dictating learning? Do I need to integrate technology in my teaching? Do I need to infuse culture in my lessons? Questions that wait to be confronted.

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?

My adult learner and student-teacher era spans from September 2006 to May 2008. During this time, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my classroom practice are based upon my prior three-year French language teaching experiences in my home country; what I experience and learn during my B.Ed. teacher training program, my practicum experiences, and my PD opportunities in Western Canada; as well as my interpretation and implementation of the local Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003). While these experiences have helped

inform, shape, and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice and as I read my second vignette, a picture of my PPK along with its transformations emerges as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Identity/Role. Based on my experience as a visible minority adult learner and student-teacher, it is important to acknowledge that student teachers bring numerous ethnic cultures, languages, assumptions, approaches, beliefs, values, and perspectives into their learning environment as well as imminent teaching practice. Who is the adult learner and student-teacher sitting in a Canadian university classroom context? A young transnational teacher without formal teacher training, yet with a genuine yearning for learning and teaching. My excitement "*to embark on a new journey as an adult learner*" is highlighted, however, a moment of apprehension, self-doubt and anxiety naturally kicks in when I think about "*sticking out, feeling out of place*", "*a longing to fit in*", acclimatising myself to the local educational context, and adjusting to Canadian English and French and their cultures.

This becomes very real at my first acquaintance with the girls at the university orientation session. When I "*have to make a conscientious effort to process their question[s] and understand what they are asking me*" whether in English or French, I immediately recognise that it is going to be a challenging university learning experience. Thinking that French "*is my comfort zone*" and naturally reverting to it will shield me from "*feeling out of place*" but it is to no avail. Instead, I "*start to repeat or rephrase myself a lot*" to make myself understood or I often opt to remain silent. The cultural context, in which I am evolving as an adult learner/student-teacher, gradually moulds me into a quiet, introverted person/learner as opposed to a "*lively, outgoing, outspoken student*" and "*how loud I was, busy socialising, chatting*" during my prior university orientation session in my native country. I experience a predictable shift in my identity.

Being used to mainly Metropolitan French and British English, which informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I become very frustrated with terms like FI, CF, IF, DSFM, ELA, ESL, etc. My experience with the distinct terms prompts a shift in my understanding of second language (FSL in my case) learning and teaching as well as my identity as a teacher. Cultural and socio-political forces clearly contribute to the construction of identities as teachers (Danielewicz, 2001). Instead of being termed as a French or English teacher (one that I have been accustomed to), I understand that, depending on my teaching situation, I could be termed a CF or FI or ELA or ESL teacher in a Canadian educational context. These lived experiences highlight that the "*language barrier is very real*" and make me understand the challenges of a "*linguistically and culturally different adult learner*" in this environment and the struggles to overcome those challenges. These experiences also prompt me to think about how my country has been built on the backs of colonized descendants of Indian, Chinese, Muslim, and African people, and the question still lingers on my mind: how do I identify myself outside of Mauritius?

Part of me knows that my struggles, self-doubt, and lack of self-confidence are the cause of my visible minority and new immigrant experience. However, this is quickly pushed aside with my resilience, patience, determination, and perseverance to keep going. I endeavour to use "*positive self-talk*" as well as journaling to "*work out my feelings and experiences*" and those strategies turn out to be successful. Despite the challenges, I know that teaching is where I want to be and strive to keep learning my craft as a prospective teacher in a Canadian context.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my linguistic and cultural knowledge of the Metropolitan French as well as my knowledge of and experience with the Cambridge International French curriculum mainly inform and shape my

PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and practice until I encounter a new frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996) due to my new experience with Canadian French and the provincial curricula. As I explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I realise that the term FSL forms an integral part of the education landscape and there is a clear distinction among CF, FI, IF or français (or DSFM as they call it) and its school curriculum. Yes, there is a clear distinction, and this is very contextual to the local French language situation. Through my courses, I am mainly exposed to the provincial CF curriculum which largely informs my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice.

Looking back at my first introduction to the "Teaching French in the Senior Years" course, I can see how my lens have changed. I experience a natural shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). What I learn in this class has shaped my viewpoint in teaching French as a second language. Prior to this, I had no idea whatsoever what the curriculum document was all about, what to teach, how to teach French in a Canadian context, and in what sequence. I vividly remember how challenging it was for me to make sense of the local Core French curriculum (2003). After much exploration, enquiry, reflection, effort to construct representations of my understandings, dialogue with peers and instructors, I feel I have enhanced my knowledge of the curriculum. Taking this course enlightened me on the scope and sequence of teaching Core French.

According to the provincial ministry of education, the purpose of the Core French curriculum (2003) is to encourage the learning of French as a means of communication and to make it an integral part of the students' overall education. I learn that the provincial curriculum for grades 7 to 12 (2003) is organised according to four categories: language, communicative-experiential, culture, and general language learning. The Core French program is:

An orientation, in which French is not only the subject matter, but also the language of

instruction, [which] encourages a multidimensional approach consisting of four components:

experience/communication, culture, language, and general language education. […] Use of the

experiential component requires language to be used by communicating and participating in

situations which are as authentic as possible. This is achieved by adopting a multidimensional

curriculum that enables language to be learned through analytical as well as non-analytical

means. […] Using language in context has become fundamental to the teaching of French as a

second language. Integrating the four components […] is necessary for developing pupils'

communication skills. As pupils improve their communication skills, their linguistic accuracy

increases and their language learning strategies expand (Manitoba, Education and Training,

2003, p. 3-4).

This multidimensional approach is context-based and task-centred. More precisely, the

learning is centred on the accomplishment of a project or task that relates to a real-life

communication context relevant to the lives of the students. This confers authenticity on the

project. The communicative, language, culture and general language learning outcomes are

directly linked to what the students must do to successfully complete the project or task (the

experiential goal). In this multidimensional approach, the communicative and language outcomes

are organised according to competencies: oral comprehension, oral production, written

comprehension, and written production. This is what I learned and experienced through my

courses, and this is what currently informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy

includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition,

knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and

teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

My CF courses are centred on my understanding of the development of the CF literacy-

based tasks, inclusive of the communicative and language strands of oral comprehension, oral

production, written comprehension, written production, all infused with culture. With

communicative approaches, communication is the objective of language teaching and learning.

It is the means through which the language is taught and learned. Regardless of the context in

which FSL teaching occurs, the FSL teacher is the professional who designs instruction to allow

students to achieve the outcomes as they are prescribed in the program of studies (Manitoba,

Education and Training, 2003). I learn that teachers have a say in the choice of textbooks, books,

activities, games, and cultural resources they want to use in their teaching practice. The obvious

question that arises is: "*How do I integrate culture in my practice when I do not know much

about the local Francophone culture?*" This tells me that my cultural knowledge requires

broadening and growth.

My entire university experience is the cornerstone in my journey of learning to establish

effective approaches to successful CF lesson planning, that is, making sure to incorporate the

activating, acquiring, and applying phases of lesson planning, implement clear objectives and

target the right skills and outcomes. Knowledge gained from my CF courses informs me that it is

of paramount importance to maintain relevance and authenticity in the classroom. I learn that

authenticity in learning and teaching is a powerful instructional strategy in that the teacher is not

the only knowledge resource in the classroom, and it encourages collaboration and engagement

of students (Cummins, 1998). I also learn that using technology and authentic assessment

methods like portfolios, reflection logs and projects can be very beneficial in helping students

take charge of their own learning. What a shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985)! As my

experiences as an adult learner evolve, I undergo a process of transformative learning (Mezirow,

1981). New knowledge gained from my lived experiences subsequently produces a paradigm

shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my future teaching practice and teacher identity.

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school

context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge

of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

The gap in my knowledge of Canadian French, the provincial curricula and the local

classroom/school context is salient here. While distinct terms like FI, CF, IF, DSFM etc. cause

me grievance, I realise that these distinctions, as puzzling as they can be for newcomers, are

purely contextual, cultural, and political. My lived experiences teach me that my acquaintance

with mainly Metropolitan French and the Cambridge International French curriculum is

inadequate. My experiences shed light on my lack of knowledge and the need for learning and

growth. As my experiences evolve within the distinct social, political, and cultural contexts, I

experience a gradual transformation in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

Practicum Experiences

Vignette Three illustrates my experiences as a student teacher in an urban school division

context where I am placed in a Grades 7-12 French Immersion co-educational school. It also

presents how my lived experiences as a student teacher produce a paradigm shift in my PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice.

October 2006. My first day of practicum arrives. I feel an overwhelming mixture of

excitement, nervousness, and anxiety. Excited that I am placed in a French Immersion school! I

am going to be immersed in French after such a long time of not hearing and speaking French daily. Anxious about not feeling prepared to teach French Immersion! Since the French course that I am taking at the university is mainly focused on the Core French program, I do not know much about the French Immersion program. Despite the little bit of research that I did prior to the start of my practicum, many questions keep bouncing in my mind: How would I teach French Immersion when I was just introduced and being trained to teach Core French? How different is it from the Core French curriculum? What to teach in a French Immersion setting? What will the school look like? Will I like the school? Will I be able to fit in? Will I look professional enough in my outfit? Will I get along with my collaborating teacher? What are the students going to be like? Are the students going to like me? What if they ask me a question which I do not know the answer to? What if they do not understand my French? What if something happens and I do not know how to handle it? Feeling ready or not, challenge accepted!

Upon arriving at the school, I am greeted by my collaborating teacher (CT) at the front door, which really helps to put my nerves at bay. After a quick warm introduction, we go to the office where I am introduced to the administrative staff, the principal, the vice principal. Since it is still early morning, my CT takes the opportunity to give me a tour of the school and along the way, we are greeted by a handful of kind-faced teachers, custodians, students, and other staff. From a massive gymnasium, a huge cafeteria, a nice library, to a spacious computer lab, a photocopy centre, a welcoming resource centre, and a big art, drama and music room, the school has so much convenience in my perspective. Quite impressed with the amenities of the school! We then make our way to the staff room. I am very excited at the thought of meeting more teachers there and seeing where I would spend my spare time plus keep my belongings.

We walk in. It is a decent size room with nice couches, tables and chairs, and a few kitchen appliances, but I imagined it to be bigger for such a big school with a large faculty and staff. I have always thought of the staff room as the life of the school. An always busy, vibrant place where all teachers gather daily, where we would get our daily news, where our ups and downs are shared, where all the hustle and bustle take place. To my surprise, the staff room is empty. Totally empty. Where are the teachers? School is about to start, but not a single soul in the staff room yet. I quickly learn that teachers go straight to their classroom each morning and spend most (if not all) of their day there. "How isolating!" I think to myself. But that's how it is. Many of them would eat lunch in their room, or in the cafeteria, or go out for lunch, and a handful would eat in the staff room. More often, we see substitute teachers in the staff room. But wait a minute!! Teachers have their own classroom??? So, teachers do not have to move around the school?? Students do?? Truly interesting! No need to drop off my belongings in the staff room. Time to head to my CT's classroom. I am excited.

What a beautiful classroom with some nice bookshelves along one side of the wall, vibrant posters on the bulletin board, desks and chairs arranged in clusters of four, a whiteboard and a projector in front of the room, a nice teacher desk and chair in a corner at the back of the room. My CT tells me that I can use the teacher desk and chair at the back. Stunned, I then hear, "See this tall chair and desk near the white board. This is my niche. Most of the time, I walk around anyways." As soon as I make myself comfortable, I am a little startled to hear 'Oh Canada' playing and a few announcements are made over the intercom. I did not expect that. That is a daily routine at the school prior to the start of Period 1 class. My CT has a prep period, so it is perfect timing for us to sit down and plan for my block of practicum teaching. We agree that I would mainly observe the first week and gradually, start co-teaching a few classes during

the second week of my practicum teaching block. I am glad that I have the first few days to do some observations and familiarise myself with the classes and students as well as generally find my place in the school. We also agree that I would teach my first full unit of study in the second semester. I feel very relieved that my CT and I get along well.

Period two starts. My CT and I stand at the door and welcome in the Grade 10 French Immersion students who greet us and gain their assigned seats. To my surprise, there are only 21 students in this class. My CT briefly introduces me and starts the lesson. On the teacher desk, I can only see a teacher agenda, a pen, and a box full of small 'Ziploc' bags. While taking attendance, my CT distributes individually labelled bags containing fake $1 bills. Later, I learn that this was my CT's 'billet' system as a method of keeping students accountable for speaking French throughout class time. At the beginning of the school year, every student would get a bag containing hundreds of those fake $1 bills. They would label their bag and be explained how the 'billet' system would work.

At the start of each class, every student gets their bag from the teacher and whenever they speak English during class, few 'billets' (depending on how many English words are used) are taken from them. The students also police each other and steal 'billets' from their classmates if they catch them speaking English. At the end of each class, the bags are kept in a big box in the classroom. This is a regular routine in each of my CT's classes and at the end of each month, students count their 'billets'. I understand that it is then converted to a mark and there is some sort of reward for students with the highest mark. This competition strategy, used as an incentive to encourage the students to always speak French, seems to work. The students keep each other accountable and are very engaged. I can tell that the students really respect their teacher. The

atmosphere in the classroom is lively and it is not as regulated as what I have experienced

before.

As the day unfolds, I encounter many discoveries that jolt my mind. But I continually think to myself, "Whatever the discovery and obstacle, I will find a way to overcome it and keep going." And I keep going. My first biggest discovery is this. Picture this. Period two ends. I am standing at the door with my CT, saying goodbye to the students. At the same time, two teachers whom I met in the morning while on my tour, stop to chat with us a little and then, one of them asks, "Tu veux-tu dîner ensemble tantôt?" (Do you want to have lunch together?) This sentence structure is very confusing to me, and I understand, "Do you want to go for dinner tonight?" Confused, I look at my CT and then answer nervously, "Je ne peux pas aujourd'hui. Peut-être un autre jour?!?! Merci." (I can't today. Maybe another day. Thanks.) My CT agrees to join them.

My CT and I go back to the classroom where our conversation continues. My CT asks, "Tu sors-tu pour aller prendre ton dîner?" (Are you going out for lunch ?) Again, this is very confusing to me, and I understand, "Are you going out for dinner?" I answer, "Non, je ne peux pas. J'ai le Zumba ce soir." (No, I have Zumba tonight.) My CT looks even more confused than I was earlier. We both sense something is amiss. After a few back and forth, we both acknowledge our misunderstanding and laugh it out. What a big misinterpretation! My biggest discovery is that there exists a Canadian French that is quite different from the variety of the French language (commonly known as International or Standard French) that I am familiar with.

As I observe a few classes and even though I know very little about the Core French curriculum, it is easy to understand that it is very different from the French Immersion one. To my intrigue, I also discover how different the curriculum is from the Cambridge GCE AS-level French syllabus. Not only is the content different but the instructional strategies and materials

are very different. Where are the textbooks? There is no prescribed textbook. Each class, the

students are given photocopied worksheets which they would organise in their French binder. I

note a lot of opportunities for group work and discussion, group projects and presentations,

integration of films, games, and culture into the lessons. Daily homework is rarely assigned. I

witness a lot of adaptations and differentiated instructional strategies to meet the needs of

diverse learners. Teachers cover a variety of interesting, engaging topics as opposed to

repetitive drills and practice. My previous teaching and high school experiences are so limited in

terms of variety and student engagement that I worry that I would not be able to plan different

engaging activities for my students and that I would fall back on my basic toolkit of teacher-

centred activities.

In one class that I observe, the lesson of the day is infused with discussions and engaging

activities. Students, placed in groups of three of their choosing, are discussing a movie that they

watched last class. Each group has a marker and a big sheet of paper to record everything, and

each student can choose a role as either the "Maître des questions" (Question Master), the

"Connecteur" (Connector) or the "Créateur" (Creator). The Question Master must think of

engaging discussion questions to get everyone to share their thoughts, opinions, feelings, and

reactions about the movie. The Connector must ask everyone to find connections between the

movie and their experiences and the wider world. The Creator, with the help of everyone, must

create a visual representation related to the movie. The movie "L'honneur à tout prix" (Men of

Honor) chronicles the inspirational, true-life achievements of ambitious Carl Brashear who joins

the U.S. Navy to become the first African-American master diver. It depicts his journey as he

fights racism and discrimination around him. After 30 minutes of collaborative work, each group

presents to the whole class. Those presentations, in turn, lead to a whole class thought-

provoking discussion on "le racisme dans notre société" (Racism in our society). Students seem comfortable to voice their opinions and share personal experiences while the teacher plays an active role as the moderator. "What a vibrant class!" I think to myself. I enjoy witnessing the teacher role as a guide and facilitator of learning as opposed to the traditional teacher role of the diffuser of all knowledge, one which I have been accustomed to while growing up.

The more I observe the more I witness the different kinds of learners there are in each classroom and strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the students. I am amazed at the resourceful support of Educational Assistants (EAs) in the classroom. See the classroom teacher who could use some help distributing the worksheets? See the classroom teacher who could use some help with photocopying worksheets? The EA would lend a helping hand. See a student who needs help or has a question? The EA would go talk to them and help them out. I quickly follow their lead. In doing so, I feel like I am reaching a point where I am slowly transitioning into knowing the students better and fostering connections with them.

Semester Two arrives. Time for me to teach my first full unit of study. A little nervous that my CT and I would not be co-teaching. However, I am not as anxious as I thought I would be. Maybe this is the reason why. The previous semester, I was very lucky to have observed my CT teach a Grade 9 unit titled "La francophonie" and upon mutual consent, I was advised to teach the same unit to the Semester Two Grade 9 class. I try to replicate how my CT taught the unit while adding my personal touch. I introduce the unit by asking the students to get into random groups of three to define the term, "la francophonie", brainstorm francophone countries and label a world map with francophone countries. I am pleased to see that the activating activity goes well, and the students are engaged. My biggest sense of satisfaction is when I see them collaborating on their final group project where they must research a francophone country and

present their findings to class in a creative way. Not only is it my first-time engaging students in a group project but it is also my first-time integrating technology and culture in my lessons.

We conclude the unit with group presentations, a francophone Food Jam and a field trip to Festival du Voyageur, Western Canada's largest winter festival, which celebrates Canada's fur-trading past and French heritage and culture as well as Métis culture through music, entertainment, food, exhibits, displays, arts, and crafts. I have no idea what Festival du Voyageur is, and I am eager to learn more. What an eye-opening experience! I never knew what icy cold meant until I got to spend half a day at the Festival du Voyageur. I feel an overpowering mixture of excitement and anxiety. Excited and grateful that I am introduced to a whole new francophone world which I never knew existed: new vocabulary, new expressions, food, music, songs, folklore dance, etc. Anxious and concerned that it is very hard for me to understand the local Canadian French and to partake in the cultural activities and conversations.

Imagine being born and raised in a francophone country, growing up speaking French, sitting at a lunch table with other francophone people chatting, laughing, and cracking jokes, finding it very hard to understand the causal talks or conversations around the 'voyageur' culture, and having no clue what the jokes mean. Despite feeling lost and awkward in the crowd, I keep a smile on and keep eating the "queue de castor" (Canadian treat shaped like the tail of a beaver) that was highly recommended to me. But inside, I am burning with angst and unease, and I have no idea what "queue de castor" is at the time. That is my first authentic experience with the local francophone culture. I start to feel the gap in my knowledge. At the end of the day, I go home with this feeling of unease, but I know I must do something about it. What a whirlwind of a day!

My practicum has provided me with real world experiences of what I hope to pursue in the future. I am immensely grateful for the experience and knowledge on what a classroom looks like in this specific Canadian context. Student teaching has allowed me to foster connections with teachers, students, and members of the local francophone community.

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?

My student-teacher era spans from October 2006 to May 2008. During this time, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my classroom practice are predominantly based upon what I experience and learn during my B.Ed. teacher training program, my practicum experiences, my PD opportunities and my interpretation and implementation of the local Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003). While these experiences have helped inform, shape, and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice and as I read my third vignette, a picture of my PPK along with its transformations emerges as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Role/Identity. Who is the student-teacher being placed in a French Immersion school context? A young student-teacher excited at the idea of being daily "*immersed in French*" and at the same time, "*anxious about not feeling prepared to teach French Immersion*" due to her inadequate knowledge of the French Immersion program of studies. Part of me knows that my lack of confidence in myself and my student-teacher abilities is the cause of the gap in my knowledge. This becomes very real when I start asking myself questions about

how and what to teach in a French Immersion setting as well as how to look professional and fit into the new school environment. My lived experiences make me realise the challenges of a "*linguistically and culturally different*" student-teacher and the hard work to overcome those challenges. I readily accept that it is going to be a demanding student teaching experience. But I am always ready to take up any challenge. Whatever the challenge or obstacle, I always think to myself that "*I will find a way to overcome it*" and I keep going. Being very resilient by nature, I never give up.

My role as the student-teacher is to "*mainly observe the first week and gradually start co-teaching a few classes*" during the first semester as well as "*lend a helping hand*" to my collaborating teacher and teach a full unit of study during the second semester. I am very grateful and relieved that I get along and collaborate well with my CT, and we have a plan to help me ease into the French Immersion teaching context. I appreciate the observation period as it serves as a means for me to "*familiarise myself with the classes and students*" and it allows me time to hone my craft to teach French Immersion. Despite the challenges, I am eager to learn and widen my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) to shape my teaching practice.

And what is the teacher role of my CT within her classroom context? My lived experiences reveal that my CT acts as a "*guide and facilitator of learning*" (Vygotsky, 1978) and "*plays an active role as the moderator*" during class presentations and discussions. What a contrast with "*the traditional teacher role of the diffuser of all knowledge*" (Cummins, 1998) that I am habituated to within my prior teaching experiences. This triggers a significant shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), and as a result, I experience a shift in my teacher role and identity while I am student teaching.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my knowledge of and experience with the provincial Core French curriculum (2003) via my university classes, mainly informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) until I encounter a new frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996) due to my exposure to the local French Immersion curriculum (1999) for Senior Years during my practicum. As I explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I realise that "*I do not know much about the French Immersion program*" and how different it is from the Core French one. As I observe a few classes, I acquire new knowledge about what and how to teach.

Throughout my practicum experiences, not only am I exposed to the French Immersion curriculum (1999) which now informs my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice, but I am also exposed to the local Canadian French. Looking back at the "*misunderstanding*" caused by the gap in my linguistic and cultural knowledge of the local Canadian French, I realise how words can have different meanings in different contexts. What a shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985)! I never knew that a word like "*dîner*" could mean lunch in a Canadian context and dinner in other Francophone contexts. What a confusion that can cause. What I learn from this experience has shifted my assumption about the French language. Indeed, there exists different varieties of the French language. Overall, my lived practicum experiences have educated me on the local Canadian French as well as the scope and sequence of teaching Immersion French in high school context.

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition, knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

My entire practicum experience is the foundation in my journey of learning effective approaches to teaching French Immersion. What do I learn from my observations and lived experiences that consequently shape my teaching practice? Knowledge gained from my observations informs me that it is of vital importance to maintain oral communication inside and outside the classroom solely in French. I learn that the "*billet system*" is one of my CT's strategies to keep "*students accountable for speaking French throughout class time*" and it seems to work well with her group. I also learn that there is no prescribed textbook, and my CT designs her instruction to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes. A major transformation in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) occurs as I witness students engaged in group work, projects, presentations, class discussions, literature circle roles, and meaningful activities with the integration of technology, games, films, and culture as opposed to what I was accustomed to in my previous teaching experience. A shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) also occurs as "*I witness a lot of adaptations and differentiated instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners*" and the "*resourceful support of EAs*" in the classroom. This informs me that my knowledge of teaching approaches, of learning and teaching materials, of assignments and activities, of assessment, and of lesson planning requires growth.

My narration of my first lesson provides a picture of how my practicum observations and experiences inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my classroom practice. What is my approach to teaching? It is pretty much replicating my CT's approach to teaching the unit of study "*while adding my personal touch*" to it. While I experience a shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teacher role and identity, I turn to new approaches to teaching. I experience a "mammoth change" (Hares, 1979, p. 1) in my practice. As I teach my first unit, I try to integrate some brainstorming sessions, engaging activities, group

work, collaboration on projects, technology, and culture into my lessons. Lesson planning becomes more time-consuming since it requires more thought and preparation. But I feel it is very worthwhile and at the same time, I feel empowered since it meets my desire to shift from my "*traditional teacher role of the diffuser of all knowledge*" with a transmission approach (Cummins et al., 2007), to innovate my teaching approach and to add fun to my lessons.

It is evident that my new teaching approach largely stems from my observations and practicum experiences. The challenge that arises is: How well do I integrate culture in my practice when I do not know much about the local Francophone culture? My first experience at the *Festival du Voyageur* winter festival fills me with a feeling of loss, awkwardness, angst, and unease. This experience informs me that my cultural knowledge requires broadening and growth.

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations, expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, what students know and how they learn.

What I learn right at the beginning of my practicum is that the average number of students in a class at this school is 22. This class size allows for better student-student interaction and student-teacher interaction. My observations tell me the students "*really respect their teacher*" and seem to enjoy collaborating with their classmates on various authentic, engaging activities. They are active learners who seem interested and engaged in group work, projects, and presentations. And these are key learning experiences that should be provided to FSL students as researchers like Hares (1979) and Cummins (1998) prominently advocate for authenticity, collaboration, and student voice in the classroom.

I further reveal my knowledge of students in the way I get to know the students better, help students with questions and foster connections with them. My awareness of my students is also evident in student-student interaction as I watch them interact in group activities and abide by the '*billet*' system throughout class time. The students seem to have a positive attitude toward learning, and they know their classroom routines and expectations well. While this '*billet*' system seems to work well with my CT's groups of students, I can also see how some students might opt to remain silent for fear of losing their 'billets' or marks. It can also create too much competition in the classroom.

As I explore my enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I witness different kinds of learners, the resourceful support of EAs in the classroom and various teacher strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the students. In contrast with my prior teaching experience, much attention is paid to the learner in the classroom (Cummins, 2000), their abilities, needs, interests, and the differences among learners. They do not all learn the same content, complete the same assignments, and meet the same learning outcomes and expectations at the same pace. Their learning is tailored to meet their needs. It is not a one-size-fits-all kind of model (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). It demonstrates a "commitment to educate the whole child rather than just teach the curriculum" (Cummins, 2000, p. 6). What a transformation in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985)! These experiences of learning and developing as an FSL transnational teacher not only impact and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), but they also transform my classroom practice.

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

The gap in my knowledge of the French Immersion program (1999) is highlighted as I discover how different the curriculum is from the Core French (2003) and the Cambridge International 'AS' level French program. I learn from my observations that my CT is free to choose a teaching approach and content that best suits her teaching context. I also communicate my knowledge (or lack of knowledge) of context outside the school as I express my discomfort, unease, and confusion regarding my experience with the local French and the winter festival '*Festival du Voyageur*' along with its cultural activities, conversations, jokes and food.

My knowledge of school and classroom context is highlighted as I discover the wonderful amenities at the school and the non-traditional setup of my CT's classroom with the "*teacher desk and chair in a corner at the back of the room*" instead of the traditional front of the room, a whiteboard and a projector that allows for integration of technology and "*desks and chairs arranged in clusters of four*" that easily allows for collaboration in the classroom. I discover and learn a lot from my observations and experiences, and I am very grateful for how my CT and I get along and collaborate well. My CT thrives in a classroom context where her teacher role is that of a facilitator instead of one with a transmission orientation (Cummins et al., 2007), dominating the classroom with a one-way flow of information. The average class size of 22 students makes it possible to spend quality time with the students and engage them with interesting activities. This explains the "*lively*" atmosphere in the classroom. The setting clearly encourages a culture of participation, engagement, and collaboration in the classroom (Vygotsky, 1978).

The gap in my knowledge of context is also present in my narration regarding the daily morning playing of the national anthem and announcements via the intercom as well as the staff room. While I am used to the staff room being "*the life of the school*", a "*busy, vibrant place*" of

gathering for all teachers at my old school, I am surprised to discover an "*empty*" staff room on the first morning of my practicum. I learn that teachers have their own classroom where they spend most of their day and they do not have to move around the school to teach a class. Instead, the students come to them and a common ritual for many teachers at the school is to stand at the door and welcome students in each class. What a shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) which, in turn, impacts the honing of my classroom practice!

First Teaching Job in Canada

Vignette Four illustrates my knowledge and experiences as a novice certified teacher in an independent school context. It portrays the transformations in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice as my experiences evolve within this particular context.

September 2008. My first day of school as a certified teacher is one to remember. I walk in the school building with a feeling of excitement and nervous apprehension. I can feel my heart racing and my adrenaline rising. Amidst all the excitement is nervousness about making a first good impression and worries about doing everything correctly: signing in at the office, finding the staff room, checking my pigeonhole, finding my room, getting to know the school layout, finding the room where the staff meeting is, finding the dining hall, getting acquainted to the school culture, being able to fit in, building a positive relationship with my colleagues, students, parents, and staff at the school, teaching my classes successfully, making sure to slow down when I am speaking French or English, ... the list of things I am considering is endless. Overwhelming, right?

However, I try not to worry too much, and I remind myself of everything I have done to get to where I am. I feel confident that my pre-service training and practicum experiences would

serve me well. I feel prepared because I have spent several days towards the end of my summer break perusing the Core French and English Language Arts curricula, gathering teaching materials and curriculum maps from the school, developing resources, and planning my first week of lessons. I am going to teach a Grade 9 English Language Arts course and Grades 9-12 Core French courses. I also learn that I am going to be the only French language teacher at the Senior School level. Since I have not had a chance to teach any of those courses in the past and I have no other Senior School French teacher to collaborate with, planning is crucial as it gives me a sense of confidence and comfort going into my first week of teaching. New school. New adventure. New role. New responsibilities. New expectations. Novice teacher. Two different departments. Teaching five different courses. "I better be prepared," I think to myself.

As I report to the office, I am greeted by the receptionist who calls one of the French teachers to meet me. That really helps keep my nerves at bay. At least someone I have met before at my interview and on my tour of the school. After a quick visit to my room, we make our way to the staff room where the staff meeting would be held. As we walk in, a very formal atmosphere prevails. What a contrast to what I have experienced in the past! It is a little intimidating. The meeting starts. I am welcomed by everyone and as I sit through a two-hour long meeting, I scan the room only to notice that I am the only visible minority person in the room. The day is jam-packed with several meetings and there is a lot of information to process. Big news! The school has launched the process of authorization to offer International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes. IB offers four educational programmes to students aged 3 to 19: Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP). My school was mainly interested in implementing the PYP and MYP programmes.

Another big news! I am informed that I have a few students, not enrolled in Grade 12 French, wanting to challenge the Advanced Placement (AP) French Language Exam. The expectation is that I would have to coach them outside of scheduled class time and prepare them to challenge the exam at the end of the school year. That same day, I am also informed that the school is piloting components of Wendy Maxwell's Accelerative Integrated Methodology (AIM) language learning program. AIM uses stories, songs, drama, dance, gestures, active collaboration, and repetition to teach the French language. It is my first introduction to IB/MYP, AP and AIM. Talking of planning and being prepared, I do not feel prepared to teach IB/MYP nor AP French nor using an AIM-based approach to teaching.

The next morning, as I am walking alone to my classroom, I realise it is real. It is my first day of teaching and meeting my students. The day starts with school-wide pre-planned activities and housekeeping items with my Grade 9 Homeroom students. Homeroom is where students report at the beginning of each school day for attendance, announcements, and other activities. As my students file into my room, looking nervous about their first day in Senior School, I greet them at the door, and I am nervous too. We start talking and I run some ice-breaker conversations and the pre-planned Homeroom activities. We have a great conversation about how new things can be fun, exciting, and worrying all at the same time. This conversation and sharing experience help ease my nerves a little. I hope that my students feel the same way. Everything goes as planned and before we know it, the bell rings for whole-school assembly and one hour has gone by.

Time for the assembly. We all gather in an orderly fashion in the gymnasium, with teachers sitting with their homeroom students. Despite being very formal, the assembly, I think, is a wonderful first event of the school year. I feel it is a brilliant way to aid the transition back

to school and to think of the new school year as a journey together. After the assembly, it is time for my first teaching period of the day – the 'real deal'. Standing at the door, I welcome my Grade 9 students into my classroom, inviting them to take a seat until I establish an effective seating plan for them. As I introduce myself and write my name on the board, students start asking me a lot of questions. Many of them are in English. As I address them, I remain cognizant of my French accent and the vocabulary and expressions I am using. I remember to slow down while talking but must switch to English a lot. Throughout, I keep thinking, "I wish I had prepared an 'All About Me' visual presentation to share with them so they could understand and better picture my origin." As I ask them to take turns to introduce themselves in French, to share something about themselves or why they are excited about school or French, it turns out to be a fun ice-breaking activity to get to know each other and for me to gauge with the different levels of French present in the classroom. This simple activity is a gentle reminder for me to articulate well and speak at a moderate pace. I realise that this is a Core French class.

Then, I go over the course outline (mostly written in English) and classroom routines and expectations with them. I remember going over the school's pre-existing Grade 9 French course outline (that I have tweaked a little), having to explain what IB/MYP and AIM are and feeling the gap in my knowledge. With the little knowledge that I have and the unease that I am feeling, I manage to explain what IB/MYP and AIM are and I am grateful that no one has questions. I feel that I explained each one to the best of my ability, but I am not content because the 'best' was not good enough for me. I know that I must address this feeling of discontent and unease. I feel an urgent need to learn more about those programs. Not much time left in the period, I decide to ask my students to write about what they have done over the summer break and to be ready to share it next class. I am thankful for this quiet time as it allows me to take a deep breath and

regain my poise. While the start of my first day of teaching had me filled with anxiety and

nervousness, it leaves me with a feeling of unease, unfulfillment and unpreparedness by the end.

Days go by. Weeks go by. I keep feeling the gap in my knowledge. I cruise through my

first term with a 'trial and error' mode, but never give up. I know that trials and errors in life are

inevitable. However, I do not want 'trial and error' to define my approach to teaching. I am

frustrated with this feeling of inadequacy and dissatisfaction. I find the demands of teaching

taxing, keeping me in survival mode for the first term. I attribute it to the strong discrepancy

between what I had imagined it to be and what the reality of it is, between what I know and what

should be known, and between the support I have and the support I hoped for. Without adequate

knowledge and experiences, I could not properly foresee the challenges and tensions at work. I

keep asking myself the questions: What is the problem? Is it a lack of knowledge in my subject

matter? Is it a lack of knowledge of the curriculum? Is it a lack of knowledge of the FSL

methodology? Is it a problem with the materials I am using and how I present them? Is it a

problem in my teaching and personal style? Is it a lack of knowledge of my students? Is it a lack

of knowledge of the school culture?

Is it a lack of knowledge in my subject matter? Is it a lack of knowledge of the

curriculum? Is it a lack of knowledge of the FSL methodology? I feel I have perused the Core

French curriculum well enough to have learned what and how to teach. But what about AP, IB

and AIM? I have never heard of their mention during my pre-service training, practicum nor in

my lived experiences. How much do I know about them? How trained and prepared am I to

deliver AP, IB/MYP or AIM? That is the challenging part for me: to teach AP, IB French and

using AIM. My deeper concern is about how I would respond to student questions and concerns

when I do not have the required expertise, essential training, and experience in AP, IB/MYP and

AIM. Because this is out of my comfort zone, I choose to spend time learning more. My instinctive strategy is to ask for support from a few experienced teachers at the school, but they are upfront about their inability to be much of a support. None of them have taught AP French before and the issue is that they have just started to experiment with IB/MYP and AIM themselves, with the little formal training they had in the previous year. Even though they do not consider themselves to be IB/MYP or AIM experts yet, I still feel the advantage they have is that they are working from a stance of contextual experience and formal training, which I do not have.

Is it a problem with the materials I am using and how I present them? Is it a problem in my teaching and personal style? Imagine standing in front of a group of Grade 9 students reading an AIM story out loud to them and highly relying on your notebook for the appropriate gestures to accompany the vocabulary in the story. How hard could reading and gesturing simultaneously be? I give it a try. It is terrible. So awkward. So artificial. What a painful reading! I am so embarrassed that I want to hide my face. I am paying too much attention to the vocabulary in the story, to my gestures, my pace of reading and my articulation that I completely ignore the most important part of my lesson: to engage my students. The story, titled "Rozène: La fille qui n'était pas contente", is a traditional Iroquois story about a teenage girl named Rozène from the Iroquois nation. It is a story about decisions that young people must face as they grow up, while also giving insight into First Nations culture. As much as I enjoy using stories in my class, that lesson highlights a few things to me: I have to educate myself about Indigenous culture, I have to engage my students more in their learning, I have to look for some formal training in AIM, I have to learn the AIM gestures, the AIM-style activities, and assessments. I need to get better at using AIM.

Is it a lack of knowledge of my students? Who are my students? What are their cultural backgrounds? What are their values, beliefs, perceptions, and expectations? I realise that I do not know much about my students until our MYP unit titled 'Mon identité' (Identity). Students must consider what the words identity and culture mean to them. They examine what they believe to be three of the most significant events to have shaped their own identity. They explore some of the challenges they face in becoming who they want/wish to be. With those guiding questions in mind, they create and present a cultural artefact to class. The gap in my knowledge is emphasised as I listen to their presentations and am first introduced to words like 'menorah', 'hannukkah', 'vaisaki', 'shogatsu', 'chuseok', to name a few. I notice that several of my Grade 9 students enjoy whole class discussions and presentations, while a few prefer small group discussions and dread presentations. Recognising that culture plays an integral role in students' identities and contributes to their beliefs, values, behaviour, and communication styles, I realise that I need to get to know my students more and what works best for them in the classroom. I also realise that what might work for some students might not suit other students. I do not stop at worrying about my lack of knowledge, experience, and formal training. Learning more and acquiring more knowledge becomes my new mantra.

Is it a lack of knowledge of the school culture? What school culture? Is it the general feel that I get when I walk into the school and through its halls? No, not merely that. Culture surrounds and envelopes the school and its people, shaping their perspectives and expectations. Each school has its own unique set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that administrators, teachers, parents, students, and staff share. Is it a problem in my teaching and personal style? Of course, I cannot escape the fact that my teaching and communication style reflect my cultural background. Much of what I say and do, the way I say it and do it, and my relationships with

students, parents and colleagues are deeply influenced by the way I was brought up and have been socialized. Imagine coming from a culture and having taught in a school culture where parents and students regard teachers as experts; where they tend to worship them as their 'gurus'; where parents will often defer educational decision making to them; where parents and students will not challenge teacher decisions and marks; where teachers can provide blunt feedback on students' work and not be perceived as 'rude' or 'impolite'. My teaching reality is very different from what I had imagined and assumed.

Now I am encountering parents that are very visible in the school; parents that are actively involved in their children's classrooms; parents and students that are very outspoken; where parents and students do not hesitate to challenge classroom decisions, feedback, marks, and report card comments. I never knew what a 'grade grubber' was until now. It takes me time to experience, understand and live it: How do parents and students regard teachers? How do students and parents communicate with teachers? How do teachers communicate with parents and students? How do administrators relate to teachers, students, and parents? How do teachers work in isolation or with colleagues? These socio-culturally determined attitudes and behaviours are interrelated and interact. This is the sociocultural context within which I am evolving, facing new attitudes and cultural norms, learning to deal with the cultural clash and tensions surrounding it, and adapting to a new school culture.

While the feeling of unease and unfulfillment is becoming more and more real, I reflect regularly on my classes, especially when they do not go very well. These critical moments prompt me to start writing out what I know, what I believe I do not know and need to learn and how I am going to do so. I always view my unsuccessful lessons, approaches, and communications as an opportunity for learning and growth and a catalyst for change. I do not

stop at just reflecting in my teacher journal. I start to act, based on the information I collect and the reflection I do. I start to look for PD opportunities to expand my knowledge. I try new ideas to enhance my teaching. I adjust my style. I soon realise, based on practical experience that I am gaining, that knowledge is the key to growth and transformation. My first teaching year has been an amazing journey that would leave a mark on my life forever.

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?

My novice teacher era spans from September 2008 to December 2010. During this time, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice are based upon my prior three-year language teaching experiences, my B.Ed. teacher training program, my practicum experiences as well as my professional in-service training and my interpretation and implementation of the local Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003). While these experiences have helped inform, shape, and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice and as I read my fourth vignette, a picture of my PPK along with its transformations emerges as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Role/Identity. Who is the novice certified teacher hired to teach in an independent school context in Canada? A young transnational certified teacher brimming with "*a feeling of excitement and nervous apprehension*" and worrying about "*making a first good impression*" at her first full-time teaching workplace. Part of me knows that my

anxiety and lack of confidence in myself is the cause of being a visible minority, being new to the country and new to the Canadian independent school system of education. This becomes accentuated when I start worrying about "*being able to fit in*" my new work environment and "making sure to slow down when I am speaking" to my students as I "*remain cognizant of my French accent*" and the vocabulary and expressions I use in the classroom. However, I "*remind myself of everything I have done to get to where I am*" and recognise my personal strengths that have helped me overcome past challenges and reach my goals.

My new teacher role is to teach a Grade 9 ELA course and Grades 9-12 Core French courses. What a heavy teaching load, I'm thinking! My PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my lived experiences advise me that planning is key to help me ease into my first few weeks of teaching, especially because it's my first time teaching those courses. Somehow, I feel prepared due to my pre-service training, practicum experiences, my summer preparation and planning for teaching. However, when I am informed about IB, AP and AIM (Maxwell, 2001) on my first day, my "*sense of confidence and comfort*" gradually fades away. Those are totally new programs to me: "*I do not have the required expertise, essential training, and experience in AP, IB and AIM.*" What a challenge awaiting me! I am neither trained nor prepared to teach IB French, AP French nor to use an AIM-based approach (Maxwell, 2001) to teaching. Yet, here I am, striving to coach a few students "*outside of scheduled class time*" to prepare them to challenge the AP French exam in due course, uneasily trying my best "*to explain what IB and AIM are and feeling the gap in my knowledge,*" as well as remaining "*in survival mode*" of teaching throughout the first term.

This whole lived experience leaves me with a huge feeling of frustration, unease, incompetence, and dissatisfaction. However, it also pushes me to want "*to learn more about*

those programs" since I do not want "*trial and error*" to define my classroom practice and giving up is not an option for me. As I maintain my role to deliver IB, AP and AIM (Maxwell, 2001), I realise that my teaching practice and my practiced identity (Norton, 2000) are going to be very different from what I have imagined it to be. I find there is a "*strong discrepancy between what I had imagined it to be and what the reality of it is, between what I know and what should be known, and between the support I have and the support I hoped for.*" I experience a key shift in my teacher identity: from Core French teacher to IB (MYP) French teacher, AIM teacher, and AP French teacher. I immediately presume that it is going to be a challenging teaching experience.

My lived experiences make me recognize the challenges of a linguistically and culturally different teacher and the determination and perseverance to deal with those challenges. But whatever the challenges and tensions at work, I always stay positive, "*never give up*" and plough through. I learn enormously through the challenges and practise reflexivity by keeping a journal. It stimulates reflection on experience, whilst helping to raise questions about my current practice and opening my world to new opportunities "*for learning and growth*" and new experiences. Being able to reflect on my classroom activities helps me understand how to better perform and enhance my teaching practice. To me, the main benefit of reflexivity is personal growth.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my knowledge of and experience with the local Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) mainly informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) until I encounter a new frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996) due to my new exposure to IB/MYP, AP and AIM (Maxwell, 2001). As I explore my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I realise that I "*do not have the required expertise, essential training, and experience in AP, IB French and AIM,*" I

don't know anything about those various programs and how distinct they are from the Core

French one. Through my own thorough research and a few PD sessions, I acquire new

knowledge about IB/MYP, AP and AIM (Maxwell, 2001). This shift in my PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985), in turn, impacts my teaching practice.

Looking back at my first introduction to IB/MYP French, I learn that the curriculum is

organised into five prescribed themes: identities, experiences, human ingenuity, social

organisation and sharing the planet. The curriculum allows for students to develop their language

skills in diverse ways, develop insights into the craft of the language and the concept of culture,

and make practical connections between their studies and the real world. In the AP French

course, students craft their command of the language through extensive listening, speaking,

reading, and writing exercises. Both courses culminate in external examinations. On the other

hand, the AIM language learning program was developed in Canada by Wendy Maxwell (2001),

a former Core French and French Immersion teacher. This communicative instructional

methodology involves the presentation of high frequency vocabulary through gesture and

contextualised in story, song, and drama. This now informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice. Within my teaching context, there is a huge

commitment on preparing students to challenge and succeed on the external examinations.

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy

includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition,

knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and

teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

My brief description of my first Homeroom class provides a picture of how my practicum

experiences inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice.

Adopting my CT's welcoming approach, I stand at the door to greet my Grade 9 Homeroom

students and "*run some ice-breaker conversations*" to get to know them. But looking back at my

first time teaching a Grade 9 French class using an AIM story, I acknowledge my lack of

expertise, training, and experience with the AIM language learning program (Maxwell, 2001).

The AIM-based approach consists of five primary features: high frequency vocabulary, gestures,

content-based instruction, an inductive, contextualised approach to grammar and cooperative

learning activities (AIM Language Learning, 2010). It is very unlike the common thematic

approaches to teaching CF (Manitoba Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003),

whereby the teaching of vocabulary and grammar is isolated and disconnected from one unit to

the next.

But how do I use an AIM-based approach to teaching (Maxwell, 2001)? It is pretty

much adopting a teacher-centred and transmission-oriented approach (Cummins, 1996, 1998),

standing in front of the classroom, reading the AIM story, titled "Rozène: La fille qui n'était pas

contente" out loud to the class while highly relying on my notebook "*for the appropriate*

gestures to accompany the vocabulary in the story," and controlling the classroom activities. In a

typical AIM classroom (AIM Language Learning, 2010), gestures are initially taught

individually and immediately contextualised in either spontaneous speech by the teacher or in the

stories, plays, songs and activities. The challenging part for me is that I am at a stage where I am

learning and trying to teach it simultaneously. I try my best to accompany the spoken words with

gestures to provide my students with meaning without relying on traditional translation charts.

But I find it very hard to produce a gesture and to speak at the same time. I find the approach

very awkward since it involves a lot of choral gestures and repetition of target vocabulary and

structures. I pay so much attention to "*my gestures, my pace of reading and my articulation*" that

I forget to engage my students. Instead, I choose to remain a teacher in control and with a transmission approach (Cummins et al., 2007) due to my lack of expertise, training, and the gap in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

Even though I find the demands of teaching taxing, I do not want 'trial and error' to define my approach to teaching. Feeling a strong disconnect between my practice and "*what I had imagined it to be*" (Norton, 2000) based on my teacher training and practicum experiences, I revert to reflecting on my experiences and looking for strategies to enhance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice. The reflections on my lived experiences reveal that I need to educate myself about Indigenous culture in Canada. I feel a strong need to act on that feeling of disconnect and unease: "*I need to get better at using AIM*" and make it work in the context of my classroom.

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations, expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, what students know and how they learn.

Right at the beginning, I reveal my knowledge of students in the way I stand at the door and welcome my students into my classroom, and we engage in meaningful conversations and sharing experiences in an endeavour to get to know them better and nurture connections with them. This clearly depicts a natural transformation in my practice (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002) prompted by my lived experiences. My awareness of students and student learning is also evident in student-teacher interaction and student-student interaction as I observe them interact with one another and myself during our introduction class. This experience tells me that students enjoy learning fun, interesting facts about their classmates and teacher and these social

interactions help build relationships in the classroom (Vygotsky, 1978). It also reveals to me that students learn better with visuals as "*I wish I had prepared an 'All About Me' visual presentation to share with them so they could understand and better picture my origin*" instead of just standing in front of the classroom and verbally introducing myself. It prompts me to shift my traditional style.

I also communicate my knowledge (or lack of knowledge) of students when "*I realise that I do not know much about my students until our MYP unit, titled 'Mon identité' (Identity)*" wherein I learn "*what the words identity and culture mean to them*" and learn about some of the things that have helped shape their identity. As we engage in class conversations, discussions, creation, and presentation of a cultural artefact, I witness different kinds of learners and from various cultural backgrounds: "*several of my Grade 9 students enjoy whole class discussions and presentations, while a few prefer small group discussions and dread presentations.*" This experience triggers in me a desire to get to know my students better and "*what works best for them in the classroom*" since I recognise that "*culture plays an integral role in students' identities*" as well as a need to learn to properly differentiate instruction to meet the needs of my students, to ensure student well-being, and to ensure that they feel safe and comfortable to participate in the classroom (Noddings, 2003). Shifting from my customary notion of a one-size-fits-all model of education (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), I come to the realisation that "*what might work for some students might not suit other students*" and I must adapt my style and shift my teacher identity (Clarke, 2008; Liu & Xu, 2011; Tsui, 2007) in my daily practice.

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

The gap in my knowledge of the IB/MYP French program, AP French program and AIM language learning program (2010) is striking as I allude to my very first introduction to IB/MYP, AP and AIM on my first day of school. I "*have never heard of their mention*" before. I bring in my awareness of context outside the French program as I express my apprehensiveness regarding the "*very formal atmosphere*" in the staff room. Being the only visible minority person in such a stern ambiance is a "*little intimidating*" since it's nothing I have experienced in the past.

My knowledge of context is highlighted in my views regarding the whole-school assembly which establishes a formal tone wherein order and discipline prevail. What does the whole-school assembly communicate about the school context? Despite being formal, it also sets a welcoming tone. It helps transition students back to school, welcome new students and above all, it helps students "*to think of the new school year as a journey together*," thus building relationships right from the start of the school year. As my lived experiences help enhance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I learn about the Homeroom program wherein "*students report at the beginning of each school day for attendance, announcements, and other activities*" and it is the perfect place for me to help students make connections as well as feel safe and cared for (Noddings, 2003).

My knowledge of context is also made obvious in my opinions concerning the support I receive and the support I had imagined or hoped for (Norton, 2000). Based on my prior lived experiences, I expect support to be free flowing, readily available, and even without solicitation. However, my contextual experience with experienced teachers' "*inability to be much of a support*" shows that even if novice teachers desperately need more guidance, they can be overlooked in a school context where experienced teachers are so incredibly busy that they

cannot possibly invest their time to offer support. This is the reality of things in practice (Norton, 2000; Wenger, 1998).

The gap in my knowledge of context is also present in my narration regarding the school cultural context. I experience a shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) when I encounter parents and students that "*do not hesitate to challenge classroom decisions, feedback, marks and report card comments*" and that are very "*outspoken*" and opinionated. I experience a different kind of parent-teacher-student relationship as I learn to adapt to a new school culture. The exciting challenge of working in a new school cultural context with different cultural norms, attitudes, behaviours, expectations, and assumptions also comes with the realisation that values inevitably clash and can give rise to tensions. As I address the tensions and cultural clash within which I am evolving, I become more aware of how my beliefs, values, perspectives, decision-making and "*my teaching and communication style*" are influenced by my cultural frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996). To deal with the tensions at work, I gradually experience a shift in my teacher identity (Clarke, 2008; Liu & Xu, 2011; Tsui, 2007) as well as teaching and communication style that reflects my revised cultural frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996).

My teacher era

Stories from this teacher era (2002-2010) have provided me with an opportunity to critically reflect on my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice, which have been informed and shaped by my lived experiences. These distinct experiences from my engagement with my students' language learning experiences have challenged and taught me that I was not fully seeing and appreciating my students' approaches to learning a second language. They have taught me that my teaching practice required growth (Goodson & Cole, 1993;

Mezirow, 1978) and my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) required broadening. My university, practicum, PD, and certified teacher experiences have challenged and taught me that a paradigm shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice is required. They have challenged me to critically reflect on my prior experiences and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as I interpret and reinterpret my sense of experience and meaning making in the new cultural context in which I am evolving. I undergo transformative learning and growth (Mezirow, 1978) by questioning and reflecting on my existing frames of reference, by learning new frames of reference, and construing a revised PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996). My experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, have subsequently transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly ndinin, 1985) and my teaching practice.

Chapter Five: Teacher-Mother Era Findings

Teacher-Mother Era Stories

There are 2 vignettes told and discussed in this section that illustrate my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), experience, and growth (Goodson & Cole, 1993; Mezirow, 1978) as a teacher and teacher-mother. I selected the following narratives because they were felt as salient elements of my lived experiences. Throughout this section, my life stories appear in italics.

Parental Leave

Vignette Five illustrates my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a mother reflecting on her home language learning environment. It presents how my lived experiences as a mother produce a paradigm shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985. It is important to note that I am on a two-year parental leave and am not teaching at the time.

It is my job to listen, observe, gather information, document, reflect, plan, instruct, and provide the appropriate support and scaffolds my students need to further their learning. It is an ongoing cycle, and I understand the critical role of observation and reflection in that ongoing cycle. It becomes an even more powerful tool when I start reflecting on my son's development as a language learner. These reflections and lived experiences, which remain thick in my memory, have helped inform, shape, and shift my PPK and teaching practice.

It is a very cold Sunday morning. Blake (pseudonym) is born. He adds a whole new dimension to my life. I am now on extended maternity leave for the next two years. Blake is raised in a multilingual home environment. English. French. Creole. Tamil. Hindi. Sanskrit. Chinese. My husband and I want to make sure that he has exposure to all the languages that we were exposed to growing up, especially French. We give a lot of importance to French because we were both born and raised in a francophone country. We want him to be fully fluent in both

English and French, and we worry that he would not have as much exposure to French given that we live in an English-speaking urban city. We strive to expose him to as much French as we can. We speak in French, play in French, read books in French, narrate stories in French, sing in French, watch French television, and listen to French radio.

We introduce him to the world of technology at an early age in the hope of exposing him more to online French resources, and in no time, we witness a little tech-savvy toddler thriving with technology use. Little did we know how good he was going to be with technology. We stand in awe watching Blake take to technology so readily and how easily he learns to use it. We take him to several French-speaking places, events, cities, and countries in an endeavour to immerse him more in the language and culture. We intentionally plan playdates with our francophone friends; found activities and events organised by the local Francophone community; pay frequent visits to French libraries and resource centres to read, sing, and speak in French, play, and do fun activities in a francophone setting; travel to Quebec, France, and Mauritius to be fully immersed in the French language and culture. And it works. The more Blake is being exposed to the French language and culture in authentic settings, the more he is developing oral fluency and accuracy in the language. Our initial fear starts to shrink gradually.

Learning takes place all day long and in every setting for Blake. There isn't a switch to turn on. There isn't an 'aha' moment when Blake suddenly learns a language. The 'aha' happens when I reflect on Blake's language development and notice how it has changed and grown over time. There is nothing more enjoyable than figuring out what Blake is understanding when we are listening to a French song or playing a game together or when he is being read out loud to. I let him pick the French books he wants to be read to, helping to establish his sense of independence, and giving him a choice at an early age. He is read to and/or told a story each

day since my own childhood experiences and my reflections teach me to believe that language development would be enhanced when reading and/or storytelling is incorporated into the everyday activities of children of all ages. No matter what other activities come up throughout the day, Blake knows that he would be read to and/or told a story.

My reflections teach me that language development can positively be enhanced with the integration of stories, songs, games, technology, and culture. My reflections also teach me that learning happens when fun happens. My hope is to be able to incorporate what I learn from my reflections into my future classroom practice in an endeavour to better engage my students in their learning of the French language.

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practi$$$$ce? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?

My teacher-mother era spans from September 2011 to August 2014. During this time, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice are mainly based upon my prior CF teaching experience in Western Canada, my professional in-service training and my interpretation and implementation of the local CF curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) and my experiences and reflections as a new mother on my home language learning environment. While these experiences have helped inform, shape, and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice and as I read my fifth vignette, a picture of my PPK along with its transformations emerges as follows:

Knowledge of Self, Context and Language Learning. I know my role as a teacher in formal settings is to "*listen, observe, gather information, document, reflect*," and plan to teach accordingly. Those reflections are very important to me as they help guide and inform my practice. But who is the self in this vignette? A new mother with first-hand experiences with a child immersed in language learning in informal settings. My lived experiences as a mother along with my reflections on those experiences largely inform and enhance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), which will, in turn, impact my future classroom practice.

My acquaintance with languages is highlighted and this highly accounts for the reason why French is given a lot of importance in my multilingual home environment, be it via play, books, storytelling, conversations, songs, television, radio, and other media. Intentionally organising playdates with francophone friends, planning visits to French libraries, travelling to francophone places, striving to expose Blake to as much French as possible and immersing him in the language and culture show the extent to which I value the language, the culture, and the power of immersion in authentic contexts. My lived experiences along with my reflections on these experiences have largely enhanced my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). They have taught me that "*learning happens when fun happens*," that language learning takes time and investment, that oral communication and social interaction is key in language learning, that "*language development can positively be enhanced with the integration of stories, songs, games, technology and culture*," and that reading in French can be pleasant when choice is embraced.

My new identity as a teacher-mother has prompted a major shift in my thinking and understanding of FSL learning and teaching. As my experiences evolve, I experience what Mezirow (1978) would term as transformative learning, that is, what I learn from my experiences subsequently shapes my identity and my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), and it impacts my

future practice and experiences. My hope is that I can integrate what I have learned from my experiences and reflections into my future practice. I believe that my enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) can positively impact my practice.

Post-maternity Teaching Experience

Vignette Six illustrates my knowledge and experiences as a teacher-mother in Canada returning to full-time teaching in another independent school context after a two-year parental leave. It presents how my lived experiences within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts have helped shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice.

September 2013. It is that time of the school year where I am preparing to head back to teaching after a two-year parental leave. As much as it is difficult to reconcile leaving my own child to teach other people's children, my new life as a teacher-mother begins. It is challenging but rewarding and fulfilling at the same time. I would now be shaping the future for children both in my professional and personal life. My first day at my new school arrives. Just like on the first day of my previous teaching job, I am filled with excitement and nervousness about making a first good impression, getting acquainted with the school culture, being able to fit in, building a positive rapport with everyone, and so on. However, I try not to worry too much and tell myself that even the most experienced teachers feel nervous about meeting new students and having new teaching roles, responsibilities, and expectations at the beginning of each school year. For some reason, I feel less nervous and worried than in the past.

New faculty at the school are given an orientation/information session at the start of each school year. My first impressions are very positive, and it is a very welcoming experience for me. It is warming to see many familiar faces which I have seen on the day of my interview, and it

helps to settle the new job jitters. It is also very warming to meet many student ambassadors and teaching and non-teaching staff from visibly different cultural backgrounds. I gladly note that I would not stand out as the only visible minority teacher. I am warmly welcomed by the Senior School Principal, my French Department Head, and my teacher mentor. I am very grateful to have a teacher mentor and am thrilled to learn that I would have another French teacher to collaborate with at the Senior School level. What a relief not to be the only Senior School French teacher! I also learn that the goal of the mentorship program at the school is to help promote the development and growth of new teachers at the school; to help orient new teachers to the school community; and to help support new teachers to teaching, as well as on the emotional and relational front. How fortunate I feel to have an experienced teacher in a leading role at the school as a mentor! At the end of the day, I go home, feeling positive about my new teaching job.

The next day is scheduled for full staff meetings, divisional meetings, department meetings and individual planning time. A formal, yet very friendly and collegial, atmosphere prevails at the full staff and divisional meetings. I appreciate having some department and individual planning time to prepare for the following full day of school. At the end of the day, I feel prepared because I have spent time collaborating with the other Senior School French teacher and planning the first few weeks of school. I am going to teach Grades 9-10 Core French courses. Since I have had the opportunity to teach those two courses in the past, I feel confident that my prior teaching experience would serve me well and I feel comfortable going into my first week of teaching. The following day starts with a whole school assembly prepared by the Student Council. As I make my way to the gymnasium for the assembly, I do not feel flustered about getting lost in such a big school because I am accompanied by my teacher mentor and there are several student ambassadors guiding new students and faculty. It is a very organised assembly

that would set the right tone for the school year. All new faculty are enthusiastically and personally introduced by their respective mentors and cheerfully welcomed by the whole school. What a nice way to make new faculty feel appreciated!

After the assembly, it is time for mixed-grade Advisory class where students report at the beginning of each school day for attendance, announcements, and other activities. New faculty are usually not assigned an Advisory class. Fortunately, I get to observe my mentor's Advisory class and I learn a lot. I witness firsthand interaction between my mentor and her advisees, as well as interaction and collaboration among students from mixed grades through some ice breaking activities run by my mentor. I gain a lot of insight into her strategies and ideas that help build relationships on Day 1, her main goal for her Advisory class. Everything goes as planned and before we know, it is time for regular classes.

After the Advisory class, I sit down with my colleague and spend my preparatory time brainstorming some activities that would help build relationships and create that feeling of community in my classroom. My colleague shares a PowerPoint presentation titled 'What is this year going to look like?' with me. She also shares how this is crucial to her as it sets the tone for the year. I am very grateful for this resource. I tweak it a little to suit my classes. And later that afternoon comes the time for my first teaching period of the day. I let some French music play in the background, greet my Grade 9 students at the door and welcome them into my classroom. I then write my name on the board and introduce myself, using an 'All About Me' PowerPoint presentation with pictures, audio, and video that I share with my students so they can learn more about myself, my passion for French and the francophone culture, how I have spent my summer holidays, as well as understand and better picture my origin. One of the most important things that I learn from my previous teaching experience is to demonstrate my enthusiasm for French

right from the start. I believe that when my students see how passionate I am, then they start to

care too. And they start to appreciate my number One rule throughout class time: to always

speak in French.

After having answered all their interesting questions, I feel that I am already establishing

a positive connection with them. Remarkably, most of the introductory part of the class is

conducted in French. Then, it is their turn to speak in French. I ask them to introduce

themselves, share something about themselves and demonstrate a general knowledge of the

advantages of learning French. This little activity helps me get acquainted with my students and

gives me some insight into why they are taking Grade 9 French. I continue with an ice breaker

activity called 'Boule de neige' (Snowball in English). I learned about this activity at a Core

French PD opportunity. Students write something about themselves (something that no one

would be able to guess) on a piece of paper, crunch the paper into a snowball and throw it as far

away as they can. Each student then picks a random 'Boule de neige' and goes around the room

asking questions to each other to find out who wrote on the 'Boule de neige' that they have

picked. The goal is to have them interact only in French during the activity and get to know each

other. I also get involved and this helps make me more approachable and build rapport with my

students. They enjoy the activity and I love it too.

It is then time to go over the 'What is this year going to look like?' PowerPoint

presentation with my class. What a gem! I agree with my colleague that this is a powerful visual

resource, highlighting an introduction to the course, major assessments, class routines,

expectations, and materials. It is much more captivating and engaging than just reading and

explaining the course outline to them. I feel very comfortable and confident with what I am

presenting to my students. I welcome any feedback, input, and questions from them. After having

addressed all questions regarding the course, I distribute a worksheet titled 'Une Auto-évaluation & Mes Buts' (Self-Assessment & My Goals) for them to complete as an exit slip. This document would allow me to better understand my students - why they want to take French, how they learn best, what they want to learn in French class, what they struggle with in French, their learning goals for the term/year, and that is something that we would revisit throughout the year.

Days pass. Weeks pass. I am very grateful for the collaborative work with the colleagues in my department and I feel more knowledgeable about the Core French curriculum, teaching materials, methodology, assignments, and assessments. We meet on a regular basis and share every resource: course outlines, lesson and unit plans, assessments, teaching materials, activities, ideas, etc. This is the cultural context within which I am evolving and adapting to a new school culture. I am quite content with the way things are going at the school. However, during our department meetings, the need to revisit our Core French program surfaces and questions arise about how to attract and sustain the interest of students in taking French throughout their Senior Years. What is the problem? Why is enrolment in Grade 10 French lower compared to Grade 9 and inexistent in Grades 11 and 12 at the time? Why aren't students interested in taking French through to Grade 12? Why is our Core French program not successful in retaining students to the end of high school? What is it that we are doing wrong? How can we improve and change the outcome?

This leads me to reflect on the 'what', 'why' and 'how' I am teaching, and whether I am meeting the needs of my students. So, I go back to the survey that I did with my students on Day 1. That document reveals that many students learn best when they work collaboratively, find the lesson fun and engaging, and they love doing projects. It also reveals that many students struggle with grammar, many students struggle with reading comprehension, many are

disappointed with their inability or lack of confidence in expressing themselves in French, and many want to get better at speaking the language fluently. So, what and how am I teaching? As a language department, we collectively adopt the task-based, multidimensional approach of the provincial curriculum (2003) which is organized according to four categories: language, communicative-experiential, culture, and general language learning. Learning is centered on the accomplishment of a task directly linked to the outcomes, as well as with a focus on ensuring that our students develop proficiency in the four competencies: oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension, and written production.

Upon reflection on our course outline, assessments, exams, and our shared teaching practice, I feel that there is a greater emphasis on written comprehension and written production than on oral comprehension and oral production, and far less attention is given to culture and general language learning outcomes. A large focus is on teaching vocabulary and grammar in isolation. I start asking myself the questions: Are my lessons student-centered or more teacher-based? Are the teaching materials and textbooks that I am using interesting, appealing, and enjoyable? Are the vocabulary and grammar lessons fun and engaging? Or is it more rote learning and memorisation of lists of vocabulary words and explicit teaching of grammar rules? Mostly the latter, I would argue.

Gradually, I witness firsthand frustrations, disengagement, and boredom of my students. I become frustrated with my classroom practice. I start reflecting on how I have been encouraging my son's language learning development at home in contrast with what I am doing in my classroom. I know that language learning can be enhanced with the integration of stories, songs, fun activities, conversations, games, technology, and culture. But why am I not implementing this in my practice? Why don't I bring this up with my department? I start to feel a

huge disconnect between how I am encouraging the learning of French at home and what I am doing in my classroom. How am I instilling love for the French language and culture in my students? How am I stimulating their learning? How am I engaging them in conversations? How am I using technology to engage them? How am I immersing them in and exposing them to authentic French? My reflections teach me that I need to do better and brainstorm ideas with my department on how to enhance our teaching and students' learning.

It is quite easy for me to reflect on the 'what' and 'how' of my teaching. But what about the 'why'? It is harder to think about the 'why', and this is probably why it is a challenge for student retention. As I witness my students' frustrations as well as mine, I feel the need to rethink the content of the units we are teaching to make it more meaningful, engaging and fun. I do not want the act of learning to feel like a power struggle or a compulsion. I want it to feel like something they enjoy doing and they understand why they are doing it. And if they enjoy it and find it relevant, they will want to keep learning. With this in mind, a paradigm shift in our teaching methodology, curriculum content, and its relevance and usefulness is required. Our traditional Core French program beckons change. Ways to make French class more interesting, more engaging, more collaborative, more stimulating, more fun, more meaningful, and more relevant are needed.

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts,

transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice? As I read my sixth vignette, a picture of my PPK along with its transformations emerges as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Role/Identity. Who is the teacher employed to teach in this context? A teacher-mother with valuable teaching experiences and lived experiences as a new mother, "*filled with excitement and nervousness*" about returning to full-time teaching after a two-year parental leave. Part of me knows that my nervousness is the cause of being new to the school, but I remind myself that "*even the most experienced teachers feel nervous*" at the start of each school year and I recognise my personal strengths and experiences that have helped me reach where I am. The orientation session at the school also helps "*to settle the new job jitters*," and even if the nerves and anxiety do not disappear instantly, my first impressions and welcoming experience at the school make me feel optimistic and comfortable in my new surroundings. I am content with the idea that "*I would not stand out as the only visible minority teacher*" at the school since inclusivity and diversity in the workplace matter a lot to me. It creates for me a sense of belonging, trust, engagement, and commitment.

My new teacher role is to teach Grades 9-10 Core French courses, and I feel positive and assured that my pre-service training as well as my prior teaching experience would serve me well. My previous teaching experience has taught me how important it is to "*demonstrate my enthusiasm for French right from the start*," and when my students witness my passion for the language, I believe that they can appreciate my goal of immersing them in French and the francophone culture throughout class time. Since the Core French program is not new to me, I feel confident that I have the required expertise, training, and experience to face the job challenge. As my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my lived experiences inform me that planning is key, I feel prepared due to the amount of time spent collaborating with another

French teacher at the school and individual planning for teaching those courses. My current CF teacher identity fills me with a feeling of readiness, satisfaction, ease, competence, and well-being.

Part of my role as a new CF teacher is to also participate in department meetings and PD sessions and collaborate on department goals as well as share professional knowledge to better student learning. Discussions at our department meetings give rise to questions surrounding "*how to attract and sustain the interest of students in taking French throughout their Senior Years.*" My engagement with these discussions prompts me to reflect on the reasons why our program is inefficacious in retaining students up until graduation (Shea, 2004). My experiences in the classroom lead me to witness "*first-hand frustrations, disengagement and boredom of my students*" and my reflections on my home language learning environment as opposed to my teaching approaches in the classroom create a strong feeling of disconnect in me. My lived experiences and reflections cause me to become so "*frustrated with my classroom practice*" that a shift in my teaching practice, growth in my teaching approaches, and ways to enhance student learning are necessary.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my knowledge of and experience with the provincial Core French curriculum (2003) via my pre-service training as well as my prior teaching experience, currently informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). As I explore my PPK, I feel positive that my training, experience, and expertise in CF would serve me well in my current classroom practice.

The provincial CF or Basic French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) guide my pedagogical practices to promote the development of my students' language abilities as highlighted in the "*task-based, multidimensional*" approach of the provincial curriculum

consisting of the four components: experience/communication, culture, language, and general language education. The communicative and language outcomes are organised into four competencies: oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension, and written production. My FSL (CF) teaching practice is therefore structured around teaching the language and accomplishing a task with a focus on ensuring that my students develop proficiency in all four competencies. The curricular document (2003) explains that each is of equal importance in the development of the students' language abilities, and this development of discrete language skills is central in the structuring of my practice. The curricular document (2003) also emphasises the significance of culture and general language learning outcomes. However, my reflections on my experiences in the classroom reveal that "*there is a greater focus on written comprehension and written production than on oral comprehension and oral production, and far less attention is given to those two components of the curriculum: culture and general language learning.*" My lived experiences in the classroom and my reflections on my practice prompt that a shift in my teaching practice is needed.

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition, knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

My account of my first classroom activity shows how my Professional Development experiences inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my practice. An ice-breaker activity like 'Boule de neige' (Snowball), learned at a PD session and closely associated with the socio-constructivist and experiential approach (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971), allows me to engage my students in the language, get them to interact naturally in French and get

acquainted with each other. My aim is to use such strategies to encourage authentic

communication and natural interaction in French in my classroom, and this is what currently

shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). However, upon reflection, I realise that I am

enacting the curriculum with more of a transmission orientation (Cummins et al., 2007), that is,

with an abundance of isolated, drill-based grammar and vocabulary activities. Since my

reflections also reveal the frustrations and disengagement of my students with the curriculum,

my lived experiences in the classroom and my reflections on my practice prompt that a shift in

my teaching practice is needed.

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student

learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations,

expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction,

what students know and how they learn.

My description of my first Grade 9 CF class depicts how my practicum and prior

teaching experiences inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my practice.

Playing some French music in the background, I stand at the door to welcome my Grade 9

students into my classroom. While embracing this approach of my CT, I hope to come across as

approachable, congenial, and welcoming to my students. My prior teaching experiences have

taught me the importance of making a thorough introduction, making connections, and

establishing relationships with my students right from the start. I have learned how important it is

to prepare an '*All About Me*' PowerPoint presentation to share with my students so they can learn

more about me, "*my passion for French and the francophone culture*," as well as why I believe

in immersing them in the French language throughout class time. This clearly portrays the

transformation in my practice prompted by my prior teaching experiences.

My awareness of students and student learning is evident in student-teacher interaction and student-student interaction as I notice them interacting with one another and myself during our introductory conversations, as I engage my students with the '*What is this year going to look like?*' PowerPoint presentation and "*welcome feedback, input, and questions*" throughout my presentation. These authentic interactions (Vygotsky, 1978) not only help establish "*a positive connection*" with my students, but they also help my students better understand what to expect in terms of course materials, assessments, class expectations and routines. These two powerful visual resources and technology tools are "*much more captivating and engaging*" than my traditional transmission style (Cummins et al., 2007) of just standing in front of the classroom and giving verbal introductions and instructions. This clearly depicts a shift in my practice as I undergo a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1996) and experience a revised PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) prompted by my lived experiences.

Furthermore, I reveal my knowledge of students and student learning as I engage them in a reflection and goal setting piece. This experience and engagement with my students give me some insight into who my students are, why they want to learn French, how they learn best and their learning goals. This surveying approach of gathering and acquiring knowledge about my students helps inform and shape my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). It reveals to me that my students learn best when the lesson is "*fun and engaging*" and they enjoy group work and collaborating on projects. It also conveys their disappointment in not being able to communicate orally with fluency, spontaneity, and confidence. My engagement with my students, experiences in the classroom and my reflections prompt that a shift in my teaching practice is necessary to make learning for my students "*more meaningful, engaging and fun*" (Vygotsky, 1978).

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

My knowledge of the Core French program is striking as I mention my feeling of confidence, ease and comfort with the curriculum, teaching materials, methodology, assignments, and assessments. I bring in my awareness of context outside the French program as I express my positive first impressions, gratitude, and comfort level regarding the mentorship program at the school, the time allotted for department meetings and planning, and the collegial bond and collaboration among teachers at the school. The school context fosters a culture where teachers readily share professional knowledge, resources like the PowerPoint presentation and instructional strategies to better student learning and support new teachers to the school. I admire the meaningful exchanges and the enormous support I receive from my mentor and colleagues. I appreciate working in such a positive school environment where there is collegiality, a culture of sharing and collaboration (Wenger et al., 2002), social-emotional support and a trusting relationship with my mentor and department. Not being the only visible minority person on the school compound also sets a non-intimidating tone and a very welcoming, safe ambiance.

My knowledge of context is featured in my mention of the well-organised whole-school assembly. What does the whole-school assembly communicate about the school context? It establishes "*the right tone for the school year*" wherein an atmosphere of enthusiasm, warmth and appreciation prevail. As my lived experiences help enhance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I learn about the mixed-grade Advisory program wherein "*students report at the beginning of each school day for attendance, announcements, and other activities*" and I am grateful that I get to observe my mentor's Advisory class, the teacher-student interaction, and the

interaction among students from mixed grades. As I observe how my mentor's Advisory class allows for a safe place to ask questions and students feel welcomed and cared for, I "*gain a lot of insight into her strategies and ideas*" that help students make connections, build relationships and community in the classroom. As my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) continues to evolve, I realise that the Advisory class is not just a place for students to check in for attendance and talk to friends. It has evolved into a period where students can start their day at a safe, supportive home base, where teachers take the time to get to know their students, teachers offer guidance as needed and it is the perfect place to celebrate student success and build a culture that's fun, inclusive, supportive, and caring (Noddings, 2003).

My knowledge of classroom context is highlighted in the question surrounding student retention throughout their Senior Years and the "*need to revisit our Core French program*" emerges during our department meetings. This leads me to question my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice. This experience leads me to reflect on my current classroom practice and brings me to the realisation that I need to find ways to enhance my teaching approaches to better meet the needs and interests of my students. As I experience a transformation in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), a paradigm shift in my teaching methodology and course content is required.

My teacher-mother era

Stories from this teacher-mother era (2011-2014) have depicted me as a teacher and a mother, but not yet a researcher. My PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice during this teacher-mother era are largely based upon my lived experiences as a mother, my accumulated knowledge and experiences as a certified CF teacher, my in-service professional

development, and my evolving understanding and implementation of the local Core French

Curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003). The change in my life role (now teacher-mother)

affects my understanding of my role as FSL (CF) teacher in practice as well as my interpretation

and implementation of the provincial curriculum (2003). The unique perspective I bring to my

teaching practice from my lived experiences as a mother along with my reflections on my home

language learning experiences has shifted my understanding and interpretation of my role as FSL

(CF) teacher.

This teacher-mother era highlights how I am intensely aware of how I am encouraging

home language development through reading and how I am giving listening and speaking

particular attention as I see them unfold in my home language learning environment. I also

become more aware of how I am trying to enhance home language learning and development via

immersion in a variety of cultural activities along with authentic interactive, communicative

activities (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). As I critically reflect on the use of the digital tools in

my home setting, I become deeply aware of my stance on technology from my lived experience

as a 'digital immigrant' and of the fact that I am not fully appreciating that my students (the

newer generation) are 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001).

In my previous teacher era, I did not have a thorough understanding of how powerful

authentic communication, culture, stories, games, technology, listening and speaking could be

for my students. Close-up engagement and reflections on my home language experiences have

deepened my understanding and have allowed for a shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985). As I experience this shift, I become frustrated with the disconnect I start to feel in the

context of my current teaching practice. My reflections on my revised PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985) and my practice give rise to a need to revisit my current classroom practice

which is heavily weighted towards grammar and vocabulary. I feel that the choice of topics and language concepts and how they are approached in my practice seem to be based more on old textbooks than the curriculum. As I critically reflect on my course content, my teaching approaches during this teaching period and what my revised PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) has taught me, I now see it as my duty as a CF teacher to immerse my students in the rich world of technology, games, culture, authentic communication, and fiction. I gradually become more acutely aware of how the shift in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) now impacts the quality of my engagements with my students as well as my pedagogical decisions in the classroom.

Based on my evolving PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), I feel it will benefit my students to place less emphasis on language (grammar and vocabulary) without a communicative purpose, to do less grammar drills outside of a communicative context, to make less use of translation charts, and to do less teacher-directed activities. This will allow me time to place greater emphasis on authentic communication in the speaking and writing components, place more emphasis on learning strategies, do more reading individually and in groups, include more variety in reading materials (beyond the textbook, using different genres), do more listening to recordings, radio, authentic texts (e.g. songs, interviews, television commercials), embrace more technology-based tasks or projects, incorporate more French games, and expose my students more to the Francophone world (through visits, guests, cultural activities, field trips).

I constantly reflect on how I can make room for technology, cultural activities, authentic communicative activities, games, choice of fiction, and give my students choice and command over the amount of time they spend on each of the four competencies: oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension and written production while still maintaining my role as a FSL teacher, who is guided by the provincial curriculum (2003) expectations, the stakeholders'

expectations, and the drive to balance the four competencies as well as make learning more meaningful and engaging for my students. This is becoming a real dilemma and cause for some tension and growing feelings of unease in my practice.

My lived experiences as a mother along with my reflections on my home language learning experiences has also intensified my awareness of the power and position of authority I hold as a teacher regarding who makes the decisions the content of knowledge studied by students. I begin to question who has the authority to regulate the topics explored in the classroom and the power to decide which language strand is given priority and why. I start probing into how I can create opportunities for my students to make decisions and choices with respect to their use of the language competencies for their individual purposes. While I reflect on my home language learning experiences along with my evolving understanding and interpretation of the provincial curriculum (2003), I start to feel that I am somehow restricting student learning. I begin to question myself and think of ways in which to honour learners' interests, experiences, and drive for meaning making (Vygotsky, 1978) in my classroom. As a teacher-mother, I start to feel certain unease since my need to shift my pedagogical choices and decisions regarding the four language strands did not seem to fit with the expectations within the socio-political context of my teaching situation. Although conscious of this unease, I lack the theoretical language in which to communicate this understanding and of how to address this.

Looking back at this teacher era through my lived experiences as a mother along with my reflections on my home language learning experiences, through my new understanding of second language learning and teaching, and through my evolving understanding of the provincial curriculum (2003), I have identified these defining moments which have offered me an opportunity to question, challenge and advance my understanding of my teacher PPK (Clandinin

& Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice. These vignettes have provided me with an opportunity to critically reflect on my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice, which have been informed and shaped by my lived experiences. My experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, continue to impact and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my practice.

Chapter Six: Teacher-Mother-Researcher Era Findings

Teacher-Mother-Researcher Era Stories

There are 3 vignettes told and discussed in this section that illustrate my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), experience, and growth as a teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher. I have selected the following narratives because they were felt as salient elements of my lived experiences. Throughout this section, my life stories appear in italics.

Returning to University and New FCC Curriculum (2014)

Vignette Seven illustrates my knowledge and experiences as a teacher-mother-researcher in the same independent school context. It portrays the transformations in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice as my lived experiences evolve within this context. It is important to note that I am a full-time teacher, and I am simultaneously pursuing my Master of Education Degree in Second Language Acquisition part-time.

September 2014. I am teaching Grades 9-10 French at the same school. I am excited for the new school year and see it as an opportunity to improve my classroom practice based on what I have learned from the previous teaching year. I am also excited to embark on a new exploratory journey to interpret and implement the new French: Communication and Culture (FCC) provincial curriculum (2014) in my classroom practice. September 2014 is also exciting because I start my journey as a graduate student to better appreciate second language teaching and learning and hopefully address the gaps in my PPK and classroom practice.

15 September 2014. I attend my first graduate class. As part of my coursework towards my Master of Education program, I must examine the scholarship in the field of second language teaching and learning. Examination of the work of many scholars, particularly, Clandinin & Connelly, Kumaravadivelu, Cummins, Mezirow, Vygotsky, and Dewey opens a world of

scholarship previously unknown to me, and it helps inform, shape, and shift my teaching practice and my PPK. Throughout my courses and further reading in the field, I notice that I am constantly reflecting on my past experiences, and I even start to pull out my learner/teacher journals and reflection pieces as a means of exploring and better understanding some of the ideas discussed in the courses and scholarship. I begin to see that I am acquiring a language that I can use to address some of the tensions around my teaching practice. I learn that there is an entire theoretical framework - that can provide the language and ideas that can possibly broaden my understanding and interpretation of second language teaching and learning as well as explore how my lived experiences have helped inform, shape, and shift my PPK and teaching practice.

Super exciting start of the school year. Why? The new French: Communication and Culture provincial curriculum (2014) comes into being, and provision is made for all Core French teachers at our school to attend in-services and to participate in other professional development activities that relate to the new French: Communication and Culture provincial curriculum (2014) throughout the year and in the following year. It is time for the first PD which would really get to the core of the new curriculum and how to implement it. My biggest takeaway from the PD session: no more teaching French grammar or vocabulary in disconnected and isolated contexts and the main purpose of learning a language is communication. Students need to hear, see, use, and reuse French in meaningful and authentic contexts. What a foundational PD session that would lay the ground for the changes that need to happen to our Core French program at the school! Every other PD session that I attend gives me the opportunity to further explore the new curriculum (2014) and methodology that promotes authentic oral communication. We now have the theoretical language to address the tensions surrounding our

traditional Core French program and why it beckons change. What a golden opportunity for me to shift my classroom practice based on the revitalised approaches to teaching Core French!

With the implementation of the new curriculum (2014), I promptly learn to adopt a balanced literacy approach (oral communication, reading, writing), which enhances students' ability to communicate in French with increased fluency, accuracy, and spontaneity. To me, spontaneity is a keyword. Engaging my students in spontaneous real-life conversations as well as scaffolded learning activities supported by visual aids becomes vital. Gradually, I find an avenue to introduce my students to short stories in French. And short stories in oral, aural, and written forms. The short stories not only help engage my students in authentic dialogue, but also expose them to diverse francophone cultures around the world. Another key aspect well stipulated in the curriculum document (2014) is the integration of, and appreciation and respect for diverse francophone cultures. I believe that students need to recognise that cultures are not homogeneous: diversity exists not only among but also within cultures. And now, I take advantage of every opportunity to teach my students how words can have different meanings in different cultural contexts. For example, the words 'déjeuner' and 'dîner' which would mean 'breakfast' and 'lunch' in the Canadian context, whereas the same words would mean 'lunch' and 'dinner' in the French context and in the context of many other francophone countries like my home country. I now seize opportunities like this one and turn them into teachable moments in my practice.

In my previous teaching job, I was reluctant to talk about the francophone culture that I grew up in - l'île Maurice (Mauritius in English). Via certain circumstances, I constantly felt that I needed to learn more about and share the local francophone culture with my students. And I did only that. Now that I feel more comfortable sharing my culture and talking about diverse

francophone cultures with my students, I introduce them to a short story titled, "Sanjay sur l'île

Maurice" written by Hilary Butler. It is a story about a teenager from Vancouver who

accompanies his parents to Mauritius, birthplace of his father, and experiences the vibrant

culture of the island. I also introduce them to various other stories, like "Je m'appelle

Christian" by Mary Anne Alton and "En vacances" by Wendy Maxwell, which introduce them to

the francophone cultures from Haïti and La Martinique, respectively. It is a perfect way for me

to integrate stories, literature circles and diverse francophone cultures into my units, as well as

foster conversations, make connections and build relationships in my classroom.

While the new curriculum (2014) strikes a balance between these interconnected skills

(oral communication, reading, writing), oral communication – listening and speaking – is

paramount. Engaging my students in daily listening and speaking activities becomes the new

norm in my classroom. When students listen to a word or a phrase, they learn to say it. When

students can say it, they learn to read it. And when students can read it, they can learn to write it.

Listening and speaking skills facilitate reading and writing. These skills are taught through

contextualising lessons and not as disconnected components. Contextualisation, such as daily

real-life conversations, familiar situations, characters, shows, and story lines, is now prioritised

in my teaching. My students learn through themes that enable them to acquire the linguistic

content required for communication purposes. Vocabulary, linguistic structures, and grammar

are taught in context. It urges me to purposely think about the vocabulary, linguistic structures,

and grammar that my students need to communicate with their peers and teacher, and then, I

plan my units and lessons accordingly. For example, when my students talk about what they did

over the holidays, we naturally fall into the use of the past tenses. And when they talk about what

they are going to do or will do during the weekend, we naturally fall into the use of the near

future or simple future tenses.

In addition to contextualising my lessons, it becomes important for me to create more

opportunities for oral communication in my classes. Each of my lessons now starts and ends with

an oral activity called "Bavardage Amical" (Friendly Chat). It can be a "Question du Jour"

(Question of the Day), "Photo du Jour" (Picture of the Day), "Vidéo du Jour" (Video of the

Day), "Chanson du Jour" (Song of the Day) or "Jeu du Jour" (Game of the Day). Each one has

its own way of engaging my students in conversation, interaction, and collaboration with one

another. And each activity that I plan is relevant to what my students are learning now or

relevant to what is currently happening in their lives and around them. Picture this. It is first

period class with my Grade 10 on a Monday morning. A simple example of a "Question du

Jour" at the start of class can be: "Qu'est-ce que tu as fait pendant le week-end/cette fin de

semaine?" (What did you do over the weekend?). I start by giving them detailed instructions

about the activity, modelling the activity, allowing them to choose their partners, and then I walk

around to monitor and facilitate the activity. It is a great way to engage my students in a

dialogue with a partner and get them to use the past tenses to talk about their weekend. And

what an interesting teachable moment with the use of the word "week-end". I believe it is

important for my students to recognise that while we use "fin de semaine" in the Canadian

context, "week-end" is a commonly used word in diverse francophone cultures and one can also

make a case for anglicism here.

Among all the interactive activities, games are my students' all-time favourite. At a few

French: Communication and Culture PD sessions that I attended, I picked up numerous EdTech

(such as Quizizz, Kahoot, Quizlet, Gimkit, Flippity, etc.) and classroom game ideas, all easy to

integrate in my lessons. My students' preferred ones are Quizlet and Kahoot! I use Quizlet to

create flashcards for my students and it is an easy way for them to study, practice, and master

what they are learning. It has smart features, and it can handle images, audio, diagrams, various

languages, etc. One of the features, Quizlet Live, is always a winner with my students. It can turn

my Quizlet study sets into a quiz-show style game that students can play individually or

collectively. When you pass by my classroom door and you hear a loud, engaged, thrilled group

of students, you know that I am hosting a Quizlet Live collective game. Kahoot, a popular game-

based learning platform, is another great way for me to bring engagement and fun to my

teaching. I use Kahoot! to create multiple-choice practice exercises and quizzes to check for

understanding, for review purposes, for formative assessment, and even as a fun break from

traditional classroom activities.

When I do not feel like using technology, classroom games like "Cercle Magique"

(Magic Circle), "Bingo" (Bingo), "Lance la Balle" (Toss the Ball), "Roule le Dé" (Roll the

Dice), just to name a few, are all fun and engaging to rehash vocabulary, grammar, and

encourage dialogue in my classroom. However, "Passe la Bombe" (Pass the Bomb) is a major

hit with all students. For instance, when we complete the reading of a short story, I use the

activity, "Passe la Bombe", to engage my students in story retelling or storytelling. Students

choose their groups of five and each group gets a pretend ticking bomb. Once set, the ticking

bomb makes an exploding noise at random intervals. I give a starting line of the story to the

whole class and the students in each group continue retelling the story in a sequential order. The

students pass the bomb around and each student has three lives. They cannot pass it on unless

they have added a new sentence to the story. If the bomb goes off in their possession, they lose a

life. It amazes me to see how my students become creative under pressure, and it helps them flex

their oral communication skills. Before I got a hold of those pretend plastic ticking bombs, I did the activity with a hat and music and called it "Passe le chapeau" (Pass the Hat). But it is way more fun, lively, and loud with the ticking bomb. And I do not have to monitor the music while they are passing the hat but can instead observe and facilitate the activity or even participate in the activity with my students.

Furthermore, I steadily start to create engaging, fun learning situations (such as oral presentations, authentic conversations, interviews, skits, debates, speeches, talk shows, game shows, hands-on workshops, etc.) that give my students the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do using the language. Talking of fun game shows. I now enjoy initiating my students (mostly my higher grades) to one of my favourite game shows: "Des Chiffres et Des Lettres" (Numbers and Letters). It is a French game show based on the skills in calculation and the knowledge of the vocabulary of participants. The game consists in finding as quickly as possible a word with a maximum of 10 letters (called "Le Mot le plus Long" – The Longest Word) or an exact count with a maximum of 6 numbers (called "Le Compte est Bon" – The Count is good) displayed. And yes, we have fun with Math 'en français'. I tweak the rules of the game a little to meet the needs of my class, and it mesmerises me to see how captivated my students are each time we play the game, especially when they play competitively in groups. And for them, it is also a wonderful exposure to French culture.

Talking of fun hands-on workshops. With my Grade 10 students, before concluding our unit of study, titled "À table!" and introducing them to their final project (Making a cooking video), I make provision for a cooking workshop 'en français' with a Chef that I met at one of the PD sessions I attended. As they take part in the cooking workshop, I watch with fascination how my students experiment, taste, and work hands-on preparing French recipes, speaking only

French throughout the workshop. I am impressed to note how much they have grasped the vocabulary, grammar, and linguistic structures they need to be able to communicate in a cooking environment. I stand awestruck as I watch them placed in groups of three, each wearing their Chef hat and apron, having fun preparing "crêpes", discovering new flavours, talking about Francophone foods, learning about the food groups in the Canadian Food Guide, learning about safety rules and cleanliness in the kitchen and being so proud of what they have learned and made. This workshop perfectly prepares the stage for them to tackle their final project.

Talking of speeches. Every now and then, I allow for writing and delivering a speech in my practice. Not only do we work on the stages of writing a speech, coherence of speech but also on vocal expression, rhythm, pace, intonation, and accuracy in pronunciation. My students appreciate the opportunity to choose a topic (a topic of their interest or a topic related to what we are currently learning), prepare a speech and deliver it in class. At the end of their speech, they can expect questions related to their speech by the students and me. This gives them a chance to use vocabulary, expressions, and grammatical structures to communicate with spontaneity. Having such an important skill up their sleeve, my students do not cease to amaze me when they showcase their public speaking skills at the Concours d'art oratoire facilitated by Canadian Parents for French (CPF). Each year, the Concours d'art oratoire happens at the school, divisional, provincial, and national levels. The first time I initiated my interested students to Concours, they pleasantly surprised me with their remarkable performance at the provincial and national levels. Since then, Concours d'art oratoire has become a highlight at our school and students eagerly look forward to it and work hard to be able to represent the school and thrive at the provincial and national levels.

What a long-overdue revitalisation the new curriculum (2014) has brought to my teaching approaches and to our Core French program at the school!

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?

My teacher-mother-researcher era spans from September 2014 to date. During this time, my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice are mainly based upon my prior CF teaching experience, my professional in-service training, my interpretation and implementation of the Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) and the new French: Communication and Culture curriculum (2014), my experiences as a graduate student, and my reflections as a teacher-mother-researcher. While these experiences have helped inform, shape, and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice and as I read my seventh vignette, a picture of my PPK along with its transformations begins to emerge as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Role/Identity. Who is "the self that teaches" (Palmer, 1998, p. 4) in this context and what is her teacher role? A teacher-mother-researcher with valuable experiences as a mother, teacher, graduate student, and researcher. My teacher role is to teach Grades 9-10 French: Communication and Culture (FCC) courses and my current FCC teacher identity fills me with a feeling of excitement for the new school year as I see it "as an opportunity to improve my classroom practice" based on my accumulated PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985) from my previous year of teaching experience at the school, my experience as a graduate student, and my interpretation and implementation of the new French: Communication and Culture curriculum (2014). I feel excited, positive, and confident that my accumulated experience and expertise in Core French would serve me well in interpreting and implementing the new curriculum (2014). Part of my role as an FCC teacher is to participate in PD sessions to inform and advance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). As I acquire new knowledge at the various PD sessions that I attend and as I interpret and implement the new French: Communication and Culture curriculum (2014), I experience a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1996) and a paradigm shift in my teaching practice.

My new identity as a graduate student and researcher also fills me with a feeling of great enthusiasm and eagerness to learn more about second language teaching and learning to "*hopefully address the gaps in my PPK and classroom practice*." As I examine the work of many scholars, such as Vygotsky, Dewey, Clandinin & Connelly amongst many others, and as I reflect on my past and present experiences, I acquire new knowledge that can possibly address the tensions surrounding my classroom practice and ultimately help shift my teaching practice. Inevitably, my classroom practice shifts with the growth of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my knowledge of and experience with the local provincial Core French curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) mainly informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) until I encounter a revised frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996) due to my new acquaintance with the new French: Communication and Culture curriculum (2014). The new provincial curriculum (2014) "focuses on authentic communication, based on students' interests and experiences" (p.

44) and promotes the contextualisation of grammar and vocabulary lessons. As the name "French: Communication and Culture" itself implies, the new curriculum (2014) emphasises communication and culture and it adopts a balanced literacy approach (speaking-reading-writing) to teaching French with an emphasis on oral communication, and the integration of francophone cultures:

> French is used as the language of instruction; language knowledge and skills are developed through themes and students' active participation in activities and projects based on the interests and life experiences of the students. Cultural activities are infused in order to enrich the students' learning experiences as they begin to grow as global citizens. To learn a language is to learn its culture; the two are intricately woven. In the context of this natural cycle of language acquisition, learners build on and transfer skills that they already possess in their first language to develop skills in the second language (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 1).

The conceptual framework for Grades 4 to 12 describes the nature of the course and the concepts to be addressed. The framework of outcomes is divided into four strands: oral communication, reading, writing and culture. The new provincial curriculum (2014) focuses on appreciation of Francophone cultures around the world, intercultural awareness, and intercultural competence, which is specifically described as:

> a combination of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries. This combination includes the skills of finding information about a culture, interpreting this information in order to understand the beliefs, meanings, and behaviours of members of that culture, relating one's own culture to the target culture, and interacting with members of that culture. […]

Preconditions for successful intercultural interaction are an attitude of openness and curiosity and a willingness to look at the world from the point of view of the other culture (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2007, p. 127).

Through various PD sessions and graduate courses, I gradually gain new knowledge and understanding of the new FCC curriculum (2014) as well as the current scholarship in second language teaching and learning. As I explore my enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and reflect on the revitalised approaches to teaching French as stipulated in the new FCC curriculum (2014), I realise that our French department now has "*the theoretical language to address the tensions surrounding our traditional Core French program and why it beckons change.*" The theoretical language behind the new FCC curriculum (2014) reinforces that teaching French as a system of disconnected and isolated components gives our students some knowledge of the French language but does not allow them to use the language effectively. Reflections on my experiences in the classroom reveal that a shift in my teaching practice is needed.

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition, knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

My biggest takeaway from the first PD session shows how my PD experiences help inform and shape my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my practice. In contrast with Freire's (2000) "banking concept" and highly teacher-centred and transmission-oriented (Cummins, 1996, 1998) traditional FSL classroom practices, I experience various strategies and activities to encourage authentic communication and natural interaction in French (Vygotsky

1978; Dewey, 1971) and meet the various needs of diverse learners in my classroom, as

stipulated in the new curriculum (2014):

> This communicative and interactive approach based on literacy takes into account the
>
> students' individual needs and strengths, differentiated instruction and multiple
>
> intelligences. (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 5).

Adopting this approach, wherein language skills are acquired by means of authentic

communication, collaborative learning, and interaction between students and peers as well as the

teacher, is associated with the socio-constructivist and experiential approach (Vygotsky, 1978;

Dewey, 1971), and this is what currently shapes my revised PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985)

which has been informed and shaped by my lived experiences as a teacher-mother-researcher. As

I question and reflect on my past and present classroom practices, I realise that I am undergoing

a shift from enacting the curriculum with a teacher-centred, transmission orientation (Cummins

et al., 2007), that is, with an abundance of isolated, drill-based grammar and vocabulary

activities and shifting to a social constructivist orientation (Cummins et al., 2007), that is, with

more of a communicative, interactive approach and a balanced literacy approach (oral

communication, reading and writing) as prescribed in the new curriculum (2014):

> In the 21st century, it is important that language instruction adopt a balanced literacy
>
> approach (oral communication, reading and writing) where students are given the
>
> opportunity to use and re-use the French language for the purpose of real communication.
>
> While oral communication, reading and writing are not perceived as separate entities, an
>
> emphasis is placed on the development of oral skills, the foundation of learning a
>
> language. This learning is developmental and requires reading and writing to round out
>
> the balanced literacy approach. Reading provides opportunities for students to understand

the language that they have heard, to see language structures in print while writing

provides other opportunities for students to consolidate their learning and to

communicate their messages (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 57).

In line with the new FCC curriculum (2014), this balanced literacy approach to teaching

engages and empowers students due to the logical scaffolding of the learning activities and the

gradual release of responsibility by the teacher, allowing for more independent learning:

> As the students progress, they are able to use familiar structures and expressions with
>
> more and more autonomy, thus allowing for the gradual release of responsibility. This
>
> approach also gives students the opportunity to make personal connections to learning
>
> French. As a result, students gradually become more fluent and begin to understand the
>
> real-life value and advantages of being able to communicate in French (Manitoba
>
> Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 58).

In addition to the gradual release of responsibility that allows students to become independent

learners, the social aspect, which includes working collaboratively, sharing ideas, and

constructing meaning cooperatively and contextually, is key to the concept, the zone of proximal

development (Vygotsky, 1978).

As I gradually embrace this socio-constructivist and experiential approach (Vygotsky,

1978; Dewey, 1971), I now see myself as a literacy teacher who provides her students with many

opportunities to use the French language in a variety of contexts and I structure each learning

situation with ample modelling, guidance, and scaffolding. From engaging my students in

authentic listening and speaking activities, "*engaging my students in spontaneous real-life*

conversations", to allowing them to progress gradually to reading and writing activities, to

contextualising my lessons, to activating my students' prior knowledge, to scaffolding the

learning activities, to engaging them in collaborative learning activities, to integrating visual

aids, technology, games, workshops, skits, interviews, presentations, speeches, short stories, and

appreciation for diverse francophone cultures into my teaching practice, I no longer adhere to the

"explicit teaching of grammar rules" (Danesi, 2003, p. 4) and I no longer teach grammar and

vocabulary in "*disconnected, isolated contexts*", but rather I integrate the vocabulary and

grammar concepts in the context of what my students need for "purposeful and meaningful

communication" (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 58) and in the context

of the short stories and topics that we are studying. Clearly, I learn from my past as I move

towards the future (Dewey, 1971).

As I encounter a revised frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996) upon critical reflection on

my past and present experiences in the classroom as well my enhanced PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985) as a teacher-mother-researcher, I feel that I am experiencing "a paradigm shift

in methodology and curriculum content" (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2002) and a

perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1996) on how I interpret and implement the new FCC

curriculum (2014) to effectively construct my future practice and positively address the tensions

and frustrations surrounding my practice and the disengagement of students with the old CF

curriculum (1978-1996, revised in 2003) and traditional FSL practices. Clearly, my PPK lies in

my past experiences, present thinking and future plans as pointed out by Clandinin (1992). My

current approach to understanding my PPK is informed by Connelly and Clandinin's (1988)

concept of PPK as "a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to

deal with the exigencies of a present situation" (p. 25).

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student

learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations,

expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, what students know and how they learn.

I reveal my knowledge of students and student learning as I engage "*my students in conversation, interaction, and collaboration with one another*" and "*create more opportunities for oral communication*" and authentic learning (Dewey, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978) in my practice with activities like "*Bavardage Amical*" (Friendly Chat), "*Question du Jour*" (Question of the Day), etc. As each activity is relevantly and meaningfully planned based on my students' interests and needs, based on "*what is currently happening in their lives and around them*" and based on what they need to know for "purposeful and meaningful communication" (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 58), I witness that my students are able to find meaning and relevance in their learning (Dewey, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978), thus, leaving them feeling more invested and engaged in their own learning. This experience and engagement with my students in the classroom help inform and shape my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). It reveals to me that when my students can connect their classroom activities to their lived experiences, to what's happening in their lives and around them, they feel empowered in the learning process, and this is when authentic learning (Dewey, 1971) happens. It is evident that student learning is effective when students experience learning in their own way and recognise relevance in their learning (Dewey, 1971).

From engaging my students in various EdTech and classroom games, to creating "*engaging, fun learning situation*" such as hosting talk shows, game shows and initiating them to skits, debates, speeches, interviews, oral presentations, hands-on workshops, and so on, it sheds light on how my students learn best. It reveals to me that they learn best when technology, games and authentic activities are integrated into their learning, when they can collaborate with their

classmates, when they have a say in their choice of groupings, when they are engaged, when they can be creative, when they are having fun, when they find their learning relevant and meaningful, and when they can make personal connections to what they are learning (Dewey, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978). It also gives me insight into student-student interaction and student-teacher interaction as I notice my students interacting with one another and myself during the time that I host a Quizlet Live interactive game; engage them in dialogue, story retelling or storytelling with the "*Passe la bombe*" (Pass the Bomb) activity; observe how fascinated and engaged they are as they take part in the French cooking workshop; witness how captivated they are when they play "*Des Chiffres et Des Lettres*" or when they are given the opportunity to "*showcase their public speaking skills at the Concours d'art oratoire.*"

These authentic interactions (Vygotsky, 1978) not only help nurture collaborative work and foster relationships in my classroom, but also allow my students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do using the French language. What Dewey (1971) termed "direct living" is clearly depicted in my practice wherein my students learn and grow with authentic learning experiences and practical learning situations, such as participating in a French cooking workshop or developing skills and knowledge by means of experiencing Concours d'art oratoire or being exposed to French culture via "*Des Chiffres et Des Lettres*" which is a popular televised French game show. My approach of integrating games and authentic learning situations combined with fun, engagement and relevance into my practice is such a contrast from my prior teaching experiences and traditional classroom practices. It clearly depicts a key transformation (Mezirow, 1996) in my teaching practice and my enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) prompted by my lived experiences.

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

My knowledge of the Core French program is emphasised in the need to revisit our program and bring about some key changes initiated by the new FCC curriculum (2014). It becomes more evident as I mention my swiftness and readiness to adopt a balanced literacy approach to teaching and to better integrate the "*appreciation and respect for diverse francophone cultures around the world*" into my practice. While my prior teaching experiences, experiences as a graduate student and accumulated knowledge have informed and transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my revised PPK has, in turn, prompted a key shift in my classroom practice.

I reveal my awareness of classroom and cultural contexts as I guide my class to explore "*how words can have different meanings in different cultural contexts*" and how it can potentially lead to misunderstanding and confusion when we travel to different francophone countries. It also leads to the exploration of how "*diversity exists not only among but also within cultures*" and we acknowledge how our local francophone culture can simultaneously be very similar to and different from another francophone culture. My revised PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) has also transformed my comfort level in "*sharing my culture and talking about diverse francophone cultures*" around the world. The game show "*Des Chiffres et des Lettres*" and the short stories mentioned in my vignette give me an avenue for exposure to various French-speaking countries and francophone cultures worldwide within my classroom context. This offers a unique opportunity to discover and celebrate the diversity and beauty of the francophone cultures and traditions of different countries. It also helps extend students'

awareness of story and the power of story, and concurrently helps foster conversations, interest, engagement, and connections in my classroom (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). I want my students to be knowledgeable about the diverse francophone cultures around the world, and as I was looking to integrate intercultural understanding more effectively into my classroom practice, I believe that this exposure supports me to reach my goal and enrich my classroom programming at the same time.

My awareness of classroom context is also present in my mention of how loud, fun and lively my class is when my students are playing a Quizlet Live game or a traditional game like "*Passe la bombe*" or when they engage in a cooking workshop, and this clearly depicts how my PD experiences inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my practice and how my lived experiences and revised PPK have also taught me the importance of designing classroom activities that are fun and engaging. When students are having fun, show interest, and remain engaged in classroom activities, learning happens naturally since they feel invested in their learning (Dewey, 1971).

Pensons vert! (Think Green!)

Vignette Eight illustrates my knowledge and experiences as a teacher-mother-researcher teaching a Grade 9 class and it depicts the transformations in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice as my experiences continue to evolve within the same independent school context. This is a lesson from a unit of study, titled *"Pensons Vert!"* (Think Green). It is important to note that I am working full-time as a Senior School FCC teacher, and I am still simultaneously pursuing my Master of Education Degree in Second Language Acquisition part-time.

October 2016. One of my colleagues returns from an out-of-province PD and brings back tons of interesting ideas that we could incorporate in our daily practice. Our favourite is 'Learning Centres'. As a department, our goal this year is to try integrating 'Learning Centres' in our classroom. I am teaching a unit, titled "Pensons Vert!" and I decide to give it a try with my Grade 9 class of 15 students. There is a plethora of ways to schedule learning centres and for this unit, I choose to organise my learning centres around speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. I designate four areas, which I call "Quatre Coins" (Four Corners) within my classroom, and I arrange the desks and chairs so my students will be sitting in groups, working both independently and collaboratively on an assignment at each centre.

As my Grade 9 students walk into my classroom, I can see their curious looks and expressions, probably wondering what the new classroom layout is all about. I take time with the whole class to discuss what a learning centre is, how and why we are going to implement it in our classroom. I am amazed at how enthusiastic and excited my class is about the idea of trying it and many happily reveal that it reminds them of their prior learning experiences with different learning stations in Junior School. Before we start the centres, I develop a list of rules together with my students to guide small group learning and to ensure the learning centres run smoothly. We agree that the main rules are that we do our very best work; we stay focused and on task; we help one another; when we complete our activity at one centre, we can select a French magazine to read while waiting for the time to switch to another centre. My students learn quickly that they need to follow the rules that govern the learning centre activities and be responsible and accountable for their own learning. I let them choose their groups and let them know that groups can be changed throughout our unit study. After that, I explain and model the activity in each

centre and discuss the various resources they will be using as well as the goal of each centre. And off they go to their centre and start their work when all their questions have been addressed.

Lesson after lesson, the learning centres seem to be working well and my students are enjoying it. The sound of activity echoes throughout my classroom. To my delight, I find that a wide array of learning is taking place. Daily, I must make sure to design engaging activities for each learning centre for my students to continue to enjoy and to provide my students with interesting experiences to enhance their learning. And I am loving it too. It gives me the opportunity to move from centre to centre and spend quality time with my students individually or in small groups, helping my students learn at their own pace. As I observe my students at work and respond to their questions in small groups, it amazes me to see how the learning centres offer powerful learning opportunities for my students, both academically and socially.

As formative assessment takes place, I carry a clipboard around with my class list formatted in a spreadsheet on which I can record how my students are meeting the learning outcomes and who needs additional support. This documentation provides me with valuable information that informs my teaching. When I am working with my students at a learning centre and they understand something thoroughly, I can tell. Those 'lightbulb moments' are the best thing about being a teacher and that's when I leave the classroom feeling happy and satisfied. With learning centres, I have witnessed firsthand many such moments.

Sitting down with a group of four students at the "Coin de communication orale" (learning centre for speaking) after a few weeks of incorporating learning centres in my classroom, I am impressed at how my students have developed and enhanced their fluency in the language. How does it work at this learning centre? Well, each student has a list of questions surrounding the theme of our unit and they take turns choosing one question to engage the group

in a "Bavardage Amical" activity. As I listen to them, observe them being so absorbed in the

activity and participate in their conversations as well, I am delighted to notice that they are

using the vocabulary and structures learned when talking about the environment, the 3 Rs,

global warming and climate change. I witness a vibrant, collaborative student-led discussion

where they support each other in their learning, deepen their understanding, share personal

experiences, and make real-world connections.

I am also pleased to observe how eco-conscious my students are or are becoming. I am

marked by their concern for the environment and their interest in bringing about a change in

their lifestyle to protect our environment. It is amazing to see how they are advising each other

on little things that they can start doing at school or at home to make a difference. Little things

like switching off the lights when they exit the room, using both sides of their paper, using

reusable cutlery instead of disposable when eating lunch at school, biking to school (weather

permitting), practising the 3Rs more, reducing their plastic consumption, and the list goes on.

They all seem to agree that everyone can make a difference, especially when smart

environmental choices become a habit and perhaps even begin to influence others into taking

similar actions.

Once they complete their one round of questions in the "Bavardage Amical " activity, I

give them a Join Link (e.g., https://flipgrid.com/FGrid2540*) for them to join a discussion on*

Flipgrid. Once they join, they record and submit their response. Today's question is: "À votre

avis, que peut-on faire pour lutter contre le réchauffement de la Terre et pour aider à sauver la

planète Terre?" (In your opinion, what can we do to fight against global warming and help save

our planet?). What a wonderful discussion! I am impressed by their responses and pleased with

their feedback using Flipgrid. My students love the Flipgrid camera as it offers a lot of fun and creative ways for them to share their ideas and voice.

That same day, while sitting down with another group of four students at the "Coin de lecture" (learning centre for reading), I am pleased to observe my students demonstrating fluency, accuracy in pronunciation and using the appropriate rhythm, pace, and intonation as they engage in a reading out loud and role-playing activity. And this is something we have been practising as we have been reading the short story "Planète en péril" (Planet in peril) throughout this unit study. "Planète en péril", which is a 3-chapter dialogue story, talks about teenagers who are members of a Youth Ecology Club of Moncton and are concerned about global warming and protecting the environment. A real delight to see my students immersed in playing their roles as Christine, Éric, Louise and Jean-Luc and highly engaged with the post-reading activities in their student workbook that comes with the book. I find those activities perfect for building reading comprehension and there are several interesting activities they can do in their workbook.

On another occasion, while sitting down with a group of four students at the "Coin d'écoute" (learning centre for listening), I am amazed at how my students have developed their listening skills and demonstrated comprehension. The book also comes with an audio compact disk. I set up a cd player at this centre for my students to listen to parts of the book and complete some listening comprehension exercises. As my students pay attention and make meaning of what they hear, it helps them develop and build their listening skills. By having my students engage in a variety of listening activities, I find it ideal for building listening comprehension. After that, they work on some Lyrics Training, Duolingo or Quizlet activities.

Near the end of our unit study, while sitting down with a group of three students at the "Coin d'écriture" (learning centre for writing), I marvel at how my students have developed and enhanced their fluency and accuracy in the language. What are they working on at this learning centre? My students are working on their final project which is to create a comic strip to promote the 3Rs. They have a set of guiding questions to help them develop their ideas. At their table, I help them with their questions, scaffold the activities for the project accomplishment and I also use questioning strategies that allow my students to demonstrate their linguistic skills, their knowledge and to develop their ideas. As part of my collaborative work with our EdTech support team, I learned that 'Storyboard That' is an easy creation platform that my students can use for their comic strip. I delightfully discover that it is naturally engaging for my students, and it is helping them nurture their creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. What surprises me the most is that it has opened the doors for my most creative writers to start their own comics.

What a wonderful decision to integrate learning centres in my classroom! I have witnessed how they encourage students to take risks, encourage student voice and diversify student experience. What a great way to build in opportunities for meaningful formative assessment, feedback, and conversations with my students!

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice? As I read

my eighth vignette, a picture of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with its transformations begins to emerge as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Role/Identity. Who is the teacher in this context? A teacher-mother-researcher with valuable lived experiences and accumulated PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) whose role is to teach Grades 9-10 FCC courses and a teacher-mother-researcher who is willing and open to learn and incorporate new ideas and practices into her teaching. Part of my role is to also collaborate with my colleagues and share department goals, new practices, and professional knowledge to enhance student learning. My narrative account of my Grade 9 class clearly depicts a shift in my teacher role and identity: teacher as a facilitator integrating learning centres into her practice rather than a teacher as a dispenser of knowledge (Cummins et al., 2007). My current FCC teacher identity fills me with a feeling of ease and competence. My experiences with learning centres lead me to witness firsthand engagement of my students as collaborators, communicators, risk-takers, creative and critical thinkers. When I experience "*those lightbulb moments*" while working with students at different learning centres, it leaves me with a feeling of satisfaction. My reflections on the growth in my teaching approaches and the transformation in my classroom practice reveal a strong feeling of contentment and fulfilment.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my knowledge of and experience with the provincial FCC curriculum (2014) via my ongoing PD training sessions, experiences as a graduate student, classroom experiences, and collaborative work with colleagues, currently informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a teacher-mother-researcher. The provincial FCC curriculum (2014), with its focus on a balanced literacy approach to teaching and the integration of Francophone cultures continues to guide my

pedagogical practices. My lived experiences in the classroom and my reflections on my enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my practice reveal that the paradigm shift in my teaching practice is well embraced.

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition, knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

Embracing a balanced literacy approach as well as the contextualised approach to teaching grammar and vocabulary through use of short stories, such as *Planète en péril*, continue to guide my pedagogical practice. My experience reveals that contextualisation is key to giving real communicative value to the French language in the classroom, thus, making learning the language more meaningful and authentic to students (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). Each short story stresses important ethics and values. The stories emphasise issues relating to social justice, racial or gender equity, cultural differences, or environmental sustainability. Teachers using such types of stories to encourage critical literacy can be viewed as "transformative intellectuals" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 13) who are willing to connect their pedagogical practice to wider social issues and embody teaching a vision of a more humane life, as Giroux and McLaren (1989) would put it.

As I adopt this story-based approach, I experience this type of transformation in my practice as I encourage my students to become more informed about issues around them and around the world. Naturally, we engage in various reading comprehension activities but, we also engage in more meaningful conversations about the underlying topics in the story. For instance, the story, *Planète en péril,* talks about environmental issues like depletion of the ozone layer,

greenhouse effect, threats to our world's oceans and ways to protect the planet. The story points out that we are not passive bystanders but active participants in the unfolding ecology of our planet. In interacting with the story, our class realises that bringing about small changes in our daily lives like practising the 3Rs (Recycling, Reusing and Reducing) can make a huge difference in saving our planet. My lessons are infused with an awareness and action for making a difference in the world, thereby, empowering my students (Cummins et al., 2007).

In addition to this, my description of how I integrate and experience a new pedagogical approach, such as learning centres with my Grade 9 class, shows how my collaborative departmental work and PD workshops inform and impact my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my practice. Such an approach that is closely connected with the socio-constructivist and experiential approach (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971) allows my students to engage in the carefully crafted learning centre activities around oral communication, writing, listening and reading comprehension, and to experience learning in meaningful, authentic ways. As I "*move from centre to centre and spend quality time*" with individual students or in groups, scaffolding the activities for them, answering their questions, and co-exploring the activities, I witness first-hand their engagement with the learning centre activities, the development in their accuracy and fluency in the French language, their increased competence, and gradual independence (Vygotsky, 1978).

The approach that I embrace as "*I explain and model the activity in each centre and discuss the various resources they will be using as well as the goal of each centre*" sets clear expectations for my students, and it allows for independent, collaborative learning with abundant guidance, scaffolding, and modelling (Vygotsky, 1978). This clearly depicts a shift in my teaching approach: from "a teacher-based, front of the class approach" (Hares, 1979, p. 1) to

more of a teacher as a guide, facilitator, and co-explorer, assisting student performance with the

goal of increasing what my students can do unassisted by me or their peers (Vygotsky, 1978).

Another valuable approach that I adopt is to record any helpful information regarding

demonstration of learning outcomes that can inform my teaching practice to better student

learning.

Upon reflection, I appreciate that I am enacting the curriculum with a communicative,

interactive, and balanced literacy approach as stipulated in the FCC curriculum (2014). Since my

reflections reveal the contentment and engagement of my students with the short story, and

learning centre activities, this evidently shows that the shift in my teaching practice is welcomed.

My goal is to continue to use such approaches to encourage collaborative learning, authentic

communication, and natural interaction (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971) in French in my

classroom, and this is what currently shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a teacher-

mother-researcher.

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student

learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations,

expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction,

what students know and how they learn.

My knowledge of students and student learning is apparent in student-teacher interaction

and student-student interaction as my students and I agree on the rules governing the learning

centres, as my students have an opportunity to move around the classroom, and as my students

are given a voice in the choice of their groups for the learning centres and in the choice of

questions during the "*Bavardage Amical*" activity. I further reveal my awareness of students and

student learning as I witness my students tap into their prior learning experiences, interact and

collaborate with one another on the activities, and support one another in their learning

(Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971), as I notice how "*eco-conscious*" and "*responsible and*

accountable" they are or are becoming, and as I watch them engage in conversations and

discussions about making smart environmental choices, collaborate to create a comic strip to

promote the 3Rs, express their desire to influence others to take action, enjoy the story reading,

role-playing and story retelling activities, have fun and be creative with their Flipgrid activity

and comic strip project, and share their personal experiences and ideas about critical

environmental issues and making a difference.

This experience with learning centres and engagement with my students shed light on

who my students are and how they learn best. They manifest themselves as creative writers,

critical thinkers, risk-takers, and agents of change who want to make a difference in the fight

against global warming and climate change. These authentic interactions (Vygotsky, 1978) at

each learning centre reveal to me that my students learn best when they are invested in their own

learning (Dewey, 1971), are involved in collaborative learning, are engaged in authentic,

meaningful interactions, are having fun, are given choice, and are given the opportunity to

engage with technology. It also reveals to me the importance of carefully designed classroom

activities that meet the needs and interests of diverse students such as my visual learners,

auditory learners, reading and writing learners, verbal learners, kinaesthetic learners, social

learners, and "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001) within this classroom context. This clearly depicts

a paradigm shift in my practice prompted by my lived experiences and enhanced PPK (Clandinin

& Connelly, 1985).

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

My knowledge of classroom context is featured in my new classroom layout. What does the new classroom layout communicate about my classroom context? It establishes the right tone for learning centre activities and the right culture for interaction, collaboration, connectedness, support, fun, active engagement, and community in the classroom. My awareness of classroom and cultural contexts is also present in my reference of "*the sound of activity*" echoing throughout my classroom and the level of engagement, interaction, experience, and "the array of learning" happening (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). My students never cease to amaze me with how invested they can be and how carried away they can get when they are engaged and having fun with what they are learning in groups. I also witness how technology integration within the classroom context can change classroom dynamics and how encouraging my students to read French magazines can create an avenue for enhanced authentic exposure to the language and its culture. It presents a beautiful window into the francophone world and offers an opportunity to appreciate the diversity and beauty of francophone cultures worldwide.

My knowledge of the French program is evident as I adopt a balanced literacy approach with a focus on authentic communication (Dewey, 1971) while incorporating learning centres in my classroom practice. Experiencing a newly learned approach like learning centres demonstrates how collaboration with my department and PD opportunities help inform, shape, and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice. Collaboration with the EdTech support team within my school context also helps sharpen my technology skills and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). Integrating a variety of technologies such as Quizlet, Flipgrid,

Storyboard That, Lyrics Training, and Duolingo into my practice clearly helps foster student

engagement with different learning styles. From what I witness, not only are they more engaged,

but they are more invested, and they begin to recognise relevance in and take more control over

their own learning (Dewey, 1971). And this is what currently shapes my PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985). My department and school contexts within which I am evolving foster a culture

of collaboration, positivity, sharing, trust, and support. I highly appreciate the sharing of

department goals and teaching approaches which help advance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985) and practice.

Reflections on my practice reveal that my revitalised teaching approaches have offered

my students an opportunity to communicate in French in meaningful ways; an opportunity to

interact and collaborate with their peers in authentic ways; an opportunity to make personal

connections to what they are learning; an opportunity to engage with technology, games, stories,

and other media; and an opportunity to grow into more comfortable, confident, and

knowledgeable learners.

Teaching through a pandemic

Vignette Nine illustrates my knowledge and experiences as a teacher-mother-researcher

teaching through a pandemic and it also presents the transformations in my PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice as my experiences continue to evolve within the same

independent school context during unprecedented times. It is important to note that I am working

full-time as a Senior School FCC teacher, and I am still pursuing my Master of Education

Degree in Second Language Acquisition part-time.

September 2020. I am teaching Grades 8-12 French: Communication and Culture courses. Even though I am teaching the same FCC curriculum every year at the same independent school, it does not mean that I teach it the same way. Every student in every class has different needs, so I must be creative and adaptable. Through lockdown, the reality has become even more obvious. Teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, I must adapt my teaching to the situation and be nimble and flexible. The old way of doing things is just not going to work during this crisis.

Desks in rows, 2 metres apart, with my students facing the front of the room. I am sitting at my designated teacher desk and giving direct instruction. My students do not move around the room, and they spend plenty of time doing independent work at their own desks. No, I did not travel back to my first year of traditional teaching. The COVID-19 pandemic upends the education landscape. This is what the classrooms at my school look like during the pandemic since traditional classrooms make it easier to follow health regulations. I do not have a French classroom anymore. I travel with my cart, filled with French resources, to each grade-level classroom to teach since the students must stay within their cohorts and cannot mingle with other grades. Many teachers view travelling to different classrooms with their teaching materials as demanding, frustrating, and requiring a herculean effort. As much as I appreciate having my French classroom as well, travelling to my students fondly reminds me of my first few years of teaching in Mauritius. It is nothing new to me. And I quickly adjust to the new situation.

September 2020. The stakes are high for the start of this school year. My students are coming to school in person five days a week for the first time since March 2020. Most of my students are attending in person, while some are choosing to learn online. I am tasked with supporting in-person learning as well as virtual learning at the same time. This presents a new

challenge, and I am figuring out a rhythm/pace that works. Throughout the day, I do my best to always keep my students six feet apart and since I must wear a mask while teaching, communication through eye contact, gestures, vocal and visual behaviours become very important. Keeping my students physically apart, especially during breaks or when transitioning from one classroom to another, takes a strenuous effort. But I am impressed by how my students rapidly adjust to their new school environment. I learn much from watching their reaction and behaviour. Amid all this transformation and the greatest time of uncertainty, they just roll with it, find ways to enjoy their school day, and look at the bright side of things. They teach me that it is okay to let things go and just go with the flow. This is my own advice that I give to others, but it is very hard for me to follow.

Teaching during the pandemic, not only are health and safety protocols essential, but the use of technology and the shifts between in-person, hybrid and virtual schedules are also part of our transformative learning and teaching landscape. The questions that keep lingering on my mind are: How do I ensure equity when teaching my in-person as well as virtual learners simultaneously? How do I teach without distributing any textbook, learning material, worksheet, test paper, etc.? How do I switch to a contactless, paperless classroom in a flash? How do I teach without walking around the classroom? How do I teach without the whiteboard or interactive smart boards in the classroom? How do I learn to use digital tools rapidly? How do I get my students to play tactile games in the classroom? How do I get my students to engage in a collaborative, interactive activity? How do I ensure student care and well-being in this transformative learning environment? Well, I quickly understand that I must be flexible, adapt and get creative. I am prepared to shift my approach as I navigate a continuously evolving education landscape.

Overnight, I undergo new technology related PD training and learn how to manoeuvre new technology equipment and numerous digital tools to ensure equity when teaching my in-person as well as remote learners simultaneously. Each classroom is equipped with advanced audio-visual equipment and necessary technology, allowing my remote learners to log into classes from anywhere. To help my in-person and virtual learners connect and stay organised, I use Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams, providing a dynamic and flexible learning environment allowing each class to access from anywhere, at any time, course content, assessments, graded work, and teacher feedback. To ensure fairness and follow health regulations, I do not distribute any printed copies of learning materials, notes, worksheets, graded work, textbooks, and short stories to my in-person learners; I do not plan in-classroom group activities and tactile games; and nor do I walk around the classroom. What a transformation, but I swiftly pivot and adapt to the situation.

Instead, I switch to a contactless, paperless classroom. Big shift to digital versions of my class notes, learning and teaching materials, worksheets, short stories, assignments, and projects! For each of my classes, I post everything, organised by units, on our Google Classroom: from the "Agenda du Jour" (Agenda of the Day), announcements, important dates, and reminders on the "Stream" page to class notes, course materials, classwork and homework assignments, and instruction videos on the "Classwork" page. As overwhelming as it seems, I am grateful for the creative, communicative, collaborative digital tools within Google Workspace for Education. On top of using Google Classroom to distribute assignments, I also quickly learn to use Google Docs and Google Slides to create interactive, collaborative tasks and assignments for my students, Kami to grade work and give feedback, Google Forms to create surveys and assessments with instant feedback. As I reflect on how my assessment

practices are largely informed by traditional pen and paper assessment practices, I realise how those practices are not going to work during the pandemic. Teaching through the pandemic automatically triggers a change in my assessment practices as I embrace the method of triangulation in assessment, a process by which I gather evidence of student learning via observations, conversations, and products. In addition, another shift occurs in my practice as I welcome student portfolios, reflections, and conferences as a way for them to demonstrate their learning and growth as well as be motivated to think for themselves.

A big challenge for me remains shifting my in-classroom lesson strategies. How do I get my students to engage in a collaborative, interactive activity? I believe my lessons are more fun and interactive when my students can group together or travel the room for different activities. But now, with physical distancing and remote learning, it is very hard for me to incorporate those strategies in the classroom. It beckons change. Since I cannot have my students travel the room for collaborative work, I use Google Jamboard to have them work together in real time on an activity. I marvel to see how engaged my students are, how much fun they have with Google Jamboard and what amazing things they can create and produce with the digital tool while collaborating and interacting with their classmates. Since I do not have the whiteboard or interactive smart board in the classroom, I shift to the Microsoft Whiteboard on Microsoft Teams to write down any class notes which I can easily upload on Teams or Google Classroom. Since I cannot implement learning centres in my classroom, I create Breakout Rooms using Microsoft Teams. Breakout Rooms allow me to create sub-meetings within my Teams meeting for smaller groups of students to have real-time conversations, discussions, and to interact and collaborate on an activity.

Since I cannot incorporate tactile games in my classroom, I create fun, engaging online games, learning activities and assessments (using Kahoot, Quizlet, Quizizz, Wordwall, Blooket, Gimkit, Flippity and so on) to integrate in my lessons. Since the circumstances urge me to shift to a contactless instruction, I turn my traditional printable worksheets into self-correcting interactive online worksheets using liveworksheets.com and get a hold of electronic versions of the short stories I have been using in my practice. Since I cannot walk around the room and sit down one-on-one with my students for oral assessments, interviews, and dialogue, I turn to Microsoft Teams for real-time interaction and conversations with my students and Flipgrid for pre-recorded videos. My students appreciate the live worksheets and digital stories, remain intrigued with Flipgrid, enjoy the game-based activities, and always crave for more.

Circumstances compel me to deliver my French curriculum in new ways. However, the opportunities for collaboration, creativity and innovation within Google Workspace and Microsoft Teams make it convenient for online, in-person, and hybrid learning and teaching. And I am struck by how quickly my students adjust and cope with the changes. They come to be resilient in learning new ways of schooling and I witness how well they embrace technology. I also witness how some of my students struggle with the new learning landscape and I try my best to support them in every way I can. I stay fascinated at how overcoming the added stresses and the challenges of the year can be a confidence booster for some students. I learn much about my students by observing and supporting them. This informs me about what my students can handle.

Amidst all this transformation, relationships are more difficult than ever to establish and maintain. How do I ensure student well-being in this new learning environment? At the start of each of my classes, I try to make connections with all my students by doing a temperature check game or asking them a simple question of the day like "How was your weekend?" It is a way for

everyone to learn something about one another, support one another and connect. At times, my students reveal that they had too much homework this past weekend and not enough sleep or relaxation time. This informs me about what my students can take on and is a good reminder about not giving them more than they can handle. I feel I am becoming better at connecting with them and knowing them better. Creating Breakout Rooms to bring my students into small groups works perfectly to allow for developing relationships in the classroom, supporting each other, ensuring student care and well-being, lively interactions and conversations with their peers and me, brainstorming sessions, collaboration on an assignment or project, meaningful exchange of ideas, constructive peer as well as teacher feedback, differentiated instruction, regular check-ins and making connections.

To ensure student well-being, I also investigate different online resources in search of physically distanced brain breaks ideas which I gladly incorporate in all my lessons. I also seek brain break ideas from my students. They enjoy sharing their ideas or even teaching the class a movement break, a mindful practice or a yoga pose .... all "en français". How authentic! And the more I involve them, the more engaged and invested they are. I find the brain breaks work well for us to energise, relax, and refocus, especially during this challenging time. A few of both my in-person and remote students' favourite brain breaks are playing games, chair yoga, Zumba, Just Dance, "Chanson du Jour" (Song of the Day) and reading French books and magazines. All of this is helping my students and me to get to know one another better, have fun together, and build a positive classroom community. To my utmost amazement, I think that one positive aspect of teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic is the opportunity to build closer relationships with my students by means of those creative approaches.

But I think one of my biggest challenges during this time is the pressure that I place on myself, let alone outside pressure. Each day, I leave school thinking about my day, asking myself if what I am doing is effective, if I am doing enough to engage and support my students and what I should have done differently. However hard it is for me to follow my own advice of giving myself grace and letting things go, I stay positive and practise reflexivity. I remind myself that I must learn to stop worrying over every little thing. I need to learn to let things go. I may strive to be flawless, but this year things are different, and this is an opportunity for growth.

In the following sub-section, I address my three research questions: What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories? What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? How have the experiences of developing and growing as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice? As I read my ninth vignette, a picture of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with its transformations begins to emerge as follows:

Knowledge of Self and Teacher Role/Identity. Who is portrayed in this context? What is her teacher role and identity? A teacher-mother-researcher with accumulated, ever-growing lived experiences and ever-evolving PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985); with an assignment to teach Grades 8-12 FCC courses during unprecedented times of the global COVID-19 pandemic; with an obligation to follow health regulations related to the pandemic; with a responsibility to enforce physical distancing and mask wearing at all times in the school; with a role to support *"in-person learning as well as virtual learning at the same time"* in the classroom; and with an openness to learn new digital tools and strategies to integrate into her teaching practice.

What a shift in my teacher role and identity? My practiced identity (Norton, 2000) and the reality of my teaching practice look and feel very different as I shift my identity and approach to adapt to "*the new situation*," my new reality, my new meaning perspective (Mezirow, 1981). I am now a crossover teacher tasked with teaching in both Middle and Senior School, travelling to different classrooms to teach, and enforcing "*health and safety protocols*" throughout my working day. There is no time to worry about having to teach five different FCC courses in two different settings since the bigger challenge for me is to deliver both in-person and virtual instruction simultaneously. I am both a virtual and an in-person teacher; graciously embracing my hybrid teacher identities; calmly displaying adaptability, flexibility, creativity, and perseverance; readily learning "*how to manoeuvre new technology equipment*" and other digital tools; and trying my best to offer uttermost support and care to all my students and to "*ensure equity when teaching my in-person as well as remote learners*" at the same time. To me, equity is crucial, and that is why I do my utmost daily so that all my students can experience learning in a fair way.

Another big challenge that I must face is self-imposed pressure. As much as I think that I can manage the outside pressure that I am experiencing during those unprecedented times, what's worse is the pressure that comes from the inside. My lived experiences enable me to recognise the challenges of living and teaching through a pandemic and the determination, resilience, patience, and perseverance to deal with those challenges. But whatever the challenges, be it outside pressure or self-imposed pressure, I remain calm and positive. Practising reflexivity regularly reveals to be very therapeutic in that it helps me deal with the contingencies of my current situation, learn enormously from the challenges, and understand how to advance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and personal growth.

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum. My knowledge of subject matter, that is, my knowledge of and experience with the provincial FCC curriculum (2014) continues to guide my pedagogical practice and continues to inform and shape my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a teacher-mother-researcher during the pandemic. As I navigate a continuously evolving teaching and learning landscape, my lived experiences in the classroom and my reflections on my teaching through the pandemic reveal that a paradigm shift in my teaching approaches is needed to accommodate the contingencies of my current teaching context and to meet the needs of my in-person, hybrid, and remote learners.

Knowledge of Instruction and Pedagogy. My knowledge of instruction and pedagogy includes my knowledge of teaching approaches, knowledge of language learning/acquisition, knowledge of assignments and activities, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of learning and teaching materials, and knowledge of lesson planning and time management.

The flagrant transformation in my pedagogical approaches demonstrates how my contextual experience and PD training shape and shift my practice. Reverting to traditional classroom setup "*with desks in rows […] facing the front of the room*" and giving a lot of direct instruction at my teacher desk "*without walking around the classroom*" becomes the current norm in my practice due to the pandemic-triggered restrictions imposed on the education landscape. What we know is that physical distancing is the new mandatory practice and face masks are an essential tool for preventing the spread of infection. However, my experience as a masked teacher reveals that face masks can also create barriers to authentic interactions (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971) in the classroom due to muffled speech. This contextual mask-wearing experience prompts me to maintain ongoing visual contact in an inviting way with my students, purposely work on my vocal clarity, enunciation and speed when speaking, and

incorporate gestures and visual cues throughout my lessons. All very good strategies in a second

language classroom, pandemic or post-pandemic in my opinion. What a growth in my PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and transformation in my teacher actions and pedagogical

decisions.

Despite the challenges with masks and physical distancing, how can I still encourage

interactions, engagement, and collaboration in my classroom? What approach do I adopt without

compromising the authenticity of my practice while at the same time abiding by the health and

safety protocols imposed in the classroom? Given the pandemic triggered social and emotional

disruption in the education landscape, I must come up with alternative, creative ways to continue

to encourage relationships, collaboration, engagement, authentic communication and natural

interaction in French in the classroom (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). How do I reimagine the

classroom experience? The answer is via the use of virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams

and digital tools within Google Workspace for Education.

Due to my prior experiences with integrating technology into my lessons, I feel open,

willing, and ready to "*manoeuvre new technology equipment and numerous digital tools*" in my

classroom practice. New technology is outstanding, but it comes with a learning curve, which

means more time and effort to implement it well. It doesn't come easy, but I stay positive and

persevere as I am grateful, especially during the pandemic, for the innovative opportunities for

teaching and learning within Google Workspace for Education, Microsoft Teams, and other

useful virtual tools. As put forward by Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), the growth in my PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my experiences of developing and growing as a teacher,

within the distinct social, political, and cultural contexts are closely connected to the

transformations in my teaching practice.

As I advance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) through new PD training and contextual experience, this is how my teaching practice has evolved: Since my contextual circumstances urge me to switch to contactless instruction, I rapidly acquire knowledge of Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom and other digital tools within Google Workspace for Education to deliver my teaching, engage and connect with my students; I swiftly "*switch to a contactless, paperless classroom*" and make digital versions of all learning and teaching materials; I manage to get a hold of digital versions of the short stories I have been using in my teaching practice; I develop my proficiency in using Microsoft Whiteboard since I do not have a classroom whiteboard or interactive smart board; I learn to use Google Jamboard to encourage my students to interact and collaborate on activities in real time since they cannot travel the room to do so; I learn to create Breakout Rooms using Microsoft Teams to implement virtual learning centres into my practice and to allow for real-time, smaller group conversations, discussions, interaction, collaboration and check-ins; I create new fun, innovative games and formative assessments using Kahoot, Quizlet, Quizizz, and so on to replace the tactile games and traditional assessments in my classroom; and I turn to Flipgrid to allow for fun, creative pre-recorded ways for my students to share their responses, ideas and voice.

My knowledge of assessment is also highlighted as I refer to how my assessment practice has evolved: moving away from traditional pen and paper assessment practice and turning to Google Forms, Google Slides, Google Docs, and Kami, amongst other digital tools, to create and grade assignments. As I triangulate assessment by including conversations, observations, and products in my assessment practices, I constantly update old performance scores of my students with new evidence of student learning and most recent reports of demonstrated proficiency of learning outcomes. I want my students to realise that learning doesn't stop after an assessment.

An assessment isn't a final judgement, it's a progress marker. How do I show my students that their growth matters? By ensuring that my grading methods accurately report grasp of the learning outcomes, I can promote, encourage, and reward student growth. As I also embrace student portfolios, student reflections and student-teacher conferences into my practice, I notice that this approach improves student motivation, helps students focus on their learning, makes them more reflective about their learning goals, helps them drive their own growth, and above all, it alleviates draining stress in the classroom especially during the pandemic.

Adopting a balanced literacy approach as well as a contextualised approach to teaching grammar and vocabulary through use of short stories, "*electronic versions of the short stories*" rather, continue to guide my pedagogical practice. It is fascinating to see how my students interact with the stories and how they develop an awareness of storying, that is, how to create and tell stories which, in turn, gives meaningful, authentic context to the language (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). My experience teaching through the pandemic, more than ever, reveals the power of the integration of stories into my practice. Not only are the stories designed for shared and guided reading and they help students develop their language and literacy skills, but each story accentuates important ethics and values on the importance of treating one another and the Earth with kindness and respect (AIM Language Learning, 2010). I witness directly how the element of care (Noddings, 2003), respect and kindness in the learning and teaching environment becomes even more important during this highly stressful uncertain time.

As I strive to ensure student well-being and care (Noddings, 2003), I search for "*physically distanced brain break ideas*" to incorporate in my teaching and learning landscape in an endeavour to help my students destress, have fun, "*energise, relax, and refocus*" for learning amidst ongoing school challenges and stress. I experience firsthand the utmost benefits of mental

breaks on my students and myself. This experience triggers an impulse in me to support scholars like Noddings (2003) and Cummins (2001) in affirming the value of care and well-being in pedagogy. By also engaging my students and creating space to listen to them via Breakout Rooms using Microsoft Teams, I strive to create a learning environment that is student centred (Vygotsky, 1978) and that promotes relationships, connections, interactions, collaboration, support, care, and student well-being (Noddings, 2003). I notice how sharing, listening and caring help forge more community connections especially during this stressful time. As I stop and listen to my students, I feel it's a game-changer in priming them for productive learning. Building relationships in the classroom becomes and will remain my most effective tool.

My lived experiences as a masked, physically distanced teacher clearly teach me patience, grace, empathy, reflexivity, creativity, flexibility, and adaptability during those uncertain times. What a growth in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a teacher-mother-researcher and transformation in my teaching practice as I encounter new meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981).

Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. My knowledge of students and student learning includes my knowledge of student attitudes, interests, needs, abilities, limitations, expectations, differences among students, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, what students know and how they learn.

I reveal my knowledge of students, student learning and student-teacher relationships as "*they teach me that it is okay to let things go and just go with the flow*" with their positivity, adaptability and resilience amidst this stressful time of uncertainty while they quickly learn new ways of schooling and adjust to spending "*plenty of time doing independent work at their own desks*" without the ability to move around the classroom and collaborate with classmates. As I

engage my students with live worksheets, digital stories, online game-based individual and collaborative learning activities, meaningful Flipgrid and Google Jamboard, Slides, Docs activities, and learning centres using Breakout Rooms on Microsoft Teams, I notice their fascination, interest, engagement and positive attitude toward learning French as they embrace and welcome technology.

This adaptive teaching and learning platform, this contextual experience and engagement with my in-person, remote and hybrid learners bring to light that engagement and learning go hand-in-hand; opportunities for collaboration, interaction, innovation and creativity can make learning fun (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971); technology can help teaching and learning; online game-based learning activities and assessments can give real-time data about where my students are excelling and where they need more practice; and gamification in the learning environment is connected with increased motivation and engagement. This is what currently informs and shapes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice.

My awareness of students and student learning is also highlighted as I "*witness how some of my students struggle with the new learning landscape*" and "*how overcoming the added stresses and the challenges of the year can be a confidence booster*" for others. I learn a lot about how much they can handle and how to support them by observing and listening to them. They teach me the fundamental importance of building safe relationships and creating a sense of belonging in the education landscape; the importance of having "*regular check-ins and making connections*" with students; the importance of creating a space for student voice; the importance of involving them in some of the classroom decisions; the importance of incorporating brain breaks in my daily practice; the importance of balancing their academic workload; the importance of communicating with other teachers about student workload; the importance of

student portfolios, reflections and student-teacher conferences, and the importance of

triangulating assessment to ensure student well-being (Noddings, 2003) and improve their mental

health.

Listening to my students and watching them adjust and cope with the changes and

challenges that accompany them has taught me how strong and resilient my students are and how

fragile our way of life can be. But there is hope as we continue to embrace new ways of thinking

and learning. Above all, this whole experience has informed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985) about the utmost value of student well-being and care in pedagogy (Noddings, 2003).

Knowledge of Context. My knowledge of context includes my knowledge of school

context, knowledge of department/program context, knowledge of classroom context, knowledge

of context outside the school, and knowledge of teacher-teacher relationship and collaboration.

My awareness of classroom and school contexts is presented in the new classroom layout

with "*desks in rows, 2 metres apart, with my students facing the front of the room*." What does

the new classroom layout communicate about my classroom and school contexts? This layout is

true for all classrooms throughout the school as "*I travel with my cart filled with French*

resources" to teach and classroom sharing has become the norm at my school. The pandemic

upends the new classroom layout. It depicts a traditional classroom setting that does not visibly

and necessarily portray a culture of collaboration, interaction, and community, but this is needed

to follow health regulations and safety protocols related to the pandemic. The travelling French

teacher experience reminds me of my teaching context and school culture in my home country

wherein most teachers do not have their own rooms except for art, computer, science, home

economics, physical education, and the like. Not having their own classroom is the norm for

most teachers in my home school culture and I was no exception while I was teaching there.

However demanding and frustrating travelling to different classrooms and classroom sharing is viewed as in my current school culture, I quickly adjust since "*it is nothing new to me*" and I adopt it as my new routine. There is no choice.

My knowledge of classroom and school contexts is also featured in my reference of how the classrooms are no longer equipped with a whiteboard and an interactive smart board and how "*each classroom is equipped with advanced audio-visual equipment and necessary technology*" to allow for remote learning to happen. While I experience the demands of teaching through the pandemic with a willingness and openness to embrace change and growth (Goodson & Cole, 1993), a drastic transformation in my practice occurs as I rapidly "*switch to a contactless, paperless classroom*" setting and shift to Google Classroom to upload digital versions of all my teaching and learning resources, to maintain a new channel of communication with my students, and to support both in-person and remote learning in an equitable manner.

In addition, I observe how technology integration in my daily teaching practice can enhance the student learning experience. For instance, the level of student engagement, fun, motivation, and wide array of learning happening when incorporating game-based learning activities and assessments into my classroom instruction are highly noticeable. I also reveal my awareness of classroom context as I depict my classroom culture that nurtures relationship building, student support, student voice, student care, and student well-being (Noddings, 2003). Providing safe spaces where my students feel valued, cared for, supported, and respected becomes fundamental to the context of my teaching practice. What a transformation and growth in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice as I "*navigate a continuously evolving education landscape*" while remaining nimble and flexible.

My teacher-mother-researcher era

Stories from this teacher-mother-researcher era (2014 - to date) have portrayed me as a teacher, a mother, and a researcher. During this era, my teaching approaches and my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) are largely informed and shaped by my accumulated PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), experiences and reflections as a CF teacher, my ongoing in-service professional development, my lived experiences and reflections as a mother and a teacher teaching through a pandemic, my evolving understanding of second language teaching and learning as a result of my Master of Education program, and my ongoing interpretation and implementation of the French: Communication and Culture provincial curriculum (2014). At the start of this teacher-mother-researcher era, I am depicted as a high school CF teacher, embarking on a new exploratory journey to interpret and implement the French: Communication and Culture provincial curriculum (2014) in my practice. I am also pursuing my Master of Education Degree in Second Language Education (SLE) which brings me to the current research in second language teaching and learning. These two main factors have largely influenced and guided my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), teaching practice, and my understanding of my role as a teacher.

The change in my life role (now teacher-mother-researcher) impacts my understanding of my role as a CF teacher as well as my approaches to teaching. In the context of my coursework towards my Master of Education program, I recall my courses, such as Research Issues and Application in TESL and Theory and Research in Second Language Acquisition among others, which led me to explore current scholarship in the field. Examination of the work of many scholars throughout my courses, particularly, Vygotsky (1978); Dewey (1971); Clandinin (1986, 1992); Clandinin & Connelly, (1985, 1986, 1987, 1995); Connelly & Clandinin (1988, 1999,

2000); Mezirow (1978, 1981, 1985, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1996); Goodson & Cole (1993); and

Wenger (1998) has unlocked a world of scholarship unfamiliar to me, and it has helped inform,

shape and shift my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice. The

unique perspective from my lived experiences and reflections as a graduate student and

researcher has enhanced and shifted my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my

understanding and interpretation of my role as a CF teacher and my approaches to teaching

French as a second language.

Throughout my courses and further reading in the field, I have noticed that I was

constantly reflecting on my past experiences, and I even started pulling out my learner/teacher

journals and reflection pieces to explore and better understand what was discussed in the courses

and scholarship. I was starting to realise that I was gaining a supporting framework that could

help address some of the tensions surrounding my teaching practice. I learned about a theoretical

framework that could broaden my understanding and interpretation of second language teaching

and learning as well as explore how my lived experiences have informed, shaped, and shifted my

PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice from the three eras of my teaching life.

With the growth of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a graduate student along

with my lived experiences, I gradually experience a paradigm shift from a highly teacher-centred

and transmission-oriented approach (Cummins, 1996, 1998) to a more socio-constructivist,

experiential, and student-centred approach (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971) to teaching French as

a second language. My enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and lived experiences

cause a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1996) to occur. As a result, my teaching practice

inevitably shifts as I acquire new theoretical knowledge and experience new approaches to

encourage authentic communication, collaboration, contextual learning, and natural interaction in French in my classroom (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971).

Additionally, the paradigm shift with the new French: Communication and Culture provincial curriculum (2014) largely impacts my understanding of my role as a CF teacher and my teaching practice. The FCC provincial curriculum (2014) was developed to provide an impetus for FSL teaching and learning in the province. Following a paradigm shift, stakeholders felt that there was a pressing need and obligation to revitalise the teaching and learning of FSL in the province. As a transformative result, the new curriculum (2014) places immense emphasis on oral communication, an appreciation of Francophone cultures around the world, and a balanced literacy approach to teaching.

In its introductory pages, the curricular document (2014) introduces the term "balanced literacy approach", a term not found in the previous document (1978-1996, revised in 2003). A balanced literacy approach values scaffolding activities and requires that students use various approaches to become proficient speakers, readers, and writers. In a CF classroom, such an approach can include modelled reading, speaking, and writing, interactive and authentic reading, speaking, and writing, and independent speaking, reading, and writing. It also puts a lot of emphasis on authentic communication, based on students' needs, interests, and experiences:

> Activities that take place in the French classroom revolve around authentic communication that is interactive, engaging, differentiated and collaborative. They also provide opportunities for students to think critically, to ask questions, to reflect on their learning and to pass on their knowledge (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014, p. 69).

This emphasis on authentic communication results in my teacher discourse starting to focus on the idea of a balanced literacy approach as a construct which entails a shift in my teaching practice. My teaching approach shifts to follow the progression of speaking-reading-writing with a focus on culture and oral communication in authentic contexts. My practice now centres on ensuring that my teaching approaches support increased oral communication along with overall language proficiency and intercultural competence. My experimentation with learning centres, workshops in French, *Concours d'art oratoire* and educational technology integration in my classroom clearly supports this. My teaching practice also supports a contextualised approach to teaching grammar and vocabulary through use of short stories and other media. Adopting a story-based approach reflects a major transformation in my practice as I connect my pedagogical practice to wider social issues, environmental issues, and cultural differences around the world.

Teaching during the unprecedented times of the global COVID-19 pandemic impacts my understanding of my role and identity as a teacher as well as my approaches to teaching. As I embrace my hybrid teacher identities throughout the pandemic, brain breaks into my daily practice, student well-being, technology integration, game-based learning activities, the use of virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams, digital tools within Google Workspace for Education, triangulation of assessment, student portfolios, reflections, and student-teacher conferences, I witness such a growth in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and a key transformation in my pedagogical practice.

Analysing over this teacher-mother-researcher era through my lived experiences and enhanced PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a teacher-mother-researcher teaching through a global pandemic, through my broadening understanding of second language learning and

teaching as a result of my M. Ed. program, and through my ongoing interpretation and implementation of the FCC provincial curriculum, I have identified and examined crucial teacher moments and tensions from my lived experiences, which have provided me with a means of informing, shaping and shifting my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), my teaching practice, as well as my understanding of my teacher role and identity.

As I interact with various aspects of my cultural and socio-political contexts, I grow and learn from my lived experiences; I learn from my past as I move towards the future (Dewey, 1971). Dewey's (1971) principles of social interaction and continuity - my past experiences influence my present experiences, and my present experiences influence my future experiences - this idea informs my approach to exploring my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) development and growth process and the evolution of my teaching practice. As I reflect on my teaching practice by turning to my past lived experiences to better inform my current practice and shape my future practice, I work under the assumption that teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is fluid in response to the particulars of contexts and evolves through reflection on lived experiences within distinct socio-political, and cultural contexts. And I remain in continuous interaction with my experiences and the interconnectedness between my past, present and future experiences (Dewey, 1971) as they relate to my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) development, evolution, and growth, which, in turn, leads to perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1996), as well as growth and shifts in my teaching practice.

Chapter Seven: Narrative Conclusions

Chapter Seven communicates what I have learned from the narrative accounts and analysis of my teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher era stories, as framed by my theoretical lens. In this chapter, I give my interpretation of my research findings and their implications and limitations, and I also indicate directions for further research.

The impetus for this thesis research was my urge to understand what I know about teaching and learning French because of my lived experiences, what I bring to my classroom practice because of my lived experiences, what pedagogical decisions I make because of my lived experiences, and to understand the growth and transformations in my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice because of my ongoing life experiences. Using PPK theory (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as a tool to reflect on and make meaning of my lived experiences, I have examined how my life experiences within different cultural contexts, in and out of the classrooms, impacted and shifted my PPK and teaching practice. This journey has allowed me to understand that the process, through which an individual goes through when negotiating his or her understanding of the teaching and learning landscapes together with an ever-growing PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), is dynamic, fluid, experiential, contextual, situational, and lifelong.

My first research question was, "What constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as an FSL transnational teacher as revealed in my life stories?" Based on my findings and data collected, I have proposed five categories for the content of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). The stories that I chose to tell uncovered insights in those five categories of PPK: knowledge of self, teacher role and identity, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum, knowledge of instruction and pedagogy, knowledge of students and student learning, and

knowledge of context. As I was seeking to find out what constitutes my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as revealed through my life stories, I did not approach data analysis with a predetermined set of categories to discover. Instead, I focused my analysis on the aspects of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) that surfaced from the stories that I had selected to tell. However, my findings are closely linked to Elbaz's (1983) categories: knowledge of self and milieu, knowledge of subject matter, and knowledge of curriculum and instruction, as well as to Golombek's (1998) categories: knowledge of self, knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of instruction, and knowledge of context. In addition, the conceived notions of what constitutes a teacher's PPK by Clandinin & Connelly (1985, 1986, 1987, 1995) and Tamir (1991) resonate most with my findings.

My findings highlight the personal qualities that I bring to my practice, the set of beliefs and values that shape my meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981), that is, my overall worldview, the call to advance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), and the need to construct and reconstruct new meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1981) to make sense of my ever-changing teacher world. I am depicted as a professional-growth teacher who is constantly trying to enhance her professional growth in the practice of her teaching as she shifts teaching contexts and with time, shifts from a highly teacher-centred (Hares, 1979) to a more student-centred (Vygotsky, 1978) teacher identity. Assuming responsibility for lifelong professional learning and development is a key aspect that emerges from my findings. On an ongoing basis, I find myself learning new teaching approaches and gaining new insights to advance my understanding of students and student learning to be in line with my teaching contexts. This ongoing learning process informs my ever-growing PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and impacts my teaching practice. My research findings bring out the importance of recognising and celebrating teacher

strengths and successes while at the same time keeping note of one's challenges, weak spots, and gaps in knowledge. I have used what I learned from my lived experiences to guide my judgments and choices about workshops and professional development opportunities that would help sharpen the knowledge and skills I needed to become more prepared to navigate my distinct teaching contexts. My lived experiences have allowed me to own my professional learning and assert my professional identity.

My second research question asked, "What lived experiences have informed and shaped my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) along with my teaching practice? I have shared stories about people, contexts, circumstances, events, and experiences that have been influential in my development and growth as an FSL transnational teacher. These people include family, acquaintances, friends, teachers, colleagues, students, teacher educators, administrators, educational leaders, and stakeholders surrounding my practice. My life stories have highlighted my lived experiences as a student, as a novice teacher without teacher training, a visible minority newcomer adult learner, an immigrant student-teacher, a professionally certified teacher in Manitoba, a teacher-mother, and a teacher-mother-researcher evolving in different contexts. The stories that I chose to tell have reinforced the influence of my lived experiences on my teaching practice. What I discovered is that my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) has absolutely been shaped by my lived experiences in distinct cultural contexts. In addition, the stories have revealed me as a reflective practitioner (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002) who learned (continues to learn) from her lived experiences and who used (continues to use) what she has learned from her past experiences to inform and shape her present and future experiences (Dewey, 1971).

My childhood and school experiences are pervaded with a genuine sense that these lived experiences have hooked me on teaching. Findings from this research study show that the

teaching and learning environment within which I was evolving in the Mauritian context have been directly informed by my childhood and school experiences. The lived experiences from my personal life have impacted the decisions and choices I made in my teaching practice. Who I was outside of the school context has shaped who I was in my teaching life. On the other hand, my lived experiences as a visible minority newcomer adult learner, an immigrant student-teacher, and above all, as a professionally certified novice teacher in Manitoba portray how I grapple to understand my teacher identity and role and how I struggle to make sense of my style and approach to teaching FSL in a Canadian context. These rich lived experiences propel me to advance my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). My quest for knowledge becomes evident throughout my stories and it leads to professional development opportunities, collaboration with colleagues, taking note of mentors and experienced teachers, learning through my students, learning through reflexivity, trying new teaching approaches and evaluation methods, networking, and graduate studies.

My graduate student experiences played a crucial role in my personal and professional development and growth. Frustrated and unsatisfied with my experiences as an FSL teacher during my initial few years of teaching within the Canadian context, I had entered the graduate program, hoping to further my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and to find a theoretical framework to address the frustrations, tensions, and challenges I have been experiencing surrounding my practice. Personally and professionally, my graduate student experiences were transformative. Discovering and exploring the concepts of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978) represent compelling experiences of my graduate studies. It has empowered me to navigate the tensions and feelings of unease surrounding my teaching contexts. Through my graduate coursework, I have realised what I value with reference

to FSL teaching and learning and how those values germinated and evolved. I have gained a

heightened awareness of who I was at the core, how I was perceived, and how I would like to be

perceived.

I never thought that my graduate student experiences would take me on a journey of self-

awareness, self-observation, self-introspection, self-discovery, self-enhancement, and self-

actualisation. Through the advancement of my theoretical understanding of PPK (Clandinin &

Connelly, 1985), I was able to explain what I brought to my teaching practice, and I was able to

be in a deeper pedagogical dialogue with others surrounding my practice and in interactions in

communities of practice (Norton, 2000; Wenger, 1998). When grounded in theoretical evidence,

pedagogical decisions and teacher actions are not taken by fluke but are intentional and

purposeful. My graduate student experiences have thus enabled me to articulate my beliefs and

values in terms of FSL teaching and learning and my commitment to teaching FSL was renewed.

As a result, I feel more at ease with my FSL teacher identity as well as my pedagogical decisions

and teacher actions in the classroom.

My third research question was, "How have the experiences of developing and growing

as an FSL transnational teacher, within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts,

transformed my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) as well as my teaching practice?" My desire

to improve and grow my teaching practice is a constant element in my stories. The stories that I

chose to tell highlight a teacher with a growth mindset who has learned over time to respond to

the varied contexts of multicultural, multilingual, mixed-race, and socio-economically diverse

urban classrooms, and in doing so, has changed her teaching practice through her enhanced PPK

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), reflexivity, adaptive expertise, experimentation, and innovation.

Even though understanding, constructing, and reconstructing my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly,

1985) has been challenging, thought-provoking and continuously evolving, it has helped me

understand who I am now as a teacher, what I value and why I do what I do as a teacher. Shifting

my teaching practices did not just happen. Circumstances required me to change. I changed

because I saw a necessity for transformation in meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1996). I

changed because change was needed for the sake of adaptability, resilience, and flexibility in my

distinct teaching contexts. I changed because change was needed in the best interests of my

professional growth. I changed because change was needed for increased student engagement,

investment, and retention in learning FSL. These are the assumptions that have made themselves

salient in my understanding of my practice. More may be evident to the reader. However, I come

out of this thesis inquiry with a better understanding of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985)

and teaching practice and why I have allowed for those transformations (Mezirow, 1996) to

happen.

My life stories have also portrayed me as a proud francophone who has been impacted by

the feeling of visible minority francophones being viewed as 'other' or culturally ambiguous.

The fact that I have been dwelling in many cultures, wherein my origins and traditions are

constantly being interpreted and reinterpreted by others, has created a continuous ambiguity

about who I am culturally. This specific aspect of cultural and socio-political experience informs

and transforms my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and my teaching practice as I navigate the

unease, tensions, and challenges I face as a visible minority francophone in the distinct education

landscapes. The shift occurs as I see the setbacks, challenges, and experiences within the distinct

cultural and socio-political contexts as opportunities to learn and grow. I learned to negotiate

sociocultural and linguistic tensions when I questioned my own sense of belonging in the school

community. I learned to create and find opportunities inside and outside classroom contexts to

educate everyone about and expose everyone to francophone cultures and francophone identities around the world; to celebrate my own francophone identity and create space for cultural diversity; and to express my pride in my culturally ambiguous identity.

Findings from this self-study demonstrate that there was not one single 'aha' moment in my development and growth as an FSL transnational teacher. My lived experiences throughout the years within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts, as depicted in my teacher, teacher-mother, and teacher-mother-researcher era stories, have collectively acted as catalysts for my teacher development, growth, and transformation (Mezirow, 1996). In addition to developing awareness with respect to my research questions, I outline my understanding about autoethnography and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) below. I then present the implications and limitations of my research findings as well as implications for further research.

My work in this thesis research contributes to the work of researchers who have made key contributions to understanding teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) development and growth through autoethnographic and ethnographic studies in various contexts. As a teacher-mother-researcher conducting this qualitative research methodology of autoethnography, my evolutionary trajectory as an FSL teacher is still in process and is fluid. Conducting this autoethnography has challenged my assumption that since I am the primary participant and I am approaching this research from a point of self-study, being an autoethnographic researcher is an easy task. It is far from being easy. It has challenged me to be a communicator and storyteller (Bochner & Ellis, 2006) while, at the same time, undergoing a process of personal discovery and a form of profound self-reflection that explores my perspectives on the research scheme through my reflective journals and artefacts. It has challenged me to approach my research and writing

with the technique of thick description (Geertz, 1973) and prolonged engagement with my data collection.

In qualitative research, "autoethnography has a methodological value in using personal experiences to illustrate facets of cultural experiences" (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 275). Since autoethnography honours subjectivity and individuality, it is a relevant methodology for my research study in the field of education. Using autoethnography as a qualitative research methodology created a space for the exploration of my lived experiences, for self-reflection and for the investigation of cultural and socio-political factors impacting my teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice. This autoethnographic investigation has helped me become more knowledgeable about the distinct contexts of schooling and the culture of schools where the "self" is situated (Chang, 2016). As a transnational teacher of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, I feel autoethnography is a useful research methodology as it has allowed for enhanced cross-cultural understanding (Chang, 2016), thus, reflecting the cultural diversity present in Canadian schools. As Chang (2016) posits, "autoethnography is universally beneficial to those who work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Through the increased awareness of self and others, they will be able to help themselves and each other, correct cultural misunderstandings, develop cross-cultural sensitivity, and respond to the needs of cultural others effectively" (p. 54). Clearly, "autoethnography is becoming a particularly useful and powerful tool for researchers and practitioners who deal with human relations in multicultural settings" (Chang, 2016, p. 51).

As a teacher-mother-researcher, I have chosen autoethnography because it served my research purpose. However, I emerge from this autoethnography with a realisation that delving into personal and professional lived experiences can lead to transformative learning (Mezirow,

1978) and can be a useful form of professional development. This autoethnographic process revealed itself to be exciting, therapeutic, and transformative. It has reinforced and emphasised that telling stories can be an educative (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) and transformative act. I did not entirely expect the professional development and growth that would occur because of undergoing this autoethnography. It has informed me of the continuing need to critically examine my past and current pedagogical practices to further my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and better construct my future practices (Dewey, 1971). Likewise, this thesis research invites teachers to reciprocate this practice and use what they learn to make thoughtful future pedagogical decisions.

When I initiated this autoethnographic research, I struggled to define what PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) was. As I was working through my data collection and trying to make sense of my data, I kept wondering if it was the PPK as conceptualised by Clandinin and Connelly (1985). When I revisited the literature, I became satisfied that it was indeed the PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) that I was noticing. I was guided by their notion of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) since it seemed to click in the context of my research study. What emerged out of my stories was indeed "knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person's being. Its meaning is derived from, and understood in terms of a person's experiential history, both professional and personal" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985, p. 363). My approach to understanding my PPK was informed by Clandinin & Connelly (1985) while my set of proposed categories closely align with Elbaz's (1983) and Golombek's (1998) categories.

This self-study reaffirms the understanding that PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is rooted in personal experiences. My childhood and schooling influences on my earlier teaching practice speak volumes about the power of personal experiences. Although teacher development

and growth are generally considered to begin as the teacher sets foot in the teaching career, I postulate that the diverse contributions of my childhood and school experiences to my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) would position the beginning of my development and of my growth as a teacher much earlier in my life. My childhood experiences of playing school with my mother's flower pots as my students, my lived experiences of growing up in a family of teachers, my lived experiences of growing up in a rich multilingual environment, and my school experiences played a significant role in the development and growth of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). Looking back, I knew very early in my life that I wanted to become a teacher and my development as a teacher started in my home environment.

What arises from the findings from this research study is that who the teacher is, where she is from, and her culturally, contextually situated experiences shape and inform her PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). It asserts that national and cultural differences play a vital role in teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and perceptions of effective teaching practice. It posits that national and cultural contexts influence the social position of the teacher, the way of communicating across cultures, teacher identity and role, teacher-student interaction and relationship, how curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are understood and followed. These findings reinforce the need for cross-cultural studies of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and the need to develop socio-cultural awareness. As Canada continues to evolve as a nation of new immigrants, we need to become aware of the cross-cultural impact on our context.

This self-study illustrates how PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and identity are closely intertwined. It demonstrates how profoundly a visible minority immigrant teacher's identity, cultural heritage and lived realities can shape and influence her PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and teaching practice. It upholds that a teacher brings numerous beliefs, values,

cultures, languages, identities, perspectives, and assumptions into the education landscape. Classrooms are spaces that are infused with not only students' but also teachers' diverse lived experiences, cultural backgrounds, and identities. As teachers enter the teaching profession, the wide range of their lived experiences since childhood and their accumulated PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) are brought forward in their teaching practice. By recognizing and honouring the richness of teachers' lived experiences, we can welcome their distinct identities and backgrounds as well as acknowledge the intricacy and personal nature of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). This research study thus calls for more attention to be paid to the lived experiences and PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) teachers bring to the education landscape and its findings call for PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) to be meaningfully acknowledged in teacher education programs.

These findings accentuate the importance of the role of teacher educators to facilitate the opportunity for student teachers to explore their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and lived experiences. This scholarship has implications for teacher educators who need to help teacher candidates make sense of and value their lived experiences so that they not only understand who they are and what they would bring to their practice, but also have a grounded sense of what constitutes their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and an evolving understanding of what they need to know in order to navigate the teaching profession in the cultural context within which they are evolving. Findings from this self-study highlight that without this level of understanding, teacher candidates may be unaware of the implications their gaps in knowledge could have for the future of their teaching career and their students' futures. My life stories clearly demonstrate how my cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the gaps in my knowledge and my way of communicating across cultures affected my learning and teaching landscapes.

Findings from this self-study therefore inform and encourage teacher education programs to turn to a focus that acknowledges the personal and socio-cultural, and political context of teachers and teaching. The implications of these findings are stark for a multiculturally responsive teacher education program beginning with what the teacher candidates have: their cultural identities, their cultural ways of knowing, and the diversity of their experiences. These findings support a teacher education program that is responsive to the needs of today's diverse teacher candidates and the impact of socio-cultural and political dynamic forces of migration shaping the new demands of the teaching and learning world. This research study therefore invites teacher educators to draw from the theoretical framework and use it with teacher candidates to explore the origins of their PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985); to examine their pedagogical decisions and teacher actions; to reflect and examine how their life histories shape and impact their teaching practice; and to support and celebrate their diverse experiences, backgrounds and identities.

My findings also call for teacher educators to consider what would constitute key support for novice teachers. It supports calls for appropriate mentorship and networking to be put in place for novice teachers. Findings from my study, as depicted during my teacher-mother era, clearly demonstrate how a trusting relationship, a culture of sharing and collaboration with my mentor and department colleagues, as well as meaningful exchanges, advice, and support from them, play a pivotal role in my positive experiences within my new teaching context in contrast to my prior one. It clearly promotes my professional well-being. My findings assert that mentors can make a difference in helping novice teachers, especially a visible minority new immigrant teacher like me, acclimate to the teaching profession, navigate through school culture, feel accepted and welcomed, and gain the confidence needed as a novice teacher to effectively work

alongside the teaching staff, and in my case, a predominantly white teaching staff. I posit that novice teachers across-the-board would benefit from constructive mentoring and networking frameworks.

In addition, this thesis research contributes to illuminating links between an FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) and classroom practice. Understanding FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is complex as it involves the personal nature of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), but is an important aspect of supporting pre-service and in-service teachers. Further research into what constitutes an FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) will allow for better understanding of what being an FSL teacher entails. I suppose there is scope for further research on the personalised nature of PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). This self-study contributes to the body of research related to a balanced literacy to teaching FSL based on principles of a socio-constructivist and experiential approach (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1971). This thesis addresses the issue of what constitutes an FSL teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985), its evolutionary trajectory and its implications for post-pandemic schooling. I note how it has evolved to include technology integration, use of virtual platforms, triangulation of assessments, authentic learning experiences, game-based and story-based learning activities, brain breaks during learning, authentic communication and natural interaction in the target language, cultural diversity, social issues, environmental issues, etc. I posit how this shift can enhance second language learning and development and boost student engagement and retention in FSL classrooms.

My findings also show that I had an easy transition to remote teaching and the use of virtual platforms since I used technology frequently in my practice prior to the global pandemic. As highlighted in my experiences teaching through the pandemic, I don't shy away from

technology use, innovation, and growth. Instead, with a transformative orientation (Cummins et al., 2007), I embrace them, am open to change and am eager to help shift the education paradigm. However, my findings also point out that new ideas, technologies, and innovations cannot replace building relationships and making connections in the classroom. Emphasising student engagement, student well-being, student care (Noddings, 2003), a sense of belonging and resilience has a big positive impact on students and student learning.

Considering the above, this thesis study clearly highlights that focusing on teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) can serve as a tool for professional development and training of future teachers and novice teachers. However, a conclusive generalisation of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) cannot be made due to the nature of this self-study. As an autoethnographic researcher approaching this research from a point of self-study, I acknowledge that I tell my story from within this privileged and biased context, and I have grappled with how to address this issue of privilege and bias to advance the discourse beyond just my interpretation of my PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). Therefore, it is worth conducting further research on a larger group of teachers to explore these ideas in more detail.

Limitations of this study predominantly reside in the very methodology chosen. My interpretations as an autoethnographic researcher have unavoidably been impacted and manipulated by my frame of reference (Mezirow, 1996) as a visible minority FSL transnational teacher evolving within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts. My own transnational, socio-economic, racial, linguistic, regional, and cultural backgrounds have impacted how I constructed knowledge and interpretations from my lived experiences. I sought to minimise my assumptions and biases by continually acknowledging and reflecting upon my privileged position as well as the assumptions and biases that I brought to this self-study. In addition, the

nature of the data comprises another limitation. My primary sources were established from my reflective teacher and personal journals as well as triangulated information with reflections on my observations, experiences, and artefacts. I tried to minimise this limitation by ensuring prolonged engagement with the data sources, by implementing peer debriefing and external audits, and by making conscious, reflective decisions all around.

In conclusion, this thesis research clearly puts forth that the experiences of developing and growing within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts can lead to transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978) and the growth of teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985). It affirms that teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is fluid, always evolving through ongoing lived experiences. It also asserts that teacher identity is not static but negotiated and shifting (Liu & Xu, 2011; Clarke, 2008; Tsui, 2007). Findings from this study demonstrate that teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is not to be identified as decontextualised and is interconnected with the teacher's lived experiences. They also reveal that teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) is continually shaping and reshaping amid evolving experiences within distinct political and sociocultural contexts. Throughout this ever-developing process, the teacher learns to be flexible and stay nimble; the teacher learns to adapt and readapt his or her PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985) according to his or her teaching contexts; the teacher learns to negotiate and shift his or her professional identity (Liu & Xu, 2011; Clarke, 2008; Tsui, 2007); the teacher learns to interpret and reinterpret the meaning of his or her lived experiences; and the teacher learns to revise his or her meaning perspectives and appropriate new frames of reference (Mezirow, 1996) within the distinct cultural and socio-political contexts. Hence, learning and growth occur by construing new or revised frames of reference (Mezirow, 1996) through critical

reflection and transformations that perpetually occur in teacher PPK (Clandinin & Connelly, 1985).

As a teacher-mother-researcher, I recognise that I still have work to do and a great deal to learn and grow. It is a lifelong process. But the most important lesson I learned from my thesis inquiry and advice I would give to prospective and novice teachers is to be flexible. The global pandemic is a perfect example of how teachers, who embrace a flexible mindset, cope better with change, transformation, and innovation. No matter what surprising changes, dips and bends life throws at us, our openness to be flexible and to be adaptable will help us respond to the ever-changing needs of our teaching world.

"Be infinitely flexible and constantly amazed."

~ Jason Kravitz

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