

The Language and Thought in Immigration

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Introduction

I grew up poor. I mean, really poor. I honestly didn't even know how poor my family actually was for a long time. I lived with my mom and sister in a house that was; I kid you not, as big as my current classroom. But what my mother lacked monetarily she made up for with good parenting. I was taught to be conscious, to be tolerant, to be respectful and how to think. These lessons were so embedded in me that my mother didn't have to supply me with a list of rules (even when I became a teenager!). There were only two rules in our house: don't talk with your mouth full and don't say the dirty dozen plus one. Obviously you know the first. However, the second rule is less known, but I can still hear my mother's voice as she'd say, "Girls! Power of the word, power of the word!" I know you want to know, so I will share. The dirty dozen plus one: (1)Yes, but (2)Try (3)Can't (4)Probably (5)If only (6)Should have (7)Maybe (8)Never (9)Always (10)Impossible (11)Must (12)Stupid (Plus 1)Shut-up. I didn't realize it at the time, but my mother was teaching us that language affects the way we think. I mean, didn't Yoda say in Star Wars, "There is no try, only do"¹? Even in my current station I am cognizant of the language I use, I even ask my students to void specific words from their vocabulary when they enter my class. Of course the moaning and complaining is a little intense...but they oblige. They listen to what I say about the power of the word. I wish there were words that people eventually grew out of, that it is only an adolescent characteristic to use the word "retarded" to describe a situation or assignment. Alas, it is not...people in general are unconscious of what they actually say; they don't realize the language they are using is affecting not only their own opinions but also the people with whom they are speaking. This is troublesome. To prove my point (whilst admitting my own naiveté), what words do you use to describe an immigrant for whom the government doesn't have documentation? It's ok...we all learn. You call them "illegal aliens/immigrants", yes? Of course you do and so did I. It is congruent with the language we hear politicians and media use. But, I will ask you the same question my seminar leader asked us...can a human be illegal? No. Their actions can be illegal, but saying *they are* illegal is dehumanizing them. The astonishing truth is that many of us are unconscious of the power words we use have.

Language is powerfully influential, a force that can make war or inspire passion. Language is the color of culture; it shapes our perceptions and highlights our differences. Even so, it's the one thing all societies on Earth have in common. Those who are

fortunate enough to have learned a second language have amazing insight and connectivity with different cultures. My attempt to learn to speak a second language was futile, but to be fair I'm not even that good at speaking one. I *can* say some sort of salutation in seven different languages- but really who am I kidding? I marvel at my immigrant students who easily converse with their peers in their native tongue. Sometimes I wonder why they are in my class in America, but I think it is taboo to ask, so I don't. I also don't presume to know where they are from, and when I ask them, they will usually laugh at me (in good humor) as I ask them to show me the location on a map. Not only do I speak only one language, but I don't know that much about the geography and people of other countries. I wonder how many of my students I have unknowingly and unintentionally offended because of my ignorance of the globe. Scary thought, that. At this point I'm sure you've figured out that I have never lived outside of the country...outside of North Carolina. In fact, I went to college two hours away from my home town, and since graduation, I've lived within an hour of my childhood home. I cannot even begin to understand the plight of an immigrant. This is the sole reason why the seminar, "All Immigration is Local", was a necessity for me. I thought, "Since I don't know what it's like to be an immigrant, then I will at least know what it entails". I think about how many times a day I connect with my students- how stories from my life enhance their learning and how some of their experiences are reflections of my past. In shameful retrospect, it has never occurred to me that maybe, students who did not grow up in America, may not get the connections my other students do. Ergo, I find it contradictory that I actually teach about language and thought being a culturally specific developmental process. I don't know if my oblivion to this issue is because I am ignorant of immigration or if it's because I have only taught predominantly native affluent Americans. Either way, I haven't been the best teacher for immigrants. With this unit, I hope to rectify this overlooked area of my teaching.

Objectives

I have designed my Curriculum Unit to be used in my Advanced Placement Psychology class which meets every other day for ninety minutes. Additionally it will be easy to make minor adjustments to this Unit to make it more appropriate for a standard level Psychology class. I will implement this Curriculum Unit during the second semester to enhance students' learning as we cover the section on Cognition as well as the section on the psychosomatic effects of stress. I hope to accomplish these objectives over the span of five to six class periods, or about two weeks. In addition to the in-class portion of the unit, there will be a corresponding student project that will serve as the major assessment for the unit. It will be assigned at the beginning of the curriculum to afford students sufficient time to complete the project. Due to the nature of the project and the time constraints of the teacher, I have designed it so adjustments or removal of pieces will be possible to accommodate class size and schedule availability.

I will use immigration as a vehicle to teach the various components and acquisitions of language as well as the conceptual foundation and processes of thinking. Specifically, my unit on cognition will focus on the use of four trends in immigration: the use of confusing clinical language in immigration policies; how a person thinks about immigration is conveyed thru language which consequently, can influence others' thoughts- positively and negatively; language that depicts immigration as a problem that makes it harder to find solutions; the nature and experience of stress for immigrants. This curriculum unit aligns with many of the state and national standards, and can be taught at different times of the year. The following are my personal objectives for the unit and the correlating North Carolina Common Core Essential Standards (NCCCES) and National Standards.

Objective One

My first objective for this unit will be to teach the basic (universal) structure of language. By teaching the structural components of language, students should be able to see the similarities in all language. Through comparison, dissection and contrast of two linguistically different documents, students should be able to identify the commonalities within the languages' symbols, phonemes, morphemes and structure. Through discussion and audio of language aptitude I will expect students to learn another universal language characteristic: language acquisition. Though humans do not have a critical period in the same way goslings do, we do have a time of optimal linguistic discovery- lessons on language development will include the nature of the bilingual household and discussions about the positive and negative effects of multi-language families. Upon completion of the first objective, students should begin to show a developing sense of understanding of the cognitive and cultural context of language. Thus, this objective should serve as a primer for the upcoming immigration-enriched lessons.

This first objective meets the following standards from AP Central and NCCCES:

NCCCES

- 12.LC.1 Understand how conditioning, learning, and cognition affect behavior.
- 12.LC.1.3 Summarize the cognitive factors involved in perception, motivation, emotion, and consciousness.
- 12.S.1 Understand how interaction with others influences thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors.
- 12.S.1.2 Compare diverse cultural norms in terms of their impacts on behavior.
- 12.S.1.6 Evaluate the extent to which mass communication systems and social networking impacts human cognition and behavior.

AP CENTRAL

- Synthesize how biological, cognitive, and cultural factors converge to facilitate acquisition, development, and use of language.

- Identify key contributors in cognitive psychology (e.g., Noam Chomsky, Hermann Ebbinghaus, Wolfgang Köhler, Elizabeth Loftus, George A. Miller).
- Describe how cultural influences shape emotional expression, including variations in body language.
- Describe the essential characteristics of insight learning, latent learning, and social learning.
- Speculate how cultural context can facilitate or constrain personality development, especially as it relates to self-concept (e.g., collectivistic versus individualistic cultures).

Objective Two

The second objective of my Curriculum Unit is to encourage student understanding of the relationship between language and thought. Within the parameters of the Immigration controversy, I want to demonstrate how thoughts influence the way in which language is used. For this portion, students will read, comprehend and make linguistically relative the actual legislation surrounding Immigration. Contrarily, I will demonstrate the effects of language on thinking- focusing on ideals of either side of the controversies, for example, the “Drop the I-Word” Campaign.² As a by-product, students will begin to make connections between the relationship of thought and language as it pertains to and influences the relationship between perception (personal thoughts) and behavior.

The second objective of my CU meets standards from AP Central and NCCCES in the following ways:

NCCCES:

- 12.LC.1 Understand how conditioning, learning, and cognition affect behavior.
- 12.LC.1.1 Compare the theoretical development of the behavioral and cognitive perspectives in psychology.
- 12.LC.1.2 Summarize the behavioral factors involved in perception, motivation, emotion, and consciousness
- 12.LC.1.3 Summarize the cognitive factors involved in perception, motivation, emotion, and consciousness.
- 12.LC.1.4 Use classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning theories to manage daily problems and improve the quality of life.
- 12.S.1 Understand how interaction with others influences thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors.
- 12.S.1.6 Evaluate the extent to which mass communication systems and social networking impacts human cognition and behavior.

AP Central

- Synthesize how biological, cognitive, and cultural factors converge to facilitate acquisition, development, and use of language.
- Describe how cultural influences shape emotional expression, including variations in body language.

- Describe the essential characteristics of insight learning, latent learning, and social learning.

Objective Three

For the third objective, I want my students to use what they've learned about the relationship between language and thought and connect it to the development of critical thinking and problem solving. Before students are able to apply what they've learned they should obtain the following skills prior to starting this objective: ³ comprehend current immigration policies on the local, state and national levels; identify the climate of a presented argument through linguistic analysis; demonstrate an understanding of cultural influence on personal perception. These skills will help students apply their knowledge by critiquing current Immigration Policy and Reform Proposals. In doing so students will focus on the manner in which people think and solve problems, the implication of cultural expectations on opinions and conflict resolution. . The third objective meets the following standards from AP Central and NC Common Core Essential Standards:

NCCCES

- 12.LC.1 Understand how conditioning, learning, and cognition affect behavior.
- 12.S.1 Understand how interaction with others influences thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors.
- 12.S.1.7 Use various theories of sociocultural psychology to manage daily problems and improve the quality of life.
- 12.DE.1.4 Use knowledge gained from an analysis of human development to understand personal challenges at different stages of life.
- 12.D.1 Understand human differences and strategies for coping when those differences create dysfunction.
- 12.D.1.1 Use factors such as biology, conditioning, cognition, sociocultural interactions, and human development to understand personality differences.

AP CENTRAL

- Synthesize how biological, cognitive, and cultural factors converge to facilitate acquisition, development, and use of language.
- Identify problem-solving strategies as well as factors that influence their effectiveness.
- List the characteristics of creative thought and creative thinkers.
- Discuss theories of stress and the effects of stress on psychological and physical well-being.
- Describe how cultural influences shape emotional expression, including variations in body language.
- Articulate the impact of social and cultural categories (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity) on self-concept and relations with others.

Objective Four

My last objective is to teach my students about the life of an immigrant via a student project. The project will focus on the motivations behind the decisions to immigrate and the psychological effects of immigration. Students' experiences will be most effective if they have the ability to suspend disbelief, as they will actually be completing tasks that a new immigrant to America would have to do. The project will be a series of tasks that will require students to glean an understanding of the immigrant plight- the transition to a new location, gaining citizenship, navigating receptivity and cultural adaptation.⁴ Students will learn the various theories of motivation⁵ and discover the reasons behind the decisions to relocate. In addition, students' experiences of a new immigrant will allow for an understanding about the psychosomatic nature of stress, the various types of stressors and ways to cope with stress. The fourth objective meets the following standards from AP Central and NCCCES:

NCCCES

- 12.S.1 Understand how interaction with others influences thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors.
- 12.S.1.7 Use various theories of sociocultural psychology to manage daily problems and improve the quality of life.
- 12.DE.1.4 Use knowledge gained from an analysis of human development to understand personal challenges at different stages of life.
- 12.D.1 Understand human differences and strategies for coping when those differences create dysfunction.

APCENTRAL

- Discuss theories of stress and the effects of stress on psychological and physical well-being.
- Describe how cultural influences shape emotional expression, including variations in body language.
- Articulate the impact of social and cultural categories (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity) on self-concept and relations with others.

Rationale

I teach at an affluent school nestled in the suburbs of Charlotte in a town known as Cornelius. We serve around 2100 students of which approximately 20% are from households at an economic disadvantage. The school population is predominately white; the two largest minority groups the school enrolls are African Americans (12%) and Hispanics (7 %).⁶ The students are well behaved despite their sardine-packed sized classes. Generally speaking they are respectful towards their teachers, peers and the physical properties of the school. Their parents are highly involved with the school's

academic atmosphere, especially concerning their child's progress in the classrooms. Despite the majority of the schools' clientele being able to travel abroad at least once or twice a year, many students' are naïve in the ways of the world. Often I find when conversing with my students, they have a misperception of reality. For example, they assume that most people are afforded the same opportunities as they have- thus I conclude, their worldly knowledge is highly localized. This is a typical trait of many adolescents. According to Choudhury⁷, adolescents are still developing cognitively and have not fully mastered hypothetical thought processes; as a result they are egocentric. Essentially, it is normal for teenagers to apply their personal experience to others- the false-consensus effect. This trait may be commonplace, but adolescents *can* learn and I believe that the juniors and seniors I teach are capable of putting themselves in others' shoes- it's just that they are rarely, if ever, asked to do so. My students tend to focus on what specifically affects them and since most of my students are native to North Carolina- they don't educate themselves with circumstances that are prevalent beyond their own back yard.⁸ Immigration- it's a hot topic and one that encroaches on my students' backyards since the greater Charlotte area is a rapidly growing immigrant destination. According to immigrant scholar Audrey Singer, Charlotte is considered to be a pre-emerging gateway- which means the numbers of historical immigration were inconsequential but recent growth of the foreign-born people in the city is at the heart of current discussions of immigrant patterns. In North Carolina, there was a relatively small foreign-born populace twenty years ago. However, starting in the 1990's, our three largest cities⁹ saw a six hundred percent increase in this new cohort. To put it simply, it means about 450,000 more individuals in the state! This says quite a bit about the major influx of immigrants to Charlotte within the contemporary growth period.¹⁰ In Charlotte alone, the foreign-born are approaching 15% of the city's total population.¹¹

OH! Now I get it! All Immigration *IS* Local! This is why it is so important to educate ourselves and our students about immigration. Prior to this seminar, (regretfully and embarrassingly) I had a pathetic grasp on the complexity and controversy of the immigration situation in America. As I spent time with my seminar leader, Heather Smith, and my peers I realized that immigration *IS* a big deal, a very real and convoluted ordeal, and it's a pressing concern in America that affects many individuals and families. I didn't know the history, the numbers, and that there are contradicting state and federal policies...but now I do. And now that I am cognizant of these issues, I am excited to educate my students. As a result of this seminar, I have learned there is great value in teaching about immigration- it is essential for students' education and preparedness to live in this exciting new country.

As I started the spring and summer reading assignments, I began to notice trends in the information I was digesting. One, immigration policy and policy reform is hard to read. Here is a short excerpt from the Immigration and Nationality Act, Sec. 102. [8 U.S.C. 1102], "Except as otherwise provided in this Act, for so long as they continue in the nonimmigrant classes enumerated in this section, the provisions of this Act relating to

ineligibility to receive visas and the removal of aliens shall not be construed to apply to nonimmigrants-”... and that’s just the introduction.¹² The language is stagnant and the amount of numbers and data used is so phenomenal that it’s hard to get a grasp on what many of the documents are saying. I found this to be profoundly unsettling. How is anyone supposed to form an opinion on information that takes so much time to understand let alone analyze? This is what led me to create my first objective of the unit. This leads me to the second trend- people who do have opinions about immigration (seemingly) stand on one side of the debate or the other. The language that people use in these opinion pieces is often-sharp- effectively painting a clear and unyielding picture on their stance on immigration. Here is an excerpt of an opinion offered by Bob Dane¹³ that was featured in a published article about the government’s lack of follow thru on immigration reform, “Absent was any discussion that rampant illegal immigration and massive levels of legal immigration are both costly detriments to our economy and job creation in particular.” Dan Brown’s piece in its entirety is pro anti-immigration reform. The article is easy to read, and easily defended, but it’s not the whole story. Most opinion pieces written in response to Immigration Policies, or lack of a consensus about Immigration Policy Reform, are much like Brown’s. They convey blatant underlying tones from the author. In fact, any information that is not actual legislation is a product of individuals’ perception of current immigration laws. This means people form personal opinions based on others’ opinions rather than reading actual legislation. Thus the importance of teaching critical thinking skills is emphasized.

I feel that the language used to express staunch opinions is absorbed into one’s thought process, thereby, affecting a person’s overall perception of an issue. It seems as if my students are susceptible to taking information at face value- they have to be told to consider other view points and as a result their impressionable minds are imprinted with others’ opinions. Parents and the manner in which opinions are shared at home can also influence how a teen thinks about a particular issue. I think this is natural- and common for most households in the world...but I also think that offering different sides to national controversy is a great way for parents to teach critical thinking. Language is a powerful tool that can be used to influence and manipulate opinion- deciding a particular order of words can have a profound effect on how a person thinks or feels about a situation. Which is why I created my second objective.

Lastly, opinions about immigration are so firm that reform policies aren’t met with compromise, thus creating barriers to real solutions. As our seminar leader, Heather Smith kept reminding us, current national immigration policy is operating on an outdated model, and many current state policies are reactionary. As we’ve seen with many recent immigrant policies,¹⁴ rushed reform can highlight and worsen the immigration scene. Take for example, the unintended ramifications of the Georgia House Bill 87¹⁵ - GA had a bit of a slight downturn in economic profits, a slight downturn meaning almost four million dollars (Shahshahani). It’s reasonable that states want to regulate immigrant behavior, “The United States is in the midst of its fourth and largest wave of immigration.

With approximately one million new immigrants entering the country each year, more than ten percent of Americans are foreign-born".¹⁶ I believe this is the reason for an increased negative perception of current immigrants. Americans are unsure of the future and what it will look like. As a result, language surrounding immigration has a negative connotation to it. There is a sense of urgency and fear and that is reflected in mass media that leaves little room for rebuttal or exposure of the truths. Words can sell people on ideas- it is how many corporations make money- by *how* they present their product and in what context. If immigrants are perceived as problems, then all of a sudden...immigration is a problem that needs solving. But real solutions are possible when there is clear and honest communication. The fact that language influences thought and thought influences *how* we think about problem-solving is why I created my third objective.

As I stated before, many of my students don't understand how other people live or issues like immigration that affect other people different from themselves. I want my students to understand how local immigration really is. This is why the last portion of my unit will focus on the actual immigrant experience and the effects of immigration. I would like for my students to acquire an empathetic understanding of the immigrants' plight. I hope to re-humanize and cultivate tolerance of the modern immigrant.

Through the information I gathered in the seminar and on my own, I discovered that there are many lessons for my students to learn- for anyone to learn. We will first focus on the structure of language- as it is necessary to understand- as we explore the manner in which we use language to convey ideas. Immigration will be at the core of this Unit's in class-lessons. The following information will explain how I plan to teach these lessons.

Strategies

I think school should be fun. I find that students typically enjoy my class and participate more when they are having fun. When I was in high school, there wasn't so much attention and weight put on tests. The students at my school are remarkably stressed out- all the time- because of the significance tests have. In fact, not much *real* learning happens in school any more- it's mostly memorization and regurgitation. I truly believe that if you're not having fun you're not learning...because learning *is* fun. Students at my school (and possibly at yours as well) have a hard time thinking. They know how to memorize, but thinking...not so much. This is why I love the Charlotte Teachers Institute! This initiative that Yale started, affords teachers the opportunity to enrich the classroom, giving way to more learning and less regurgitating. So, many of the strategies I use in my class are typically student-centered. I love seeing my students discovering that they can have fun whilst learning. The new standards that North Carolina (and the rest of the country) has adopted are based on students' reading comprehension and

informed decision making. With this in mind, the in-class portion of my lessons will require students to read about immigration and write about their own opinions. The unit will be split in four parts: The Language We Speak; The Relationship Between Language and Thought; How We Think About and Solve Problems; Life as an Immigrant. In addition to the classroom unit, students will complete a project about the life of an immigrant. This will be their major assessment for the entire curriculum. The project is an application of the material and information provided in the classroom lessons. As an introduction to this unit, I will give my students a brief activity that will get them thinking about language. It should offer a smooth transition into the first section of the unit.

This is the activity: I will give them a sentence that I have written in the “windings” font for Microsoft word or some emoticon¹⁷ infused sentence. The sentence might look something like this: ☞☞☞ ☞☞☞☞ ◆□ ●☞☞☞◆ ☆□◆☞☞ I will ask them to tell me what they think it is. I hypothesize that they will assume it is some sort of language- but then, when I ask them to read it; they might get a little frustrated. I hope to spark a discussion by asking, “Why can’t you read it?” I assume they’ll say that they don’t know what it means, of course I’ll ask them why and then, after telling them the alphabet is nothing but a list of symbols, I will ask them to say the sentence in “winding” language by giving them a chart that has each symbol attached with a list of phonemes. I will also give them the translation of each winding. I will make some sort of reference to the way in which we acquire our native language by hearing sounds put together and then learning how to speak it and lastly, writing the language. Then, (since they are more the expert than I) I will ask them about the process of learning a second language. Hopefully they will be able to tell me that we learn second languages by learning the pronunciation (phoneme) of each symbol, or letter, first then write the symbols together (morphemes) and finally, we are able to speak the new words.

The Language We Speak

This sub-unit will accomplish my first objective- to teach the basic structure of language. I will begin this section through student discovery by presenting students with an activity that will teach them about the basics of language. I will give a brief lecture about the universal nature of language- symbols, generativity¹⁸ and structure. These three universal basics are the reason we can learn different languages. First, I plan on presenting my students with two documents, one written in English the other in Spanish. Students will use a partner to discuss and identify the similarities between the two documents. Students who have had classes in Spanish might be able to read the document so I will ask them to ignore their ability to comprehend and just look at the symbols and structure. After a discussion about how the documents are similar (symbols and structure), we’ll discuss morphemes- the meaning behind the combined list of symbols- and how symbols and grammar regulate how and what we read. I’ll speak about learning second languages and we’ll talk about why sometimes immigrants of different countries have difficulty

understanding some idioms. For instance, in England if your car breaks down and you ask a native to check under the hood, s/he might look at you funny. In America engines are under the hood, in England it's the bonnet. We'll talk about generativity. This should be educational for me because I will ask students to tell me of any new words, or old words with new meanings they observe in pop-culture. This will transition into the second part of this section: language acquisition. I think it is important to mention that babies, up until the 7th month, make universal sounds and that you can hear when a baby is beginning the cognitive (and physical) understanding of the native house tongue. This, of course, seems to always warrant a discussion about raising children in a bilingual environment. I'll elaborate on the advantages and disadvantages to raising a child to be bilingual that are presented in our text book. Then, we will discuss immigrant households in which the parents may only speak their native language, but the children are bilingual. Our seminar leader invited members of Charlotte's Latin American Coalition to talk to us about their experiences as children of immigrants. This gave me wonderful insight into the life of some of my students, and I am thankful for their contributions and will use these stories to enrich my lesson about bilingual households. I would suggest that if you plan to teach this unit, you inquire about the obstacles children of immigrants face.¹⁹

The Relationship Between Language and Thought

The next sub-unit, The Relationship between Language and Thought, will aim to teach my second objective. Students will start by reading and comprehending, the fourteenth amendment and sections of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1986. What is this language they use? Why is it so dry? I will then ask students to write it in "teenager", a language that I am not entirely sure I understand myself. We will talk about how language can influence how we think about and what we think about. I will start this by posing this question: "What or who do you think of when I say, immigrant?" I believe most of my students will lay victim to the availability heuristic and use words and/or situations they've recently seen related to the word, immigrant (which will be great to reference to provide a preview for the upcoming sub-unit). Then I will ask my students to read two different documents surrounding the popular, "Drop the I-Word" campaign.²⁰ I will ask students to produce a short summary of each article and stating any issues they have with the documents surrounding the language used. How can the language we use be so persuasive? For homework, I will ask students to search for statements made about immigration during the presidential race of 2012 and identify any effects those statements might have had on the result of the election. Afterwards, I want them to tell me their thoughts on the use of language and any language they use or they have heard that might have affected others or themselves.

How We Think About and Solve Problems

The sub-unit, How We Think About and Solve Problems, will address my third objective which asks students to apply information they've previously learned. I think it's obvious

that many problems are because of language which is why I think the controversy over immigration reform in America will be a wonderful avenue for discussions about problem solving. To begin, I will ask students to identify various opinions on Immigration Policy that they previously read. Can the views be categorized into various theories and are those ideals representative of any one group? Why are our opinions affected by the groups we subscribe to? Language and thought are influenced and affected by cultural context. I will ask students to identify the last time a major wave of Immigration was a popular topic.²¹ Here I will talk about waves of immigration to the United States and the places where immigrants traditionally began their lives in America. Then we will go to the computer lab and generate our own maps using the all-too-cool website from the US Census Bureau, American Fact Finder.²² Students will begin to see the numbers and the locations of contemporary immigrant growth (essentially, the who, what and where of immigration). As students look into their data I will slightly nudge them to consider what areas of the country have been in the media lately concerning immigration? We will look at how different areas' populations change over time. They should start making connections between numbers and/or growth of immigrants and the level of concern amongst the populace. Then I will lecture on the nature of problems and the barriers to solving problems. For this, I will cover the following types of obstacles in problem solving: belief bias; belief perseverance; irrelevant information; functional fixedness; mental set; unnecessary constraints; overconfidence. I will integrate the topic of immigration and the data from our maps when discussing the availability heuristic and representative heuristic. I will reference language as well as immigration when discussing framing. Furthermore, I want students to identify how these obstacles to thinking apply to common misperceptions Americans make about immigrants.²³

For the second section of this sub-unit I want to cover the ways we solve problems. I will talk about the following methods of problem solving: algorithms; heuristics; sub goals; working backwards; analogies and changing representations. We will discuss these methods as they pertain to immigration- would any of them work? We'll then move to talk about what the government has done to address the issues of immigration reform by revisiting the readings from the INA 1956, and then look at the Immigration and Reform and Control Act of 1986 as well as the Consideration for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.²⁴ This is quite a bit of reading for one person, so I will choose selections from each proposal and split the class into different groups and ask each group to dissect either the IRCA or the DACA policies and report their findings to the class- in teen speak. We'll talk as a class about what each means and why there was a need for DACA- being, that IRCA is outdated and needs revision. I will then ask them to read an article by Marc R. Rosenblum,²⁵ that my seminar leader asked us to read, which discusses the current debate on Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Students will be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of a comprehensive reform and voice their own opinions why individual states are beginning to seek laws to govern immigration. What are the implications to state immigration legislature? Afterwards I will have students get together

and discuss what they would do to reform the current policies. In other words, they will write their own reform policy- in teen speak.

The Life of an Immigrant

The last sub-unit will focus on the psychological aspects of the immigrant experience. As I mentioned earlier, adolescents aren't quite cognitively complete, which is why I will focus on the adolescent immigrant. I want to do a little thing that I call- drawing connections. I believe my students will grasp concepts easier if I attach them to something they already understand. So a simple questionnaire (that happens to be a life-application of motivational theories): Why do you do what you do? Are you driven to achieve- what is it that you want to achieve? Do you like to hang out and be accepted by your peers? Has there ever been a situation in your life that made you leave your house in frustration? Have you ever completed a task because you knew at some point, you would receive some sort of reward? Have you ever listened to your gut instinct? Now, because I know all the answers to the previous questions will be yes, I will ask students if there would ever be a reason that would make them leave their school, home, parents and friends and travel alone to another country that they know very little about? Then I will tell them of *Enrique's Journey*. Of course, not every immigrant who comes to America, shares in this migratory journey, however, this is a powerful story. At this point, I will show them a short clip from the documentary, *El Tren de la Muerto*²⁶. I would also like to talk about the Lost Boys of Sudan, as our school works with that organization, to remind students that we have a diverse foreign-born population in America...not all are Latino. Afterwards, I will combine the discussion of motivational theories and the different types of stressors in life.

As we discuss the stressors in their own life, I will also begin to talk about human's need to belong and the stress that can ensue if a person feels ostracized. Imagine being new to a school, to a culture- what type of discomfort would that bring? Here I will talk about the biological response to stress, general adaptation syndrome. All year I tell my students not to stress, because stressing out only makes things worse. Your body gets all jammed and you're inner-systems believe that you are in danger so they begin acting out the fight or flight response. This means, your brain and immune system are being ignored and pumped full of "git-er-dun" hormones that make functioning normally near impossible. I'll remind my students of this, and then ask what if you had the added stress of not being able to communicate how you're feeling because no one speaks your language? Immigrant students have added pressure of being part of a new culture. How can the degree of receptivity alter an immigrant's experience? How can immigrants get the assistance they need? How can a society encourage mentally and physically healthy naturalized citizens? What type of integration style does the country have and are they receptive to immigrants? Since we are in Charlotte, N.C. we will focus on the organizations that help to facilitate new immigrants' introduction to the area. I will

specifically pull resources from the Latin American Coalition as well as the Crisis Assistance Ministry in Charlotte.

This is where I will teach the differences between assimilation, acculturation and integration. I'll have students listen carefully to the definition of each word, as I will later ask them to determine the likelihood of assimilation, acculturation and integration based on the country's receptivity of immigrants as well as the state and local atmosphere. The following are the definitions I'll use to explain methods of cultural adaptation:

Assimilation, the melting pot model, is the expectation is for the immigrant to fit into the existing schema of his/her immigrated country. The only problem with assimilation is the psychological detachment from his/her familiar culture in order to "be American". Many who oppose assimilation are in support of integration or, multiculturalism and believe that immigrants should have "...the opportunity to retain their basic cultural norms, values, traditions, and languages within a greater cultural framework".²⁷ Lastly, there is acculturation, which is like a marriage of the above. Essentially, a foreign-born citizen could feel like they truly belong to both cultures- a healthy support system on both sides.

I asked the question before, how can society make sure to gain upstanding naturalized citizens? What are the consequences to poor receptivity of a new immigrant? I hope to secure a guest speaker from the Latin American Coalition in Charlotte to educate my students on ways to create a supportive environment for new immigrants. My students are nice to outsiders, but they don't go the extra step to show them around, to ask questions...to truly welcome- there's that cognitive underdevelopment again. They need someone to reveal the simple truth that they would appreciate the same courtesy. They would want someone just to say, hey, let me show you around. Perhaps they don't know what is socially acceptable and err on the side of caution. Efforts to remain politically correct can undermine an opportunity for understanding and compassion. I would never ask any one of my students about their citizen status, EVER, but sometimes, I don't know if it's ok for me to even ask about their family, how long they've been in NC...simple questions that I would have no qualm asking someone who is native-born. If I feel this way, I am unsure that my students' desire to reach out to their neighbor is even on their radar. This is why I think someone from the LAC would behoove everyone in the room. The LAC does a wonderful job of advocating for immigrants through education and creating a safe place of acceptance- which is crucial for healthy social development. A lack of a support, acceptance and caring environment, regardless of a person's place of origin, can result in poor social development.

In addition to the stress of adapting to a new environment, immigrant teens are also balancing their life at home. What added stress does one feel if there are any unauthorized persons living in his/her household? Joanna Dreby²⁸ writes in an article posted on Center for American Progress, "A total of 16.6 million people currently live in mixed-status families-with at least one unauthorized immigrant-and a third of U.S. citizen children of immigrants live in mixed-status families". The odds of knowing someone

without legal documentation is high and the constant dread of the possibility of deportation or broken homes could have adverse effects on a teen trying to be a part of the culture. Jose Vargas wrote an article in the NY Times about his experience living as an undocumented youth, he said, “But I am still an undocumented immigrant. And that means living a different kind of reality. It means going about my day in fear of being found out. It means rarely trusting people, even those closest to me, with who I really am”.²⁹ This is the inspiration behind the student project, My Life as an Immigrant.

Student Project: Life as an Immigrant

This project requires students to incorporate the lessons learned throughout the duration of the CU. They will apply these lessons to a simulation of the immigrant naturalization process. Students’ final objective will be to become a naturalized citizen of the country, ClassAnd (a play on Classroom Andrews). The tasks leading up to citizenship mimic those of the naturalization process of America. In order to gain citizenship to the classroom students will have to complete individual and group tasks. The nature of the project is student-discovery and students will benefit from the group interaction. Prior to the beginning of the unit, I’ll have students select their own groups consisting of no more than four members. This group will be their “immigrant family”; they will need to create a family surname. From this information, I will prepare student permanent residence cards including names, identification numbers, the expiration date and monthly salary. After groups receive their green cards, they can begin the naturalization process. This process will consist of various tasks they will have to complete in order to gain citizenship (and a passing grade). The following is how I will present the tasks to my students: Individual Tasks-

- Permanent Residence- Perfect attendance for a two week period starting at the beginning of unit.
- Prove a good Moral Standing (no tardy marks or failing marks)
- Pass Naturalization Test
- Complete Form N-001 Application for Naturalization to ClassAnd

Some of the tasks will require additional worksheets that I will make available online.

The Family (Group) Tasks-

- Interview two immigrants- include transcript of interview
- Have Family’s Migrant Stories: Fill out Migration Story Worksheet
- Complete the USCIS Worksheet
- Choose a documentary about Immigration to view and write a review.
- Attend the Poverty Simulation
- Choose a place to live and complete the following: monthly budget, school enrollment

- Perform an online search to provide assistance to new immigrants (local) and create an annotated bibliography of each website (3 sites = min requirement).

After students have completed the aforementioned tasks, they will each take part in a Naturalization Interview with me. If they are granted citizenship they will take the Oath of Allegiance to ClassAnd.

Notes

Star Wars; Episode V- The Empire Strikes Back. Dir. Irvin Kershner. Perf. Frank Oz, Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford,. Twentieth Century Fox Film (Leigh Brackett, Kasdan and Lucas) Corporation, 1980. Film. Frank Oz provided Yoda's voice and puppetry for Episode V

2) Applied Research Center; A public education campaign to bring awareness to the adverse effects of using the term illegal to describe a human being, with the hopes to eradicate the i-word completely.

3) The skills should develop naturally over the duration of the Curriculum Unit.

4) Students' understanding of cultural adaptation will require them to see the differences between assimilation, acculturation and integration.

5) Motivational theories include: incentives, drive-reduction and the need to belong.

6) The data was taken from our School Improvement Plan.

Choudhury, Suparna , Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, and Tony Charman. "Social Cognitive Development During Adolescence." *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 1.3 (2006): 164-174. *SCAN*. Web. 4 Nov. 2012.

8) Students' backyard refers to their close proximity with Charlotte, North Carolina.

9) Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh

Singer, Audrey . "The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways." Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy February (2004): 1-36. Print.

"Charlotte (city) QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau." *State and County QuickFacts*. N.p., n.d. Web. 5 Dec. 2012. <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/371200.0.html>

12) I actually chose one of the easier bits from the INA.

Dane, Bob. "Yet Another Republican Debate Fails to Fully Address Immigration Chaos." *Home | Federation for American Immigration Reform*. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.fairus.org/opinion/yet-another-republican-debate-fails-to-fully-address-immigration-chaos>>.

14) I am referring to the backlash of the following states' legislation: Arizona SB 1070; Alabama HB 56; Georgia HB 87

Shahshahani, Azadeh . "HB 87 Negatively Impacts Georgia Economy and Reputation." *Huff Post Politics*. Huffington Post, 21 May 2012. Web. 24 Nov. 2012. <www.huffingtonpost.com/azadeh-shahshahani/georgia-immigration-policy_b_1528987.html>.

Bump, Micah . "Farmingville . Overview: Wave of Immigration | POV | PBS." *PBS: Public Broadcasting Service*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012. <http://www.pbs.org/pov/farmingville/special_wave.php>

17) I find that many of my students use emoticons to communicate and if I use those, I might accidentally say something, which I shouldn't, without knowing.

18) Generativity means the ability to combine many words together to form new meanings.

19) You can speak with immigrants to gain an understanding or use one of the resources presented in my annotated bibliography.

Novoa, Mónica . "The Associated Press' Developing, Conflicted Policy on the I-Word." *Colorlines.com*. Drop the I Word, 23 Oct. 2012. Web. 8 Nov. 2012

21) Many of my students have already had U.S. History which discusses the influx of immigrants in the early 19th century.

"American FactFinder." American FactFinder. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Nov. 2012. <<http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/ /pages/index.xhtml>>

"Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America | Pew Hispanic Center." *Pew Hispanic Center - Chronicling Latinos Diverse Experiences in a Changing America*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2009/12/11/between-two-worlds-how-young-latinos-come-of-age-in-america/>>.

"USCIS - Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Process." *USCIS Home Page*. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Nov. 2012.
<<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnnextoid=f2ef2f19470f7310VgnVCM1000>>

Rosenblum, Marc. "US Immigration Policy Since 9/11: Understanding the Stalemate over Comprehensive Immigration Reform." *migrationpolicy.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Nov. 2011. <www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/RMSG-post-9-11policy.pdf>.

El tren de la muerte. Dir. Juan Orol. Perf. Julio Alemán, Patricia Rivera . Videomax, 2006. Film.

" Psychology of Immigration 101." *American Psychological Association (APA)*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.apa.org/topics/immigration/immigration-psychology.aspx>>.

Dreby, Joanna . "How Today's Immigration Enforcement Policies Impact Children, Families, and Communities | Center for American Progress." *Center for American Progress*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012.
<<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/report/2012/08/20/27082/how-todays-immigration-enforcement-policies-impact-children-families-and-communities/>>.

Vargas, Jose Antonio. "My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant - NYTimes.com." *The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/magazine/my-life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant.html?pagewanted=all>>.

Resources

Classroom List of Materials

All you need is access to a computer and an open mind!

Excellent Resources for you and your students:

Applied Research Center. "Drop the I-Word. Don't call people "illegals." Sign the Pledge.." *COLORLINES*. Applied Research Center, n.d. Web. 6 Nov. 2012. <<http://colorlines.com/droptheiword/>>.

- *This website offers information about the movement to drop the I-Word.*

"Interactive Map Showing Immigration Data Since 1880 - Interactive Graphic - NYTimes.com." *The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/03/10/us/20090310-immigration-explorer.html>>.

-*New York Time's Interactive Map...This map is an easy alternative to student-created maps if you are running short on time.*

"Language in the Immigration Debate | Center for Immigration Studies." *Center for Immigration Studies | Low-immigration, Pro-immigrant*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 Nov. 2012. <<http://cis.org/language-in-the-immigration-debate-ap-pushes-back>>.

-*This article discusses the debate surrounding the movement to drop the use of the word illegal when addressing persons of undocumented status. This article uses language that dismisses the campaign for language change surrounding immigration.*

"National Archives and Records Administration." *National Archives and Records Administration*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.archives.gov/>>.

-*This website provides United States recorded documents. You can find different records here; this is an easy site to navigate. This is the location that I will send my students to read about the 14th amendment.*

Nazario, Sonia. *Enrique's journey*. New York: Random House, 2006. Print.

-*This IS the book. If you haven't read it...you should. This book is a valuable source of insight into the life of many young immigrants.*

Excellent Resources for You

Bump, Micah . "Farmingville . Overview: Wave of Immigration | POV | PBS." *PBS: Public Broadcasting Service*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012. <http://www.pbs.org/pov/farmingville/special_wave.php>

-*This site is a tool kit for immigration. The site is the ancillary source for the documentary based on immigration in Farmville, NY, where two immigrant workers were killed. The site is designed with intent to inform and spread awareness of immigrant life.*

"Crisis Assistance Ministry." *Crisis Assistance Ministry*. N.p., n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.crisisassistance.org/>>.

-The Crisis Assistance Ministry is a local non-profit advocacy organization in Charlotte, N. C.

" Education." *Energy of a Nation Home*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Nov. 2012. <http://www.energyofanation.org/education_immigration.html>

-This website is an excellent source for educational tools for advocacy.

"Enrique's Journey - The Book by Sonia Nazario." *Enrique's Journey - The Book by Sonia Nazario*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Nov. 2012. <<http://enriquesjourney.com/about.html>>

-This is not the book, but the website that accompanies the book. Here you will find updates, call to action and valuable resources for utilizing and teaching immigration with "Enrique's Journey".

"Immigration Workshop." *Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE)*. N.p., n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.energyofanation.org/education_immigration.html>>.

-This website has a list of documentaries on immigration.