A Case Study of Six Immigrant Instructors Teaching Their
Native Languages and Cultures to Military Students

by

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A Case Study of Six Immigrant Instructors Teaching Their

Native Languages and Cultures to Military Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study was to examine the experiences of six civilian immigrant instructors teaching their native language and culture to military students. The participants were recent immigrants who spent 5 years or less in the United States.

Previous research on foreign language education focused on learners’ characteristics. The literature has a wealth of quantitative studies examining students’ scores and efficiency of language and culture programs. The dearth of qualitative research about the experience of instructors was a motivation for this research.

This qualitative case study also focused on describing the experiences of these instructors and how they used their native knowledge of language and culture to teach their students. The research questions that guided this case study explored the different instructional strategies used by the instructors and how their content knowledge influenced their teaching.

The findings indicated lack of professional development led the instructors to fall back on their own experiences as former students. That consequently translated into a preference for a teacher-centered style of instruction. There was evidence the instructors lacked knowledge of the principles of adult learning and Knowles’ assumptions of Andragogy. The instructors did not see that their students were capable of self-directed learning. They did not understand the relevance of the instruction to the mission of their military students. Therefore, they were unable to involve their students in the learning process.

The overall recommendation of this study is to provide culturally appropriate pedagogical training for immigrant instructors on Andragogy and second language
acquisition theories. The findings of the study reflected the need for intercultural communication training prior to language and culture classes—for instructors and students—to facilitate a more effective learning environment.
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Apollo Roshdy Alexander for inspiring me to strive to excel in all that I do;

Ryan Shaheen Alexander for giving me a daily reason to smile.
CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

This chapter is composed of nine sections: the background information, which prompted the study, the description of the case study, the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the limitations and delimitations of the study, the role of the researcher, and the definitions of the terms used in the study.

Background

President Barack Obama, in an address to the Veterans of Foreign Wars on August 17, 2009 stated:

So, even as we modernize our conventional forces, we’re investing in the capabilities that will reorient our force to the future. . . . And across the force, we are investing in new skills and specialties, because in the 21st century, military strength will be measured not only by the weapons our troops carry, but by the languages they speak and the cultures that they understand. (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2009, para. 35, 36)

Our President’s statement reflects our commitment as a nation to grow our foreign language and culture capabilities. For instance, the budget for foreign languages and cultures training for military personnel is commonly described in government parlance as “fenced”: It remains behind that highly guarded fence where budget cutting scissors do not reach. This commitment includes Special Operations Forces (SOF) as well. The U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM, 2009) manual 350-8 articulated a vision for SOF to become “culturally attuned warriors with basic through native language and culture capabilities able to blend into the operational environment and build relations
across diverse cultures” (p. 2). This policy direction concerns the reinvention of U.S. forces and employment of new strategies to combat low-intensity regional threats around the globe. Put another way, we are moving toward the vision of striving to replicate the Lawrence of Arabia warrior. Our enemies may have lower means, but when they use the populace as a shield to hide and we do not have the cultural and language knowledge to distinguish insurgents from other people, we lose.

The mass homicides created by the terrorist acts on September 11, 2001 marked the beginning of our enemies employing irregular warfare (IW). The tactics of IW required a national response rooted in the development of language, and regional and culture capabilities as a prime U.S. security requirement. This concept was explained in detail in the U.S. counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2009). “Insurgency, terrorism and guerrilla war are the manifestations of weak actors choosing asymmetric strategies against strong actors” (p. I-1). Put another way, the Al Qaida and Taliban leadership realized that they could not defeat the U.S. military forces in a conventional or traditional manner and so they resorted to an asymmetric form of combat—irregular warfare.

Irregular warfare is a different, but not necessarily lesser, type of conflict. Irregular warfare has been explained as low-intensity conflict, insurgency or “small war.” The U.S. Air Force (2007) doctrine document, which was published by order of the Secretary of the Air Force on August 1, 2007, defines IW as:

A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities in order to
erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will. Rather than seeking to impose societal change from the outside by a decisive defeat of the population’s military and security forces, proponents of IW seek a change from within by delegitimizing the institutions and ideologies of the targeted state, and eventually winning the support of the population (or at least acquiescence) for their cause.

(pp. 1-2)

The nature of IW, as explained by the doctrine, presents a significant new challenge to U.S. military personnel on foreign soil. Irregular warfare requires the military to develop an understanding of the operating environment, including the human terrain. Learning foreign language and understanding culture will provide U.S. forces with enhanced situational awareness. It will prepare them to handle the unique characteristics of IW and position them for strategic success.

The U.S. Air Force (2007) document explains,

The protracted approach that adversaries may use in IW requires a long-term strategy for victory. Winning a protracted war is all about winning the struggle of ideas, undermining the legitimacy of a competing ideology, addressing valid grievances, reducing an enemy’s influence, and depriving the enemy of the support of the people. (p. 48)

To rephrase the counterinsurgency doctrine explanation, let me use this common expression: to win IW, military members need to win the hearts and minds of the foreign population. Students need to learn the culture, as explained in the U.S. Air Force (2007) doctrine:
Traditional warfare seeks a change in the policies and practices, if not in the outright existence of a government by coercing key government leaders or defeating them. IW, conversely, seeks to undermine a group, government or ideology by influencing the population, which is often the center of gravity. (p. 3)

Lieutenant General Robert Caslen repeated the same idea in his remarks given on April 2009. He stated, “Our best commanders were those who were culturally astute—they were the ones who could identify the network and the fabric of society, all the different elements of it, whether it is economic, political, tribal . . .” (U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, 2010, p. 24).

The implication of facing a new type of war was also explained in the U.S. Navy, Chief of Naval Operations (2008) document, *Language Skills, Regional Expertise and Culture Awareness Strategy*, commonly referred to as LREC: “As the lessons of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom attest, communication and comprehension are enabled through awareness of foreign cultures, regional expertise, and skill in foreign languages” (p. 1).

Using interpreters was the first solution and it was deemed unsuccessful. This idea was articulated in several national documents. Additionally, the over-reliance of the use on interpreters has been deemed by the military to be detrimental to the mission of Special Operations Forces (SOF) in the theater of operations. The reference manual of the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL, 2004) outlined some of the inherent Operations Security (OPSEC) concerns that occur when using interpreters:

If the interpreter is a local national, it is safe to assume that his first loyalty is to the host nation (HN) or subgroup and not to the U.S. military. The security
implications are clear. The service member must use caution when explaining concepts to interpreters. Additionally, some interpreters, for political or personal reasons, may have ulterior motives or a hidden agenda when they apply for the interpreting job. (p. 4)

Direct communication was considered the key to achieve strategic success. The need to grow foreign language and regional expertise capabilities to support war fighters became the solution. This idea was articulated in several national policy documents, such as the U.S. Air Force (2007) doctrine document 2-3, USSOCOM’s (2009) Manual 350-8, the reference manual for CALL (2004), and the language roadmap (U.S. Department of Defense, 2006). The U.S. Air Force (2007) doctrine document confirmed:

Interpersonal relationships built through sustained interaction with the populace and partner operations with indigenous forces are critical to understanding the nature of the conflict and ultimate victory in the IW. Developing these relationships can effectively strip the insurgency of its most valuable asset—the support of the population. The inability to distinguish insurgents from the general population allows adversaries the freedom to organize and attack while creating a dilemma for counterinsurgency forces trying to identify insurgents. (p. 20)

In other words, establishing effective working relationships in the field through sustained direct interpersonal relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds is essential to achieve strategic success of military missions.
The purpose of teaching the students is for them to learn how to sustain a direct interpersonal relationship with the foreign populace using their acquired foreign language and culture knowledge.

Now that we learned about the importance of teaching language and culture, the discussion moved to covering the steps of beginning the training. Learning languages and cultures is a strategic imperative for winning the war; however, we cannot expect that every military member will learn a foreign language and culture in his or her spare time. The responsibility of seeking training does not fall on the military member; military commands rely on Command Language Programs (CLP) to develop language and culture capabilities to meet proficiency requirements. In order to ensure military personnel have adequate language and culture training to deploy in the field and to conduct missions, there is an integrated process to identify, analyze, assess, and forecast the correct language and regional culture expertise 5 years in advance. In other words, we could not let each military member choose the foreign language that interests him, as members deploy to several areas of the world. Every 2 years, commands validate the effectiveness of the CLP in training an adequate number of linguists.

In an effort to standardize the process teaching of language and culture to military students, the success of the language and culture schools is measured by the scores that students obtain on two language proficiency tests: the Defense Language Proficiency Tests (DLPT) and the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). Policymakers primarily define students’ success by scores performed on language proficiency tests. In fact, when the different language programs compete for the language program of the year award, the
main criteria is whether the student achieved or exceeded their OPI expected level of success.

The Language and Regional Expertise planning directive (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2013), updated on November 27, 2010, explains the importance further:

Language skill levels are assessed through an authorized language examination via the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) and/or Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). These skills are classified as proficiency levels 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. These skill levels provide descriptive statements for a variety of descriptive criteria, and illustrate situations in which a person may function effectively.

(Enclosure D, p. 9)

The scores students obtain on proficiency tests do not necessarily represent what they learned from their first interaction with their immigrant instructors. Since such military programs are still maturing and are in demand, there is a need to understand the learning environment in the foreign language classroom. Studying the instructors’ experiences is an important step in understanding this learning environment (Goldstein, 1993).

A recent study conducted by Surface, Ward and Associates in August 2009 sheds light on the central role that instructors play. This pioneering study highlighted the predictive relationship between students’ evaluations of their instructors and the students’ Oral Proficiency Interviews scores. The study was conducted in a large military installation. The data included a large sample of 553 students from four Initial Acquisition Training (IAT) courses. The technical report summarized the findings of this quantitative study. “These findings indicated that as instructor evaluations increased,
students’ Speaking and Participatory Listening proficiency ratings increased” (Surface, Ward and Associates, 2009, p. 3).

Surface, Ward and Associates’ (2009) important study was the first to empirically document that there was a relationship between instructional behaviors in the classroom and the Speaking and Participatory Listening on the OPI in a military setting. Its findings were used to justify conducting instructor evaluations throughout the course of IAT in an effort to provide feedback to foreign language program administrators. There was no subsequent qualitative study to document how the instructors feel about being frequently (three times in 12 weeks) evaluated by their students.

Surface, Ward and Associates’ (2009) study demonstrated that instructor evaluations at the 25% time point in the course still had a measurable impact on the level of Speaking and Participatory Listening results achieved by students. However, there was no subsequent study to determine the influence of giving feedback to instructors throughout the course on the learning environment and the relationship between instructors and their students.

Due to this study, the utility of evaluations as a managerial quality control tool became firmly established. However, what were the unintended consequences of administering these evaluations? Did it cause administrators to fire instructors instead of training them? Did it cause the instructors to feel that they were professionally evaluated on how successful their students were achieving passing scores on standard tests? Did they begin “teaching to the test” as a result of these evaluations?

Additionally, students learn that their measure of success is scoring well on a test, since they receive foreign language incentive pay if they score well. With no other
incentive to learn anything else, what happens in the classrooms? Did the students and the instructors concentrate on preparing for these tests? Did instructors ignore teaching culture since it was not on the test?

In a way, as explained in the literature, the classroom provides a protective learning environment where students acquire their first knowledge about the culture (Damen, 1987). The interaction between students and their immigrant instructors is their first step to achieve their mission by learning how to directly interact with representatives of their cultural backgrounds.

It took years of using interpreters for the U.S. military to study and learn before it was realized that interpreters were not the optimal solution and that direct communication was the ideal one. Now, we have to focus on studying the learning environment in the language and culture programs and understand how the instructors teach students to communicate directly with the foreign populace. There is a lack of research documenting the experience of these immigrant instructors as they teach their native languages to military students. We do not know if immigrant instructors gain the trust of their students simply by virtue of being their instructors. We do not know if students wonder whether the loyalty of their instructors may lay with their countries of origin. We do not know if this potential lack of trust might affect the learning environment. The study describes the experiences of immigrant instructors and provides insight regarding these questions from the perspective of the instructors.

Civilian instructors teaching their native language and culture to military students experience a unique set of circumstances. Surface, Ward and Associates (2009) from 2008 until 2010 conducted several quantitative studies providing training analysis,
creating an instructor feedback tool and studying instructional effectiveness. However, there is a lack of qualitative research exploring the experiences of these instructors. It is critical to understand these experiences to strengthen the selection process for instructors and the continued development of the instructors’ teaching skills.

Significance of This Study

The significance of this study relies on two points: first, it enriches the body of knowledge in the field of foreign language education, and second, it adds to our understanding of the experiences of immigrant instructors working in positions dealing with military personnel who will be engaged in IW. The educational research is rich with information about teaching second language and culture. However, there is limited research on teaching a foreign language and culture (H. D. Brown, 2007). The circumstances are quite different for an ESL (English as a Second Language) instructor teaching English to an immigrant who has a stake in learning the language of his new country. The student steps out of the classroom and practices English to perform necessary daily communications when picking up dry-cleaning or shopping at the grocery store. Everyone the student interacts with becomes a conversational partner. A foreign language student may have a harder time finding conversational partners. In addition to the availability of resources, the ESL student wants to learn the language in order to fit into a new society and to gain social mobility. The foreign language and culture instructor sometimes faces students who lost their fellow military members in combat and may harbor ill feelings toward those who speak the language.

There is a plethora of research on second language acquisition and teaching foreign languages for traveling and pleasure. Research on second language acquisition
has led to the creation of language teaching software such as Rosetta Stone and Pimsleur. However, none of these studies addressed teaching languages and cultures to students who will deploy and use their knowledge to fight wars. The lack of research on teaching foreign language and culture has caused a phenomenon of grouping it under the same category as second language acquisition. H. D. Brown (2007) explained there are fewer resources available for foreign language instructors. Yet, the field of foreign language education is typically combined with the field of second language acquisition and experts in teaching English as a second language acquisition may claim expertise in foreign language acquisition. Research on civilian instructors teaching foreign languages and cultures to military students may further inform the field of foreign language and culture teaching.

The study may be of interest to foreign language instructors who might be facing similar circumstances and conditions of employment as the participants. It describes the experiences of these immigrant instructors in class, which other foreign language instructors may relate to it.

Additionally, there is limited research that documents the experiences of immigrants in the workplace setting. There is even less research documenting the experiences of these immigrants serving the national government interest by preparing military personnel to fight IW. The literature supports a growing need for training foreign language instructors in how to teach language and culture. Understanding the experiences of these instructors may inform decision makers how to better prepare immigrants to be successful in their new role as instructors.
**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this case study was to examine the experiences of six civilian immigrant instructors teaching their native language and culture to military students using a case study design. This case study took an in-depth look at the perception of the instructors’ experiences on the foreign language and culture training for military students. The focus of the case study was to describe the experiences of these instructors and how they used their regional cultural and language knowledge to teach. Most novice instructors use trial and error (Doyle, 2011). This study is about the experiences of these instructors using trial and error in their new roles. In other words, the instructors have been asked to teach language and culture to their students who are from a different culture background. They had no training on how to teach but were expected to be able to teach based on their native knowledge of the culture and language. Additionally, the fact that the instructors came from a different cultural background than their students may affect their instructional behaviors, as well as their expectations about the power structure in class, students’ level of class participation, and the students’ preferred learning approaches.

**Research Questions**

In order to understand the teaching experiences of civilian instructors in the foreign language program, two research questions guided this study:

**R1:** What were the instructional strategies used by immigrant instructors to teach their native languages and cultures to military students?

**R2:** How did the content knowledge and work experiences of the immigrant instructors influence their teaching with military students?
**Epistemology**

This study employed a social constructivist theoretical perspective. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) explain social constructivism as a process of constructing meaning: It is how people make sense of their experience. I interpret this perspective to mean that the knowledge is always in the process of construction or in a state of becoming. Constructivism finds its roots in the early work of Piaget and Campbell (1977). They asserted that learning takes place with an active construction of meaning. This means that when we encounter an event, a situation that presents a conflict causes a state of disequilibrium. We can either attempt to assimilate into our current repertoire of knowledge or we can accommodate that new information by adapting it to our existing knowledge system. Similarly, Kelly (1955/1991) indicated that we construct patterns which we create in order to help us absorb new experiences into our old patterns or adjust an old pattern to match a new one. Now, we move to a description of the learning environment setting of the research. The following information presents a description of the case study site where all the participants work.

**Description of Case Study Site**

The site is a foreign language and culture program that teaches language and culture to military students in Southern California. To protect the identities of the participants, I will only refer to the site as the Military Language School. It is one of several language and culture programs around the country. The school is in charge of teaching 13 languages, with an average of four to six students per class. The instructors have 6 hours of contact daily with the students. The instructors are required to assign 2 hours of daily homework. The setting is very intense due to the significant daily contact
hours between instructors and students. The training is mandatory and the students do not voluntarily enroll in the course. The training has to be completed prior to deployment.

Students have to take foreign language background surveys prior to their placement in language classes in order to determine their prior foreign language knowledge. Then they have to take the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) test in order to determine their foreign language aptitude. Students have no choice in the selection of the language of study. The three criteria that control the assignment of languages are the language background survey, the scores on the DLAB, and the area where they will eventually deploy. The fact that the students did not volunteer to learn and did not choose the language might affect the level of students’ motivation and the learning environment. It could be negative, as they might resent studying a language if they do not like or care for the culture associated with it. However, it could be positive, as the students might be mission-oriented and feel that it is their duty to study. There are documents provided to the administrators in order to facilitate the management of the program: Situation Report (SITREP), Weekly Progress Reports, and third-party evaluation forms. The class’s leader has to write a SITREP and submit it to the administrators weekly. The instructors write Weekly Progress Reports to update the administrators on the students. The school also hired a third party evaluator to administrator evaluations throughout the course of instruction.

I studied the experience of civilian instructors teaching language and culture to military students. The *USSOCOM Manual 350-8* (USSOCOM, 2009) is the document that provides the following rules for the languages and cultures programs. These
instructors are civilian contractors hired for 12 weeks, which is the duration of classes. The instructors are required to speak the target language 100% of the time. They are required to have an advanced level of proficiency in the language being taught and an intermediate level of proficiency in English. Sometimes, due to the limited availability of local instructors teaching a specific language, especially for the less commonly taught languages, the English proficiency requirement is waived as stipulated in the USSOCOM Manual 350-8. When these exceptions are made, instructors with limited and beginner levels of proficiency in English may have difficulty interacting with students. They teach their native languages and cultures to students who are likely going to deploy to their countries of origin. Several instructors have extended family members still living in the countries where their students will deploy.

The government does not provide these instructors with a special training that prepares them to teach military students as it is against government policy to provide training to contractors. Instructors are not required to have prior experience teaching military students and, in many cases, teaching their students is their first interaction with American uniformed personnel. The instructors are not hired directly by the government. They are hired by a civilian company commonly referred to as the “vendor” who has a contract with the government to provide them with instructors. The vendor/civilian company does not provide the instructors with a specific military curriculum to teach students. The instructors’ performance is constantly monitored and evaluated by the government and the vendor or civilian company for whom they work. Additionally, their students evaluate their performance three times within 3 months through a third party evaluator. The intent of these multiple evaluation forms is to flag low-performing
instructors and report them to the vendor/civilian company for replacement, as stated on
the evaluations. In addition to the fact that the government does not authorize the training
of civilian contractors, since the language assignments change, the vendor/civilian
company has no incentive in investing to train its temporary teaching staff. Furthermore,
the government does not interfere in the hiring process; the vendor/civilian company
might opt to replace instructors who are considered low-performing instead of training
them, which is more costly.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is my choosing to not focus on any managerial
performance tools such as students’ weekly reports, SITREPs, or third party evaluation
forms. These reports are based on the surveys administered three times during training
events. These tools are intended to have the students reflect on their experiences and
evaluate and rate the performance of their instructors. It might contribute to the
experience of students and instructors in subsequent classes. However, I was only
interested in the instructors and their perception of their experience. Therefore, the study
presented the perspectives of the interviewees and their experience teaching military
students, and it did not provide the opinions of administrators or the evaluations of the
students.

I am a female Arab American and Muslim who interviewed three male instructors
with a similar cultural background. I was concerned that this gender difference would
pose an unintended cultural power play that could possibly inhibit them. This limitation
turned out to be a personal concern. However, the way the male instructors related to me
proved that it was not a valid concern. The openness that I experienced with the three male participants confirmed that my concern was based only on my own perception.

The unavoidable limitation was the fact that I conducted interviews in English, and the immigrant instructors might not be fully expressive in English, which is their second language. Less proficient speakers tend to feel communicatively restricted (Bijvoet, 2002; Hyltenstam, 1988, Preston, 1996). Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002) found “learners’ weak knowledge of connotation and stylistic word causes ‘Lexical Handicap’ which keeps L.2 users away from emotional topics” (p. 271). I managed to ask for clarification and examples when needed. I also allowed the participants who spoke Arabic/my native language to ask me for the word in Arabic. Then, I noted the translation in English in the interview notes.

**Delimitation of the Study**

A delimitation of this study is that I focused on the instructors working in one school location. That decision guaranteed all instructors had the same working conditions. Additionally, they faced the same type of learner profile, meaning that students shared the same special characteristics, such as motivation level and the tendency to be a kinetic learner.

**Role of the Researcher**

In August 1996, I immigrated to the United States of America. My new home was Sierra Vista, Arizona. To move from my native international city of Cairo, Egypt to a small town like Sierra Vista was a cultural shock. I told my friends that I was born in Egypt, but Sierra Vista was my first desert experience. Four months later, a friend heard about a job opening on the south campus of the University of Arizona. I went for the job
interview. The position was for an Arabic instructor. I was formerly trained to work as a journalist, and all my professional experience was in journalism. I went for the interview to practice going for interviews. I did not expect to be offered the job, since I did not have any teaching experience or teaching credentials. However, I was offered the job. I was in the right place, and the director thought of me as the right person. I could not believe that I got a job offer, and the program waived all educational and prior experience requirements to hire me.

I hesitated. I felt accepting a teaching job without any prior training in education was unethical. The hourly rate was significant, and my husband at the time convinced me to accept it due to our financial hardship. I found a compromise. I accepted the position to teach but only on a part-time basis, which meant that I would only teach 2 hours per day rather than the 6 hours per day, just to try and see if I could be an instructor.

Without any prior training, I did a lot of improvising. My whole teaching style was trial and error. My co-teacher did not offer any help. At the end of the class, the students gave me favorable evaluations. All the students agreed that they learned more in the 2 hours than the rest of their 6 hours. One student said that I had a “knack” for teaching. I remember not understanding the word and running home to find a dictionary to look up that strange word knack. The language program offered me a full-time position. I accepted the position, which came with nearly free tuition for classes. I decided to take education classes. At $25 a semester, taking classes was affordable, and I wanted to hone that “knack” with knowledge. In my first education class, I had to translate 300 hundred words into Arabic in order to understand one book on teaching methods.
I will never forget my humble beginning as a foreign language instructor and often share with novice instructors that I started just like them. I share stories of how I attended my first day of class and asked the students for an empty page instead of a blank page.

Serendipity gave me my career. However, I found out later through my experience in other language programs that the hiring of instructors without teaching qualifications is a common practice. In many cases, the only requirement is to be a local native speaker of the requested language.

My interest in the experiences of immigrant instructors teaching military students started years ago with the fascination of my own story. I kept a teaching diary to document my own experiences and a diary to document how I constructed my American-based identity. For me, teaching military students added a pressure to assimilate and become thoroughly American in order to be accepted by my students. Yet, I could not be estranged from my native language and culture and still teach it. I had to find a delicate balance and construct my new American-based identity. In every class, I taught and prepared my students for deployment. They taught and prepared me to live in my new country. In each class I taught, I felt that I pledged allegiance to my country. My naturalization process did not end with my naturalization ceremony; it began with that ceremony.

Sometimes one or more of my students would question my national loyalty, and it floated uncomfortably in the room until I addressed it. During my job interview in 2002, I was asked how I felt about Bin Laden. I answered jokingly that I was indebted to my uncle who provided me with job security for life. I was told later that the interviewers liked my attitude and knew that I would be able to handle the students.
I am sharing my stories to explain my interest in learning the story of every immigrant instructor who teaches military students. I believe that every instructor has a story to tell. This study is centered on the experiences of immigrant instructors teaching their native languages and cultures to military students.

My experience differs from the other instructors, as I taught language and culture for military students from 1996 to 2008. Then, I moved to an administrative job as the academic coordinator from June 2008 until March 2013. Most instructors continue teaching their native languages and move from one temporary position to the next job. As a single mother, I had to maintain a full-time job in order to provide healthcare benefits for my children. I found myself in a middle management position. It did not carry any direct influence over students and instructors. However, I had to learn about leadership and, thus, I joined my current doctoral program in educational leadership. I had a supervisor who believed in my potential and introduced me to the director of the program. I am invested in this case study because I want to gain greater understanding of the experience of instructors at the language school, as I want to pursue other similar future research. I know that each instructor’s experience will be unique.

My personal bias is the fact that I have worked with students in this command for the last 9 years. I have great esteem for them as they do for me. I was given a nickname “Mother Rasha” engraved on a commemorative plaque. I received substantial financial support toward my doctoral degree from my command, and I am grateful. However, my loyalty to the command is counterbalanced by the fact that I can relate to the instructors as I shared the similar circumstances of employment and the same cultural background as these instructors. I was a civilian instructor and an immigrant who had to explain to my
students on my first day of classes the reasons why I immigrated to the United States of America in 1996. I faced challenges due to intercultural communication. Some challenges I was not able to resolve and others I was able to overcome and build lasting interpersonal relationship with students. I kept a teaching diary and intend to write an ethnographic study, which will trace my road to naturalization through my professional and personal life after my graduation.

Given my long history of employment with the command, I took special precaution to remain unbiased and fair during the case study. I used two techniques. First, I used the member check technique where I asked the instructors to verify that my interpretation was accurate. I found through my initial discussions with instructors during the recruiting phase that they were more comfortable with the idea that they would receive the transcripts and would get a chance to read my interpretation. I requested a transfer in March 2013. I was moved in April 2013 to a different position in an education center of another command. I am now relieved that I am no longer the academic coordinator. Although my position did not hold any power over the instructors, I was still viewed as the administrator, and I was not confident that the instructors would feel comfortable telling me their stories. In my opinion, my prior position had a perceived power. My view was no longer as an administrator who felt responsible for the success of the program as an integral part of it. I had successfully removed my “administrator hat” after I moved to a different command.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms were used in this study:
Language Background Survey: The program administers a language background survey to students before the start date of the program. The survey gives formative data on learners’ characteristics and their prior language experience.

SITREP: A Situation Report (SITREP) is a short narrative about the progress of instruction. A SITREP gives details on the weekly instruction, the plan of instruction for the following 7 days, absence, and physical training. The class leader (a senior student) produces this weekly memorandum. It is due every Monday morning at 7:00 and is sent to the academic coordinator who summarizes it and presents its findings to the language program director every Thursday during the language staff meeting at 10:00 a.m. The class leader’s reports are based on his observations and his discussions with the other students. If there is any incident that is deemed important, the class leader contacts the academic coordinator by telephone for immediate action.

Weekly Progress Report: The weekly student progress report is a form provided by instructors to update the academic coordinator on the progress of each student. The form provides information about the student’s behavior, class participation, attitude, absence, homework, and weekly quizzes. It is due every Thursday at 7:00 a.m. The academic coordinator summarizes it and reports to the language program director at the weekly staff meeting. The academic coordinator can either suggest or require additional tutoring hours for students. The academic coordinator can also counsel the students.

Third Party Evaluations: The third party evaluation forms are administered on the first day of class, and the end of the 4th, 8th, and 12th weeks. At the end of training, all students are given critique forms to report on the instruction, curriculum, and experience of 12 weeks of training.
**DLAB:** The Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) test consists of 126 multiple-choice questions. Applicable service policies require that each candidate for attendance at the Defense Language Institute be a high school graduate. For admission to a Basic Language Program, the following minimum DLAB scores are required: 85 points for a Category I language (Dutch, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish); 90 points for a Category II language (German); 95 points for a Category III language (Belorussian, Czech, Greek, Hebrew, Persian, Polish, Russian, Serbian/Croatian, Slovak, Tagalog [Filipino], Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese); 100 points for a Category IV language (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean).

**OPI:** The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is the last performance test used to determine the speaking proficiency of the students. It is measured on the following Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale: Speaking 0 (No Proficiency); Speaking 0+ (Memorized Proficiency); Speaking 1 (Elementary Proficiency); Speaking 1+ (Elementary Proficiency, Plus); Cat 1 and 2 Languages (French, German, Spanish, Russian, Swahili, Tagalog)’1; Cat 3 and 4 (Dari, Pashto, Farsi, Modern Standard Arabic)’0+.

**Skill Level Descriptions**

Following are the skill level descriptions for intercultural communication.

**Level 0: No Competence**

Unable to adjust when faced with cultural differences, and shows little or no awareness that such exist.
Level 0+: Memorized Competence

Able to use rehearsed behavior and memorized utterances to engage in a few routine interactions serving basic survival needs. Shows awareness of obvious differences between the culture and the individual’s own, and avoids some of the most critical and noticeable taboos, although not consistently.

Can use appropriate posture and behavior when acknowledging and delivering short polite exchanges, such as greetings, farewells, and expressions of thanks and apology, but can rarely cope with deviations from the routine. May often miss cues indicating miscommunication and is almost always unable to repair misunderstandings when they occur.

Level 1: Elementary Competence

Able to participate in some everyday interactions, though not always acceptably. Recognizes that differences exist between behaviors, norms, and values of the individual’s own culture and those of the other culture, but shows little understanding of the significance or nature of these differences.

Avoids well-known taboo topics and behavior, and normally observes basic courtesy requirements in encounters with individuals of different gender, age, or status. Can generally conform to culturally prescribed practices during interactions, such as those regarding posture, eye contact, and distance from others, and observe rules governing personal appearance and attire.

Exhibits emerging ability to participate in some social media activities. Usually responds appropriately to the most commonly used cultural cues but may exhibit confusion when faced with unfamiliar ones and can rarely cope if misunderstandings
arise. Typically experiences difficulties with less predictable and spontaneous interactions, such as open/ended conversations or bargaining.

**Level 2: Limited Working Competence**

Able to participate acceptably in many everyday social and work-related interactions. Shows conscious awareness of significant differences between the individual’s own culture and the other culture and attempts to adjust behavior accordingly, although not always successfully.

Can typically avoid taboos and adhere to basic social norms and rules of etiquette, such as in accepting and refusing invitations, offering and receiving gifts, and requesting assistance. May sometimes misinterpret cultural cues or behave inappropriately for the culture, but is usually able to recognize and repair misunderstandings.

Normally functions as expected in predictable and commonly encountered situations, including public events and large gatherings, but may have difficulty when faced with less familiar circumstances. Able to participate in various social media activities. In a work environment, can appropriately issue straightforward directions and instructions, give or receive orders, whether in person, on the telephone, or in writing, and may be able to address some job-related problems. In some instances, demonstrates recognition of and makes appropriate reference to issues and topics that are customarily the subject of conversation, such as historical, cultural, or current events.

**Organization of the Study**

This research study is organized into five chapters: Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study, the purpose statement, the significance of this study, research questions, limitation and delimitations of the study, definition of terms, and the role of the
researcher. Chapter 2 is the literature on Second Language Acquisition, such as The Army Method, Suggestopedia, the silent way, Total Physical Response, Krashen’s five hypotheses, the Natural Way, and the communicative language teaching approach.

Chapter 2 discusses theories of adult learning such as the assumptions of Andragogy, the student-centered approach and team teaching. The chapter also summarizes the relationship between language and culture, culture definition, second culture acquisition, and culture teaching methodology. Chapter 2 concludes by explaining acculturation theories. Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the case study which will be the methodology used in this study. Chapter 4 includes a discussion of the results and analysis of the findings, which emerged during the study. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study, lessons learned, and recommendations based on the findings.
CHAPTER 2—REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

This literature review is organized into four general sections. The first section of this chapter provides an introduction to second language acquisition theories. The section starts with behaviorism as the springboard, which gave rise to earlier theories of second language acquisition. The first section details the characteristics of each theory: The Army Method, Suggestopedia, the Silent way, Total Physical Response, Krashen’s five hypotheses, the Natural Way, and the Communicative language teaching approach. The second section focuses on literature in learning theories, such as the assumptions of Andragogy, and factors affecting instruction, such as the student-centered approach and team-teaching. The third section gives an overview of issues related to culture, such as the relationship between language and culture, the various definitions of culture, teaching culture, advantages and difficulties in teaching culture, limited view of culture, second culture acquisition/methodology, the need to develop more culture teaching methodology, the role of the instructors, and the implications of the current study. The fourth section reviews the history of acculturation theories.

The literature on the learning environment focuses on student characteristics, teaching strategies, and learning theories. The role of the instructor in affecting the learning environment is often ignored (Goldstein, 1993). E. Surface and Ellington (2008) expressed the same opinion:

Most research related to the impact of training characteristics on outcomes has focused on instructional techniques, learning principles, and the interaction of these features with content. Although important, this focus neglects other major
aspects of the learning environment. For example, the influence of the instructor is rarely discussed or even mentioned in training effectiveness. (p. 2)

Before beginning a study, which concentrates on the experiences of instructors and how they choose and adapt their own teaching methodologies, it is necessary to study the literature on second language acquisition, teaching methodologies, and learning theories. Additionally, the need to review the literature about second language acquisition was explained by Shrum and Glisan (2005). The authors asserted, “By studying second language acquisition (SLA) research, teachers are able to examine critically the principles upon which they base foreign language instruction” (p. 12).

When instructors learn the theories of second language acquisitions, they may regard them as tools, and then each instructor may decide which tools to include in his or her own personal toolkit. For instance, as a novice instructor I attended workshop after workshop looking for step-by-step instructions on how to teach. I read all the books that promised toolkits of activities based on theories.

Practitioners tend to focus on how to translate theories into practical applications in the classroom. Richard-Amato (1996) articulated a similar belief. He stated, “By understanding more about those processes that language learners seem to share, we can be in a better position to develop our own language teaching principles and to plan classroom experiences that are conducive to second-language acquisition” (p. 7).

It is very important to note that the terms second and foreign have been interchangeable in the field of teaching and learning. H. D. Brown (2007) gave an operationally focused definition to distinguish between foreign language teaching and second language teaching. The author claimed, “Second language learning contexts are
those in which the classroom target language is readily available out there. Foreign
language contexts are those in which students do not have ready-made contexts for
communication beyond their classroom” (p. 134).

H. D. Brown (2007) warned that there are pedagogical implications to consider
that further separate second language acquisition from foreign language acquisition, such
as students in the second language classrooms have access to “a continuum of contexts.”
In other words, the student in a foreign language classroom has a disadvantage in that he
is not immersed in the language and culture environment. I fully agree with H. D.
Brown’s point of view as the student leaves the classroom, he cannot go and practice his
language skills in real-life context. Therefore, acquiring sociocultural competence in
foreign language classrooms is not an easy task to achieve.

For the purpose of this literature review, theories of second language acquisition
were explored in order to draw parallels with foreign language acquisition and understand
the implications in foreign language classrooms.

Second Language Acquisition Learning Theories

This concise history of second language acquisition (SLA) theories intends to
highlight what has been recorded and agreed upon by researchers as landmark studies. It
is interesting that what prompted the teaching of second languages in the United States
was World War II.

Van Patten and Williams (2007) explained the beginning of the field of SLA as a
product of the U.S. “Army Method”—a forerunner of the Audio-Lingual Method—that
borrowed heavily from behavioral psychology. Therefore, in order to explain the first
method of second language acquisition, giving a short summary of behaviorism is important.

**Behaviorism**

Behaviorism is a theory, which explained learning as a behavior motivated by external factors. The environmental stimuli, which subsequently are viewed as either reinforcement or punishment, affect all behavior-forming events. Lightbown and Spada (1999) gave details:

Behaviorists account for learning in terms of imitation, practice, reinforcement (or feedback on success), and habit formation. According to the behaviorists, all learning, whether verbal or non-verbal, takes place through the same underlying processes. Learners receive linguistic input from speakers in their environment and they form ‘associations’ between words and objects or events. These associations become stronger as experiences are repeated. Learners receive encouragement for their correct imitations, and corrective feedback on their errors. (p. 35)

VanPatten and Williams (2007) explained, “Within the behaviorist theory, all learning—including language learning—is seen as the acquisition of a new behavior. Behaviorism offered several constructs, such as conditioning, reinforcement, and punishment that remain important today” (pp. 19-20).

It is true that in later years, most theorists viewed that comparing humans to animals was limited and that there are behaviors not motivated by external responses. However, it was never completely abandoned or ignored. While behaviorism received its share of fair criticism, it is still important to start by learning about behaviorism as it
affected subsequent learning theories. For instance, the influence of behaviorism gave rise to the first recognized SLA system, the Army Method.

**The Army Method**

Field (2012) attributed the spread of the Audio-Lingual method after World War II to the technology that made language laboratories popular, while H. D. Brown (2007) recounts the history of the first SLA system used by the military school: “The U.S. military provided the impetus with funding for special, intensive language courses which came to be known as the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) or more colloquially, the ‘Army Method’” (pp. 22-23).

Some of the methods of language acquisition enjoyed a short-lived popularity among practitioners, and some methods have been updated and remain popular. For instance, while the Army Method was the first one used, the Audio-Lingual Method bears significant similarities with the Army Method and was used by educational institutions in the early 1950s. Both methods depended on introducing sequenced sets of phrases, which were presented in dialogue form. Richard-Amato (1996) explained the theoretical basis of the ALM: “Audiolingualism (ALM) was the new ‘Scientific’ oral method that was based on behaviorism . . . . It adheres to the theory that language is acquired through the process of habit formation and the stimulus/response association” (p. 11).

We can still see a trace of the Audiolingual Method in current language teaching practices. There is a parallel that could be drawn between the guiding principles of the Audiolingual Method and the practice activities used in the commercial language software Pimsleur, such as repetition, inflection, replacement, completion, and expansion.
Richards and Rodgers (2001) noted that Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) is the connection between the Audiolingual Method and Behaviorism. The main assumption of this hypothesis is that differences and similarities between L.1 and L.2 would control the occurrence of mistakes in L.2.

While the influence of Behaviorism dominated the literature, it was later rejected as researchers recognized that language acquisition is a complex process, which could not be explained by a simple process such as stimulus/response. It was first rejected by Noam Chomsky and then later by Stephen Krashen. Freyberg (2006) made an astute remark regarding the position held by behaviorists and how it started to receive criticism by Chomsky. She explained, “Learning via imitation and behaviouristic elements held the sway of the teaching community as their main influence for an extended period. In 1980, Noam Chomsky highly criticized this view insisting that the language was not a habit” (p. 6). Chomsky depended on the ability of humans to create with languages in order to disprove the behaviorist premise, which explained language learning through imitation (Fromkin & Rodman, 1998).

**Suggestopedia**

After World War II, the stage was set for less restrictive methods to arise. Suggestopedia, advanced by Bulgarian psychologist Lozanov, was one that emerged. H. D. Brown (2007) summarized the guiding principle of Suggestopedia, “According to Lozanov, people are capable of learning much more than they give themselves credit for” (p. 27).

Lozanov’s method prescribes ideal, comfortable, and stress-free conditions that regular classrooms might lack. In application, followers of Suggestopedia experimented
by using music and drama in classrooms in order to promote relaxed states of
consciousness among learners. While the students at the site do not take relaxation
techniques, there are still some implications of Suggestopedia in our foreign language
classes. The element of agreeable classrooms exists, as the building is appealing with
comfortable chairs. The schoolhouse aims at hiring dynamic instructors as Suggestopedia
suggests. The case study site recommends that the instructors provide a relaxed learning
environment in order to be an environment conducive to learning. Additionally, at the
case study site the schedule is an intensive 6 hours a day as prescribed by Suggestopedia.

The Silent Way

Gattegno (as cited in Hadley, 2001) introduced this method in 1976. It promoted
the independence, self-reliance and responsibilities of the learners. Stevick Earl (as cited
in Hadley, 2001) outlined the five basic principles in the Silent Way:

Teaching should be subordinated to learning. Learning is not primarily imitation
or drill. In learning . . . the mind “equips itself by its own working, trial and error,
deliberate experimentation, by suspending judgment, and revising conclusions.”
As it works, the mind draws on everything it has already acquired, particularly
. . . its experience in learning the native language. If the teacher’s activity is to be
subordinate to that of the learner . . . then the teacher must stop interfering with
and sidetracking that activity. (p. 125)

H. D. Brown (2007) attributed the success and popularity to discovery learning as an
educational trend to the fact that it echoed the thoughts of the Silent Way.
Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) was developed by James Asher, who adopted insights into his method from first language learning in children. Hadley (2001) explained that Asher based understanding and retention on associating commands given to students with movements of the students in response to such commands. Asher (1981) explained the focus on the use of imperative: “An utterance in the target language followed immediately by a physical action is a cause-effect relationship that the mind must cope with as a fact” (p. 327).

In response to the concept of TPR, a number of teaching aids and tools were developed which remain widely used and popular among instructors. The critique of the TPR considered it an artificial use of language. However, teaching through responses to commands might have direct application with military students who are used to commands.

Krashen’s Five Hypotheses

Giving a theoretical orientation of language teaching and learning cannot be complete without talking about the five hypotheses proposed by Steven Krashen in 1982. VanPatten and Williams (2007) called it one of the most ambitious and influential theories in the field of Second Language Acquisition. Providing a short summary of Krashen’s hypotheses is warranted. Cook (2001) explained the essence of Krashen’s hypotheses: “Krashen suggests that knowledge of language in L2 (Second Language) users takes two forms, acquired and learnt knowledge” (p. 58).

Perhaps the best summary of Krashen’s five hypotheses is found in Cook (2001). Cook explains the Acquisition/Learning hypothesis as a way for Krashen to distinguish
between the unconscious learning process and learning as a conscious process. In Cook’s view of the Monitor hypothesis, Krashen places the student as the only one responsible for monitoring his own learning. Cook interpreted the Natural Order hypothesis as Krashen’s way of saying language structures are acquired in order. Cook’s insight into the Affective Learning hypothesis is that individual variables disturb how the second language is filtered. Cook paraphrases the Input hypothesis, saying that students acquire a language by understanding the comprehensible input from the environment.

I believe Krashen’s (1982) Input hypothesis, where he explained that acquiring language happens through receiving comprehensible input and suggests that for input to be comprehensible, it has to be not far beyond the current level of learner competence. Unless the input is comprehensible, learners waste their time. The direct implication of the Input hypothesis is the level of learner proficiency, which I believe was designed to build fluency in increments, or input and input plus one.

The Acquisition/Learning hypothesis claimed there are two ways of learning—using real communication and learning about the language. Terrell (1981) confirmed that while acquisition is a subconscious product, it is still—as a process—a combination between conscious and subconscious processes.

The Monitor Hypothesis explains conscious learning is utilized as a monitor in that only the learner is truly aware of his progress. The hypothesis suggests that formal language learning has little bearing on adult second language performance. I believe Krashen (1982) is saying the formal grammatical rules play the role of monitor to one’s speech. Terrell (1981) gave further proof of Krashen’s view of the limited role of teaching grammatical rules. He noted that, “Grammar-based approaches such as
grammar-translation, audiolingualism, or cognitive-code have been overwhelming failures in preparing students to function in normal communicative contexts” (p. 117).

In 1986, the findings of Jenifer Burckett-Evans further substantiated the theoretical basis of the Monitor hypothesis. She studied students in three different Spanish classes and found no significant difference between approaches used by the instructors in terms of listening comprehension or grammatical usage.

VanPatten and Williams (2007) suggested a connection between Krashen’s Monitor Theory and Chomsky’s theory of language:

Although not articulated in Krashen’s writing, Monitor Theory seems to be connected to Chomsky’s theory of language, which states that humans are uniquely endowed with a specific faculty for language acquisition. In other words, children come to the task of language already knowing a great deal; they simply need the triggering data in the input in order for language acquisition to take place. Krashen’s processes are essentially the same. (p. 25)

In other words, Krashen (1982) seemingly built on Chomsky’s Language Acquisition Device, which is commonly known in linguistic studies as LAD. While Chomsky’s theory tried to explain the acquisition of L.1 (First language), he postulated that each human is equipped with a language-processing device, which he called LAD. Krashen instead tried to explain the acquisition of L.2 and was rather concerned more with input than the LAD. The Natural Order hypothesis clarified that the way we acquire language happens in a predictable order. Several studies (i.e., Bailey, Madden, & Krashen, 1974; Larsen-Freeman, 1976) showed that there were patterns indicating a natural order for acquiring grammatical morphemes. Classrooms research conducted by
McLaughlin in 1987 led him to affirm that teaching grammar rules first was not necessary and that second language students were able to acquire the rules through practice (McLaughlin, 1987; Terrell, 1981). Both the Natural Order hypothesis and the Monitor hypothesis placed little weight on the importance of grammar in producing communicative competence in second language acquisition.

The Affective Filter hypothesis revealed that emotional factors could form a “Mental Block” which could impede the acquisition. The Affective Filter hypothesis is concerned with specific affective variables such as motivation, anxiety level, and positive attitude. The hypothesis proposes that there is a positive relationship between affective variables and achievement in second language acquisition. For instance, with the student’s level of anxiety, it suggests that a low anxiety level tends to enable students to focus on input and consequently have a higher performance. All activities built on the fourth principle of Krashen (1982) are based on interactions between students or students and instructors. These activities aim at fostering a good learning environment, where the level of anxiety is low.

The Natural Way

The Monitor Theory gave rise to the Natural Way as a teaching method. Terrell, a colleague of Krashen, created the Natural Way. Terrell put the work of Krashen into application. Hadley (2001) summarized the four principles of the Natural Way as follows: Beginning language instruction should focus on the attainment of immediate communicative competence rather than on grammatical perfection; instruction needs to be aimed at modification and improvement of student’s developing grammar rather than at building that grammar up one rule at a time; instructors should afford students the
opportunity to acquire language rather than force them to learn it; and affective rather than cognitive factors are primary in language learning. The believers in the Natural Method claim foreign language could be taught without any translation, as long as instructors depended on using demonstration and action. This belief gave rise to the Direct Method. Richards and Rodgers (2001) explained:

Direct Method was officially introduced in France and Germany (it was officially approved in both countries at the turn of the century) and it became widely known in the United States through its use by Sauveur and Maximilian Berlitz in successful commercial language schools. (Berlitz, in fact, never used the term; he referred to the method used in his school as the Berlitz Method). (p. 12)

We see the principles of the Direct Method used, not just in the Berlitz commercial school, but also in other popular commercial software such as Rosetta Stone. The guiding principles of the Direct Method implemented are the exclusive use of the Target/Foreign language, the inductive way of teaching grammar, the emphasis placed on providing the correct pronunciation and the fact that concrete vocabulary is taught through pictures. The main drawback in using the Direct Method is the fact that it required instructors who were native speakers. However, instructors in the language programs are mostly native speakers and perhaps they subscribe to the principles of the Direct Method.

**The Communicative Language Teaching Approach**

The Communicative Method became the trend that swept other theories away. Searle’s (1969) Speech Act theory was the precursor to understanding a functional notion, as it pointed out that learners used languages for a purpose. Communicative language
teaching gained ground as a functional approach in teaching foreign language and second languages. Its main characteristic is placing the meaning as the principal point of the method. The guiding principle is to give input in a meaningful and contextualized way. Richards and Rodgers (as cited in Hadley, 2001) summarized the theoretical premises of the communicative language teaching:

The communicative principle: Activities that involve communication promote language learning. The task principle: Activities that involve the completion of real-world tasks promote learning. The meaningfulness principle: Learners must be engaged in meaningful and authentic language use for learning to take place.

(p. 117)

Breen and Candlin (as cited by Richard-Amato, 1996) explained the meaningfulness principle further: “In a communicative methodology, content ceases to become some external control over learning-teaching procedures. Choosing directions becomes a part of the curriculum itself, and involves negotiation between learners and learners, learners and teachers, and learners and text” (p. 18).

The foregoing introduction to second language acquisition theories as described in the literature illustrates an evolution in thinking about the ways in which the focus has shifted from instructor-centered to student-centered. This paradigm shift was also highlighted by emphasis on output. While Krashen underscored the importance of input, Swain (as cited by Richard-Amato, 1996) underlined the importance of output:

Comprehensible output . . . is a necessary mechanism of acquisition independent of the role of comprehensible input. Its role is, at minimum, to provide opportunities for contextualized, meaningful use, to test out hypotheses about the
target language and to move the learner from a purely semantic analysis of language to a syntactic analysis of it. (p. 51)

This concept presented a new learning context where the instructor is viewed as a “facilitator” who must provide a supportive learning context to students. This fundamental change leads us to the discussion of the assumption of Andragogy and the student-centered approach.

**Andragogy**

In order to study an education environment, we necessarily must learn about teaching methodology, but the other side of the coin is theories of learning. Since the students at the case study site are adults, it is central to the study to understand adult learning theories. The term *adult learning* is a recent concept, and, as the term implies, it concerns adult learners as opposed to children. Knowles (1970) first introduced the concept of Andragogy in the United States in the early seventies. Knowles initially rejected the use of the word *pedagogy* based on linguistic merit. He traced the word pedagogy to the Greek word ‘paid,’ which means child. He chose the word *andragogy* because it is derived from the Greek stem *aner*, which means man. Knowles found an early use of the term *andragogy* in 1970, as the University of Amsterdam housed a department of pedagogical and andragogical sciences. He defined Andragogy in 1984 as the art and science of helping adults learn.

**The Assumptions of Andragogy**

The first assumption of Andragogy is centered on the need of adult learners to know why they need to learn something, and they must learn it through self-discovery.
“Teachers should help the learners become aware of the need to know” (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 64).

The second assumption of Andragogy explains that adults grow a total independent self-concept, which relates to their increasing need to be self-directing. Merriam (2001) also highlighted the learning autonomy. The autonomy in adult learners is described by Knowles et al. (2005) as a “deep psychological need to be seen by others and treated by others as being capable of self-direction” (p. 65).

The third assumption of Andragogy explains that adults have an expanding reservoir of experience, which will affect their understanding of new learning and affect how they will relate to new learning. This incorporation of background experiences in the third tenant of Andragogy draws a parallel with the concept of integration of prior knowledge found in reading Jerome Bruner, who was a cognitive theorist. Bruner (1966) was interested in the concept of attainment:

 Acquisition of new information, often when information runs counter to or is a replacement of what the person has previously known, but which at the very least is a refinement of previous knowledge; transformation or the process of manipulating knowledge to make it fit new tasks; and evaluation or checking whether the way we have manipulated information is adequate to the task. (p. 48)

The fourth assumption of Andragogy claims the adult’s readiness to learn is the result of their developmental tasks required by their evolving social roles, rather than their biological and genetic make-up. This developmental stage of learning echoes behaviorists’ work. For instance, Rogers (1969) defines experiential learning:
It is self-initiated even when the impetus or stimulus come from the outside, the sense of discovery, of reaching out, of grasping and comprehending comes from within the locus of evaluation, we might say, resides definitely in the learner. Its essence is meaning. When such learning takes place, the element of meaning to the learner is built into the whole experience. (p. 5)

The literature of adult learning theory is centered on the discussion of Knowles’s (1980) assumptions of Andragogy. Henschke (as cited in McGrath, 2009) defined Andragogy as “the scientific discipline that studies everything related to learning and teaching which bring adults to their full degree of humaneness” (p. 102). Merriam (2001) found that Knowles’s assumptions were grounded in Humanistic thought, which views learners as autonomous. However, further reading in the literature suggests that Knowles’s work echoed other trends, which existed in education in the early sixties. For instance, Knowles was influenced by Goodwin Watson’s “Guidelines for the Facilitation of Learning” (as cited in Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). Note the similarity between Watson’s guidelines 7, 8, 11, and 12, and Knowles’ assumptions.

Guideline 7 explains the importance of the participation of students in the selection and the planning, which is synonymous to self-directed learning. Guideline 8 relates to the autonomy of adults learners, whereas it describes their genuine participation while intensifying their motivation, flexibility, and rate of learning. Guideline 11 relates to the fact that direct applicability to learn constitutes the best timing to learn, which is similar to assumption that adult learning is a life-long model where the learner needs to understand problem-centered topics addressing his life and his needs. Guideline 12 paints the “open” nonauthoritarian atmosphere as the best atmosphere conducive to
learning. This guideline is parallel to the underlying assumption of the Andragogical model advanced by Knowles (1980).

Another analogous concept is found by reading Bruner (1966). He found that the will to learn is an intrinsic motive. He stipulated that the theory of instruction should be arranged to match the predisposition of the learner.

There is also indication that Knowles was influenced by Dewey’s concepts of the centrality of a learner’s experience and how its continuity impacts future learning. Knowles (1970) himself stated that Dewey propounded the most influential system of ideas about effective teaching during the first half of the century.

To move the discussion from Andragogy to the Student-Centered Approach, a transitional stop to discuss Houle’s (1969) concepts is necessary, as Houle’s early concepts about adult learners and why they engage in continuing education were the precursors of Carl Roger’s Student-Centered Approach and Knowles’s Andragogy. Houle started his line of investigation in the 1950s. He proposed, “Education is a cooperative art rather than an operative art. A cooperative art works in a facilitative way by guiding and directing a natural entity or process” (p. 28). By introducing that cooperative/interactive notion into adult teaching theory, Houle paved the way for the Rogers’ Student-Centered Approach. Additionally, Houle is a firm proponent of Knowles’s assumptions of Andragogy. Houle emphasized:

Over the past two decades it has drawn adult educators’ attention to the fact that they should involve learners in as many aspects of their education as possible and in the creation of a climate in which both they and the students can fruitfully learn.

(p. 30)
More contemporary contribution to the body of knowledge of learning and teaching theories has focused on the role of the learner.

**Student-Centered Approach**

Perhaps the second landmark in adult education theories is Carl Rogers’ Student-Centered Approach. In 1969, Rogers made his infamous statement: “Teaching is, for me, a relatively unimportant and vastly overvalued activity” (p. 103). He based his approach on the hypothesis that “you can’t teach another person directly,” but rather “you can only facilitate his learning.” He defined the role of an instructor as a facilitator of learning. As the expression student-centered has become commonly used and in many cases misunderstood, it is important to cite the initial guidelines as adapted from Rogers. For instance, the facilitator has to set the initial stage of the learning experience. In other words, he has to create the environment which is conducive to learning by arranging the information and making resources readily accessible to students. The environment is not conducive to learning if the facilitator does not embrace the emotional attitudes as much as he embraces the intellectual content, while sensing all strong emotion surges from the students. The facilitator has to take charge of the progress of each student in class through elicitation and clarification. The facilitator uses the desire in each student as a propelling force to move each student forward. The facilitator becomes the flexible resource, which adapts to each of the learner’s needs. His role becomes to gradually join the ranks of the participant, sharing himself and his ideals. In the end, it is most important for a facilitator to recognize and accept his own limitations.
Applications of the Student-Centered Approach

McCombs and Whisler (1997) explained how to conduct a learner-centered classroom by giving the students a sense of ownership through the freedom of choice. The authors stated, “Self-directed and self-regulated learning requires at least some learner input, choice and autonomy” (p. 50).

Zimmerman (1994) expressed a similar belief. He explained that students need to be self-initiating, able to self-monitor their own progress and finally willing to set their own performance goals.

McCombs and Whisler (1997) explained the difference in the relationship between students and instructors in a learner-centered classroom: “This relationship becomes more collaborative, students have more voice, and there is an underlying trust and respect often absent in traditional teacher-centered models of learning” (p. 9).

In the same vein, and in order to give a framework for the Student-Centered model, Vatterott (1995) outlined three ways of how the instructors shift the focus to learner-centered. First, the instructors design active learning tasks, which provide learning opportunity for choice and autonomy. Second, they design an assessment where students are encouraged to create products and engage in self-reflection. Vatterott went as far as suggesting that assessment could be co-designed with the students. Third, instructors concentrate on structuring and individualizing the learning experiences of students.

McCombs and Whisler (1997) articulated 12 foundational principles in order to explain the implementation of the learner-centered model. These 12 tenets gave a detailed picture of how a classroom would look with learner-centered principles.
The first tenet relates to the natural learning process of pursuing personally meaningful goals. In the application of the first principle, instructors will spend time helping their students connect their learning and find the relevancy to their lives. Since the students are military personnel, the instructors spend time connecting all the information to their missions.

The second tenet states that learners seek to create meaningful, coherent representations of knowledge, regardless of the quantity and quality of data available. In the application of the second principle, instructors would allow time for students to construct their meanings and concepts. The instructors permit the students to process the information on their own pace.

The third tenet tells us that the learner links new information with existing and future-oriented knowledge. In the application of the third principle, instructors would give students different ways of organizing materials that correspond better to their prior information. The students tend to try to link the information received to their first language.

The fourth principle relates to high order thinking. It reminds us that higher order strategies for overseeing and monitoring mental operations facilitates creative and critical thinking. In the application of the fourth principle, instructors would engage students in the use of complex reasoning process (comparison, classification, decision-making, invention, and production of new knowledge). Culturally, the instructors are accustomed to assigning rote memorization drills. However, especially dealing with military students, instructors should learn that students need higher order thinking exercises.
The fifth principle discusses motivational influences on learning. It states that the depth and breadth of information processed, and what and how much is learned and remembered, are influenced by self-awareness, beliefs about personal control, clarity, salience of personal values, personal expectations for success or failure, emotion, and the resulting motivation to learn.

In the application of the fifth principle, learner-centered instructors give equal attention and engage all students regardless of the caliber of their performance. Military students are self-aware and have high personal expectations.

The sixth principle is highly connected with the fifth one. It gives details about the intrinsic motivation to learn. It points out that individuals are naturally curious and enjoy learning, but intense negative cognitions may thwart this enthusiasm. In the application of the sixth principle, instructors would provide students with activities, which elicit their natural love for learning. They would encourage and support students. Military students at the case study site profess themselves highly motivated, which in essence should make the instructor’s job easier.

The seventh principle builds on the prior two principles. It elucidates the characteristics of motivation-enhancing learning tasks, which reminds us that curiosity, creativity, and high-order thinking are stimulated by relevant, authentic learning tasks of optimal difficulty and novelty for each student. In the application of this seventh principle, instructors would use authentic materials and present real-world opportunities for learning.

The eighth principle deals with developmental constraints and opportunities. It states an individual moves through stages of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social
development. In the application of the eighth principle, instructors would keep a balanced approach between providing a challenge and developmental appropriateness. Instructors have to learn about their students’ individual characteristics and attempt to tailor instruction to each student. Applying this eighth principle within the classroom context is difficult, as students are rarely a homogenous group.

The ninth principle is hardest to apply within a cross-cultural communication setting. It discusses social and cultural diversity. It incorporates the idea that learning is facilitated by social interactions and communication with others in flexible, diverse, and adaptive instructional settings. In the application of the ninth principle, instructors accept the differing values and points of view and develop abilities to communicate effectively with students who come from different cultural backgrounds.

The tenth principle builds on the ninth. As instructors recognize the differences in their students, they must accept them. The tenth principle elucidates social acceptance, self-esteem, and learning. It states when individuals are in respectful and caring relationships, learning and self-esteem flourish. In the application of the tenth principle, instructors will develop a nurturing relationship with their students that aim at valuing each student. Applying the tenth principle at the case study site might present a challenge given the fact the instructors are immigrants.

On the other hand, the eleventh principle discusses individual differences in learning, not cultural background. It reminds us that although basic principles of learning, motivation, and effective instruction apply to all learners, still they have different capabilities and preferences for learning modes and strategies. In the application of the eleventh principle, instructors will appreciate the uniqueness of each student. They
will learn the weakness and strength of each student. At the case study site, the students tend to be kinetic learners as a population, which in essence should make the instructor’s job easier.

The twelfth principle puts the term cognitive filters into plain words. It refers to personal beliefs, thoughts, and understandings resulting from prior learning and interpretations that become the individual’s basis for constructing reality and interpreting life experiences. In the application of the twelfth principle, instructors will self-check their perception and make sure that they do not operate under a set of assumptions about their students. Since instructors and students come from different cultural backgrounds, this principle affects the instructor’s perception about their experience teaching with military students.

As the student-centered approach gained ground, it is hard to find researchers who oppose it. An instructor from Ontario, Siwak (2013), cautions that there are factors that impede the application of a student-centered approach such as class size, pressure on instructors to cover curriculum, and the fact that instructors grew up in instructor-directed classrooms themselves. It is curious that a practitioner expressed skepticism. Thirty years ago, Cuban (1983) noted the same resistance of instructors. He lamented, “A seemingly stubborn continuity in teacher-centered instruction despite intense reform efforts to move practices toward instruction that was more learner-centered” (p. 160). Marlowe and Page (2005) noted that Cuban did not find any significant changes in instructor-dominated classroom in the last hundred years.

Some of the best practices are based on the Andragogical model following the Student-Centered approach. Charles Curran (as cited in Hadley, 2001), who advocated
the importance of social dynamics between students and instructors, extended the principles given by Carl Rogers. He found that it had affective implications, which affected the learning experience. Hadley (2001) emphasized the value of the community language learning: “The techniques used are designed to reduce anxiety in the group to a minimum and to promote the free expressions of ideas and feelings” (p. 124). The theoretical underpinnings of Curran’s method of community of language learning remain viable in the second language classroom.

The value of the interpersonal relationship between instructors and students could be affected by having multiple instructors. Therefore, a closer look at team teaching is warranted.

**Team Teaching**

Buckley (2000) gave a definition of team teaching, which relates to Knowles’s assumptions of Andragogy. He explains:

Team teaching involves a group of instructors working purposefully, regularly and cooperatively to help a group of students learn. They model the competence they try to impart, forming the students by their example of interaction as much as their words. They try to lead the students to discover some aspects of reality, to become aware of the complexity of the relationships involved, to appreciate the beauty of this experience and to strive joyously to master the skills of learning.

(p. 4)

It is noteworthy that the Team Teaching technique made its first appearance as an educational teaching approach in the early 1950s. It gained steady support while others remained skeptical. Now, the Team Teaching is no longer viewed as an experimental
technique, and it is hard to find critiques in the recent literature. Some authors prefer the term “Peer Coaching” to “Team Teaching”; however, the expression “Team Teaching” is more commonly used in the literature. Johnson and Hunt (1968) gives another definition of team teaching: “The teaching team is composed of persons of varied training and experience. Each member of the team possesses particular skills, knowledge, and competence which should be utilized in the manner most beneficial to students” (p. 65).

The literature gives different examples of successful Team Teaching experiences. However, there is no one-size-fits-all formula of what constitutes a successful Team Teaching. Buckley (2000) confirmed, “Differing needs and professional resources rule out any universal approach” (p. 5). His statement echoed an earlier assertion given by Blair and Woodward (1964): “The heart of concept of team teaching lies not in details of structure and organization but more in the essential spirit of cooperative planning, constant collaboration, close unity, unrestrained communication and sincere sharing” (p. 22).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Team Teaching

There are a number of advantages on Team Teaching discussed by the literature. For instance, Team Teaching improves the quality of education because more experts are available in the classroom to present different perspectives and approaches. This strategy also allows instructors to learn from one another. In other words, the novice instructor learns from the experienced instructor, and the seasoned instructor gets to learn new ways of adapting the rules from the neophyte instructor. Working in a team promotes self-discipline as instructors rely on each other. While they share the burden of instruction, that division significantly lightens the load of each instructor.
The list of disadvantages of Team Teaching as found in the literature is significantly smaller as Team Teaching gained more supporters. In fact, researchers find that the disadvantages of team teaching reside principally in two points: incompatible teammates and exposing students to clashing instructors’ viewpoints.

**Team Teaching in a Multicultural Setting**

While it is dangerous to use stereotypes, it is useful to recognize the different cultural values associated with the original culture that exists in a work setting. There is a gap in research addressing team teaching in a multicultural context. A recent study by Clark and Estes (2008) shed some light. The authors assert:

“"We" culture individuals tend to value teamwork and many often work harder in collective efforts than "I" culture people. Many "I" culture people think of collective efforts as less interesting and they tend to loaf more in group setting unless their individual contributions to the group are assessed.” (p. 84)

More research is needed to address how people from different cultural backgrounds value Team Teaching. Given the fact that all instructors at the case study site are native speakers of the languages that they teach, the study will be able to elucidate their experience with the Team Teaching from their own cultural perspectives.

**Culture**

In this section, I reviewed how the literature discussed issues pertaining to the relationship between language and culture, culture’s definition, difficulties in teaching culture, teaching culture in language classes, second culture methodology, and the roles of instructors in culture classes.
Introduction

The publication of the seminal work *The Silent Language* of Edward T. Hall (1990) marks the beginning of the importance accorded to the study of the effect of culture on communication. Hall explained the relationship between culture and communication. The work of anthropologists such as Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict was more concerned with the various cultural patterns and how these were translated into behaviorist patterns. It was first suggested by anthropologist Margaret Mead in 1961 that culture could be learned. After World War II, the emergence of aid programs placed cultural training into the curriculum. The linguists in the army school in Monterey developed immersion techniques that highlighted the importance of cultural learning. Damen (1987) lamented that their efforts led to stereotypes and generalizations. He explained the beginning attempts in teaching culture as follows: “The early training programs were usually of relatively short duration and largely confined to the processing of information concerning given target groups. Snippets of cultural information were drawn together and assembled into hastily prepared manuals” (p. 25).

As humble as these early efforts were, it is now commonly accepted in the field of second language acquisition that teaching culture is necessary. In many institutions, the names of language programs also includes the word *culture*. Earlier work (H. D. Brown, 1987; Byram & Morgan, 1994; Seelye, 1974) put cultural learning on equal footing with language learning. The importance of teaching culture within foreign language curriculum has been the theme often discussed by researchers such as H. D. Brown (1987, 2007), Damen (1987), Morgan and Cain (2000), and Tang (2006).
The Relationship Between Language and Culture: Two Sides of a Coin

Fluency in a language might mean mastering lexicon and acquiring proficiency in listening, reading, speaking, and writing. However, without the ability to apply these skills in context and participate in a cultural community, all language learning remains useless. Byram (1989) declares that cultural studies should not be considered merely as incidental to the real business of language teaching. Michael Agar (1994) was the first anthropologist to join language and culture and coin the term Languaculture. He came up with the concept of Languaculture in his book Language Shock in 1994. The concept placed acquisition of local information as a needed background necessary to support language proficiency. He emphasized that there is a link or a tie between your first culture as a language learner LC1 (Source Languaculture) and your LC2 (Target Languaculture). Language and culture are the two sides of the same coin. Swiderski (1993) expressed a similar belief: “Fluency in language does not mean participation in a community of speakers, but learning a language also needs not to leave aside culture learning. And culture learning cannot be fostered entirely apart from language learning” (p. 81).

H. D. Brown (2007) indicated the interconnectedness of language and culture:

Language is a part of culture, and culture is a part of the language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. The acquisition of a second language, except for specialized, instrumental acquisition (as maybe the case, say, in acquiring a reading knowledge of a language for examining texts), is also the acquisition of a second culture. (p. 133)
Byram (1989) insisted the mere acquisition of information about a foreign country, without the psychological demands of integrated language and culture learning, is inadequate as a basis for education through foreign language teaching. Kuang (2007) confirmed H. D. Brown’s position by saying learning a language is inseparable from learning its culture.

Krasner (1999) explained the relationship between language and culture as follows: “Language represents one of the constituents of the culture; on the other hand, each structure of the language contains bits of cultural information” (p. 83). In the same work, Krasner additionally underlined the importance of developing a cultural proficiency: “Breakdowns in communications arise not from the linguistic, but from the socio-linguistic differences. In other words, linguistic competence is not sufficient for successful communication. Culture is integrated in any communication activity” (p. 81).

Krasner’s thoughts were echoed in Fox’s (1999) assertion regarding the importance of developing cultural competency: “What hinders true cultural communication is, in addition to the lack of cultural exchange, the harm done by value judgments made without the full knowledge of all aspects of a given culture” (p. 92).

Singer (2000) had a similar finding as he outlined recognizing the differences in values as the first step to effective intercultural communication.

Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (2008) highlighted the fact that cognition cannot be separate from the social context where language output occurs:

The cognitive/social dichotomy widely taken for granted in SLA theory obscures the relationship between the knowledge about language that learners construct and the social, cultural and political contexts in which acquisition takes place.
Cognition originates in social interaction. Constructing new knowledge is therefore both a cognitive and a social process. (p. 156)

**Definitions of Culture**

Before starting a discussion about teaching culture, it is necessary to define culture. Most definitions of the word *culture* come from the field of anthropology. Byram and Morgan (1994) asserted, “Definitions of culture within the context of language teaching usually include some reference to behavior. Culture is defined as the shared knowledge of a given social group as realized in part through behavioral norms and conventions” (p. 139). This definition corresponds to anthropologist Goodenough’s (1964) popular definition of culture: “A society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members” (p. 36). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) provided an equally popular definition of culture:

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (p. 357)

In a lecture given by Agar (2006) at the University of California at Santa Barbara titled “Culture: Can You Take It Anywhere?,” he explained culture was viewed as a “confined geographical box” (p. 3). He added, “What people did could be described, explained, and generalized by their membership in that single, shared culture” (p. 3).
H. D. Brown (2007) gave a definition closely related to Agar’s. He defined culture simply as a way of life. H. D. Brown explained:

Culture also establishes for each person a context of cognitive and affective behavior, a template for personal and social existence. We tend to perceive reality within the context of our own culture, a reality that we have “created” and therefore not necessarily a reality that is empirically defined. (p. 133)


For anthropologists, culture has long stood for the way of life of a people, for the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things. Though they subscribe to this general view, most anthropologists tend to disagree, however, on what the precise substance of culture is. (p. 20)

Tang (2006) pointed out that even though multiple disciplines attempted to define culture, we still do not have one definition which can gain consensus. Singer (1998) gives a broad but comprehensive definition of what constitutes culture: “Group-related learned perceptions (including verbal and non-verbal codes) attitudes, values and belief and disbelief systems taught by the groups with which we identify” (pp. 5-6). Wagener (2010) gave a justification of why language and culture should not be separated, which built on prior definitions:

Language and culture should not be separated when dealing with interactional situations and ways of communicating. If culture has to be explored as a set of shared habits which organizes social life . . . language also plays a significant part
in the way individuals and groups organize their collective thoughts, needs and semantic implications. (para. 20)

**Teaching Culture**

While scholars agreed that the inclusion of culture in the foreign language program was necessary, there were no standards to provide guidelines to educators. The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language [ACTFL]) was a visionary document first published in 1996. Developing the national standards was a collaborative project that received federal funding.

Lange (1999) analyzed the issue of inclusion, and he saw that the problem is two-fold. First, there is no consensus on what culture to teach. Second, educators do not agree on how to integrate culture. Lange asserts that the National Standards have finally solved both problems.

The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (ACTFL, 1996) presents a set of interconnected goals that emphasize using language for communication with other peoples, gaining understanding of other cultures, and accessing information in a wide range of disciplines. The vision of language study goes well beyond what has traditionally been the main focus of foreign language learning in the past: mastering the “code” or linguistic system (p. 24). Culture was incorporated as one of the five Cs (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities) and integrated as a goal within the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*. 
Standards for Teaching Culture

Hadley (2001) summarized the following standards for teaching cultures:

Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied; and Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied. Hadley underscored the central role placement of culture within the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*:

The Content standards for Culture (Standards 2.1 and 2.2) and Comparisons (Standards 4.1 and 4.2) emphasize the need for students to develop an awareness of the cultural framework or “perspectives” of the culture whose language they are studying. It is thus not enough to learn about “practices” and “products” in isolation of their cultural framework; rather, students need to begin to discover how they are viewed and understood from the point of view of the people who developed them. Likewise, students need to develop a general awareness of how languages and cultures work and how languages reflect the perspectives that may be different from their own. (p. 39)

Kramer (1994) pointed out that foreign language learning is “hermeneutic process” where learners expose their own cultural identity to the contrasting influences of a foreign language and culture:

Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen drew our attention to LS (Language Socialization) a socio-cultural approach as a new shift in the direction of second language research, which is gaining ground and focusing on the social context of language output. The rise of sociolinguistic and contextual approaches in L.2 research over
the past decade reflects a growing recognition that learning language is more complex process than merely acquiring linguistic structures, and that language learning and use (if indeed the two can be separated) are shaped by socio-political processes . . . . Language Socialization (LS) stands to contribute the most to an understanding of the cognitive, cultural, social, and political complexity of language learning. (p. 155)

**Advantages and Difficulties in the Teaching of Culture**

As scholars agreed on the importance of teaching culture, they discussed the advantages and difficulties associated with teaching culture in the foreign language classrooms. Damen (1987) suggested that learning culture within foreign language classroom presented students with advantages as it created a “culturally protective wall,” providing students with unique opportunities for experimental intercultural communication. Damen later affirmed:

The members of a language class may be regarded as forming a transient, ad hoc group composed of a teacher and students whose communal existence is limited in time and space. This community will develop a group culture and at the same time engage in explorations of the culture “outside.” As such, the classroom context may serve as a practice stage for intercultural communication as well as language learning. This specialized context provides some distinct advantages:

1) As an artificial community, it draws a culturally protective wall around those within, bestowing less severe punishment for the commission of linguistic and cultural errors than might be met outside its walls.
2) The classroom community is managed, unreal, forgiving, and protective, but it is also an environment that offers unique opportunities for experimental intercultural communication. If administered well, this community can provide the first step on a long voyage of cultural discovery that will end in the world outside the classroom. (pp. 7-8)

Some of the difficulties in teaching culture reside in the need to train instructors and the need to develop a cultural teaching methodology. Damen (1987) pointed out that there is a need to recognize the importance for training instructors to be cultural trainers.

It is generally accepted that specialized training is required in order to provide guidance in the acquisition of a new linguistic system. Although largely unrecognized, there is an equally compelling need to train our instructors as cultural guides. While cultural guidance is seldom part of the stated curriculum of the ESL (English as a Second Language), EFL (English as a Foreign Language), or any language classroom, it is nonetheless often a part of the hidden agenda, a pervasive but unrecognized dimension, coloring expectations, perceptions, reactions, teaching, and learning strategies, and is, more often than not, a contributing factor in the success or failure of second or foreign language learning and acquisition.

Damen (1987) further summarized her point:

In order to make this link [Cultural connection], adequate and appropriate skills must be acquired by teachers. This task—to assist and enhance the development of the cultural and linguistic competence of students—should not be undertaken by untrained, albeit well-intentioned, “natives.” (p. 6)
Michael Byram (1989), in the introduction to his book *Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Education*, described culture as the “Hidden Curriculum of Foreign Language.” He attests to the complex nature of teaching culture: “Cultural studies are taught and learnt both overtly and implicitly, both consciously and incidentally” (p. 3). Byram asserted that a methodology of teaching culture should take into consideration a theoretical discussion of educational goals, as well as concepts of cultural learning and pedagogical structuring.

Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (2008) addressed the same point:

The issue of differing cultural models is highly salient not only for SLA theory, but also for the L.2 classroom. In our experience as teachers competing and diverse cultural models at varying levels—for pedagogy, interaction, conversational inferencing and exchange, affect expression, epistemology, knowledge construction, world view—must be dealt with both instructors and students when teaching/learning a second language. (p. 160)

**Limited View of Culture**

Hadley (2001) acknowledged that while finding authentic resources has been a challenge for language instructors for decades, technology would have a great impact on the instruction of culture. The author claimed:

This wealth of resources can facilitate the integration of language and culture. . . . The use of internet in particular in the creation of activities in culturally authentic contexts does indeed remove a great deal of burden being the cultural authority from the teacher. (p. 359)
Several researchers regretted the reductionist view of culture espoused by practitioners. Byram (1989) asserted that the mere acquisition of information about a foreign country, without the psychological demands of integrated language and culture learning, is inadequate as a basis for education through foreign language teaching. Rosaldo (1994) indicated that culture is far more than a mere catalogue of rituals and beliefs.

Damen (1987) discussed the inefficiency of the current state of teaching culture: The insertion into lesson plans of inventories of cultural tidbits, which can be gleaned from a wide variety of sources including anthropological studies, guides for business men and women going overseas, counseling studies, and the uncle who just returned from a two-week trip to Riyadh, is often counterproductive. (p. 5)

Byram and Morgan (1994) re-emphasized their earlier view. They declared, “The hamster-like collection of facts and realia is not an adequate basis for understanding. Cultural studies need a disciplinary framework for teaching and learning about a particular country and society” (p. 63).

Nieto (2002) articulated the following point: Culture is complex and intricate; it cannot be reduced to holidays, foods, or dances, although these are of course elements of culture. Everyone has a culture because all people participate in the world through social and political relationships informed by history as well as by race, ethnicity, language, social class, sexual orientation, gender, and other circumstances related to identity and experience. (p. 10)
Within the availability of resources, we must focus on different research needed to improve the teaching of culture. For instance, more research is needed to address dialect teaching and authentic setting of L2 learning. J. Siegel (2008), in his chapter on social context, recognizes that as one of the limitations of literature on second language acquisition: “To sum up, one shortcoming of the field of SLA is that generalizations have been made on the basis of research carried out in only a limited range of sociolinguistic settings and involving only standard varieties of language” (p. 183).

Much has been said about this limited view of culture. However, practice is far from applying a larger scope of culture. The question has to be asked where does the disconnect lies. This point brings us to explore the second culture methodology used by instructors.

**Second Culture Acquisition/Methodology**

James Lantolf (1999), in his paper on second culture acquisition, lamented the fact that second culture acquisition is limited to social and attitudinal considerations. He advocated the need to cognitively appropriate a second culture. Swiderski (1993) expressed the same view: “Language learning is gaining a skill; culture learning as assimilation is transforming identity. Second culture acquisition reduces to an absurdity when treated in the same way as second language acquisition” (p. 23).

Byram and Morgan (1994) were the pioneers to research culture teaching methodology. They found that the comparative methodology is essential to teaching of culture. They stated, “Our own research has shown that language teachers use comparison frequently, especially in talk about the foreign culture. The comparison may not be entirely overt, but based on juxtaposition” (p. 42). They further explained:
When learners acquire an understanding of the connotations of lexical items in the foreign language and contrast them with connotations of an apparently equivalent item in their own, they begin to gain insight into the schemata and perspectives of the foreign culture. (p. 44)

Byram and Morgan summarized the value of the comparative methodology:

By making comparisons, learners are deliberately led into relativisation of their own perspective through prioritization of the perspectives of others. Comparison is not only a technique for highlighting similarities and differences as a means of making them more perceptible. (p. 177)

**Need to Develop More Culture Teaching Methodology**

After reviewing the literature on teaching language and culture, it is clear that the field of foreign language teaching has yet to supply practitioners with methods of culture teaching. Tran (2010) highlighted the need of the teaching of culture to develop in order to match the achievement in the field of language teaching:

Although the field of language teaching has done an excellent job to increasingly better accommodate the needs of language learners, the field may have to do even more and better to address the various needs of language learners. Specifically, cultural aspects of the language being learned must be taught concurrently with the linguistic aspects, which have traditionally been emphasized. (p. 3)

While the body of knowledge has addressed the intercultural learning, there is still a need to focus on practice. Liddicoat (2011) offers the same conclusion: “Particular attention has been given to theorizing the intercultural for language learning. There is
however a need to further investigate both the what and the how of intercultural teaching and learning at the interface with practice” (p. 852).

**Role of Instructors**

Seelye (1974) was the first to recognize the importance of the role of instructors in teaching culture: “One cannot understand a native speaker if his cultural referents, his view of the world, and his linguistic forms are novel. The language teacher can build bridges from one cognitive system to another” (p. 22). Damen (1987) explained the common belief about the role of instructors: “It is often assumed that any teacher as a bearer of a target culture can, by right of group membership, competently supply inventories and explanations of cultural patterns by simply drawing on personal explanation and texts selection” (p. 56).

Byram and Morgan (1994) in their introduction advocated that, regardless of the fact that language instructors are not professionally trained in culture as social anthropologists, they should still be considered as culture instructors. They put it simply, “Since language and culture are inseparable, we cannot be teachers of language without being teachers of culture—or vice versa” (p. vii).

While Damen (1987) was mainly addressing the situation of ESL classrooms or multi-cultural classrooms, there are points to consider and transfer to the foreign language classrooms or instructors of culturally diverse backgrounds with homogenous cultural background students. Damen outlined the different roles that instructors should play in a language and culture classrooms as follows:

Learner-centered instruction, in the case of culture learning, means roles for teachers that may range from counselor to participant observer to resident...
pragmatic anthropologist to mediator to fellow learner. Taken together, these represent the range of skills expected of the modern language teacher. What is entailed in each of these roles? As counselors, teachers must be aware of the stress of cultural change and the need to address the pains and problems of adjustment that both they themselves and their students face. As participant observers, teachers should be aware of the various currents of cross-cultural differences and similarities that swirl around every classroom. They must be prepared to note these forces and take them into consideration as major classroom variables. As pragmatic ethnographers, they must maintain a learning mode that enhances not only their own continuing search for understanding but also that of their students. As mediators, teachers must put aside their own proclivities and attempt to stand in the shoes of others. Mediation does not mean imposing a sort of cross-cultural consensus, but rather fostering an ambiance in the classroom that encourages the development of empathy and, as some feel, a third culture in which cultural differences are recognized and respected. (pp. 327-328)

**Implications for the Current Study**

Now, after learning all about culture and its relationship to language, it is important to analyze the implications for the current study. The setting in the case study includes immigrant instructors teaching their native languages to military students. Some instructors have extended family members still living in the countries where their students will eventually deploy. The study will present the perception of these instructors. The setting is rather different than teaching a language to tourists who want to enjoy a trip in your country of origin. These immigrant instructors are teaching language and culture to
military students—who might be regarded as the enemy by their fellow native country speakers.

Breen, Candlin, and Waters (1979) were the first to acknowledge the lack of research on the experience of instructors and students of foreign language inside the classroom: “The classroom itself has a unique social environment with its own human activities and its own conventions governing the activities” (p. 98).

Byram and Morgan (1994) highlighted the importance of the role of the social identity of the instructors who are native speakers and usually have been born and educated in the country of origin. They are therefore “carriers” of the culture and realizations of the cultural identity.

Swiderski (1993) discussed the culture of the classroom as setting, interactions between students who expect to be taught culture and their instructors.

One way of looking at the culture that is already present in the classroom before a word is said is to notice these layers of identity encircling each person. The classroom’s immediate appearance of cultural neutrality is itself a cultural phenomenon; so is the task-oriented identity-lessness of the people who converge on the classroom at a set time. . . . Each person there bears an identity that contributes to what actually happens inside those walls. (p. 15)

This study will explore the culture of the classroom described by Swiderski (1993). The study will describe the unique social environment inside the foreign language classroom where immigrant instructors teach language and culture to their military students. It is noteworthy that Krashen’s (1982) affective filter hypothesis could link to Schumann’s eight dimensions of social distance. The study will describe how the
instructors taught and the factors that affected their experience. For instance, Byram and Morgan (1994) underscored, “Clearly, whenever teachers compare social phenomena, explain historical contexts and describe material situations in their treatment of texts with students, they also introduce a political dimension to their teaching” (p. 179).

Tran (2010) highlighted the delicate factor in the interaction between students and instructors:

Culture bumps can happen to anyone who is not familiar with a new culture; therefore, not only language students but language teachers may also encounter such experiences which can turn out to be very instructive for teachers and students to discuss in class. (p. 11)

In order to place the experience of the immigrant instructors in the correct cultural background, it is important to discuss collectivism and individualism, as the instructor’s behaviors will be affected by their belief’s system, values, and attitudes.

**Cultural Background**

It is equally important and pertinent to the study to define collectivism and individualism, as the immigrant instructors come from collectivist culture and the study will describe their experience in individualistic culture.

Triandis (1972) defines collectivism as:

A social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as part of one or more collectives (family, co-workers, tribe, nation); are primarily motivated by the norms of, and duties by, those collectives; are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their own personal goals; and emphasize their connectedness to members of these collectives. (p. 2)
Triandis (1972) defines individualism as:

A social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of collectives; are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights, and the contracts they have established with others; give priority to their personal goals over the goals of others; and emphasize rational analyses of the advantages and disadvantages to associating with others. (p. 2)

It is equally important to review the history of acculturation theories in order to fully understand the experiences of immigrant instructions in their work life.

Acculturation

In this section, I reviewed the literature discussing the concept of acculturation. It is curious to note the first time the term *acculturation* was used, J. W. Powell (1880) was describing changes in Native American language. I say curious because he used it to describe changes in what should be considered “Host culture/Native American.” The presence of European immigrants brought changes in the host culture of Native Americans and not vice versa.

Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) gave acculturation a definition:

“Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (p. 149).

According to several theorists (Padilla, 1980; B. J. Siegel, 1955; Teske & Nelson, 1974), acculturation is a process involving two distinct cultural units (groups). One or both groups could experience cultural change due to the contact between groups. Early research on acculturation explained it as a single linear process leading to assimilation of
the immigrant, which ends with the immigrant fully relinquishing his or her background cultural practices in favor of the new host culture practices.

This unidimensional assimilation model was proposed by Gordon (1964). Khodaparast (2008) explained, “This model posits that preserving the heritage culture and adopting the host culture are inversely correlated” (p. 27).

The classical assimilation theory suggests, “After many generations, all immigrant or ethnic groups will inevitably and completely assimilate into the dominant Anglo culture and institutions” (Yang, 2000, p. 82). In 1969, Richard Clemmer critiqued this view of acculturation by highlighting the ethnocentric bias, as it does not place the host culture and the native culture on equal footing.

**Berry’s Fourfold Theory of Acculturation**

Berry (1991) introduced four approaches: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Integration occurs if it is equally important to the immigrant to maintain his heritage cultural background, while establishing relationships with individuals in the host culture. Immigrants experience assimilation if they place no importance on keeping their heritage cultural background, while they only care about blending in within the host culture. Separation takes place if immigrants value their heritage cultural background above all else. Marginalization is experienced by immigrants who fail to identify neither their heritage culture nor host culture.

In a working paper commissioned by the Economic Council of Canada, John Berry (1991) suggests that acculturation is a function of two primary factors: (a) the importance that the individual places on maintaining his or her own cultural distinctiveness, and (b) the importance that he or she places on maintaining relations with
the larger society. Berry’s theory was widely accepted and adopted by researchers. However, as cited by Rudmin (2003), it came under attack for lack of focus on dominant group attitudes and subcultures and for lack of differentiating between individuals and groups.

It is noteworthy to mention that two social psychologists, Thomas and Znaniecki, were the first to propose that individual characteristics and differences would lead to different acculturation approaches (Conzen, 1996).

Portes and Zhou (1993) challenged acculturation by proposing a segmented assimilation theory. They proposed three different adaptation paths where immigrants could experience upward mobility into White middle class, downward mobility with minorities, or upward mobility while preserving their heritage cultural background.

According to this theory, the acculturation process is not experienced in the same way, depending on the ethnicity and the heritage background of the immigrants. They advocated that, while some immigrants might experience utmost assimilation, others may not assimilate at all.

Alba and Nee (2003) confirmed Portes’ and Zhou’s (1993) concept that assimilation is experienced differently by people based on their ethnic and racial groups. However, they advanced the argument to include that even within the same racial and ethnic groups, individual differences and factors like exposure would determine the level of assimilation and acculturation experienced by immigrants. Alba and Nee highlighted the diversity in adaptation outcomes, while addressing the dual process of acculturation. They advocated that while immigrants are influenced by the natives, they are influencing the natives as well with their heritage cultural background. Their argument leads us to
consider the implications of the dual acculturation model on both the instructors and their students. This current study is only concerned with the description of the experiences of the immigrant instructors. The literature review concludes with literature on the acculturation process to highlight the contextual factors of culture present and culture taught in classrooms.

**Implications of Acculturation Model for Current Study**

The acculturation model, developed by Schuman in 1978 and 1986 (as cited in Byram & Morgan, 1994), explained one of the main issues facing instructors as they introduce culture in the classroom. Byram and Morgan (1994) point out:

Schuman’s 1978 model of social distance describes the relationships of the learner’s group to the target culture group and identifies different factors which bring about the best language learning context: dominance (relative status), congruence, attitude, integration and also factors relating to the learning group: enclosure (open/closed attitudes), length of stay in target culture, size and cohesiveness. (p. 7)

H. D. Brown (2007) identified four stages of acculturation: euphoria, insecurity, recovery, and acceptance. He suggested that the third stage coincides with the majority of language learning. B. Brown and Eisterhold (2004) described the classic model of culture shock. They divided culture shock into five stages, which encompass the honeymoon stage, the disintegration stage, the reintegration stage, the autonomy stage, and the interdependence stage. In the fifth stage, newcomers have a balanced perspective and become bicultural.

J. Siegel (2008) explained the acculturation model:
L2 learning in the classroom according to the model, the extent of acculturation depends on the degree of social distance and psychological distance between learners and the L2 groups. The greater the social distance, the less contact learners will have with L2 and the less they will be open to the available input—thus the lower the degree of SLA. (p. 187)

For example, American students learning a European language would find it easier than learning a language of the Middle East, given the social and psychological distance between the students and people from the Middle East is larger than Europe. The six participants in this case study were all from the Middle East; therefore, the degree of social distance between them and their students are great. The implications of the social and psychological factors will become evident in the discussion of findings.

Summary

This chapter reviewed, compared, and contrasted theories in second language acquisition. It gave the details of language learning theories starting from the Army Method and ending with the Communicative Language Teaching. As the participants intuitively chose their instructional strategies, it was important for the literature to provide background theories and concepts that are prevalent in the field of second language acquisition. The first section of this chapter was devoted to explain in detail the Suggestopedia, the silent way, the total physical response, and Krashen's five hypotheses. The chapter discussed the assumptions of Andragogy, and student-centered approach. The chapter summarized the literature of teaching culture and acculturation. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the literature on acculturation to highlight the interplay between the culture of students and instructors in the context of the classroom. The
following chapter will provide the details of the methodology, which was used to conduct the study.
CHAPTER 3—METHODOLOGY

Introduction

How many of us remember an instructor and his or her influence on our lives? Some of us might have a “good” instructor’s story, where he or she motivated us and pushed us in the right direction. Some of us might have a “bad” instructor story, where he or she made us lose interest in the topic or even quit the class. Regardless of that important role played by the instructors in the learning environment, the importance of the instructor’s role remains anecdotal and peripheral to most studies. The literature about the classroom learning environment typically places the focus on students’ characteristics, learners’ types, internal and external students’ motivational factors, instructional strategies, and curriculum type. Goldstein (as cited by E. Surface and Ellington, 2008), declares, “The central role of the instructor in shaping learning has been largely ignored in the training literature” (p. 2). Since all learning is transactional or interactional, the influence of the instructors on the learning environment should not be ignored. I chose to study the experiences of immigrant instructors in what may be considered a difficult environment, since the instructors are inexperienced and did not receive any special training prior to their employment. The study described the experiences of immigrant instructors teaching their native languages and cultures to military students. These instructors knew that their students would likely deploy to the instructors’ native countries. The study describes the experience of these immigrants in their new role as instructors and the teaching strategies that they used.
Overview

This chapter describes the methodology and procedures that were used to conduct the study. For the purpose of this study, I selected the case study as the methodology. Merriam (1998) gives a definition of case study as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit. It is hard to separate the elements of the learning environment in this case study site into instructors, students, and a curriculum. The learning environment is a living continuum where every element affects each other. The participants in this case study were immigrant instructors of American military students. They came from different cultural backgrounds than their students and were likely to have different sets of beliefs and behaviors.

Thomas (2011) declared case studies are aptly used when they are an indissolubility of the situation studied:

The interpretative inquirer starts with the view that situations cannot be fractured into variables. We have to study the meanings that people are constructing of the situations in which they find themselves and proceed from these meanings in order to understand the social order. (p. 171)

Yin (2009) gives a definition of case study as “an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a “case”), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 18). The use of case study is essential, as it can be customized to fit the different components. Merriam (1998) quotes Kenny and Groteluschen’s paper, making the argument for case study:

“When it is important to be responsive, to convey a holistic and dynamically rich account
of an educational program, case study is a tailor-made approach” (p. 134). The use of case study allowed a fluid format, which explained the complex context of military students learning languages and cultures for deployment and their instructors who are typically immigrants with their families still living where the students deploy.

Creswell (2009) considers the case study methodology traditional qualitative strategy. However, as Yin (2009) explains, a case study method is a form of empirical inquiry, which could employ qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. In this study, given the fact its intent and purpose was to understand how the instructors view their experiences teaching foreign languages to military students, the choice of a descriptive case study using a qualitative method is justified. The experiences of instructors are bound within the learning environment of the classroom and their daily interactions with their students. This case study used qualitative interviews and data analysis of observational data recorded on a governmental Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) form, and from personal notes to develop a rich description, or, borrowing from an anthropologist’s expression, “thick description” of the participant’s experiences. The research described and studied in depth the contextual factors that had an influence on the experiences of immigrant instructors teaching foreign language and culture to military students. Yin (2003) underlines, “A descriptive case study presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context” (p. 5). This study presented unique experiences governed and bound by class rules. By that I mean, we have recent immigrant instructors who are teaching military students (enlisted and officers). They did not receive any training prior to starting their jobs. We do not know if they fully
understand the military culture. They are teaching their native language and cultures to military members who will eventually deploy to the instructors’ countries of origin.

**Research Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to describe and explore the perceptions of instructors about their experiences teaching their native languages and cultures to military students. The study described and identified internal and external factors, which instructors felt influenced their experiences. This study also examined the instructional strategies, which the instructors report using to enhance the student’s learning.

**Research Design**

A case study methodology was chosen for this study. Given the research questions, conducting a case study is appropriate; Yin (2003) maintained that conducting a case study is particularly suitable to answer “how” questions. Yin also considered the use of the case studies particularly pertinent when the research addresses descriptive questions.

Yin (2003) stated, “Articulating ‘theory’ about what is being studied helps to operationalize case study designs and make them more explicit” (p. 33). In other words, he advises researchers to write propositions. Yin proposed that having a theoretical framework is an immense aid. He explained:

For cases studies, five components of a research design are especially important:

1. a study’s questions;
2. its propositions, if any;
3. its unit (s) of analysis;
4. the logic linking the data to the propositions; and
5. the criteria for interpreting the findings. (p. 21)

Pike (as cited in Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009) contends, “Good research involves asking good questions, and good research questions are both interesting and important” (p. 56). The following information provides details relating to the research questions.

Research Questions

In order to comprehend the experiences of instructors teaching foreign languages to military students, the first research question addressed the instructional strategies used and the second research question focused on the views and perceptions of instructors.

R1: What were the instructional strategies used by immigrant instructors to teach their native languages and cultures to military students?

R2: How did the content knowledge and work experiences of the immigrant instructors influence their teachings with military students?

Research Propositions

As informed by the literature of adult learning and second language acquisition, the following two propositions were examined as the core elements of the theoretical framework:

First, principles of adult learning theories will support a learner-centered teaching style. Instructors need to involve their students in their learning process. They need to build on their students’ prior experiences. They also need to show the relevancy of the lessons to the lives of their students. Instructors must understand that their students are capable of self-directed learning. These principles are derived from the assumptions of Andragogy by Knowles (1980).
Second, the fact that these instructors have not received professional training indicates that the instructional strategies that they used have to be based on the instructors’ prior experiences as students.

**The Unit of Analysis**

According to Yin (2012), “The case serves as the main unit of analysis in a case study” (p. 6). For this study, the cohort of six immigrant instructors was the unit of analysis, and the experiences of each participant represented a subunit.

**Logic and Criteria for Interpreting the Findings**

Nespor (1987) maintains that people’s beliefs influence their behaviors more than their knowledge. That will explain how the cultural backgrounds and the content knowledge of the instructors influenced their choice of teaching strategies.

**Theoretical Perspective**

I used a social constructivist lens to describe the experiences of the instructors. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) defined it “as a process of constructing meaning; it is how people make sense of their experience” (p. 261). In social constructivism, the learners are engaged in their own learning process as they connect prior knowledge and experience to new learning. This bears a striking resemblance to Knowles’ (1980) Andragogy assumptions, in which the learner is viewed as being self-directed, and he or she builds knowledge based on prior experience.

McMahon (1997) views context where learning occurs as central to the learning itself. It is necessary to describe the setting of the unit analysis of this case study. The following information describes the setting of the school house where all the participants work.
Research Setting and Context

The context in this case study is very unique. The program facilitates the teaching of 13 languages, with an average of four to six students per section. This low ratio of students to instructor creates a very close-knit learning environment. The school’s course offerings include IAT (Initial Acquisition Training) courses and SET (Sustainment and Enhancement Training) courses. All instructors are native speakers. Students learn their language assignment during the first day of class. The classrooms have state of the art equipment, and the chairs are comfortable. Each classroom comes with smart-board and access to international TV channels. It is a government schoolhouse and no expenses have been spared. I chose instructors working for the same language program. There is no special precaution used by the government during the hiring process. The vendor/civilian company is the one in charge of the hiring process, and it is only required to conduct a simple personal security background review. These instructors are hired temporarily for a period of 12 weeks. Students are constantly evaluating their instructors, which affects the employment of these instructors. For instance, if students complain about their instructor and gave him or her low marks on the evaluation forms, the program manager informs the vendor of the issue. The vendor can choose to correct the problem by warning the instructor or by replacing the instructor to avoid further complications. A civilian vendor/civilian company is the only entity allowed to provide direct support to the instructors and have authority over them. The vendor/civilian company is the one to make employment decisions. This is important to understand, as it is one of the conditions in any government contract. When the government hires a vendor/civilian company, all the contracted employees are hired for their expertise. The
government does not provide any training for a civilian contractor. While in essence this rule makes sense, in reality the vendor rarely has a cadre of contractors who have the required expertise to fill their roles.

There are three factors that contribute to the assignment of the language to all students. First, they are required to take the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB). Next, they complete a language background survey to provide a formative assessment of their prior language learning experiences. Some of the final factors for the selection are based on the needs of the particular unit and could include such things as the geographical location where the unit is based, and the likely areas in which they might be deployed. This is important to understand because, while students might be motivated to learn in general, they might harbor ill feelings toward a specific culture or a specific language due to personal reasons. On one hand, in this case study we have immigrant instructors who professed to be happy to be employed, regardless of their specific assignments, and on the other hand, we have students who did not have a choice in which language they are learning.

Students enrolled in the language and culture program at this case study site are expected to master a specific level of proficiency in order to pass their Initial Acquisition Training (IAT). Languages taught in IAT are placed into categories of difficulty, with Category 1 being the easiest and Category 4 being the most difficult for a native English speaker to acquire. Categories 1 and 2 include French, Spanish, and Tagalog, and Categories 3 and 4 include Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Farsi, Korean, and Pashto. Participants are tested using an Oral Proficiency Interview and the Defense Language Proficiency Test to assess their levels at the end of the program. They must be rated at
level 1 to pass Category 1 or 2 languages and 0+ to pass Categories 3 and 4, as measured by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR).

All this information are important criteria for what constitutes a successful program—whether most students are meeting or exceeding the stated goals of the program upon completion of their courses. The site chosen for the case study has a 99% success rate since its inception in 2008, which means that the students have a 99% chance of meeting or exceeding the expected results (low level of proficiency, rating of 1) on the exit tests Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and a low level of 0+ on the DLPT. However, to define success by graduating students who attain foreign language proficiency is a limited view, which does not illustrate the whole picture. It is a common practice to describe an instructor as successful simply because his or her students have met and exceeded the expected test scores. In keeping with this same belief, it is also customary to unfavorably describe an instructor because he or she had students that did not meet the expected results. While the caliber of instructors has a bearing on students’ results, there are a lot of factors that contribute to students’ success. To associate success or failure of instructors with student results remains unjust, illogical, and yet a common practice among government administrators as explained by Leaver and Kaplan (2004). Although the vendor/civilian company and the government’s representatives frequently evaluate instructors, there is very little that we know about their experiences teaching in the program.

**Sampling/Participants**

For the purpose of this study, I used purposeful sampling to select interviewees from the instructors who responded positively to the invitation to participate in this study.
The participants were six civilian immigrant instructors hired by the vendor/civilian company. I chose three females and three male instructors to maintain a balance in the gender selection. I interviewed seven participants. The first participant was not willing to talk about his experience, so the data from that interview was not included. I eliminated the first interview from the data and interviewed another male instructor. All participants were recent immigrants and have been in the country for 5 years or less. In other words, all participants were foreign-born and first-generation immigrants. All the participants were immigrants and native speakers of the languages that they teach. Additionally, all instructors come from different cultural backgrounds. While race and religious affiliation affect the core values of individuals and their behaviors, I avoided framing my research based on nationality or religion. To clarify further, I did not presume such influence nor look for specific ethnicity or religious affiliation as a prerequisite for recruitment. All the participants voluntarily shared their religion during the interviews. One participant insisted that I mention his religion. All participants came from the Middle East. The languages represented were Arabic, Farsi, and Pashto.

**Recruitment**

Approval from the San Diego State University (SDSU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained before the recruitment phase began. The study was considered to be educational research bearing minimal risk and verified as exempt (see Appendix A). In order to initiate recruitment in a culturally acceptable manner, I approached each candidate personally. I invited 12 instructors to participate in my study. Three instructors called me to apologize and decline; nine expressed their willingness to participate. I interviewed seven participants and eliminated data from one of the participants.
I met with each instructor separately to explain my study project. At the end of the meeting, I asked each instructor to contact me if he or she was willing to participate.

During this study, I transferred and accepted a new position with a different local command. This took place in April of 2013 prior to obtaining IRB approval and conducting interviews. I believe that this move put the participants at ease. Since I no longer work for the program, there was no misconception about my intentions in conducting the study. The instructors understood that I was only interested in their experiences for educational purposes, and it would not affect their employment in any way.

**Data Collection**

Yin (2012) states, “Good case studies benefit from having multiple sources of evidences” (p. 10). In this case study, I used existing data collected during direct observation: QASP forms and personal observational notes written separately. I obtained the command’s written permission (see Appendix B) to use Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) forms (see Appendix C) and my observational notes that I collected during the course of my employment. I took the observational notes in order to provide the instructors with feedback that would aid them professionally. I also collected data from semi-structured individual interviews, and writing assignments. All data collection was done on a volunteer basis. Only two instructors provided the writing assignments. The other instructors did not feel comfortable writing in English.

**Direct Observation**

Direct observation is deemed an appropriate tool for the qualitative inquiry by the researcher. Patton (2002) enumerates the values of direct observation as follows: First, it
allows the observer to understand the context within which people interact, which is essential to acquire holistic perspective. Second, it frees the observer from relying on written documents and verbal reports. Third, it enables the observer to discover things which people did not notice or were unwilling to discuss.

Yin (2003) explains that making direct observations in a field setting has two steps. First, the researcher collects observational data; for example, taking field notes. In step two, the researcher composes a narrative and identifies whether the information represents a neutral view of the researcher’s or participants’ views. Yin declares that in addition to the traditional observational procedure, there is another way, which is the use of a formal observational instrument.

Yin (2003) found the use of observational evidence to be useful in providing information about the topic studied. During my employment as the academic coordinator, I used a formal observational instrument known as QASP (Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan), a sample that is contained in Appendix C. I used this government form to take field notes based on class observation. As the QASP forms are administered according to prescheduled visits, I notified the instructors at least a day ahead, the instructor sent me his or her lesson plan, and I went to the classroom to conduct the observation. This formal observational instrument, however, has its own shortcomings. The instructors might have used the opportunity and customized their routines to match a favorable evaluation.

During my employment as the academic coordinator for the military language schoolhouse, I had the unique opportunity to observe classes. I asked the command for
permission, and I obtained approval, to use existing data from notes collected during my previous observations (see Appendix B).

Patton (2002) provides a summary of the value of direct observation:

Finally, getting close to the people in a setting through firsthand experience permits the inquirer to draw on personal knowledge during the formal interpretation stage of analysis. The observer takes in information and forms of impressions that go beyond what can be fully recorded in even the most detailed field notes. (p. 264)

**Individual Interviews**

I used in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which enabled me to develop a deeper understanding of the instructors’ experiences (see Appendix D for interview protocol). Esterberg (2002) found using in-depth interviews to be an effective method if the participants are from marginalized groups. Since the research focus is on immigrant instructors, using in-depth interviews is appropriate. I needed to allow the instructors to tell their stories, and I used several quotations from their interviews to highlight what they felt and experienced.

“Informal interviewing aims to get the respondent’s story from his unique perspective,” explained Weiss (1998, p. 259). Weiss (1998) explains informal interviewing by comparing it to structured questions of a survey. She declared while an interviewer is taping an interview, he/she has to pay attention to nonverbal cues, such as facial expression and body language. The researcher will use informal interviewing in order to ask open-ended questions and allow participants to share their own stories. Yin (2011) underscored the value of open-ended interviews: “The flexible format permits
open-ended interviews, if properly done, to reveal how case study participants construct reality and think about situations, not just to provide the answers to a researcher’s specific questions and own implicit construction of reality” (p. 12).

In this case study, the instructors are participants, and their construction of reality brought valuable insights into the case. The interviews provided the appropriate avenue for their voices.

The interviews were conducted in a public library. I asked the participants to choose the time and location for their convenience and ease. The interview protocols are found later in this study (see Appendix D).

As recognition for their valuable time, I offered monetary compensation to the participants in the form of a $100 Visa card for partaking in the interviews and doing the writing assignments. Only two instructors accepted the compensation, while the others insisted on volunteering. The interviews followed an open-ended question, semi-structured format. If the interviewing protocol specified rigid questions, the results might be contrived. However, the case study is designed to present answers to a series of open-ended questions about the instructors’ expectations at the beginning of the courses and how their experiences in their courses were.

Yin (2012) warns against having no structure in the data collection. He explains: Descriptive studies typically fail to specify a priori the critical ingredients of the phenomenon to be described. Data collection can then ramble on a result and the ensuing case study may even contain undesirable, circular reasoning. The final description constitutes a contaminated combination of what may have been expected and what was found. (p. 41)
Yin’s warning is very useful, because without knowing what a researcher is looking for, it is easy to get lost. I specified that I am looking for evidence of use or lack of use of teaching strategies which are based on andragogical assumptions and second language acquisition theories before starting my research.

**Data Analysis**

I started the data analysis of the QASP forms and the observational notes for each instructor prior to interviewing him or her. The data gleaned from the analysis of the forms and the observational notes contributed to guiding me and helped me focus during the interview. The data were reviewed and analyzed manually. I used colored sticky notes and colored highlighters. I worked in a rather “primitive” way, as my sons described it. First, I analyzed the raw data line by line. I used Charmaz (2006) methods of open and focused coding.

I used action verbs to describe the initial codes used. I developed a code book and wrote analytical memos to describe the codes’ definition and characteristics of themes. I initially used a yellow highlighter for passages denoting temporary constructs and wrote it on yellow sticky notes. When these temporary constructs were not reinforced by evidence of support, I deleted it and removed all yellow highlighted passages into another working document. In that first phase of coding, I did a line by line coding and stayed close to the data. Open coding allowed themes and subthemes to emerge.

The second phase of coding was focused and began with revising the code book. The secondary codes were derived from participants’ own words used during the interviews. The second-order construct summarized important themes. I used a green highlighter to visually mark the second-order constructs. For example, in my initial
analysis, I identified a theme which I called “Gaming the system.” As I did the second phase of cross case analysis, I realized that that theme reflected my own ex-administrator bias. I abandoned it. I analyzed the data with a focus on uncovering hidden meaning or, as Charmaz (2006) put it, “salient categories in larger batches of data” (p. 46). After that deeper look, I realized that the instructors adopted strategies to survive and cope with the fact that they were less than equipped for the task of teaching their military students. Creswell (2009) recommends the use of constant comparative analysis in order to enhance the reliability of coding and interpretation. I used the constant comparative method to compare data within each subunit. When groups of codes had similar meanings, subthemes emerged. I used a pink highlighter to visually distinguish the similarities. In essence, axial coding was used to connect subthemes to theme and glue the data back together in what Charmaz (2006) calls “coherent whole” (p. 60).

In summary, I viewed this case study as an embedded, single case design with each participant as a subunit. I considered all data from each instructor as a subunit. I looked at the interview notes, the QASP forms from his or her observation, and observational notes from our subsequent meeting. I did this initial phase to distinguish between what was unique to each participant and what characteristics were shared between participants. Then, I started a cross-case analysis. I noted when subthemes overlapped with light blue highlighter. I created a matrix of categories using pattern matching and explanation building. I also used the logic model as an analytic technique, matching what was observed to what was theoretically plausible in the literature. Sometimes findings lent support to previously theoretical propositions in the literature, and sometimes findings were contradictory to earlier findings in the literature.
Institutional Review Board

The following information serves as a clarification regarding the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and collection of data, while observation notes were initially collected for nonresearch purposes. I obtained the military command’s approval (see Appendix B) and IRB approval (see Appendix A) to use existing materials. The study complied with IRB policy and guidelines, since I ensured that interview subjects were informed of their rights as study participants. The information provided by interviewees was kept secure and confidential during data collection, analysis, and final reports.

Confidentiality

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants in the study, the case study site is denoted as the military language schoolhouse and not referenced by its specific name. It is located in California. The information that the interviewees provided was kept secure and confidential in a locked cabinet in my house during data collection, analysis, and final report. All copies of raw data were shredded. I eliminated all identifying data including age, religion, and country of origin to further ensure confidentiality of the participants. Given the relatively small cohort of instructors, I used these pseudonyms throughout the study. I was the sole person responsible for all documentation and took all necessary steps to ensure the integrity of the case study. Additionally, each participant was given an opportunity to opt out at any stage of the data collection as explained in the informed consent (see Appendix E).
Role of the Researcher/Trustworthiness/Validity

Merriam (1998) identified six strategies to enhance internal validity: triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, collaborative modes of research, and researcher’s biases. I used three of these strategies: First, I used multiple sources of data resulting in triangulation. Triangulation was used to increase internal validity. Yin (2011) explains triangulation as establishing converging lines of evidence. He contends, “The most desired convergence occurs when three (or more) independent sources all point to the same set of events, facts or interpretations” (p. 13). Second, I used member check, as I followed up with the participants and made sure that the tentative interpretations of their statements are accurate. Third, I shared information about my background in order for readers to understand how researcher’s biases might have affected my interpretation.

Much has been said about whether researchers should conduct their studies as an “outsider” or as an “insider.” This has been a topic of recent scholarly work (Lofland, 2006; McCorkel & Myers, 2003). I am viewed by the participants in many ways as an “insider.” They often refer to me as “one of us.” This was also evidenced by the fact that four out of six participants insisted on volunteering in the research without receiving any monetary compensation. I do not believe that gender played a role in the acceptance or refusal of compensation, since out of three male participants two accepted and the three female participants refused. If cultural backgrounds played a role, I would have expected none of the male participants to accept the compensation. Despite the role I played as an administrator, I personally viewed myself as one of them. I was an immigrant who began her professional career years ago by teaching Arabic and French to military students.
Creswell (2009) cautions that the researcher’s personal biases might affect their interpretations. I shared demographic facts about myself to provide readers with information that would illuminate my background. I have worked for the past 10 years at the same military command. I held the position of the academic coordinator for the foreign language program from June 2008 until March 2013. While this position enabled me unique access to the program and a unique opportunity to observe interactions between instructors and students, the most important aspect about it is the fact that it enabled me to develop good relationships with the instructors. The position was considered middle management within the leadership echelon in the command. Its functions relate to the daily operations of the foreign language program. As the academic coordinator, I was in charge of observing instruction and advising the students about academic issues. My job was a nonsupervisory position, which held no authority over instructors and students.

Given my long history of employment with the program, I am aware that I may have personal biases and preconceived notions. I guarded against any personal bias since I used member check and shared the interpretation with the participants. They all expressed their agreement, and none of the participants asked me to change or edit any information. Additionally, I did not add any information that I knew personally about the participants from outside the research. I was very vigilant about inviting instructors who were currently working at the program, as well as others who were not. I excluded Egyptian instructors who are personal friends to me from the sample. I am confident that I used systematic data collection and analysis procedures to mitigate any personal biases.
I only used data collected from interviews and document analysis. I did not add any information based on familiarity with the topic and knowledge of the participants.

Our understanding of each other is based on myriad personal interpretations we weave together into meaningful stories that help us to make sense of similar events and situations, or similar plotlines. Therefore, I believe that my prior experience with the program was a strength that led to a rich and intensive understanding of the participants. Thomas (2011) explained the usefulness of the interpretative inquiry as follows:

You should in a case study, be able to smell human breath and hear the sound of the voices. Nothing is lost in their refraction through our own understanding as interpreting inquirers. In fact, much is gained as we add a separate viewpoint one that moulds and melds the experiences of others through our understandings.

(p. 7)

Put another way, I was an instructor who had similar experiences as the participants. I was an administrator who viewed instruction through an administrator’s lens. Now, I am just a researcher who is viewed as an insider, and I can fully understand and appreciate the instructors’ experiences through an objective research lens.

I moved to another command in April 2013 prior to obtaining IRB approval and beginning the recruitment phase. The fact that I no longer worked for the program allowed the participants to more fully share their stories without any reservation. Some of the participants actually said that they would not have been comfortable telling me what they said if I was still in my position of academic coordinator.
Significance

As the need to teach military students foreign language and cultures persists, the need to train immigrant instructors increases. As the study will shed light on the experiences of some immigrant instructors, it might lead instructor trainers to develop multicultural perspective that will accommodate immigrant instructor’s specific needs. The study might lead decision makers to revise curricular goals.

This study is of interest to other foreign language immigrant instructors who might be facing similar circumstances as the participants.

Summary

This chapter presented a detailed account of the systematic process and methodology used to conduct this descriptive case study. The research design was discussed, including theoretical propositions. Data collection was presented including recruitment, individual interviews, and direct observations. A detailed description of the research setting (school house) was provided. The data coding techniques were explained step by step. A brief review of the study’s limitations, delimitations, and significance was provided. The chapter concluded with a description of measures that I took to ensure confidentiality, trustworthiness, and validity. The following chapter will provide a detailed summary of findings.
CHAPTER 4—FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences of six immigrant instructors teaching their languages and cultures to military students and explore how the content knowledge of the instructors influenced their teaching. The literature addresses foreign language instruction; however, the experiences of instructors who are native speakers of the languages they teach and immigrants teaching their cultures in a new country are rarely discussed. This study shows how the cultural backgrounds of the instructors played a role in their choices of teaching methodologies.

This chapter presents a synthesis of the research findings. It is divided into four parts. It starts with an introduction of the six instructors. The second part presents major themes and subthemes which emerged from participants’ interviews, and document analysis. The third part reports on the major themes and subthemes which emerged during the interviews only. Then the chapter concludes with a summary of findings.

Background

I invited 12 instructors to participate. Nine instructors contacted me and expressed their willingness to participate; they were all from the Middle East. I interviewed seven instructors. I discarded the data obtained from the first interviewee after I failed to make the participant understand that this research is about his experience and not mine. All the participants were recent immigrants who arrived in the United States less than 5 years ago. All interview sessions were held at a local library at times convenient to the participants. Two participants received a monetary stipend/Visa cash card. Four participants insisted on volunteering their time. Three of the instructors
belonged to an ethnic minority and religious minorities in their countries of origin. Three instructors were female. The participants’ ages varied from 27 to 54 years old.

I did not ask the participants about their faith. I was hesitant about introducing personal and sensitive issues. However, all the participants started with a self-identification. One instructor started by saying, “As an Iraqi Muslim woman . . .” and a male instructor repeated throughout the interview, “As a Middle Eastern man who belonged to a religious and ethnic minority in [country of birth].” I avoided reporting the country of birth, religion, or ages in order to further protect the confidentiality of the participants. When I used quotations, I substituted the name of countries with the phrase “country of birth” and removed all other information that could lead to possible identification of religion, ethnic group, or age. I asked each participant if there was a pseudonym that he or she would rather have. Some of the participants were happy to have pseudonyms; they suggested that I use their siblings’ names, which are only known to the participants, as their pseudonyms. I apologized that this might lead to possible identification. I used the names of three of my aunts for the female participants and two names of childhood friends for the male instructors. One of the instructors insisted that I give him an American name. I used Jon, which is the name of a friend.

**Instructors**

Siham is a vibrant young woman. She brought a small suitcase full of artifacts from her native country that she uses in class. She came half an hour before the interview and displayed the artifacts on the interview table. She proudly shared a lot of pictures that were taken during numerous field trips with her students. Teaching military students was her first work experience. She was a married housewife who did not work in her
native country. She did not receive formal education in her country beyond high school. She refused to accept any monetary compensation for her interview. She shared that she came from a prominent family who suffered in the conditions of her country. She immigrated with her family to join other family members who had immigrated to the United States 20 years ago. She met another instructor in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class who urged her to apply for the position. She shared that her husband allowed her to work, since they lived with extended family and housework was divided between the females in the house. She also said she told her family that she was teaching children. The “Need to Hide the Nature of Work” theme is later discussed as a theme which emerged from the data.

Jon is a Middle Eastern man. He insisted on having an English name as a nickname since he uses a nickname in all his social interactions. Jon salted his speech with excessive profanity. Jon refused to do the writing assignment and explained that writing in English is one of his weaknesses. I later asked him about the lesson plans that he submitted daily for the programs. This subject is discussed later in the data analysis. Jon was introduced to the position while he was smoking with his friends and playing backgammon. Jon had no prior work experience related to education. He shared that he was a successful car salesman in San Francisco. He said that teaching seemed like it would be easy, so he knew that he could do it. Jon shared that he did not finish formal education in his country of birth; however, he acquired a degree certificate. He explained that in his country, like several other Middle Eastern countries, he was able to purchase a certificate. Jon refused to accept compensation. He said that I was “one of them” and my
success is his success. His attitude is later discussed in the theme “Recreating the Tribe” which emerged during the analysis of the data.

Awatef is a middle-aged woman. She shared that she worked as an instructor for children in her native country. She said that she is doing her job to boost the economic situation of her children in the new country. Awatef talked about the difficulty of her position as an instructor. She talked about her husband and “the price he paid in her country torn by war.” I share this information for two reasons: first there are number of countries torn by war in the Middle East, so it is not easy to guess her country of origin. The second reason is frequency and significance, as Awatef managed to weave in this information with all her responses. Awatef did not do the writing assignment. She admitted that she pays another instructor with lunch in exchange for writing her lesson plans. Awatef refused to receive any monetary compensation. She explained that she wanted to share her story with others through the research, since she never talks about her position.

Fareed is a young Middle Eastern man. He belonged to ethnic and religious minority groups in his country of birth. He repeatedly shared that information and used it as an explanation throughout the interview. He came to the appointment on time. His interview is the one that did not run long. He provided the writing assignment. He also was the only instructor who accepted gracefully the Visa card as a compensation for his time. He also admitted that he did not finish his formal education in his country of birth. Fareed proudly said that he was enrolled in a community college and taking ESL classes. He was introduced to the position through his roommate and cousin who was also an instructor. He had no prior work experience.
Thoraya is a young woman. She shared that she had prior experience working as a tactical training “role-player” with Marines. She was very proud about her prior work experience. She insisted that I share the information. She curiously said that her prior experience prepared her to be an instructor. I did not see the relevance and asked her later to understand her logic. She explained that both jobs are role-playing, but one is scripted and the other is unscripted. She shared that she was enrolled in school and working on her associate’s degree. Thoraya was very happy to share her experience and refused to accept any monetary compensation for her participation.

Ali is a Muslim and Middle Eastern man. I mention his religion at his request. When I explained to him that I will hide all identifying information, he insisted that I should mention that he was Muslim and give him a Muslim pseudonym. He said, “Islam defines who I am and how I live.” Ali was the only instructor who had a terminal degree and prior experience teaching adults. He was the only participant who arrived in the United States for only 1 year prior to his first teaching experience. Like all the other participants, he heard about the position informally from friends. Ali was the other study participant to accept financial compensation. He did not accept it gracefully like Fareed. Ali tried to bargain for more money and offered to have additional interviews for more money. Ali explained, “We are in the U.S., and we learned that time is money.” Like Fareed, Ali was the only other instructor who submitted the writing assignment.

**Major Themes and Subthemes**

In this section, I examined several themes that emerged during the interviews and from the analysis of documents. Three major themes evolved through the process of coding the interview notes and document analysis. These themes include: teaching
styles/instructor-centered style, teaching culture/reinforcing stereotypes, and fear of job loss/economic advantage. Four themes emerged from the interviews only: need to hide, acceptance, proof of loyalty, and recreating the tribe. Each one of these themes and its family of codes or subthemes are described in the following two sections.

This case study had an embedded, single case design. The story of each participant represented a subunit. I initially coded all the documents and then wrote analytic memos describing the code definitions. Through constant comparison using pattern matching and analytic technique, themes emerged. These themes were categories of information generated from open coding. The cross-case analysis revealed major similarities between the experiences of the instructors. Subthemes were gleaned from the data. Table 1 presents the major themes and subthemes that emerged from interviewing the instructors, the document analysis of the QASP, and the observational notes.

Table 1

Major Themes and Subthemes That Emerged From Instructors’ Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major themes</th>
<th>Subthemes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching styles/teacher centered</td>
<td>Traditional teaching practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching culture/reinforcing stereotypes</td>
<td>The teacher as a messenger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of job loss/economic advantage</td>
<td>Staging</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher-waiter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Worrying about students’ scores</td>
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Classroom Setting

The dynamics of class interaction involved multidimensional social axes and continuous negotiations between students and instructors. It is important to remember that the instructors did not receive any information about the military culture in the
United States. The students are enlisted noncommissioned officers and officers. All the students wear uniforms during class sessions, and their ranks are clearly visible to the instructors. According to the foreign language and culture program regulations, the highest-ranking student is the leader of the class who reports issues to the administration and deals with his classmates to ensure accountability of the students.

It is important to remember that the instructors are immigrants from societies that have a caste system. For the instructors, that places the students in a hierarchy where noncommissioned officers are at the bottom of the invisible pyramid of power and officers are at the top. Some instructors shared that they did not care about enlisted students. Other instructors bragged about the fact that they randomly taught more officers. It is equally important to remember that the immigrant instructors come from countries where the profession of teaching is held in higher regard. Additionally, the instructors received their education in a teacher-centered environment.

**Major Theme 1: Teaching Styles/Teacher-Centered**

As the participants started to answer the question about their teaching philosophy, they all discussed what each of them believed to be his or her teaching ideology. The teaching ideologies of the instructors, as expressed through interviews and as found in the observed activities, leaned toward a teacher-centered style. From the answers provided by all the instructors, it was clear that the concept of student-centeredness is not truly understood or practiced by the instructors. Some of the instructors’ comments revealed their preference for teaching-centered style. Ali spoke about his firm belief that as subject matter expert, he should be in charge. He added, “What do these young students
know about teaching a language?” Thoraya shared her opinion of student-centered. She said, “I know that the right word that you are looking for is student-centered, but that simply does not work. Think about how you and I were raised in teacher-centered classrooms.” When I analyzed the QASP for Thoraya, I found the following comments: *Thoraya acted like a policeman and a judge. She blamed the students for not remembering words from their memorization lists and assigned punishment to write each word 100 times.* Jon affirmed Thoraya’s opinion about student-centered learning by saying, “That shit does not work.”

On the other hand, other instructors called their teaching styles “student-centered” yet described “teacher-centered.” Siham explained, “I believe in the communicative approach. I have the students repeat after me all the time. I keep them talking all the time.” When I analyzed the QASP for Siham, I found the following comments: *The instructor asked the students what do you feel like learning today; There is no visible evidence of lesson plan; The instructor let the students repeat after her for half an hour.* Awatef said, “I am student-centered focused. I come to class and tell them a lot of activities that I prepared.” Fareed commented, “I am a believer of student-centered, and I give the best lectures in my class every day.” When Fareed explained student-centered in the writing assignment, he wrote: “I care about my students and that makes me a 100% student-centered instructor.” It was clear from his written and verbal statements that Fareed did not understand what student-centered means.

When I analyzed the QASP forms, the theme of *teacher-centered* received support from the comments made under the second criterion, *learner centered.* In Ali’s classes, the following comments were written: *He took over; Ali monopolized the speech; the*
ratio of teacher’s talk vs. students’ talk is imbalanced; Ali dominated and the students mutely listened; Ali did not stop to evaluate comprehension. In the observational notes taken during the subsequent meeting with Ali, he explained, “As our prophet Mohamed (May Peace Be Upon Him) said, the teacher should almost be considered a messenger. How does administration expect us to be a teacher-waiter? I am the subject matter expert; I should be in charge.”

Within this overarching theme of teaching style, a subtheme of traditional teaching practices emerged. The participants demonstrated through their classroom practices and articulated in their interviews that they have very traditional teaching practices. For instance, some of the participants bragged about their superior abilities to explain grammar rules. Awatef said, “I am the best instructor as far as teaching grammar. I spent about 2 hours explaining grammar rules daily.” Fareed was very proud that he could recite grammar rules better than any other instructor. Siham shared that she could make grammar drills because she knows all the rules by heart. All the participants talked about their students’ abilities to memorize vocabulary lists. Thoraya described good students as the ones with the better memory. There was no evidence that any of the teaching strategies used by instructors corresponded with the assumptions of Andragogy. The instructors did not believe that their students were capable of doing self-directed learning activities. For example, in analyzing the comments made on all QASP forms, the fifth criterion (Critical Thinking and Problem Solving) I found the following comment repeatedly: “instructor believed that his students were incapable of dealing with problem solving and activities which required critical thinking skills.” In the observational notes taken during the subsequent meetings, Awatef explained that her
students are beginners and could not deal with any complicated class activities. Thoraya joked, “My students do not do math.” Instructors did not want to present tasks that require more than mere recalling of vocabulary. In essence, this practice relates to the satisfaction guaranteed theme which will be later explained. Instructors did all that they could to avoid frustrating their students.

One of Knowles’ (1980) assumptions of Andragogy, explains that adult learners need to understand why they are learning what they are taught. This assumption also explains that once the learner sees the relevancy of the task, it will enhance his learning experience. In analyzing the comments made under the sixth criterion Assessment on all QASP forms, I found that while all instructors wrote the objective of the lesson plan on the board following the foreign language and culture program’s rules, they failed to explain to their students the relevance of the tasks. That made the lesson’s objective as written on the board devoid of any significance. In interviewing the participants, I came to realize that the instructors could not imagine a social context where their students would be accepted and get to practice. Thoraya explained, “These students will become occupiers who will be talking with them and correcting their mistakes?” I later asked Thoraya about her use of the word occupiers; she laughed and said, “That’s who they are, right?” Awatef shared, “My students told me a hundred times that they will have an interpreter to use. They will not really get to use the language.” It became clear to me that the instructors did not see how teaching the students languages and cultures was relevant to the students’ jobs, and therefore failed to understand the goal and purpose behind teaching. In my observational notes taken during instructors meeting, Ali described an incident where he corrected a student and told him that he pronounced a
word wrong. Then the student held his arm up, motioned with his fingers as if he was holding a rifle and asked him, “How about now, would they still understand me?” Ali concluded the story by saying that all the students laughed, and he turned his back to the class to write on the board and move on to a new topic.

**Major Theme 2: Teaching Culture/Reinforcing Stereotypes**

While the first category of information had to do with teaching languages, the second category focused on teaching culture or reinforcing stereotypes. In a sense, the participants discussed how they gave inventories of information similar to a tour guide. The reliance on realia (artifacts from the native country) and presenting tourist attractions was visible in the following comment which described teaching culture in my observational notes: *As I passed through the corridors the instructors invited me into their classrooms, which were adorned with artifacts from their countries. They acted like proud mothers and fathers who wanted to show off their babies. The classrooms walls were decorated with fabric, pictures and newspapers. Some instructors brought food, and when you passed by classrooms you smelled the authentic food and aroma of the spices.* During interviews, the participants’ answers revealed that they did not seem to take risks or challenge their students’ preconceptions. All the participants except for Ali were content to limit their cultural instruction to superficial and stereotypical information.

For instance, Fareed shared that he was not personally offended when students put their feet up, but he had to act offended because everyone knows that you cannot show the bottom of your feet around Middle Easterners. Jon admitted, “When some of my students made fun of Middle Eastern men and called them fucking gay, I joined in on the joke and made fun of [name of male instructor] who wore tight white pants.” While Jon
avoided conflict with the students, he failed to explain that these comments would be highly offensive to Middle Eastern men. These moments of cultural conflict is what Agar (2006) called “rich points.”

On the other hand, Ali vehemently defended his views and presented the students with some cultural challenges. Ali felt he represented a negative stereotype to his students and other instructors. He claimed:

I was Islam and what’s wrong with Islam to my students and other instructors. Religion should be a private matter. I could not pray on time without my co-workers laughing behind my back. I resented when students made comments about the Salifi sect. I am not Salifi myself, but I have respect for Salifis. I did not allow my students to speak ill of Sheik Bin Laden. My religion does not allow speaking ill of the dead.

That might incidentally reinforce other stereotypes, such as the common assumption that all Muslims are terrorist sympathizers.

The second subtheme, *the teacher as a messenger*, emerged from what the participants perceived to be their role as instructors of culture. Instructors articulated that they viewed their roles as cultural representatives. Damen (1987) pointed out, “It is often assumed that any teacher as a bearer of a target culture can, by right of group membership, completely supply inventories and explanations of cultural patterns by simply drawing on personal explanation and text selection” (p. 56). The participants’ comments mirror Damen’s statement. Thoraya declared, “I represented my country to my students. The students paid close attention and asked about personal mannerisms and attributed it to my culture.” Damen also warned against treating foreign instructors as
“culture tokens” and in essence that is what Thoraya described. Awatef admitted, “I am not a generous person but I had to share food with students. I was representing my culture.” This theme of viewing the instructor as a cultural representative found support in the notes on the QASP under the third criterion of balanced and variety of language presentation and the observational notes. On the QASP, I noted among all instructors the frequent use of computer-mediated videos. These long videos on YouTube did not seem necessary from a teaching standpoint. The students were beginners, and they could not learn from exposure to videos at a much higher linguistic level than their own proficiency level. In the observational notes, the participants said they felt students saw them as a personification of their culture. The instructors explained the overuse of YouTube videos as a cultural entertainment weapon that they used to protect them from angry or bored students. For instance, the Arabic instructors within the participants showed videos of good looking Lebanese singers such as Haifa Wahbee, Nancy Agram, and Mariyam Fares whenever there were events that triggered anti-Arab sentiment in the media. Awatef explained:

Let me tell you about one day I came to class and learned that some of the students’ friends were killed during their deployment. That day, I was the enemy and nothing that I could say would work. I played YouTube videos all day. Haifa Wahbee came through for me.

Awatef laughed loud, and I joined her. Siham shared that, when her students were bored, it was easier to show YouTube videos than deal with restless students.
Major Theme 3: Fear of Job Loss/Economic Advantage

The theme of *Fear of Job Loss/Economic Advantage* did not appear as a direct answer to any of my interview questions. Nevertheless, it was a salient theme that dominated all the interviews. It affected how they treated the students and managed their classrooms. This fear caused the instructors to worry about their observation. It made them want to please the students. It made them worry about the students’ scores. Each aspect of this fear is explained in the subthemes that were gleaned from analyzing the data. The perception of the instructors was that if students were unsatisfied with their teaching that it would cost them their job. The instructors linked receiving bad evaluations with job loss. Siham said, “You remember [instructor name]; she is now a sales associate at Ross after she got these low numbers on the evaluations. I do not want to become a Ross sales associate.”

Thoraya professed a similar opinion. “You see how many evaluations we have. I can’t afford to lose my job. I let my students do and get what they want.” Thoraya admitted that, out of fear of losing her job, she asked the students to rehearse the session the day before observations. Essentially, what I observed the day of the observation was theater. Awatef confessed that she adopted a similar practice, where she rewarded the students by giving them longer media break if they prepared their parts in the lesson. Awatef said, “I probably would not have told you that if you still worked there. But I just could not afford to get a bad observation, and the students understood.” Siham said, “I had to bribe the students with food treats just to make sure that I have a good observation.”
This theme of *Fear of Job Loss* received substantial support from the document analysis. The instructors followed the foreign language and culture program rules just to keep their jobs. For example, in analyzing the QASP, under the ninth criterion, *lesson plan*, I noted that the instructors provided me with a print out of their lesson plans but that there was little evidence that they adhered to them. I recorded this in my observational notes and during the follow-up meeting the instructors provided explanations. Fareed told me, “I do it [lesson plan] because it is required. You know I have to follow the program’s rules.” Siham explained, “Do not forget, the program paid us 1.5 hours a day for providing a lesson plan.” Jon admitted, “We are provided a format and I just fill in the blanks, but most of the time I have no fucking idea what it means.” Ali shared, “I do it [lesson plan] because it is enforced and we are paid to produce but I find it very limiting. Of course, I do not follow it.”

The subtheme of *satisfaction guaranteed* is a manifestation of the instructors’ fear of observation. Awatef explained, “You know the customer is always right. I kept all the activities at a manageable size. If a student [misunderstood it] and no other student caught it, I did not correct it either.” Siham admitted, “The job is what we call back home ‘A way of eating bread.’ I could not cause any frustration to students by adding hard tasks. I was eating bread, and you do not go upset people you work for.” Ali lamented, “I know that I was not well-liked, but I did what I thought what was right. I made the students think. Yet, I am the one who has not been recalled for classes.”

This subtheme appeared throughout the interviews, QASP and observational notes. It describes a strategy used by instructors to avoid frustrating their students out of fear of losing their jobs. Under the fifth criterion, *critical thinking and problem solving,*
I noted that the instructors did not push the students beyond their current level of proficiency. In the observational notes, Fareed said, “Just to get students to memorize a few conversations took a lot of work.” Siham admitted, “If I was covering any point that the students did not understand in the curriculum, I told them to skip it because it was not important.” Awatef explained, “My students are beginners; God created the world in 7 days. The students are not able to deal with complicated class activities.”

The second subtheme within the theme of Fear of Job Loss was teacher-waiter. The expression of teacher-waiter was introduced by Ali. He complained, “I felt like I became a teacher-waiter. I had to serve the students what they wanted. If I did not, the students went and complained to the manager. I felt like I was not allowed to be the teacher-subject matter expert. I was reduced to a teacher-waiter.” In analyzing the tenth criterion, homework, on the QASP, I noted that the instructors listed the homework assigned, but there was no evidence that it was ever collected or corrected. In my observational notes, the instructors provided the following explanation. Jon said, “There was no fucking way that the students will do 2 hours’ worth of homework after being in the class for 6 hours a day. We made a deal. I could not give fucking homework without risking the students hating me.” Siham explained, “I had to reach a compromise with my students. I had to assign homework to follow the school rules, but I told my students [she winked] that I would never collect or correct it.” Awatef shared, “I am there to please the students and giving 2 hours of homework was a big no-no.” Ali said, “I assigned homework and had to hear excuses from the students daily about why it was not done. I was just the teacher-waiter and waiters do not give the order. They take it.”
Another subtheme occurring within the theme of *Fear of Job Loss* was manifested in the instructors *worrying about students’ scores*. Low performing students presented a danger of possibly scoring low test results. This is consistent with Leaver and Kaplan’s (2004) finding that government instructors are held accountable for their students results. Fareed said that he did not want low performers in his class. He said, “Once I realized that these students were not pulling their weight, I complained about them to the administration in the weekly progress report. I had to recommend tutoring and show that it was not my fault.”

Thoraya admitted that she pushed low performers into another class. She said:

I had an honest discussion with any low performing student and advised him to move to the other class so the other teacher can help him more. That strategy always worked, because I made the advice about them and not me.

This subtheme of *worrying about student’s scores* was mirrored on QASP and observational notes. It was noted under the seventh criterion, *skill and proficiency* on the QASP, that Awatef used an Islamic/Arabic expression to praise the students “*Masha Allah!*” She also repeatedly told students, “You are 2,” in a beginners class where students could not possibly be at level 2. When I met with Awatef to discuss her observation, she said, “I have to praise them; I want them to score on the OPI, and I want to think that they can do it even if they do mistakes.” The OPI is the Oral Proficiency Interview which students take as an exit test at the end of the course.

On Thoraya’s QASP, I noted that she completely ignored two students in her class. During the subsequent meeting, she explained, “Well, when they do not speak, they make me look bad. If they do not score on OPI, I lose my job.”
Themes Which Emerged From Interviews Only

All the following themes and subthemes appeared from the analysis of the interviews only. It did not receive support from the analysis of documents because QASP and observational materials reflected observed behaviors in classrooms. During the interviews, the instructors talked about their experiences and the feelings that they had. Table 2 presents the major themes and subthemes which emerged from analyzing the interviews only.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Themes and Subthemes Which Emerged From Analyzing the Interviews Only</th>
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<td>Themes</td>
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<td>Need to hide the nature of work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proof of loyalty</td>
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**Major Theme 4: Need to Hide the Nature of Work**

Instructors shared that they kept in touch with their extended family and friends back in the countries of origin, sometimes through daily contact on Facebook. In some cases, they sent money back home to help less fortunate family members or siblings.

The instructors shared they could not proudly share their professional success stories and the fact that they obtained jobs as instructors of military students. Some instructors went as far as creating a back-story and gave their family members made-up scenarios. Ali said, “I told my family that I was teaching Arabic to engineers who will be hired by oil companies to work in gulf countries. I know that I lied to my family, but that
Allah will forgive, as it was necessary and, as you know, necessary lies are forgiven in Islam.” Thoraya admitted, “I told my family that as a student in [a local university], I was required to do community services and participate in [a] conversational club.” Awatef shared, “After all what my family have been through in [country of origin] and the price that my husband paid, I would be viewed as a traitor if I tell my family that I teach military students. I told them that I teach children,” she laughed. Then she added, “To me they almost are children.”

Another aspect of this theme was a desire shared by all the instructors to hide from others in their ethnic group that they taught military students, even when they took the students on field trips to ethnic grocery stores and restaurants. Awatef said, “I just told the owner of the restaurant or the store that I teach in [a local university].” Jon confessed, “I introduced my students to the waiters in [Arabic restaurant] by saying that they were [community college] students.”

The subtheme need for distance emerged as I analyzed the interviews of instructors who expressed the need to hide the nature of work. Some of the participants shared that they felt the need to distance themselves from their ethnic and cultural communities. For instance, Siham moved away from an apartment building in a community of immigrants from her country of origin. She explained, “I did not want neighbors to learn what I do. People there are curious. They might envy my professional success or try to apply for my job. I had to move to a secluded house.” Awatef expressed similar belief. She said, “I had to move out, as I did not want my neighbors to know that I teach military students.” Fareed said that he could not hang out with his friends who were from his country of birth. “They could not understand my choice of teaching
military. They would have judged me or stopped talking to me. Besides, I also wanted to be closer to my students and spend more time with them.”

**Major Theme 5: Acceptance**

It seemed easier for the instructors who belonged to religious, ethnic and gender minorities in their countries of origin than other instructors who were male, and belonged to ethnic and religious majorities, to cross social boundaries and be accepted by their students.

Fareed said, “The students knew that my family was discriminated against in my country. They knew that Muslims have persecuted us. I think that allowed them to think of me as an ally.” He added that he introduced himself and shared his religion with his students in the first 5 minutes on the first day. “I grew up playing with Muslim kids in my neighborhood and have many Muslim friends,” he explained. “However, I had to allow my students to share their anti-Muslim sentiments. I knew that there was no point of talking about my childhood friends and share how they protected me and that they were nice to me.” Thoraya expressed a similar belief: “My ethnic background did not work for me back home, but it was definitely an advantage in my classroom.”

Two of the female instructors experienced the same acceptance by the students. Siham explained:

I was viewed as a victim who got freed. The students made jokes about how my husband used to hit me in my [country of origin]. The students commented on what they called western style clothing and said things like, “you could not dress like that back home.” I did not once share with them that I wore the same style
clothing back in [country of origin], and my husband was a decent man who never abused me.

Thoraya expressed a similar view: “My students told me that now I am saved from arranged marriages. I did not object or share that my parents married for love and that in my family arranged marriages do not exist.” The instructor shared that she did not want to appear as if she was defending her native culture.

The subtheme need to blend in appeared as I analyzed the narratives of participants who experienced acceptance. During the interviews, Siham, Thoraya, Awatef, Fareed, and Jon said that they wanted to downplay their “foreign identity.” This finding is consistent with Goffman’s concept (1963), which explained that an individual with a stigmatized trait acts in a way that either hides or downplays the stigmatization.

Thoraya confessed:

I am not comfortable wearing short skirts and low cut blouses. I just wanted my students to think of me as a liberated woman. I live with my parents. When I left my house every morning, I wore long loose dresses and no make-up. Then I stopped at Starbucks got my morning coffee, put heavy make-up, switched into my short skirts and low cut blouses. Et, voila! My transformation was complete.

Siham’s statement echoed Thoraya’s feeling: “I went to Macy’s and purchased jeans for Friday, which is a casual day. I wanted to look American to my students.”

Awatef explained, “I started to drink coffee instead of tea. I did small changes. I knew that I had to adjust to my students and not the other way around.”

Fareed said, “I went to the gym with my students and asked for their help to show me how to exercise. I even started to drink energy drinks like them; I wanted them to feel
that I was one of them, and indeed, Red Bull gave me wings.” Jon shared that when he went on field trips, he had a beer with his students. He explained, “I do not drink alcohol, but I knew that my students will not trust me if I do not drink a beer with them.”

Jon explained, “The students do not want to be taught by freaking Mohamed or fucking Ahmed. That is why I kept my first name to my family and adopted a ‘Starbucks’ name.” I am merely reporting Jon’s speech. I believe the excessive use of profanity was his way to attempt to blend in with his students.

**Major Theme 6: Proof of Loyalty**

This theme describes how instructors felt that there was a lack of trust between them and their students. The participants reported that they felt the need to constantly reinforce their happiness for being part of the American culture. One of the male instructors said, “I got a tattoo of the American flag. I wanted to say here it is—my proof of loyalty.” I removed his pseudonym in this instance, since a tattoo would be viewed as a specific identification.

Awatef declared, “Since our classes take place at [military installation], I stopped the class every day at eight for the sound of the flag and the national anthem. We could hardly hear it, but I wanted to assure my students that I respect the country.”

Ali was the only participant who was positive that his students did not trust him. He admitted that he suspected one of his students had followed him outside the classrooms. Whether or not this incident actually occurred, it is still a significant indication of Ali’s state of mind. Ali said, “I did not provide a daily proof of loyalty like other instructors.” He declared that he started to pray at home instead of the school house. He added, “That is the only concession that I am willing to do.”
Major Theme 7: Recreating the Tribe

In analyzing instructors’ responses, the theme of *recreating the tribe* emerged. It is important to remember that all of the study participants are from the Middle East. They came from collectivist cultures and are not individualists. Participants reported that they only felt comfortable around other instructors who came from their country of origin. For example, Egyptian instructors shared that they worked well with each other, but did not get along with Syrian instructors. Iraqi instructors explained that they created their own circle of trust, which excluded all other Arab nationalities. Instructors who were from Afghanistan explained that they allied themselves based on their ethnic affiliation. In other words, instructors who were Pashtun did not get along with those who were Hazara. Instructors from Iran also said that they based their trust on ethnic affiliation. Therefore, they did not trust Afghan instructors who taught Farsi. This theme appeared as I asked the participants about their team teaching experiences. All instructors agreed that they did not like their team teaching experience, unless they were grouped with instructors from their own country or those who belonged to their same ethnic group. I am excluding participants’ names from the comments in this theme because I do not want to reveal any identifying data. Further research should develop this finding, as I could not find anything in the literature which discussed team teaching in similar multicultural settings.

Summary of Findings

In teaching languages, all participants demonstrated through their teaching that they favored traditional teaching methods. They relied on explicit grammar rules and rote memorization. They assigned the students lists of words and scenarios to memorize.
Some of the instructors expressed that they prefer student-centered teaching styles but failed to show that they truly understood the differences between student-centered and teacher-centered. Some instructors professed that they firmly believe in teacher-centered, as they had seen it work for them when they were students.

In teaching culture, almost all participants, except for Ali, did not want to challenge students’ previously held beliefs. They presented the students with a plethora of information about the countries without introducing the cultural information needed. They perpetuated stereotypical information because it was easily accepted by the students.

The participants shared that they experienced fear, worry, mistrust, and shame as they struggled to find the best way to teach the students.

All participants experienced upward mobility and progress toward a higher position in the social hierarchy. Their income did not correspond with their educational and occupational background, except for Ali who had finished a terminal degree and had prior teaching experience. Some of the participants wanted to pursue higher educational goals in order to further their success, but others were content with their status. That overnight success made them place higher value on job retention. They were hired for only 12-week periods, but they fervently wanted to return for new classes. This fear to lose the job had three aspects, including: worry about observation, students’ evaluations and test scores, and a desire to please the students.

All the participants expressed the need to hide the fact that they teach military students from their family and friends. All the participants put distance between themselves and their ethnic community. Some of them relocated and started to hang out with Americans in general or the students in particular.
All the participants felt that their students did not trust them to varying degrees. They also expressed that they needed to constantly show loyalty and happiness about being in the United States. All the participants adapted some of their behaviors to better fit with the American culture of their students. They expressed with pride that their English speaking proficiency skills had improved. It was easier for some instructors to adapt than others. Female instructors and instructors who belonged to ethnic or religious minorities in their country of origin felt more accepted by their students.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the synthesis of findings. This chapter was organized into four parts. The chapter starts with an introduction of the instructors. The second part focused on presenting themes and subthemes, which were gleaned from interviews and document analysis. The first three major themes and subthemes described how the instructors taught language and culture. The third part showed the major themes and subthemes (4-7) which emerged during participants’ interviews only. It described the experience of the instructors and feelings that they expressed. Part four reported a summary of the findings.

Chapter 5 will present discussion of the research findings and will provide recommendations for practice, policymakers, and further research.
CHAPTER 5—DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This qualitative case study was conducted to describe the experiences of six immigrant instructors teaching their native languages and cultures to military students. The previous chapters provided an introduction to the study (Chapter 1), a review of the literature (Chapter 2), a description of the methodology (Chapter 3), and findings from documents analysis and interview narratives (Chapter 4). In this final chapter, I present the analysis of main and supplemental findings. This chapter addresses limitations of the study, and the recommendations for practice are discussed. The chapter concludes with suggesting directions for future research.

Limitations

This research is limited by the nature of the case study and its small number of participants. Results are limited in generalizability. However, the study findings provided insights into the work life experience of immigrant instructors.

The second limitation is that I interviewed immigrants in English, which is not their native language. Sometimes language breakdowns occurred while interviewing the participants. For instance, an instructor said, “I motive my students to speak all the time.” When a language breakdown occurred, I had to ask the instructors for clarification and examples. The ensuing explanation confirmed what I suspected the instructor meant: “motivate.” In case of instructors who spoke Arabic—and given the fact that Arabic is my first language—I allowed them to tell me in Arabic what they meant, and then I made the translation in my notes.
Main Findings

In the absence of professional development programs, the instructors drew from their own individual experience as students in teacher-centered classes. The instructors demonstrated through their classroom practices that they used traditional teaching methodologies. For instance, they focused on explicit grammar explanation, grammar drills, and memorization of vocabulary.

The cultural belief of the instructors made them favor teacher-centered style. The teaching ideologies of the instructors, as expressed by them during interviews and through their observed practices, were traditional ideologies. They used grammar translation which echoes the first method of teaching second language acquisition the Army way. The instructors were supplied with key words by the vendor such as “Student-centered”; “Communicative Approach”; and “Task-based Instruction.” They repeated these expressions without fully understanding what they meant. For example, some instructors articulated that they believed in student-centered teaching style, but failed to explain it. Some instructors explained teacher-centered but called it student-centered. Other instructors said they use “The Communicative Approach” as they have the students listen and repeat. Other instructors defined “Task-based Instruction” to mean giving grammar drills. Instructors depended on rote memorization and giving grammar drills. Additionally, it was necessary to compare the instructional strategies used by instructors to Knowles’ (1980) assumptions of Andragogy as it supports adult learning. Knowles’ principles of adult learning advocated self-directed learning and using the students’ experiences in order to keep them motivated. Moreover, the core of Andragogy is showing students the relevance and direct application of what they study.
The analysis of the interviews, observational notes, and documents indicated that the instructional methods used by instructors were in direct opposition with Knowles’ assumptions of adult learners. For instance, the instructors held a strong belief of the difficulty of their native languages which was based on the instructors’ cultural belief. That conviction led them to assume their students were incapable of self-directed learning activities. Curiously, this belief was shared between instructors of three different languages: Arabic, Pashto, and Farsi. The instructors did not believe what they taught would benefit the students in their deployments to overseas locations. They could not see how the curriculum was relevant to their students’ work. Therefore, they failed to show the students a relevancy which they could not see themselves. They missed out on presenting real-life applications of their languages and cultures. They relied on using scripted conversation and teaching memorization of primitive speech, as they could not imagine a social context where their students would be accepted and allowed to practice languages in their native societies. All the participants said they felt awkward with taking students on field trips to shops and restaurants of their native culture. Almost all of the participants admitted they introduced their military students as university or college students to members of their native culture when they took them out on field trips.

This first set of findings corroborates Guilherme’s (2002) study—that there is a great need for instructor development programs and the need for pedagogical strategies aimed at studying foreign cultures. Guilherme summarizes:

Not only have teachers to redefine their skills and remodel their qualities, but they also have to rearrange their knowledge into a new perspective. There is a pressing need for further and reformed academic preparation and professional development.
for prospective and practicing teachers applied to this specific field, the education
of critical intercultural speakers. (p. 206)

In other words, this set of findings from this study regarding how instructors
taught languages may bear specific implications for the developing of future instructor
training. The instructors’ cultural backgrounds influenced their choices of teaching
methodology and style of teaching. Administrators need to design faculty development
that is culturally sensitive and gradually leads them to understand the assumptions of
Andragogy, student-centered teaching style, and the communicative approach. The
awareness of the difference in value and expectations suggests the trainers may have to
create a shift in thinking to cause acceptance from instructors.

As for the teaching of culture, the instructors shared information about their
countries. They used illustrative objects, media, and food to display genuine artifacts
from their native culture. The instructors did not want to challenge the students’
preconceptions and ended up reinforcing stereotypes. The participants used the
comparative method highlighted by Byram (1989)—which depends on constantly
comparing between cultures—as a primary cultural teaching method. However, the
examples provided by the instructors showed how they reinforced stereotypes. There was
little evidence that they understood the concept of “rich points,” which was explained by
Agar (2006) as moments of incomprehension and unmet expectations. The examples
provided by all instructors except for Ali showed that their priority was to keep students
happy and how they avoided conflict with students. They did not want challenges to their
students’ belief systems. For example, Fareed acted offended when his students put their
feet up. Awatef pretended to be generous. Jon even drank beer with his students. The
instructors missed out on teachable moments by not challenging the students’ false assumptions and not using opportunities to contrast the differences in culture. This finding coincided with what Byram (1989) viewed as an inefficient method of teaching. Byram noted, “The mere acquisition of information about a foreign country, without the psychological demands of integrated language and culture learning, is inadequate as a basis for education through foreign language teaching” (p. 5).

Additionally, the data from this case study suggest that instructors taught culture sparingly, relying on personal stories, and use of artifacts and media. The instructors admitted that they only taught culture on Friday afternoon. They used culture as story time for students who were burned out and ready to start their weekend. This finding corresponds to what Damen (1987) attributed to as the lack of importance awarded to culture: “Culture instruction and learning projects should not be relegated to the passing of time on Friday afternoons or as ‘treats’ for grammatically exhausted students” (p. 327).

The findings of the study were consistent with Byram’s (1989) concept of *carriers of culture*. The instructors accepted the role of cultural representatives, as evidenced by their narratives during the interviews. Damen (1987) pointed out, “It is often assumed that any teacher as a bearer of a target culture can, by right of group membership, completely supply inventories and explanations of cultural patterns by simply drawing on personal explanation and text selection” (p. 56). The participants’ comments mirror Damen’s statement.

In other words, this second set of findings regarding how instructors taught culture has implication for future curriculum development. The cultural objectives have to be directly stated in the curriculum and comprehensive not just reduced to cultural tidbits
and tips of the day. The instructors have to be given tools for culture teaching that assist them. Without proper tools and guidance, the instruction of culture was reduced to story time and entertainment.

**Supplementary Findings**

During the interviews, I came to realize that the participants understood the students’ satisfaction and students’ results were tied to job retention. Azouz Begag (2007) described the mobility of immigrants as a social elevator. In the case of the participants, they wanted to ride the social elevator up. Having a high paying position as instructors gave them an economic advantage over other recent immigrants. Fareed explained, “Whatever it took to keep the students happy and scoring, I did. I just could not go back to food stamps.”

All the participants adopted various features and behavioral patterns that belonged to American culture, yet they retained some patterns of behaviors that belonged to their own cultural background. The instructors explained that they modified their behaviors in order to better fit into the American culture—the culture of their students.

However, since the instructors were placed in direct contact with military students, I believe that some of the patterns of behaviors perceived to be mainstream American by the instructors might not be accepted in all American societal settings. For example, the excessive use of curse words might be tolerated in some military settings but not accepted in all American social settings.

I did not introduce the topic of religion, yet the topic was introduced by the participants themselves, especially Muslim participants. In analyzing the narratives of their interviews, the findings revealed that the Muslim instructors were going through a
process of individualization. The findings of this study added additional support to the concept of individualization, which was explained by Mills (2012) as a stage where the individual plays the role of interpreting the religious rules. In Mills’ research, he found immigrant Muslims who wanted to separate themselves from orthodox Islam by separating themselves from the Muslim community. The findings of this study showed that the Muslim participants went through a similar individualization process. It is noteworthy that the concept of individualization by Mills is closely related to the concept of privatization explained by Luckman (1990), where immigrants relegate the practice of religious faith to the private life. One female instructor abandoned the Islamic dress code for women and dressed in what she perceived to be an American style of business casual. Another female instructor did not share with her students that she was fasting during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Ali stopped his regular prayer schedule to avoid praying at the school house; instead he opted to pray in the privacy of his home. These findings also lend support to the concept of avoidance, which was explained by Marvasti and McKinney (2004) as a method of mediation and dealing with anti-Islamic rhetoric. Findings highlighted that Ali’s experience—who insisted on presenting himself as Muslim—was different from other participants who shared the same ethnic and cultural background. This supports findings by Rizzo, Abdel-Latif, and Meyer (2007) who found that religious identity had a greater social impact than ethnic, cultural, and national identity.

The findings of this descriptive case study show instructors bending their cultural boundaries to accommodate what they perceived to be the students’ belief system. It is curious in itself and merits a closer look. It is true that Jon had a beer with his students,
and he joked with them about Middle Eastern men being homosexual. Awat ef pretended to be generous and started drinking coffee instead of tea. Fareed acted offended at the showing of the bottom of the feet, and he started to drink energy drinks. Thoraya furtively transformed her look every day. Siham did not share that she had a progressive husband. Why were they compelled to comply with what they perceived to be American social norms? In some ways, the participants displayed cultural flexibility by making superficial changes in their public lives. There is a gap in the research on temporary cultural code switching, or what I call cultural flexibility.

**Recommendations for Practice**

The insights gained through findings of this study indicated that the instructors needed professional development. The instructors were hired temporarily, which meant that the government could not provide them with professional development. Therefore, I find that the temporary hiring of instructors as contractors was not an adequate measure for building a pool of qualified instructors. I recommend that foreign language and culture programs hire instructors full-time on a permanent basis to enable the programs to provide professional development for the instructors. The findings suggest that these instructors need professional development and significant investment in time.

Additionally, the fact that the instructors were hired for 12-week periods was detrimental. It led the instructors to have a seasonal workers mentality. Jon admitted, “I thought of every class as a gig, and all I wanted was to get another freaking gig.” Siham said, “We were the hired help and we had to do a good job so we could be asked back.” These findings support findings by Leaver and Kaplan (2004). They highlighted among challenges facing instructors the need for faculty development and for administrators to
have a significant investment of time. The foreign language and culture program may have to invest the time in order to develop a professional cadre of instructors.

I recommend that foreign language and cultural programs create professional training specifically for instructors who come from different cultural backgrounds to get the instructors to understand class management techniques, adult learning, and a student-centered approach. Some of this professional training will need to be offered in the native language of the instructors to eliminate language barriers and ensure full understanding.

I recommend that administrators have each new instructor paired with a senior instructor with a similar cultural or ethnic background. The theme of *recreating the tribe* emerged throughout the narrative of the instructors’ interviews. It indicates that instructors place their trust based on their cultural and ethnic background. If every experienced instructor becomes a mentor to a new instructor, it will provide the new instructor with ongoing academic support and enable senior instructors to share their experiences.

I recommend that cultural objectives be clearly stated in the curriculum in order to guide instructors instead of limiting cultural learning to mere tips of the day, personal stories, and comments shared by instructors.

I recommend that students, as well as instructors, be provided with cross-cultural communication training prior to taking language classes. While the study focused on the instructors, the examples provided by the participants indicated that students needed to be more aware of cross-cultural communication.
I recommend that policymakers find another way to define an instructor’s success that is not dependent on students’ scores. For instance, instructors could identify points of weakness and develop a professional development plan. Then they could be assessed on whether or not they attained their milestones of personal success in their professional development plan.

**Future Research Recommendations**

I recommend conducting a case study addressing the experience of students who had immigrant instructors in foreign language and cultures classrooms to understand the perspectives of these students.

I recommend replicating the study in institutions or language programs such as the Defense Language Institute (DLI), which hire the instructors on a full-time basis and provide them with academic development. It will be valuable to share how these institutions created training for instructors with different cultural backgrounds.

I recommend replicating the research study but to study the experience of instructors who are teaching future diplomats, such as those in the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), and investigate whether the mission of the students influenced how the instructors related to their students.

The supplementary findings lead me to recommend further research, which deals with how Middle Eastern immigrants deal with adapting to American culture and deal with the acculturation process. The temporary cultural code switching or “cultural flexibility” merits a closer look. I want to understand the external and internal motives that enable someone to bend and flex his or her cultural boundaries.
I knew that female instructors who are wearing the veil would have a unique experience as they are wearing a religious indicator. I could not risk identifying the participants, so I did not invite female instructors who wore the veil.

As I could not invite female instructors who wore the veil, I would like to pursue future research which focus on the experience of female Muslim immigrants who are wearing the Islamic veil in educational or work settings. I will be curious to understand the effect of wearing a visible religious indicator and learn whether it has hindered the process of adaptation of these female immigrants or not. I may pursue this study as future postdoctoral research.

**Summary**

Chapter 5 presents limitations of the study. It gives a discussion of main findings regarding how instructors taught their native languages and cultures. It provides supplementary findings. The chapter concludes with recommendations for practice and for future research.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval

October 28, 2013

Student Researcher: Rashda Rosshdy
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Bresciani
Department: Educational Leadership
IRB Number: 15-42089

Re: A case study of six immigrant instructors teaching their native languages and cultures to military students

Dear Rashda Rosshdy:

The above referenced research was reviewed and verified as exempt in accordance with SDSU’s Assurance and federal requirements pertaining to human subjects protections within the Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46.101). This review applies to the conditions and procedures described in your protocol.

The determination of exemption is final and requests for continuing review (Progress Reports) are not required for this study. However, if any changes to your study are planned, you must submit a modification request and receive either IRB approval (per 45 CFR 46.110 or 46.111) or IRB verification that the modification is exempt (per 45 CFR 46.101). To submit a modification request, please follow the necessary steps below:

Modification steps:
- Access the protocol via the Webportal
  (https://sunsnet.sdsu.edu/sis/Awebapp/web_menu.login/)
- Protocol main page click on “Modifications” to enter a report
- Once the report has been fill out completely, click “submit”
- Make sure to email the IRB (irb@mail.sdsu.edu) notifying them that a modification has been submitted.

Additionally, please notify the IRB office if your status as an SDSU-affiliate changes while conducting this research study (you are no longer an SDSU faculty member).

Sincerely,

Amy McDaniel
Regulatory Compliance Analyst
APPENDIX B

Military Command’s Approval

-----Original Message-----
From: Pasken, Timothy J LTUSSOCOM NSWG1
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2013 4:22 PM
To: Gargan, Christine B LT USSOCOM NSWCEN; Roshdy, Rasha A Ms CIV CENSEALSWCC
Subject: RE: Request for authorization

Ms. Roshdy,

No legal objection. Approved from a legal standpoint, provided that there is no mention of command, students, instructors, or information from which command, student, instructors, or Naval Special Warfare could reasonably be identified. Best of luck with your dissertation.

V/R,

Tim Pasken
LT, JAGC, USN
Staff Judge Advocate
Naval Special Warfare Center
2446 Trident Way
San Diego, CA 92155-5494
O: (619) 537-2092
SIPR: timothy.pasken@navsoc.socom.smil.mil

From: Gargan, Christine B LT USSOCOM NSWCEN
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2013 11:56 AM
To: Roshdy, Rasha A Ms CIV CENSEALSWCC; Pasken, Timothy J LT USSOCOM NSWG1
Subject: RE: Request for authorization

Rasha,

Approved from a public affairs stand point, pending JAG approval.

V/R
From: Roshdy, Rasha A Ms CIV
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2013 9:27 AM
To: Pasken, Timothy J LT USSOCOM NSWG1; Gargan, Christine B LT USSOCOM
Subject: Request for authorization

Background:

My name is Rasha Roshdy. I worked as the academic coordinator for the language and culture program. I am conducting a case study of six contracted immigrant instructors who taught for the command Language and Culture program as part of the requirement for the educational leadership doctoral program at San Diego State University. During my employment with the Language and Culture program, and as part of work duties, I administered and wrote Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans (QASP) forms during class observations. Additionally, I wrote personal reflection notes in order to assist teachers’ professional development. I received the participants’ approval to be interviewed.

Request:

I am seeking the command’s approval to use the previously collected materials and my personal notes in my research. Please consider my request and grant me an authorization.

V/R,

Rasha Roshdy
Curriculum Development Specialist
APPENDIX C

Quality Assurance Surveillance Program (QASP) Forms

Quality Assurance Surveillance Program (QASP) Class Evaluation Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Observer:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Language:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Week of Instruction:</td>
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<tr>
<th>Start/End Time:</th>
<th>Duration of Course:</th>
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Was the Official Visitor's Folder available? Choose One
Has instructor seen this checklist in advance? Choose One

*If "Standard Not Met", "Approaching Standard", or "Standard Exceeded" are chosen, comments must follow.*

1. Classroom Environment Choose One
   Students' success in language learning is influenced by the atmosphere in the classroom. It is important that the instructor maintains a positive, supportive, motivating classroom environment. The instructor also needs to foster respect amongst students, encouraging all students to participate openly and equally in class.
   **Comments**

2. Learner-centeredness Choose One
   Instructors must be able to gather information from individual learners in the process of learning, to analyze and interpret what they see, and, on that basis, to validate or rethink what they are doing in order to facilitate learning amongst each student. When an instructor is able to adapt their teaching style and approach to an individual's learning style, preferences, needs, and motivations, we can say that the class is learner-centered. One can observe this ability in an instructor by looking to see that the students are actively engaged and motivated, classroom tasks are challenging but students are capable of accomplishing them with effort, and feel a sense of accomplishment once completed.
   **Comments**

3. Balance & Variety of Language Presentation Choose One
   Language presentation is balanced in order to promote fluency and understandability, between fluency and form, and between all aspects of communicative competence (i.e., grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence). Presentation has ample variety in order to maintain interest, encourage acquisition, and provide contextualization/application of materials.
   **Comments**
4. Class Participation & Interaction in the Target Language
In order to succeed at the task of learning the target language, it is essential that all students are active participants in every class, and that no student dominates or is uninvolved. All students should be actively engaged in the task at hand at all times. In order to accomplish this goal, the instructor must act as a facilitator and guide in class activities so that the majority of class time is spent in production of the target language involving all students. The students are speaking and producing the language more than the teacher. The class is carried out primarily in the target language, including all routine instructional directions (i.e., “please repeat”, “your turn now”, etc.). Students use the target language to communicate with the teacher and each other.
Comments

5. Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
Instructor creates learning activities which promote analysis, negotiation of meaning, synthesis, and problem solving. Students collaborate with each other during class to solve problems and carry out tasks. Students use critical, strategic thinking to negotiate use of the language.
Comments

6. Goals, Outcomes, Feedback & Assessment
Clear class goals, objectives, and outcomes are evident and instructor has a realistic plan to assist students to meet these expectations. The outcome(s) of each class meeting is/are made clear and students can see how meeting these outcome(s) will help them to reach other overall course goals and objectives. Throughout each class meeting, students are given supportive feedback as to how they are progressing towards meeting these outcomes. Assessment is used throughout the class and course to provide constructive feedback to students.
Comments

7. Skill & Proficiency Level
Instructor has a good understanding of the students’ current skill proficiency level and is able to continually adjust teaching to adapt to their ability, with knowledge of the next steps they need to take and how to direct them there in order to reach outcomes. Instructor is able to break more difficult tasks into smaller pieces in order to assist the students in building up to achieving desired outcomes.
Comments
8. Contextualization / Meaningful Tasks
Language is presented in a meaningful context and not presented in isolation. Activities in class have real-life applications which are meaningful, relevant and will be useful to the students. Students are engaged in tasks which require them to use the language to accomplish something.
Comments

9. Lesson Planning
Instructors develop daily class lesson plans in support of the POI. Instructors should have a lesson plan in writing for each day of class. This plan should demonstrate clear goals, objectives, and outcomes, and the smooth, effective flow of class activities in pursuit of reaching these outcomes. Lesson plans should include a well-rounded variety of activities. Activities should be of high interest, authentic when possible, and relevant to students.
Comments

10. Reflective Practices
Instructor reflects upon teaching practices, policies, and procedures in order to continually improve course. The class content appears to be current, applicable to students' needs, abilities, and interests.
Comments

11. Homework
The length and difficulty of homework assignments are appropriate to the level of class. Homework assignments should be interesting, useful and relevant both to class materials and to the student's ultimate application of the language.
Comments

12. Class Periods & Teaching Obligations
Instructors are expected to start class on-time and run for the full assigned duration. Any changes to the defined schedule need to be approved in advance.
Comments

13. Professional Image
Instructor dresses and behaves in a manner that is conducive to learning, not distracting.
Comments
14. Materials

Materials for the course are sufficient and appropriate to the level and goals of the students. Course materials are utilized to promote acquisition, serve to support, not stifle instruction. Students are able to use materials to promote their learning.

Comments

15. Command of the Target Language

The instructor's command of the language is appropriate for this class type and level.

Comments

*Official Visitor's
Folder should include:

- POI / Syllabus
- Lesson Plan
- Grade Book
- Attendance
- Records
- Homework Plan/Records
- Assessment Plan/Records

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<tr>
<th>Standard Not Met</th>
<th>Approaching</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Standard Met</th>
<th>Standard Exceeded</th>
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APPENDIX D

Interview Participant Questions

Background Questions

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself and your cultural background: Where did you grow up? And when did you immigrate to the United States?

2. How did you find out about the program? And why did you join it?

Educational & Professional Background Questions

1. Tell me about your educational background: Where did you go to school? And what is the highest degree you obtained?

2. Tell me about your teaching experience: Do you have experience teaching other military students? And describe your prior teaching experience.

Teaching Style

1. Tell me about your personal teaching style: What is your personal educational philosophy? And what methodology do you believe to be best?

2. Thinking of your program, what methodology or educational practices do you use with your students? And which one do you find to be the most effective with them?

3. Describe your experience teaching culture to your students?

Acculturation

1. What culture (s) do you identify with American culture or your Native culture or both cultures? (Give Examples)

2. Have you adopted some aspects of American culture? (Give Examples)
3. Is there any other question that you feel was important for me to ask in order to understand your experience? Or is there any additional information that you would to add?

The Optional Writing Assignment

The following questions are provided in order to help you think about your experience teaching your native language and culture to military students.

1) What do you see as the most important aspect of your role as a teacher in your class? And why do you feel that?
2) What instructional strategies do you use? Think of it in terms of what is the most useful instructional strategy? And what is the least useful instructional strategy?
3) Please provide any teaching material that illustrates your instructional strategies.
4) How do you understand the student-centered approach?
5) Do you feel that you were able to help your students learn? And how?
6) Describe your experience teaching culture in terms of what was hard to teach and what was easy to teach?
Dear Participant,

My name is Rasha Roshdy and I am a student at the educational leadership doctoral program at SDSU. I am conducting a case study on the experience of recent immigrant instructors teaching their languages and cultures to military students. The results will be reported in a thesis that I will complete as a requirement in my graduate program.

I am seeking to understand, describe and document the experiences of immigrant instructors teaching their native languages and cultures to military students and how it influenced their acculturation process. I believe that understanding the experiences of recent immigrant instructors may shed light on the importance of the instructors’ roles in the foreign language classrooms. It may additionally identify ways of helping other immigrant instructors that teach in similar circumstances.

Your participation involves being interviewed by me and optionally completing a writing assignment. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. I may additionally take notes during the interview. I will provide you with a transcript of the interview and discuss my preliminary findings with you. I may need to ask you for clarification of any statement at a later date. You will receive a monetary compensation of $50 for the interview portion.

If you choose to participate in the optional writing assignment prior to our interview date, you will receive an additional $50 Visa card. It is meant to stimulate you to think about your teaching experience. Feel free to send via email your answers and any instructional material you wish to include or bring it to the interview session.

I am also seeking your approval for me to use information noted on QASP related to your class observation and all additional observational notes from subsequent meetings. You are free to opt out.

All these materials will be used for research purposes only.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time by notifying me. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous—that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you. If you have any questions regarding the writing assignment or the interview, please contact me at sdeducator2014@gmail.com. You may also contact the Institutional Review Board at SDSU (619-594-6622) to report problems or concerns related to this study.