WALKING WITH A CHANGED HEART:

INFORMAL AND INCIDENTAL LEARNING OF VOLUNTEERS IN ADULT ESL

by

BEIXI LI

(Under the Direction of Karen E. Watkins)

ABSTRACT

Adult ESL is a high-turnover field, and volunteers are a critical component of the adult ESL workforce. Existing research focuses on learners' experience in the classroom, and there is limited attention to how teachers might change in any way as a result of encountering immigrant learners in adult ESL. The current study used an explanatory sequential, mixed-methods design to examine adult ESL volunteers' informal and incidental learning and the impact of the learning on their intercultural maturity.

A total of 212 adult ESL teachers (77 volunteers) participated in the study. Participants completed the Learning Practices Audit (LPA) and the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI), which were analyzed with exploratory factor analysis, multiple regression, and *t*-tests. Twelve participants (6 volunteers) completed semi-structured interviews informed by the Critical Incident Technique. Fifty-two critical incidents were identified and examined via narrative analysis.

The results demonstrated that adult ESL presented many triggers for informal and incidental learning for both volunteers and paid instructors. While paid instructors scored significantly higher than volunteers on the LPA, participants from both groups identified

learning from teaching as the most important source of learning. Participation in informal and incidental learning activities was positively correlated with intercultural maturity. Both volunteers and paid instructors scored above the national average on the GPI. While there was no significant difference between volunteers and paid instructors in the mean GPI, volunteers scored significantly higher on the Intrapersonal scale and Social Responsibility subscale of the GPI. Interviews suggested intercultural experiences in adult ESL triggered learning in cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of intercultural maturity. These experiences were usually in the form of unexpected events growing out of interactions with adult learners, were often social and interactive in nature, and involved self-reflection. Further, organizational support promoted informal and incidental learning.

This study validated the LPA in adult ESL, applied the GPI in adult ESL for the first time, and exemplified the use of CIT in studying experiences in adult ESL. It gave voice to adult ESL teachers and presented practical implications. Future research studies should consider virtual volunteering and power dynamics in adult ESL.

INDEX WORDS: Adult ESL, volunteer, informal and incidental learning, intercultural maturity, global perspective inventory, mixed-methods research

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my grandmother and grandfather. Until we meet again, Laolao and Laoye.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

English as a Second Language (ESL) is one of the largest types of instructional programs in adult education in the United States. It is estimated that there are approximately 5.8 million legal permanent residents in the U.S. that need English instruction to participate in civic life (McHugh et al., 2007). There are also 6.4 million unauthorized immigrants in the United States who require English instruction to obtain legal status and fully participate in civic life (McHugh et al., 2007). In 2006-2007, one million adults enrolled in federally funded, state-administered ESL programs, with 48% of them enrolled in beginner ESL or literacy classes (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Adult ESL classes are also offered in volunteer-based programs, faith-based organizations, libraries, community centers, and private institutions; however, the total number of learners enrolled in these programs delivered through community organizations are difficult to estimate (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010; Eyring, 2014).

Adult ESL is a field where "full-time positions are rare, resources are scarce, and turnover is high" (Crandall, 1993, p. 497). Volunteers are widely utilized to meet the growing instructional demands of immigrant populations. The most recent report conducted in 2015 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 9% of volunteers in the United States engaged in teaching or tutoring activities in 2015 (Bureau of Labor Statistics U.S Department of Labor, 2015). A survey of 3,100 adult education programs in the U.S revealed that 43% of the workforce is made up of volunteer staff (Tamassia et al., 2007). Volunteers also represent over

80% of the staff who work in community-based organizations (Tamassia et al., 2007). Often the earliest contact with immigrant learners, volunteers provide instruction that meets the needs of learners who cannot afford language courses in for-profit institutions or cannot be placed in traditional classrooms due to issues related to their availability and varying requirements for language proficiency (Henrichsen, 2010; Schlusberg & Mueller, 1995). Thus, volunteers who are willing to teach with minimal or no compensation fill an important gap in adult ESL because they cater to a growing population that cannot afford expensive classes but need English as a life skill (Henrichsen, 2010).

The National Reporting System for Adult Education defined ESL as instruction "designed to help adults who are limited English proficient to achieve competence in the English language" (National Reporting System for Adult Education, 2001, p. 25). It contributes to one of the pillars of immigrant integration into the United States, linguistic integration (World Education, 2013). Immigrant integration is defined as "a dynamic, two-way process in which immigrants and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities" (World Education, 2013, p. 6). The Networks for Integrating New Americans (NINA) proposed that immigrant integration into the United States includes linguistic integration, economic integration, and civic integration (World Education, 2013). However, the view of the adult ESL program being an agent for immigrant integration is challenged by new developments in second language acquisition and language policy studies. For example, Blommaert and Rampton (2012) argued that due to the rise of rapid international migration, the paradigm of multiculturalism has gradually shifted into superdiversity. The paradigm of multiculturism has been problematized for legitimizing the dominance of certain cultural or racial groups by essentializing cultural differences and ignoring systematic racism (Guo, 2015).

Superdiversity, as described by Vertovec (2007) is characterized by "a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade" (p. 1024). Superdiversity has created unprecedented levels of complexity, which has caused contrasting and even conflicting understanding of culture, integration, and citizenship (Blommaert, 2013). Guo (2015), for example, deconstructed the discourse of integration around immigration and adult immigrant language policies in Canada by arguing, "the policy in practice is assimilationist not integrationist" (p. 47). The reality is further complicated by the nationwide anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States. Larrotta (2019) suggested that teachers in adult ESL contexts need to move beyond language or literacy instruction to assist immigrants and provide emotional support.

And now, the Covid-19 pandemic has forced many adult ESL programs to reduce services, pivot to online instruction, and consider new ways to support teachers and learners in this challenging time. Taken together, adult ESL teachers have taken up the role as a facilitator in the intersection of language and culture in the era of great uncertainty and ambiguity. Mathews-Aydinli (2008) reviewed studies of adult ESL programs in nonacademic settings and found that educators have demonstrated "a particular sensitivity toward the students' cultural background" (p. 207). To effectively teach adult learners, teachers need to develop and demonstrate their intercultural competence and sensitivity. McGroarty (1993) argued to ensure that the instruction is culturally and linguistically compatible for the learners, both learners and teachers need to engage in "ongoing mutual discovery and adaptation" (p. 6). That is, the adult ESL classroom is a learning forum for both teachers and learners. While much research has been conducted on immigrants' experience in adult ESL, there is relatively little study on how teachers may have

changed in any way as a result of encountering immigrants (Shan & Butterwick, 2014). Thus, this study proposed to investigate how volunteer teachers in adult ESL contexts might develop their intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005) through informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990; 2014).

Learning occupies a peripheral theme in volunteering. It is rarely considered as a motivation for volunteering (Duguid et al., 2013a). Compared to other service-learning programs (e.g., internship, community service, and field education), volunteering activities primarily emphasize "the service being provided and the primary intended beneficiary is clearly the service recipient" (Furco, 1996, p. 4). In the context of adult ESL, formal training for volunteers is also limited. A survey of instructors in adult ESL programs suggested that only 1.9% of volunteer teachers have obtained the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) credentials (Tamassia et al., 2007). ESL programs often have structural challenges and have limited financial and human resources to implement long-term volunteer training programs, and consequently can only provide training in a one-time, pre-service way (Durham & Kim, 2019). Before volunteers start teaching, they typically receive a 10-18-hour workshop training focused on effective instruction, lesson and material development, and cross-cultural awareness (Schlusberg & Mueller, 1995). However, only a quarter of volunteers have rated pre-service training as effective (Wu & Carter, 2000). Furthermore, no significant correlation has been found between the hours spent in training and knowledge of teaching adult literacy (Ziegler et al., 2009). Belzer (2006a) also found there was a lack of knowledge transfer from pre-service training to practice. Given that most training was short-term and only limited topics could be covered, Belzer (2006a) argued that even tutors who were able to transfer the knowledge from training to practice would still feel unprepared to work with adult learners.

Given the limited training adult ESL programs can offer to volunteers and the low knowledge transfer from training to practice, informal and incidental learning can be a useful theoretical lens to explore how volunteers learn on the job and make meaning of their experiences. Marsick and Watkins (1990) defined informal and incidental learning by contrasting them with formal learning:

> "Formal learning is typically institutionally sponsored, classroom-based, and highly structured. Informal learning, a category that includes incidental learning, may occur in institutions, but it is not typically classroom-based or highly structured, and control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner. Incidental learning is defined by Watkins as a byproduct of some other activity, such as task accomplishment, interpersonal interaction, sensing the organizational culture, trial-and-error experimentation, or even formal learning. Informal learning can be deliberately encouraged by an organization or it can take place despite an environment not highly conducive to learning. Incidental learning, on the other hand, almost always takes place although people are not always conscious of it." (p. 12)

Literature suggests that informal and incidental learning is the principal way through which volunteers acquire new knowledge and skills. For example, Perry and Hart (2012) explored volunteer's own perception of their preparedness to teach adult refugees and found that besides training, most learning occurred on the job. Ziegler et al.'s (2009) investigation of volunteer tutors' knowledge revealed similar findings. Specifically, they found that volunteers mastered the same level of knowledge as paid instructors; and volunteers spent the majority of their professional development hours in the form of independent study, as opposed to attending conferences and workshops. Although it is a reasonable assumption that adult ESL contexts

create a pedagogical space that fosters intercultural communication among students and teachers, few studies have been conducted to explore the linkage between this experience and intercultural outcomes.

The developmental model of intercultural maturity developed by King and Baxter Magolda (2005) guided the study's exploration into adult ESL teacher's intercultural learning experiences. Drawing primarily from Kegan's (1994) adult development model, the model of intercultural maturity presents a holistic perspective on an individual's capacity of "understanding and acting in ways that are interculturally aware and appropriate" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 573). The model is comprised of three dimensions of development as well as their interconnections. The cognitive dimension focuses on one's meaning making system. The intrapersonal dimension focuses on one's development of identity and beliefs and how they govern one's behaviors. The interpersonal dimension focuses on one's relationship with others and capacity to interact in different social situations. Based on this holistic view, the model of intercultural maturity measures "the developmental complexity that allows a learner to understand and accept the general idea of difference from self without feeling threat to self enables a person to offer positive regard to others across many types of difference, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 573). There are three levels of development within the intercultural maturity model: initial, intermediate, and mature (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

As individuals encounter more intercultural differences and experience more intercultural interactions, their ways of meaning making will continue to shift as they attempt to incorporate new perspectives and insights into an increasingly internally defined self. Multiple-dimensions and multiple-levels of learning might occur for volunteers as a result of their work in adult ESL

contexts. Programs that connect teachers with immigrant learners "constitute a significant pedagogical space to foster co-learning and co-integration" for both sides (Shan & Butterwick, 2014, p. 230). However, there is a need to understand what this experience looks like from the perspective of teachers. Intercultural maturity can be a useful framework to describe how the learning and developmental process unfolds in an adult ESL context. Thus, this study conceptually linked informal and incidental learning with intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Linking these concepts can identify informal and incidental learning activities experienced by volunteers in adult ESL contexts, informing potential pathways to cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal growth.

Problem Statement

The instructional demands of adult ESL learners are met by full-time, part-time, and volunteer teachers in a variety of settings, including federally funded adult education programs, local education agencies, community colleges, community-based organizations, private institutions, and other types of organizations (Eyring, 2014). Despite the adult ESL learners' growing instructional needs, adult ESL in nonacademic settings remains an understudied area in second language acquisition and education (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). Moreover, there has been very little research that focuses exclusively on teachers and their practices, although they make a substantial contribution to adult ESL and adult literacy (K. Perry, 2013; Ziegler et al., 2009). A study of the informal and incidental learning that occurs during teaching in the adult ESL context can reveal how adult educators grow and develop expertise on the job.

Volunteers represent an important component in the adult ESL workforce. This study had a special focus on the linkage between informal and incidental learning activities experienced by volunteers and the three dimensions of intercultural maturity (cognitive, interpersonal,

intrapersonal). Even though many adult ESL and literacy programs rely on the goodwill of volunteers, we know very little about this population, especially in terms of their views on race, class, gender, or culture (J. Erickson, 2012). Making meaning of the intercultural experiences in the adult ESL context can be challenging for volunteers. It is indeed that "for many people, volunteering is the first opportunity in their lives to recognize the issues faced by minority groups and to empathize with their humanity, and in this process they become more empathetic and caring people, and open their horizons" (Schugurensky, 2013, p. 8). James (2002) attributed the difficulties of dealing with culture in adult ESL classrooms to two factors. First, multiple cultures are represented in the classroom, including those of the learners, the instructors, the programs or the organizations, and the broader society. Second, simply understanding the concept of culture demands cognitive complexity. Few studies have been conducted to investigate how volunteers make meaning of their intercultural experiences in the adult ESL context. Furthermore, no study has compared the learning experiences and learning outcomes between volunteers and paid instructors in adult ESL.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005).

The research questions guiding this study were:

R1: What informal and incidental learning activities do volunteers and paid instructors in the adult ESL context engage in?

R2: To what extent do informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in the adult ESL context contribute to their intercultural maturity?

R3: To what degree does organizational support moderate the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities and intercultural maturity?

R4: How do teachers in adult ESL programs make meaning of their intercultural learning experience?

Conceptual Framework

Based on the research questions and literature review, the following conceptual framework (Figure 1) was proposed to guide the current research. The framework conceptually linked the recent re-cognized model of informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990; 2014) and intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). This study hypothesized that teaching in the adult ESL context triggers informal and incidental learning activities that are positively related to teachers' intercultural maturity. This hypothesized relationship between a volunteer's informal and incidental learning and intercultural maturity is conditional on contextual factors which reflect the organizational support available.

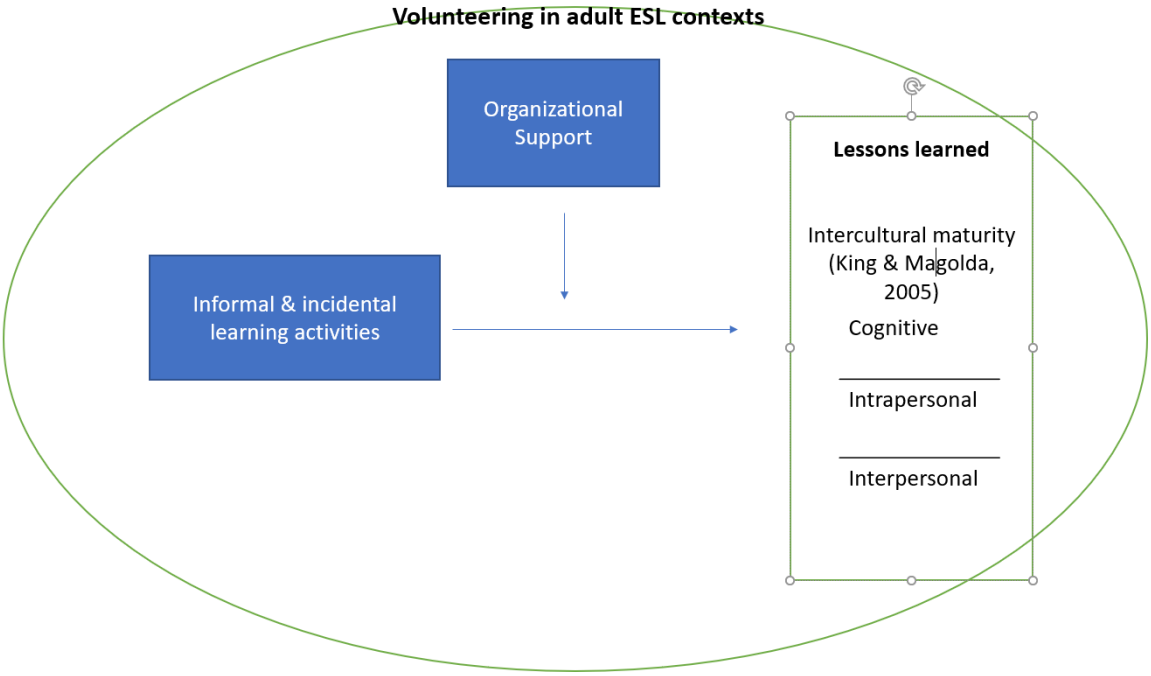

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Significance of the Study

There is little doubt that individual benefits from volunteering and the impact could be long-lasting. The benefits are usually "unintended consequences of behavior that is motivated not by extrinsic but intrinsic rewards" (Wilson & Musick, 1999, p. 167). Polanyi (1966) suggested that "while learning is an important dimension of the activities of many voluntary and community organizations, it is often tacit and a by-product of other objectives" (as cited in McGivney, 2006, p. 13). This might help explain why volunteers do not consider their activities educative despite benefiting from them. This also poses a challenge for researching informal learning among volunteers. Researchers need to develop an appropriate approach that can "capture a process that is not always conscious or recognized and identify the ways in which people acquire and utilize the knowledge and skills they gain informally and often unintentionally" (McGivney, 2006, p. 14). This study contributes to the significant role of informal and incidental learning through volunteering in the adult ESL context. In addition, by sampling both paid instructors and volunteers, this study provided a comparative analysis on their learning experiences and learning outcomes in adult ESL.

By conceptually and empirically linking informal and incidental learning with intercultural maturity, this study aimed to further explore the conditions that advance one's ability to behave and communicate in culturally appropriate ways. Intercultural maturity is relevant for teachers in adult ESL in two ways. First, the consciousness of cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity has been identified as an important aspect of teaching adult learners effectively (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). That is, to effectively teach adult learners, volunteers need to develop and demonstrate their intercultural competence and sensitivity. Second, volunteers who choose to work in these settings are motivated by their desire to help immigrants and

refugees in the community and interact with people of diverse cultures to enhance cultural competence (Wu & Carter, 2000). Thus, it can be argued that volunteers who choose to work with immigrants are motivated by their desire to develop their intercultural maturity and become better teachers as well as citizens in the broader community. This study offered insight into how the adult ESL context fosters a pedagogical space that facilitates the growth of intercultural maturity among volunteers.

For practitioners, findings from this study contribute to recognition of informal and incidental learning and expand our knowledge and understanding of how teachers make meaning of their experiences in the adult ESL context. Recognizing knowledge acquired through informal and incidental learning encourages individuals to raise awareness of "how it impacts on their daily lives and work performance as well as on their behavior and attitudes" (McGivney, 2006, p.17). Voluntary organizations also benefit from this largely unacknowledged learning. New knowledge generated through informal learning among volunteers contributes to the organization's well-being and efficiency (Mündel & Schugurensky, 2008). Findings from this study can also inform the design of more effective volunteering activities that create conditions to enhance critical reflection and informal and incidental learning.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005). This chapter reviews literature associated with informal and incidental learning and intercultural maturity particularly as it relates to teachers in adult ESL contexts. This chapter includes four major sections. First, this chapter introduces theoretical literature on informal and incidental learning, with special attention to Marsick and Watkins' (1990/2015) informal and incidental learning model. Second, it reviews empirical literature on informal and incidental learning of teachers in adult ESL contexts, using Marsick and Watkins' model as an organizing framework. Third, it reviews theoretical literature on intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005). And finally, it reviews empirical literature on intercultural maturity, focusing on studies that have used the Global Perspective Inventory as the instrument and studies in adult ESL contexts.

The literature review was conducted based on the guidelines of the integrative literature review (Torraco, 2005). According to Torraco (2005), the integrative literature review is "a form of research that reviews, critiques, and synthesizes representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated" (p. 356). Internet based searches were used to identify literature for inclusion in this review. Because informal and incidental learning and intercultural maturity were both less frequently studied in adult ESL and volunteering, the combination of the following major keywords were used in the

search process to identify articles: informal and incidental learning, professional development, learning through volunteering, benefits of volunteering, adult education, adult ESL, adult literacy, intercultural maturity, intercultural competence, intercultural experiences, teacher cognition, and Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI).

Informal and Incidental Learning Theoretical Research

The concept of informal and incidental learning has been extensively explored by Marsick and Watkins (1990, 2014), Livingstone (1999, 2001, 2006), Eraut (2000, 2010) and Schugueresky and colleagues (Duguid et al., 2013b; Mündel & Schugurensky, 2008; Schugurensky, 2000) with applications in educational, nonprofit, and for-profit contexts. They draw on multiple theoretical perspectives to make sense of informal and incidental learning in various contexts. The following section introduces the informal and incidental learning model by Marsick and Watkins (1990, 2014), a guiding theory for this study. It also discusses other related theoretical development in informal and incidental learning.

Marsick and Watkins' Model

Marsick and Watkins' theory of informal and incidental learning is based on literature and practice concerning learning from experience (Dewey, 1938), field theory (Lewin, 1951), action science (Argyris & Schön, 1974, 1978) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997). Marsick and Watkins are interested in how individuals learn informally and how organizations can create conditions to enhance such learning (Marsick et al., 2006). In their initial conception, the model contrasted informal and incidental learning with formal, structured learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). The focus was placed on "how individuals learn by engaging in ongoing, not necessarily sequential, interactive cycles of learning from experience that started with an unfamiliar challenge or problem at work that triggered informal and or incidental learning"

(Marsick & Watkins, 2018, p. 10). In the informal and incidental learning model they reconceptualized with Cseh (Cseh et al., 1999), learning begins with a trigger, possibly a dissatisfaction with an experience. This trigger leads to a series of new meaning-making activities which are neither linear nor sequential. In the informal learning cycle, people use their current worldview to diagnose and interpret the problems they encounter. They may take on alternative perspectives and actions or acquire new skills and knowledge in order to solve the problem. The informal learning cycle ends with drawing lessons from the experiences and starts again with using the lessons to plan future actions when entering new situations. In the model, Marsick and Watkins emphasized the importance of context (Marsick & Watkins, 2018). Context influences what people learn and how people learn. Marsick and Watkins recognized that learning usually grows out of interactions and encounters in a given context and the context for learning "plays a key role in influencing the way in which people interpret the situation, their choices, the action they take, and the learning that is effected" (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p. 29).

Many contextual factors can influence an individual's engagement in informal learning. Lohman (2006) studied factors influencing the engagement of public-school teachers in informal learning in the workplace. She found that lack of time, lack of proximity to colleagues, and insufficient funds hindered teachers' engagement in informal learning. In addition, she identified seven personal characteristics that enhanced teachers' informal learning, with self-efficacy ranked as the major determinant. In contrast, Jeon and Kim (2012) examined the relationship between organizational and task factors and the effectiveness of informal learning in Korean companies. They found that leadership in human resource development and open communication positively influenced the effectiveness of informal learning. New tasks and task satisfaction also positively influenced the effectiveness of informal learning. There are also different levels of

intentionality and consciousness associated with informal and incidental learning. People often learn informally with some degree of intentionality; however incidental learning is mostly experienced unconsciously (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Consequently, learning that is taken for granted often results in tacit knowledge (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Polanyi (1966) distinguished between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge by asserting that tacit knowledge concerns direct experience that cannot be transmitted in any codified way. Therefore, "learning by doing" and "learning by using" become critical elements in tacit knowledge acquisition (Howells, 1996).

Over time, Marsick and Watkins have expanded their understanding of the learning process and recognized that the original model: "*looked* linear (even though we did not intend it to be), *felt* cognitive (at the expense of emotions and feelings), overemphasized individual meaning making over social interaction and meaning making, and did not adequately attend to the role of context" (Marsick, 2009, p. 266). In recent years, they have focused on "rethinking the ways in which learning is integrally connected with and through the learning of social units in which individuals are embedded" (Marsick & Watkins, 2018). Indeed, informal learning is largely a result of social interactions, including mentoring, conversation, and teamwork; and is thus highly affected by the cultural, social, and organizational environment in which it takes place (Le Clus, 2011). This is significant in this study since the learning of volunteers primarily occurred through interactions with their students. Marsick and Watkins also began to explore the powerful impact of technology and its influence on how we learn and what we learn (Watkins et al., 2018). These impacts have resulted in incorporating individuals' social and organizational context on informal and incidental learning into the model (Marsick & Watkins, 2014). During the Covid-19 pandemic, Watkins and Marsick (2020) applied the informal and incidental

learning model through the lens of complexity science to understand how we can learn and adapt in this time of uncertainty. They argued that the chaos created by the pandemic calls for a reframe of learning that incorporates "design thinking – coupled with knowledge-intensive tools, data visualization modeling, imagination, and abductive reasoning" (Watkins & Marsick, 2000, p. 88). Figure 2 depicts the most recent model.

The Learning Practices Audit (Watkins, 2019), an instrument developed based on the Marsick and Watkins' model, was adapted and used in this study to measure teacher's engagement in informal and incidental learning in adult ESL contexts. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the process of developing, adapting, and validating the LPA in adult ESL.

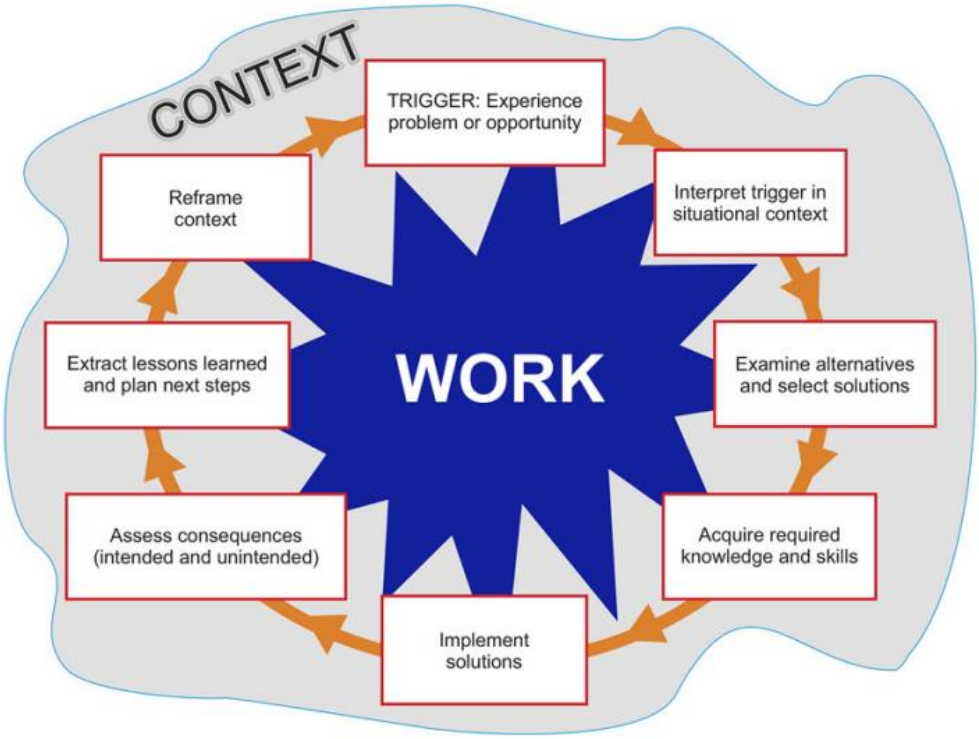

Figure 2. Informal and incidental learning model by Marsick and Watkins (2014), used with permission

Other Definitions

Livingstone's (1999) conception of informal learning has a distinct focus on human agency and the structure of knowledge. In this model, informal learning includes learning on one's own (self-directed or collective learning) and learning guided by an expert or mentor (informal education or informal training). Both types of learning result in situational knowledge, as opposed to pre-established structures of knowledge. Livingstone was part of the research network on New Approaches to Lifelong Learning (NALL) that conducted the first Canadian survey of informal learning practices in 1998 (Livingstone, 1999, 2001, 2006). Participants were asked to indicate their participation in four aspects of informal learning: employment related, community volunteering related, household work related, and other general interest related. Findings showed that those who volunteered through organized community work devoted four hours on average to volunteering related informal learning. The informal learning activities included matters related to "communication skills, social issues, organizational/managerial skills, and fundraising" (Livingstone, 2006, p. 213). While findings have established that informal learning is extensive in an adult's everyday life, the conceptual model was criticized for "neglecting the interactive or situational learning process" (Sawchuk, 2008, p. 6). Given its focus on power and control in contexts, Livingstone's model does not consider the cognitive and emotional dimensions that affect informal learning (Sawchuk, 2008).

Eraut (2000) uses two dimensions to map the domain of informal learning: the intention to learn and the timing of the event. The intention to learn constitutes the most fundamental distinction in Eraut's (2000) model. Informal learning ranges from implicit learning to reactive learning to deliberative learning as one becomes increasingly aware of one's own learning attempts and knowledge acquired throughout the learning process. The experiences that foster

learning can be from the past, in the current, or planned in the future. Eraut's (2000) model has been applied to examine informal learning in workplace settings. Findings indicated that participation in group activities, working alongside others, tackling challenging tasks, and working with clients accounted for the highest proportion of informal learning reported in the workplace (Eraut, 2010). Informal learning contributes to task performance, awareness and understanding, personal development, teamwork, role performance, academic knowledge and skills, and decision-making and problem-solving (Eraut, 2010). Several learning factors and contextual factors affecting the engagement of informal learning in the workplace have also been identified (Eraut, 2010). At the micro level, Eraut (2011) believed that managers can play significant roles in promoting and facilitating informal learning in the workplace. The larger issue is that "public discourse about training not only neglects informal learning but denies complexity by over-simplifying the processes and outcomes of learning and the factors that give rise to it" (Eraut, 2011, p. 271). Thus, enhancing informal learning should start with the "recognition of the complexities and uncertainties of the modern world" (Eraut, 2011, p. 271).

Similar to the previous models, Schugurensky (2000) used intentionality and consciousness to identify three forms of informal learning: self-directed learning, incidental learning, and socialization. Self-directed learning is both intentional and conscious. It can take place on one's own or with the presence of a "resource person." Schugurensky's (2000) conception of incidental learning is slightly different from Marsick and Watkins' (1990) regarding the consciousness of learning. Schugurensky (2000) argues that individuals might experience something without the intention to learn but become aware of their learning afterwards. While Marsick and Watkins (1990) believe that incidental learning is almost always experienced unconsciously. Socialization refers to our internalization of habits, behaviors, beliefs

etc. in daily life. While Schugurensky (2000) believes that this unintentional and unconscious form of learning constitutes a type of informal learning, Livingstone (1999) argues that it should be excluded from the scope of informal learning because it is too difficult to be distinguished from everyday activity. Schugurensky and colleagues are some of the scholars that linked volunteering directly with informal learning. Studies by Duguid et al. (2007) have found that volunteers acknowledge informal learning as the most powerful way to acquire knowledge. Through informal learning, they acquired a variety of skills and knowledge related to their volunteering contexts, developed a set of social and practical skills and reflected on their own assumptions and attitudes.

Taken together, these conceptions and models move us toward a unifying framework. Figure 3 depicts a taxonomy of informal and incidental learning as defined by various scholars based on the matrix of degree of consciousness and degree of intentionality.

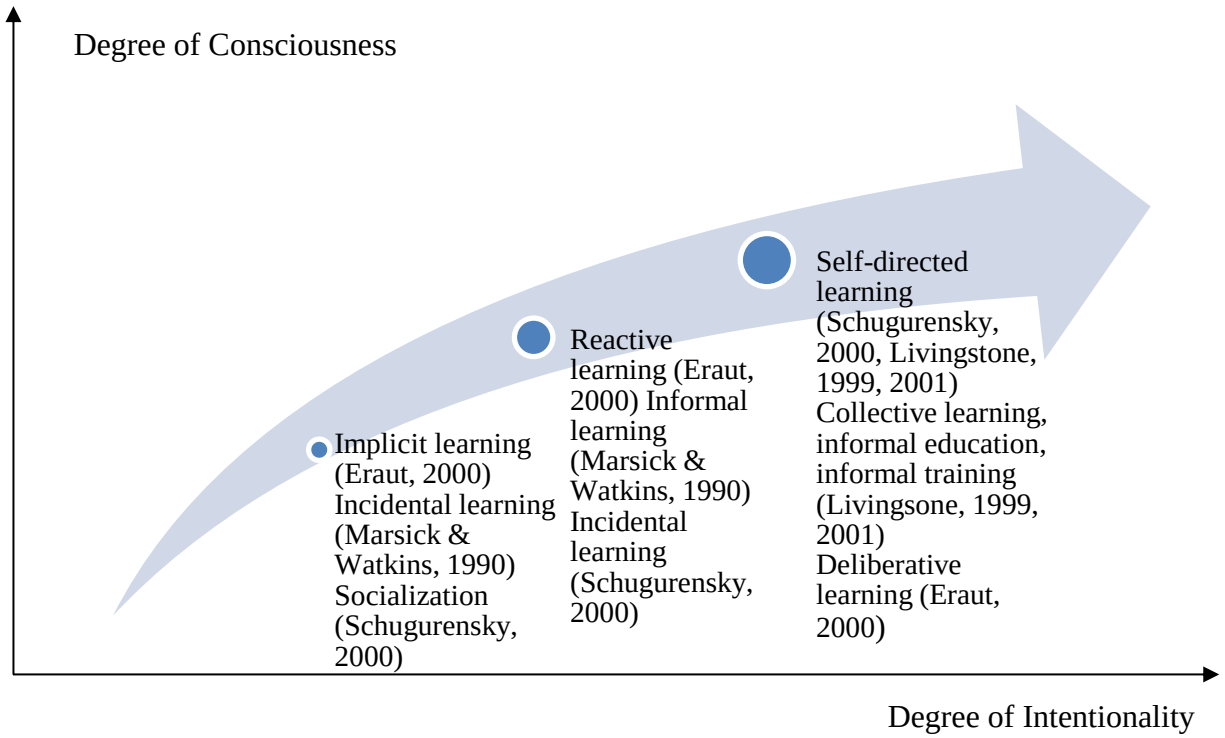

Figure 3. Taxonomy of informal and incidental learning

To summarize, informal and incidental learning tend to be defined in direct contrast to formal and nonformal learning. Informal learning generally happens outside of a structured educational setting. As Marsick and Volpe (1999) suggest, informal learning "takes place as people go about their daily activities at work or in other spheres of life" (p. 4). However, informal and incidental learning could also occur in formal and nonformal learning settings when it is not acquired as an intended outcome of the curriculum (Duguid et al., 2013a). Another theme among conceptions of informal and incidental learning is the recognition of degrees of intentionality. There are different levels of intentionality and consciousness associated with informal learning. In general, informal learning is initiated by the learner and occurs spontaneously. Contextual factors (e.g., personal, job, and organizational characteristics) can promote or hinder individuals' engagement in informal learning. Finally, all scholars recognize that informal and incidental learning tend to result in tacit knowledge.

Informal and Incidental Learning in Adult ESL

A wide variety of organizations provide education services to adult English learners. Besides federally funded programs, adult ESL classes are also offered in volunteer-based programs, faith-based organizations, community centers, refugee settlement agencies and other social services centers (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010; Schlusberg & Mueller, 1995). Adult education programs employ a mixture of full-time, part-time, and volunteer teachers. Volunteers represented over 80% of instructors in community-based adult education programs (Tamassia et al., 2007). The ERIC Digest on volunteer-based ESL programs has provided a profile of volunteers and volunteer related work, illustrating a variety of instructional models, learning materials, course settings and learners can be found in volunteer-based ESL programs. (Schlusberg & Mueller, 1995). According to the volunteer profiles, the most common

instructional model is one volunteer teaching a small group of 2-15 students. The programs typically provide a particular series of textbooks or a library of material for volunteers to choose from. Volunteers also receive training through a 10−18-hour workshop. There is usually no on-going training and less support when volunteers start teaching (Crandall, 1993).

The following section used Marsick and Watkins's (1990, 2014) informal and incidental learning model as a framework to organize the empirical findings from research on teacher's learning experiences in adult ESL with special attention to how volunteer teachers learn. It starts with an overview of triggers presented in adult ESL for informal and incidental learning. It then moves to a summary of informal and incidental learning activities in adult ESL. It is followed by a discussion of the role of critical reflection, relationship with learners, and other contextual factors affecting informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. Table 1 summarizes the empirical studies used in this section of the review.

Learning Triggers

Informal learning is often triggered by "a need, gap, challenge, or opportunity that may grow through interaction with others" (Watkins et al., 2018, p.32). Several studies documented the learning triggers teachers experienced in adult ESL contexts. The triggers to learn are often a result of encountering a reality that does not fit their' beliefs or expectations. A study by McBrien (2008) illustrates that running counter to one's expectations can trigger informal and incidental learning. McBrien (2008) studied college students' experiences of volunteering in a school with a high population of refugee and immigrant learners and in an after-school learning programs for refugees. Students' perceptions of refugee learners being withdrawn and emotionally unstable was challenged by the reality they encountered in the two settings. Working

with motivated and happy kids helped volunteers re-conceptualize their understanding of refugee populations.

Teaching in adult ESL can create many ill-defined and unexpected situations where the teachers do not feel prepared enough to work out the solutions. For example, Perry and Hart (2012) studied volunteers' perceptions of their preparedness to teach adult refugee learners. Their findings showed that regardless of certification and prior teaching experience, the volunteers felt unprepared to teach adult ESL learners, particularly with learners who were refugees and had limited schooling or literacy skills. One volunteer felt completely unprepared to deal with the cultural differences in the classroom. This study also revealed that the awareness of their unpreparedness motivated volunteers to seek knowledge or guidance from an external source to improve their teaching. Encountering difficult or even negative experiences (e.g., trial and error, witnessing injustice, and struggling to complete tasks) has been recognized as a powerful learning tool resulting in genuine growth and transformative insight (Perry, 2013). DeCapua et al. (2018) studied one TESOL student's experience in providing ESL instruction to low literacy adult learners. Despite their desire to use culturally appropriate practices, the instructor unconsciously returned to a teacher-centered approach and was unsettled by how poorly the class was going. However, the struggle to provide learner-centered instruction motivated the instructor to explore new options with professors and mentors and modify teaching practices.

Learning on the Job

Kyndt et al. (2016) conducted an integrative literature review on teachers' informal learning activities that occur in their everyday practice in schools. They categorized learning activities into seven categories: (1) interacting and discussing with others, (2) practicing and

testing, (3) learning from others without interaction, (4) consulting online or offline information sources, (5) reflecting in and on action, (6) engaging in extracurricular activities, and (7) encountering difficulties. Teachers' learning outcomes were also grouped into three themes: (1) subject knowledge, (2) pedagogical knowledge and skills and (3) professional attitudes and identity. Like teachers in any setting, teachers in adult ESL also learn from their own experiences in and out of the classroom. Their on-the-job learning sources were grouped into three main categories: learning through teaching, learning from others, and self-directed education.

Learning by doing is the most common source of informal learning for teachers in adult ESL. K. Perry and Hart (2012) and K. Perry (2013) found that volunteers in a refugee literacy learning center described their experiences as "jumping in and trying things." Belzer (2006b) studied adult learner and volunteer interactions in a one-on-one literacy tutoring setting and found the volunteers' instructions were guided by learners' reactions. One volunteer reported they paid attention to what the learner enjoyed the most and tried to address the topics the learner brought up. Kim (2005) and Stewart (2015) both reflected on their own teaching experiences with refugee and immigrant learners. They used literacy activities like writing a dialogical journal and reading immigrant storybooks to gain valuable information about the learners' life experiences and then used these insights to plan lessons responsively to the learners' cultural and linguistic needs.

Teachers also learn from other teachers, staff, and individuals with relevant experiences. Studies have shown that informal learning among adult ESL teachers occurs through observation, mentorship, and apprenticeship (K. Perry & Hart, 2012; K. Perry, 2013). However, despite the appeal of mentorship and other knowledge sharing activities, these resources might not be offered regularly or at all by adult ESL programs (Schlusberg & Mueller, 1995). For

example, Abbott and Rossiter (2014) studied the perceived professional development needs and interests from rural ESL instructors' perspectives and found these instructors felt there was a lack of sufficient opportunity to informally collaborate with and learn from other teachers.

And finally, a large portion of informal learning falls into the category of self-directed education. That is, teachers intentionally seek knowledge or skills from an external source to improve their teaching (K. Perry & Hart, 2012; Ziegler et al., 2009). They engage in a variety of self-initiated learning activities, such as searching for resources from books or online, reading books on professional development, reaching out to experts, and engaging in purposeful reflection (K. Perry & Hart, 2012; K. Perry, 2013; Ziegler et al., 2009).

The Role of Critical Reflection

Marsick and Watkins (1990) recognized that informal and incidental learning could occur without conscious reflection. They drew on Argyris and Schön (1978) and Mezirow (1985) to find ways to "engage learners in examining taken-for-granted understandings, assumptions, and unintended consequences" (Marsick, 2009, p. 266). They emphasized proactivity, critical reflection, and creativity as the conditions to enhance informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Schön's (1983) model of the reflective practitioner was influential in Marsick and Watkin's informal and incidental learning model. Central to Schön's argument are the concepts of knowing in action and reflection in action. Knowing in action is the tacit knowledge we acquire through experience, "a kind of knowing which does not stem from a prior intellectual operation" (Schön, 1983, p. 47). When a situation is in conflict with an individual's knowing in action, reflection in action allows individuals to "surface and criticize his initial understanding of the phenomenon, construct a new description of it, and test the new description by an on-the-spot experiment" (Schön, 1983, p. 56).

Purposeful reflection is an important trait in promoting effective teaching. K. Perry (2013) studied the practice of one effective but uncredentialed volunteer teacher of a low-literate ESL class for African refugees. This volunteer, who received little formal training to teach, represented a large group of teachers who worked with adult immigrant and refugee learners in community-based education programs. The study found that the volunteer engaged in "routine, purposeful reflection on their own instruction and students' learning as a regular part of the teaching practice" (K. Perry, 2013, p. 29). The volunteer described reflection processes as "mak[ing] note of what we did, what worked, what didn't work, and notes about what I want to do next week […] then [typing] up a lesson plan" (K. Perry, 2013, p.29). This example illustrates that informal learning is "an iterative process of action and reflection" (Marsick & Volpe, 1999, p. 7).

Purposeful reflection in adult ESL was also linked to teacher identity development and increased social awareness. DeCapua et al. (2017) and Jurkunas (2015) both found that volunteering with adult ESL learners provides a space for novice teachers to develop and solidify their teacher identities. Both studies noted the importance of reflecting on experiences, which facilitated the volunteers' growth to become better teachers. Primavera's (1999) study on college students' volunteering experience in a family literacy program found that participants devoted a significant amount of time to "thinking about, talking about, or using their volunteer experiences in some way" (p. 129). The reflection over their service led them to develop a better understanding of themselves, the learner population and the social issues they faced, and to build a greater appreciation for diversity and multiculturalism (Primavera, 1999). Their elevated degree of civic commitment also showed the possibility of transferring what they learned through volunteering into other spaces, including future community work.

Because informal and incidental learning are unstructured and often happen unconsciously, it is easy to "become trapped by blind spots about one's own needs, assumptions, and values that influence the way people frame a situation, and by misperceptions about one's own responsibility when errors occur" (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p. 31). While volunteer teachers often engage in self-reflection, voluntary organizations rarely provide spaces for individual or collective reflection in a systematic way (Duguid et al., 2013). Volunteers also have various levels of skills or awareness to interpret or reflect on an experience. Moreover, because the current discourse frames volunteering as an altruistic act, it might hinder volunteers from engaging in a deeper level of critical reflection. However, in order to bring meaningful change to the learners, volunteers, like any teacher, must consciously reflect on their work and action (J. Perry & Luk, 2016). Studies have documented the volunteer teacher's inability or unwillingness to engage in critical reflection and the consequences of this. Erickson (2012) studied a group of senior volunteers who taught and mentored adult refugee learners in North Dakota. Findings indicated that some senior volunteers' problematic behaviors were the result of their inability to examine their own privilege or reflect on their assumptions about refugees and other cultures. When the refugees tried to push back against volunteers' effort, the volunteers failed to make meaning of the refugees' resistance. Instead, they framed the problem through the lens of "a white' man's burden" where they felt the need to "teach refugees rather than collaborate with or learn from them" (J. Erickson, 2012, p. 174). Shan and Butterwick (2014) studied what volunteers learned from mentoring new professional immigrants in Canada and found that much of the learning reported could be categorized as informative. Drawing on Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning theory, they found that only a few learning episodes involved de-stereotyping immigrants through the volunteers' capacity to reflect critically on their

assumptions about immigrants and other countries. Clearly, the volunteering activities in these two studies had the potential to engage volunteers in critical reflection because they offered a space for volunteers to engage in social interaction with immigrant and refugee learners. However, as Marsick et al. (2018) have hypothesized, without the design, facilitation, and feedback that could assist learners in better interpreting situations and seeking alternative solutions, there may be errors in the informal learning cycle. Moreover, because of the lack of training and supervision along with the increasing demand for volunteers in refugee settlements and other related educational programs, volunteers are rarely screened for their attitudes about race, class, gender, or culture (J. Erickson, 2012). Without deliberate critical reflection, volunteer teachers risk learning and teaching through unquestioned assumptions that might end up "reproducing the injustices that we think we are trying to eliminate" (J. Perry & Luk, 2016, p. 255).

Learning Through Relationship

"Relationship and shared meaning-making" is critical to avoid errors in the informal and incidental learning cycle (Marsick & Watkins, 2014, p. 15). Shan and Butterwick (2014) found that what volunteer mentors learned and their changes in attitudes and perceptions towards immigrants and themselves were largely dependent on the relationship negotiated with immigrant mentees. The relationship volunteers build with their learners could be a powerful lens for them to engage in critical reflection and thus "develop a deeper awareness of the reality of the situation" (Freire, 1970, as citied in J. A. Perry, 2013, p. 84). J. A. Perry (2013) studied the informal learning of volunteer teachers in a literacy program for migrant farm workers in Canada. A unique aspect of this program was that even though volunteer teachers were not paid to teach; they were offered paid employment to work alongside migrant workers on the farm. At

orientation, the volunteers were introduced to methods to create pedagogical space that fosters dialogue and student-centeredness. The student-centered learning environment and the physical labor they struggled with allowed volunteers to develop an intimate and genuine relationship with their learners as they lived, worked, and shared their lives together during the agricultural season. The volunteers claimed that solidarity became the foundation of their work as adult educators. J. A. Perry (2013) quoted Freire's (1992) concept of cultural synthesis to describe the relationship volunteers developed with learners. This relationship is defined by "learners who are integrated in the process of learning and who are co-authors of the thematic content of curriculum" (Freire, as cited in J. A. Perry, 2013, p. 87). It was precisely this relationship that facilitated the volunteers' learning as they "start[ed] a process of conscientization and [began] to experience more critically their role as middle-class Canadians and understand their role in the process of global inequality" (J. A. Perry, 2013, p. 97). J. A. Perry's work confirmed Marsick and Watkins' (2014) informal and incidental learning model where they recognized the effects of relational space and social interaction on learning.

Organizational Support for Informal Learning

Research suggests that various contextual factors might help to support or hinder teacher's informal and incidental learning in adult ESL contexts. Some empirical studies have been conducted to examine factors at the organizational level that might affect a teacher's engagement in learning. Lytle et al. (1992) conducted the Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project to investigate the potential of inquiry-centered staff development for adult literacy practitioners. They interviewed full-time, part-time, and volunteer teachers from diverse adult education agencies in Philadelphia and explored their barriers to learning on the job. The opportunities to engage in learning were constrained by "demoralizing problems with space and

other physical conditions of their workplaces as well as pressures of time, job fragmentation, and other factors that contribute to an atmosphere of instability" (Lytle et al., 1992, p. 8). As a result, these factors contributed to a profound feeling of isolation (Lytle et al., 1992).

The sense of isolation was used by multiple teachers to describe their experiences as an instructor or tutor for adult ESL or literacy (K. Perry, 2013; K. Perry & Hart, 2012; Lytle et al., 1992; C. Smith et al., 2001). Teachers in adult ESL usually work independently with a small group of learners or one learner. For volunteers, there is rarely any opportunity to communicate or exchange ideas with others. The isolation often comes from the feeling that they need to "figure out for [themselves] what's the best thing" (K. Perry, 2013, p. 27). As one teacher said, "isolation is difficult and gets in the way of me learning. I need to be stimulated and I need the ideas of other people. I would give anything ... for us to be together and share" (C. Smith et al., 2001, p. 3). Similarly, K. Perry and Hart (2012) found that volunteers considered access to expertise in the form of "(a) mentoring, (b) a 'reference person,' and (c) social networking among educators" as the most important supports (p. 119). These examples indicate that the lack of social connections and opportunities to interact with other teachers contribute to the feeling of being isolated and hinder informal and incidental learning.

Because of the lack of opportunity to communicate with other teachers, many participants in studies considered the focus-group interview to be a unique opportunity to interact with others and reflect on their teaching experiences (Abbott & Rossiter, 2014; Lytle et al., 1992). Organized and guided reflective practice is another missing piece in the informal learning cycle in adult ESL. The process of interviewing became a valuable learning opportunity through which volunteers began to recognize the depth and scope of their informal learning (Duguid et al., 2013; McGivney, 2006). In practice, there is a lack of recognition of volunteer learning in

general (Duguid et al., 2013). For example, the Frontier College literacy program explicitly stated that it did not consider volunteer's experience as important (J. A. Perry, 2013). According to the national director of the program, "Frontier College does not recruit volunteers who are looking to consume an experience which would then by definition become about them and their role as the consumers of some product. We have even told people that we don't care if they have a good experience; we don't care if they are happy at the end of this. We just care that they are effective" (J. A. Perry, 2013, p. 82). This might be an extreme case, but it's an example that illustrates how volunteer's learning experiences are not appreciated and an instance where volunteers are not invited to share their learning experiences despite their work and efforts. Organizations that do not create spaces for volunteer's individual and collective reflections "represents a missing opportunity that can actually inhibit social and organizational learning, and eventually can reduce the impact of the organization" (Duguid et al., 2013, p. 233).

This section synthesizes the literature on informal and incidental learning of teachers in adult ESL contexts, particularly, as they relate to the Marsick and Watkins' model. Informal and incidental learning provides a broader theoretical lens to explore learning in adult ESL, since training is not always available or applicable in these programs. An overarching finding from the literature is that informal and incidental learning is the primary way teachers learn in adult ESL contexts. They gain new skills and knowledge related to classroom instruction, acquire new values, expand their understanding of the immigrant experiences, and become more aware of their own role in the community and society. Their learning is beneficial not only to themselves but also to the clients they serve, the organizations they work for and even their affiliated communities. However, it is equally important to note that not all teachers learn the same thing as a result of their experiences. Without intervention or critical reflection, it is possible for

teachers to deepen their unexamined assumptions and prejudice, which will affect their work performance and hurt the populations they serve.

The preceding sections introduced the theoretical and empirical literatures related to informal and incidental learning. The following sections focused on the theoretical and empirical literatures related to intercultural maturity.

Table 1

Empirical Studies Related to How Teachers Learn in Adult ESL Contexts

Author(s)	Purpose	Sample	Methodology	Findings
Abbott & Rossiter (2014)	To understand the perceived professional development (PD) needs, interests, and challenge of ESL instructors in rural Alberta from the perspectives of instructors and administrators	36 instructors	Questionnaire Focus-group interview Interview	All administrators rated the need for formal ESL training for ESL teachers. Useful PD topics were activity-based learning, teaching English for work purposes, teaching multilevel classes, curriculum development, teaching pronunciation, and assessment. Other issues identified were difficulties associated with attracting staff who are interested in PD, a need for increased funding to cover PD, difficulties associated with delivering PD, and desired for increased communication and networking to enhance PD.
Belzer (2006b)	To understand what volunteer tutors and adult literacy learners do together and what influences their work	3 pairs of volunteer and learner	Case study Recording of teaching Interview	Volunteers used learners' reaction as the guide to plan and tutor. Volunteers had mixed reaction to the tutoring training session. Volunteers drew on personal experience when tutoring.
DeCapua, Marshall, & Frydland (2018)	To examine the transformative learning experience of one volunteer in adult ESL	1 TESOL student	Case study Journal Observation Debriefing	Volunteer experienced struggle to understand different habits of minds. Volunteer was unsettled by how poorly her class was going. The debriefing sessions enabled volunteer to reflect on her teaching. Volunteer continued the critical reflection to the end of becoming a more successful teacher.
J. Erickson (2012)	To examine what elderly volunteers do in refugee	5 elderly volunteers	Case study Interview	Volunteers engaged in various levels of reflection.

	settlement program and the ways in which they uphold and contest mainstream ideas about race, class, gender, and culture			Volunteering became a space for counter-hegemonic struggle for some volunteers. Volunteers who were unable to examine their own attitudes or privileges could lead to problematic behaviors.
Jurkunas (2015)	To describe how volunteering in the ESL classroom can contribute to teacher's identity as an emerging professional in the TESOL field	1 TESOL student	Reflection	Volunteering created an opportunity for teacher to reflect on teaching experience, which has in turn facilitated the growth of teacher identity. Discussing classroom experience with mentors, professors and classmates contributed to the growth of teacher identity.
Kim (2005)	To explore the use of dialogue journal writing in creating meaningful learning in adult ESL classroom	1 volunteer	Reflection	Volunteer learned about adult learner's characteristic through their dialogical journal writing. Dialogical journal writing invited volunteer to join learners in sharing, reflecting on, and learning about their life experience.
Lytle, Belzer, & Reumann (1992)	To identify policy issues in adult education and introduce inquiry-centered staff direction for adult literacy practitioners	21 adult literacy practitioners	Interview	Practitioners brought extensive prior knowledge to the teaching of adults. Practitioners had no opportunities to improve their practice through ongoing, collaborative learning within or across programs. Learning opportunities were constrained by poor physical conditions on the job, lack of time, and the feeling of isolation.
McBrien (2008)	To examine the impact of service learning at a local refugee agency or elementary school	24 undergraduate students	Journal	Students encountered realities not as they expected. Students recognized the struggles of international students through their field experiences. Students made connections between coursework and the field experiences. Students demonstrated metacognitive reflections.

J. A. Perry (2013)	To examine the informal learning of Frontier College volunteer labourer-teachers	6 volunteers	Interview	Volunteers learned through solidarity as they lived and worked with migrant farmers together. Volunteers learned through struggle as they had to manage a challenging work environment.
J. Perry & Luk (2016)	To understand whether volunteer tutors act as agents of change or reproduction	3 volunteers	Interview	Volunteers encountered surprises when learning about the immigrant experiences. Volunteers engaged in reflection which changed their approach to tutoring and their worldviews.
K. Perry (2013)	To examine volunteer's preparedness to teach low literacy adult refugee learner	1 volunteer	Case study Journal Observation Interview	Volunteer indicated that she did not feel prepared to teach adult literacy learner. Volunteer felt a sense of isolation. Volunteer demonstrated cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity due to her personal background and professional experiences. Volunteer was a reflective practitioner. Volunteer experimented with new technique in the classroom.
K. Perry & Hart (2012)	To understand local educator's perceptions of their preparation to teach adult refugee learners	10 volunteers	Interview Questionnaire Observation	Educators in adult ESL literacy had a wide variety of preparation. Educators were aware of what their preparation experiences afforded, along with their limitations. Educators acquired knowledge through on the job learning (apprenticeship, self-education and self-reflection). Educators indicated the need for teaching tools and technique (general training, teaching materials, teaching ideas/activities, curriculum and lesson plans, and pedagogical content knowledge) and people resource (mentoring, reference people, and social networking among educators).
Primavera (1995)	To describe the impact of volunteering in family	112 student volunteers	Questionnaire	Students were exposed to the "other" reality. Volunteering created space for students to reflect on their own identity.

	literacy program on college student volunteers			Relationship with the learners helped students increase awareness of diversity and problematize their assumptions of others.
Shan & Butterwick (2014)	To examine the learning experience of volunteer mentors at an immigrant workplace connection program	18 volunteers	Interview	Not all mentors have learned the same thing as a result of their volunteering experience. Volunteer learning was largely dependent on their relationship with their mentee.
Smith, Hofer, & Gillespie (2001)	To understand the environment factors that influence adult basic education and adult literacy teacher's ability to provide effective instruction	95 teachers	Questionnaire	Adult educators received minimal training or support on the job. Adult educators felt isolated when it comes to learning and professional development. Adult educators wanted to have a learning community where they could learn and work collaboratively.
Stewart (2015)	To describe the use of reading and writing about the refugee experience to know more about the learners and enact more effective instruction	1 teacher	Reflection	Teacher learned from students' responses to the reading. Teacher listened to students' immigrant narrative. Teacher planned instruction based on response from students.
Ziegler, McCallum, & Bell (2009)	To describe volunteer instructors in adult literacy programs and their knowledge of providing reading instruction for adults	124 volunteers	Questionnaire	Training was not a significant factor determining volunteers' knowledge of reading instruction. There was no significant difference in reading instructional knowledge based on employment status.

Intercultural Maturity

It is estimated that by 2020, one of five workers in the United States will be foreign-born and more than half of the school-age children will belong to a minority racial or ethnic group (Hanover Research, 2014; Hussar & Bailey, 2011). Intercultural interactions have become an important aspect of our everyday life due to the increasingly globalized and multicultural society. The principal challenge for education in the 21st century, as highlighted at the International Conference on Education in 2004, is to "learn to live together" (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2004). That is, living together in a multicultural society requires new abilities and capacities to negotiate cultural experiences and deal with cultural differences (Chen & Starosta, 1996). The ability to act and communicate appropriately in a cross-cultural context is a high demand in the workplace as well as in daily life. This ability is often conceptualized as intercultural competence. Besides the most frequently used term, "intercultural competence", some related terms include intercultural sensitivity (Chen, 1997), diversity development (Chavez et al., 2003), and intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Scholars have addressed intercultural competence in a variety of disciplines, including education, communication, international business, and health care (Campinha-Bacote, 1999; Chavez et al., 2003; Deardorff, 2016; Johnson et al., 2006). While multiple terms, definitions, processes, and models have been developed, there is a lack of general consensus due to the difficulty of identifying the specific constructs of this concept (Deardorff, 2016). The following section introduces the conceptual and developmental framework of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005), a guiding theory for this study.

Conceptual Framework for Intercultural Maturity

The question guiding King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) theoretical research is "how do people come to understand cultural differences in ways that enable them to interact effectively with others from different racial, ethnic, or social identity groups?" (p. 571) King and Baxter Magolda (2005) found several limitations in current research and practice related to promoting intercultural competence. They found that in theoretical research, the assessment of intercultural competence relies heavily on attitudes as a proxy for competence. In practice, intercultural training has been limited to teaching knowledge and skills while omitting other aspects of human development. In response to these limitations, they argued for a more holistic perspective on human development and proposed a multidimensional framework that describes "how people become increasingly capable of understanding and acting in ways that are interculturally aware and appropriate" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 573). This capacity is called intercultural maturity.

King and Baxter Magolda (2005) primarily drew from literature on college development and Kegan's (1994) adult development model. Kegan links adult development to "the lifelong process of constructing increasingly complex systems of meaning making-or ways of knowing-in order to better understand ourselves and our social roles in an increasingly complex world" (Kegan et al., 2001, p. 4). His theory is based on the idea that adults grow into qualitatively different stages of meaning making, also known as ways of knowing or orders of mind. This transformation of ways of knowing "is always to some extent an epistemological change rather than merely a change in behavioral repertoire or an increase in the quantity or fund of knowledge" (Kegan, 2009, p. 41). Kegan (1994) proposed five stages of meaning-making in adult development. The three stages predominately represented in adulthood are the sovereign

mind, the socializing mind, and the self-authoring mind (Kegan et al., 2001). Self-centered people who perceive others as either helpers or barriers are at the second order of Kegan's (1994) model, the sovereign mind. Moving toward the third order, the socialized mind, people begin to think more abstractly and become reflective. Despite the decreased reliance on dichotomy and a dualistic mindset, people at this stage are still largely "made up by" others' expectations and external ideas (Kegan, 1994). An internally defined self will only emerge when people reach the fourth order, the self-authoring mind (Kegan, 1994). Many demands that adults face in contemporary society, including to live and work in an interdependent and diverse community, call for self-authorship, the fourth order in Kegan's (1994) model (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

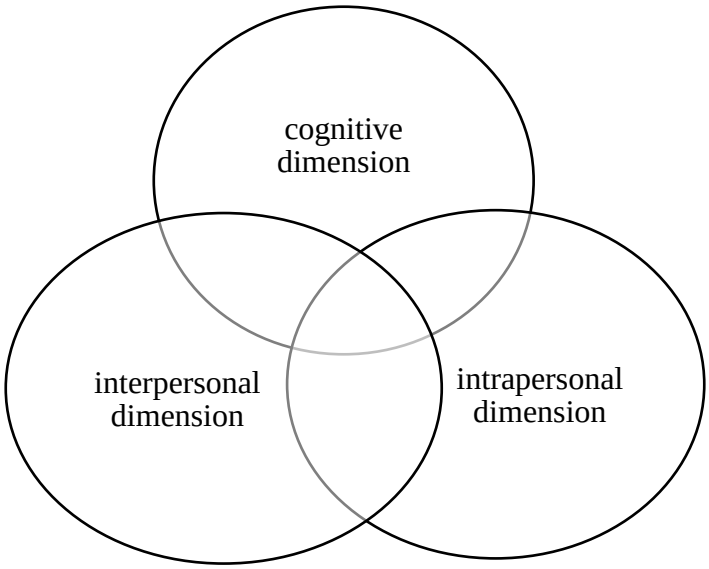

Figure 4. The dimensions of intercultural maturity

As illustrated in Figure 4, intercultural maturity presents a holistic view on human development because it encompasses Kegan's (1994) three dimensions in human development: cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal and their interconnectedness. The cognitive dimension focuses on one's meaning-making system. The intrapersonal dimension focuses on one's

development of identity and beliefs and how they govern one's behaviors. The interpersonal dimension focuses on one's relationship with others and the capacity to interact in different social situations. Based on this holistic view, King and Baxter Magolda (2005) argued that being interculturally competent requires a variety of expertise, "including complex understanding of cultural differences (cognitive dimension), capacity to accept and not feel threatened by cultural differences (intrapersonal dimension), and the capacity to function interdependently with diverse others (interpersonal dimension)" (p. 574). The word maturity denotes that there is an underlying developmental capacity that allows an individual to integrate one's knowledge, skills, and attitudes to behave and communicate in an interculturally appropriate way (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). That is, an individual moves between distinct developmental stages as one becomes increasingly interculturally competent. There are three levels of development within the intercultural maturity model: initial, intermediate, and mature (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

The Development of Intercultural Maturity

Initial level. The initial level of intercultural maturity is characterized by a heavy reliance on external authorities to make meaning. Individuals at the initial level of intercultural maturity do not have the capacity to deal with differences and diversity effectively. This level is correlated with the second order in Kegan's (1994) model, the self-sovereign mind. Individuals with a self-sovereign mind perceive others as either helpers or barriers. This way of meaning making has been characterized in several cognitive development theories as a dualistic mindset (M. Bennett, 2004; Chavez et al., 2003; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). While individuals are aware of the existence of differences, they are not able to hold multiple perspectives at the same time. Thus, they frame differences dichotomously. At this level, individuals experience their own culture as the only "right" culture. They interpret other cultures based on their proximity to their own

culture and perceive divergence as "wrong" rather than different. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) argued that this dichotomous thinking on how knowledge could be judged serves as a barrier to understanding and accepting cultural differences.

Individuals at the initial level of intercultural maturity often lack the awareness of one's own cultural or social identity. This phase is characterized by "being defined by others' expectations; endorsing cultural beliefs, values, or practices in an unreflective or unconsidered way, and being threatened by different cultural values or by others of different social identity groups" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 578). That is, the sense of self is largely defined externally and accepted by individuals unreflectively. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) argued that the unreflective acceptance of others' expectations and cultural beliefs and practices is similar to the third order in Kegan's (1994) adult development model, the socialized mind. However, individuals with the socialized mind can think abstractly and reflectively and have a greater capacity to acknowledge cultural differences (Kegan, 2009). Individuals at the stage of dualistic awareness do not possess these skills and mindsets.

When individuals at the initial level engage in intercultural interaction, "There is little acknowledgement of or reference to abstract concepts such as social ideals of community or to the goals of organized society" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 580). With a dualistic mindset, they can tolerate different perspectives and values but judge them based on egocentric standards.

In summary, individuals at the initial level of intercultural maturity have an unsophisticated view on cultural differences and diversity issues. Their capacity to explore cultural differences is limited by their dualistic mindset. As a result, they generally lack the awareness of their own values and identities as well as those of other cultures. They tend to

perceive other cultures, values, or beliefs as a threat or as wrong. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) argued that the simplest cognitive category and externally defined self often contributes to an individual's resistance to multicultural education.

Intermediate level. Individuals at the intermediate level of intercultural maturity development differ significantly from the individuals at the initial level. This phase is characterized by reflection, self-exploration, and, sometimes, feelings of fragility (M. Bennett, 2004; Chavez et al., 2003; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Individuals begin to develop a more holistic view on cultural differences, shifting "from seeing knowledge as certain to increasingly acknowledging the uncertainty associated with making a knowledge claim" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 575). This shift results in individuals decreasing their reliance on dichotomy and beginning to rely on personal processes for meaning making.

The highlight of the intermediate level of intercultural maturity is "the tension between an externally derived sense of self (e.g., reliance upon affirmation by others or peer group acceptance) and an internally derived self-definition" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 578). Individuals begin to turn away from identifying oneself through external authorities and gradually move to internal self-definition. This level is characterized by self-exploration that allows for the "simultaneous examination of one's experience in one's own cultural contexts and an examination of that culture in broader social context" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 578). This self-exploration demands skills like thinking abstractly and reflectively, the capacities that individuals with a self-socialized mind possess (Kegan, 1994). This experience can cause excitement, as well as imbalance, stress or even anger (Chavez et al, 2003). Individuals often find themselves torn in two when there is a conflict between important ideologies, beliefs, and communities (Kegan, 2009). They are still wrestling with the possibility of entertaining multiple

perspectives at the same time, which often results in a feeling of betrayal to the culture or community with which they identify (Chavez et al., 2003; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Individuals at the intermediate level have a much greater capacity to explore cultural differences and diversity and interact with others effectively. They also develop a broader understanding of social systems, social constructs, social environments and how they govern the behaviors of themselves and others. At this level, individuals begin to acknowledge that "these systems [are] social/cultural constructions that include not only social expectations that are codified in law, but also social conventions and community rules governing behaviors" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 580).

In summary, the intermediate level of intercultural maturity encompasses a continuum of explorations and challenges. Individuals at this level develop a more sophisticated view on culture differences and a deeper awareness of their own culture and identity. They begin to explore their own meaning making as well as the cultures of others, which often results in a greater degree of empathy. However, individuals at this stage can also experience fragility and stress as they are still struggling with reconciling differences or developing an internally defined self. The state of distress will continue until they reach the mature stage of intercultural maturity.

Mature level. The mature level of intercultural maturity is undergirded by the self-authoring mind, "a shift away from being made up by the values and expectations of one's surroundings (family, friends, community, culture) that get uncritically internalized, and with which one becomes identified, toward developing an internal authority that makes choice about these external values and expectations according to one's own self-authored belief system" (Kegan, 2009, p. 46). This level is characterized by the capacity to integrate multiple perspectives and engage in interdependent interactions. Cognitively, individuals at the mature

level of intercultural maturity can consciously shift perspectives and use multiple cultural frames without "losing themselves" (M. Bennett, 2004; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Their cognitive complexity allows them to accept uncertainty and ambiguity and entertain multiple cultural perspectives.

Unlike individuals at the intermediate level who might experience discomfort or imbalance while reconciling multiple identities, individuals at the mature level have developed an internally defined sense of self and do not feel torn apart by the conflicts of differences. The intrapersonal dimension at this level is characterized by "a sense of self in which various aspects of one's identity are integrated in ways that provides a culturally-sensitive and well-considered basis for making decisions about intercultural interactions" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 579).

Individuals at this level have a greater awareness of and appreciation for cultural differences. They can engage in intercultural interaction that is interdependent, mutually respectful and mutually negotiated. In fact, intercultural interaction is experienced as "enhancing one's identity and role as a member of society" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 580). King and Baxter Magolda (2005) argued that the mature ways of making meaning of cultural differences and intercultural experiences also enable individuals to act effectively as advocates for social justice and a range of social issues.

In summary, individuals at the mature level of intercultural maturity have an internally defined sense of self and can examine various rules, beliefs, and systems reflectively. This self-governing capacity allows them to interact with people from diverse backgrounds confidently and respectfully without feeling threatened by their differences. They have a deeper

understanding of how individuals are embedded in various systems, communities and cultures and are willing to work for the rights of others.

Research on Intercultural Maturity in Intercultural Contexts

King et al. (2013) analyzed 207 intercultural experiences from 161 college students to identify contexts, characteristics, and key features related to intercultural effectiveness outcomes. They found three major themes in students' intercultural learning: (a) encountering others' experiences provided a powerful context for intercultural learning, (b) a sense of safety mediated students' willingness to explore cultural differences, and (c) students used a variety of approaches to participate in intercultural learning, and these approaches varied in complexity corresponding to the students' levels in the intercultural maturity model. This study not only supported the developmental nature of intercultural maturity, but also pointed out that encountering cultural diversity is an important condition to foster intercultural maturity. King et al. argued (2013),

> "Learning from exposure to differences may seem like so obvious a starting place that it hardly merits discussion. However, the fact that this surfaced as a theme in students' commentaries about their significant intercultural experiences serves as a good reminder that this is a necessary starting point, in part because it reflects students' awareness and understanding about intercultural issues and dynamics, however naïve or unsophisticated." (p. 80)

To date, some studies have empirically examined an individual's intercultural maturity development in several multicultural settings, including studies abroad (Anderson & Lawton, 2011; Engberg, 2013; Gaia, 2015; Grigorescu, 2015; Luchesi, 2014; Smart, 2014), service-learning programs (Engberg, 2013; Engberg & Fox, 2011; Mather et al., 2012), college

experiences (Durodoye et al., 2011; Poole & Russell, 2015), precollege engagement (Engberg & Davidson, 2016) and online learning (Stickler & Emke, 2011). The following section reviews empirical studies that used the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI) as the instrument and studies that examined the developmental outcome of volunteering in the adult ESL context.

Empirical Studies using the GPI

The Global Perspective Inventory (GPI), developed by Braskamp et al. (2014) is a leading assessment tool that measures an individual's intercultural learning and development within the cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal domains. It was developed under the influenced of King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) theory of intercultural maturity. The GPI was designed to measure an individual's development on three domains of intercultural maturity (cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal). The cognitive domain consists of two subscales: knowing and knowledge. The intrapersonal domain consists of two subscales: identity and affect. The interpersonal domain consists of two subscales: social responsibility and social interaction. This study used the GPI to measure volunteers' intercultural maturity. A detailed explanation of the theoretical foundation and constructs of the GPI can be found in Chapter 3. The use of the GPI in empirical studies allows for a quantitative measurement of the effect of intercultural experience. It has been used in a number of studies to examine individual's intercultural maturity development in a variety of settings.

The GPI has been used to measure how study abroad can impact student's intercultural maturity development. Research on study abroad affirms its connection to intercultural maturity among college and university students (Anderson & Lawton, 2011; Grigorescu, 2015; Luchesi, 2014; Smart, 2014). Participants in these studies were asked to complete the GPI pre- and post-study abroad trips. In general, a greater change in pre- post scores was found among students

who completed a study abroad trip, as opposed to students who studied on campus (Anderson & Lawton, 2011). Grigorescu (2015), Luchesi (2014), and Smart (2014) found that study abroad had a stronger influence on the cognitive and intrapersonal dimensions with less impact on the interpersonal dimensions. Participants in Smart's (2014) study reported a significant decline in American Identity, a tool used to assess participants' agreement with statements that express features of American identity. This significant decline indicated that exposure to diversity led participants to "question their own understanding of what it means to be an American" (Smart, 2014, p.48). Similarly, Luchesi (2014) found that study abroad programs provoked self-reflection, which facilitated identity exploration. Regarding the low score on the interpersonal dimension, Luchesi (2014) and Grigorescu (2015) both argued that even though study abroad presented ample opportunities for intercultural interaction, some students still preferred to only socialize with students in the study abroad program, thus resulting in lack of interaction with members from the host community. Smart (2014) also found that both the level of cultural immersion and the quality of relationship participants built with the host community had an impact on the intercultural maturity of participants. Although semester or long-term study abroad is an ideal way to increase intercultural competency, students and parents have voiced their concerns over expense and time commitment (Gaia, 2015). Gaia's (2015) study sought to examine whether short-term faculty-led study abroad courses could be an alternative to effectively promote intercultural maturity. The study showed that a three-week study abroad course enhanced participants' understanding of cultural contexts and cultural diversity, increased their awareness of their own identity, and encouraged them to engage in intercultural interaction. However, the changes in the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions were limited. The findings indicated that while short-term study abroad participants developed a deeper awareness

of the influence of other cultures, their desire to accept cultural differences or to live in a multicultural setting remained the same (Gaia, 2015).

Service-learning is a type of course offered in higher education that "combines community service activities with personal and academic development, allowing students to actively participate in relevant and collaborative learning" (Bringle & Hatcher, as cited in Mann & DeAngelo, 2016). The GPI has been used to understand the impact of service learning on student's intercultural maturity development. Engberg and Fox (2011) conducted a study with 5,352 undergraduate students attending 46 universities to understand the relationship between service learning and students' global perspectives. Participants were asked to complete the GPI and indicate whether they had taken a course with a service-learning component. The study showed that the mean score on each of the GPI domains were higher for students who had service-learning experience than those who did not, and the mean differences between groups were most significant in the interpersonal domain. The effect of service learning on a student's interpersonal maturity was confirmed by a comparative study focused on the impacts of study abroad and international service-learning on students' intercultural maturity (Engberg, 2013). The results showed that both types of learning experiences positively impacted students' intercultural maturity levels. While study abroad participants demonstrated a growth in intercultural knowledge and a stronger awareness of personal identity, international service-learning participants demonstrated the most growth in the interpersonal dimension, particularly in their acknowledgement of social responsibility. These findings suggest that service-learning could be an effective tool to "promote civic engagement, social justice orientation, and interactions across differences" (Engberg, 2013, p. 477).

The GPI has also been used to describe a population or to examine the influence of personal background and experiences on an individual's degree of global perspective. Durodoye et al. (2011) examined the strengths and challenges of global perspective development among students, staff, and faculty at a Hispanic and minority serving institution in Texas. The results showed that students, faculty, and staff scored the highest on the intrapersonal identity scale, with students scoring the highest. The lowest scores for staff and students fell into the cognitive knowing scale. Engberg and Davidson (2016) studied the relationship between a student's precollege engagement and their development of global perspectives. The results showed that precollege engagement in curricular and cocurricular experiences that were related to learning about cultural differences, global events, leadership, and community service was strongly linked to all three dimensions of intercultural maturity. Poole and Russell (2015) examined the relationship between preservice teachers' experiences in a teacher education program and their level of global perspective. They found that preservice teachers scored highly on the intrapersonal identity scale but relatively low on the cognitive knowledge scale and social interaction scale. A significant relationship was found between enrollment in global content courses and their mean GPI score. Preservice teachers who more frequently participated in cocurricular cross-cultural activities also reported higher mean GPI scores than their counterparts.

Thus far, studies have applied the GPI either to describe a population or to identify the effects of a particular educational experience on the development of intercultural maturity. Table 2 offers a summary of GPI studies. Across all studies, the intrapersonal identity scale frequently scored higher means and the cognitive knowing scale and cognitive knowledge scales frequently scored lower means. Experiences like study abroad, service learning, and taking courses focused

on global content can create opportunities for intercultural learning, identity development, and intercultural interaction. As seen in these studies, these experiences have strong potential to facilitate the growth in all three dimensions of intercultural maturity.

Table 2

Means of GPI Dimensions from Empirical Studies

Author(s)	Context	Sample	Cognitive Outcome		Intrapersonal outcome		Interpersonal outcome		Mean of GPI
			Knowing	Knowledge	Identity	Affect	Responsibility	Interaction	
Anderson & Lawton (2011)	Study abroad	39 undergraduate students		3.37 ↓ *3.44*	**3.91** ↓ **4.09** *	3.62 ↓ 3.75 **	3.41 ↓ 3.50 **	*3.32* ↓ 3.50 *	
Durodoye, Coryell, Wright, & Pate (2011)	Hispanic serving institution	1438 college students, staff, and faculty members							4.22 (students) 4.20 (faculty) 4.16 (staff)
Engberg (2013)	Study abroad	659 undergraduate students	*3.46* ↓ *3.58* ***	*3.46* ↓ 3.73 ***	**4.04** ↓ **4.19** ***	3.72 ↓ 3.85 ***	3.54 ↓ 3.66 ***	3.73 ↓ 3.79 ***	
Engberg & Fox (2011)	Service learning	5352 undergraduate students	Nonparticipants						
			3.24	3.52	**4.05**	3.66	3.47	3.56	
			Participants						
			3.30	3.59	**4.13**	3.72	3.56	3.75	

Gaia (2015)	Study abroad	136 undergraduate students	3.57 ↓ 3.72	*3.39* ↓ *3.65* *	**3.85** ↓ **4.05** *	3.80 ↓ 3.88	3.71 ↓ 3.78	3.57 ↓ 3.70
Grigorescu (2015)	Study abroad	147 undergraduate students	3.78 ↓ 3.86 *		4.19 ↓ 4.23		3.94 ↓ 3.99	
Luchesi (2014)	Study abroad	369 undergraduate students	2011, Florence					
			3.68 ↓ *3.67*	*3.50* ↓ 3.72 ***	**3.96** ↓ **4.11** *	3.74 ↓ 3.80	3.70 ↓ 3.84 ***	3.62 ↓ 3.70
			2011, Barcelona					
			3.64 ↓ *3.57*	*3.42* ↓ 3.67 ***	**3.92** ↓ **4.01**	3.80 ↓ 3.76	3.61 ↓ 3.63	3.63 ↓ 3.61
			2012, Florence					
			3.74 ↓ 3.66	*3.49* ↓ 3.72 **	**3.99** ↓ **4.08**	3.89 ↓ 3.87	3.72 ↓ 3.71	3.53 ↓ *3.57*
			2012, Barcelona					
			3.62 ↓ *3.57*	*3.45* ↓ 3.86 ***	**3.84** ↓ **4.10** ***	3.77 ↓ 3.79	3.54 ↓ 3.73 **	3.46 ↓ 3.61 *
			2013, Florence					

			3.70 ↓ 3.77	*3.49* ↓ 3.78 ***	**3.99** ↓ **4.18** ***	3.83 ↓ 3.92 *	3.66 ↓ *3.67*	3.51 ↓ 3.68 ***	
					2013, Hong Kong				
			3.72 ↓ *3.73*	*3.55* ↓ 3.80 *	**4.03** ↓ **4.20** **	3.95 ↓ 4.04	3.95 ↓ 4.04	3.77 ↓ 3.80	
					2013, Seville				
			3.70 ↓ 3.79	3.55 ↓ 3.99 ***	**4.02** ↓ **4.18** *	3.82 ↓ 3.99 *	3.66 ↓ 3.74	*3.48* ↓ *3.58*	
Smart (2014)	Study abroad	2517 undergraduate students	*2.69* ↓ 2.93	2.81 ↓ 3.03	**3.33** ↓ **3.35**	3.08 ↓ 3.25	2.86 ↓ 2.82	2.84 ↓ 2.95	2.94 ↓ 3.06

Note. The highest mean is in bold. The lowest mean is in italic. * p<.05 ** p<.01 ** p<.001

Intercultural Maturity as Informal and Incidental Learning Outcome

Mathews-Aydinli (2008) reviewed studies of adult ESL in nonacademic settings and found that "the consciousness of a need for cultural awareness and sensitivity is particularly strong within the literature on adult ELL instruction – more so, for example, than in studies on adults in EFL or academic ESL settings" (p. 208). This might be explained by the fact that adult ESL programs rarely provide only language or literacy instruction. They also provide learners with "access to information they need for success in their roles as parents, employees, consumers and lifelong learners" (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010, p. 20). That is, the adult ESL program is a place that invites learners' wholeness into the classroom. Adult learners, who are "embedded in their lifelong cultures", "bring a wealth of information and experience with them to the classroom" (Buttaro & King, 2001, p. 40). At the same time, as one volunteer teacher put it, "When you volunteer, you bring your whole background with you, your whole approach to life" (Narushima, 2005, p. 578). Adult ESL contexts create community, "whether civic, work, religious, or identity-based", where "we cease to be alone and become connected with others" (Larrotta, 2009, p. 75). While much research has been conducted on how adult education programs can facilitate an immigrant's integration, we know relatively little about how the host population might have changed as a result of encountering immigrants in such settings (Shan & Butterwick, 2014). DeCapua et al. (2017) studied the learning journey of one novice teacher volunteering in an adult ESL literacy class. They found that their learning went beyond acquiring skills and knowledge. It became "a journey of cognitive, conative, and affective factors in which they experienced much anxiety and frustration that called into question their own identity" (DeCapua et al., 2017, p. 31). That is, teaching in adult ESL settings has the potential to increase the individuals' developmental capacity to act in an interculturally appropriate way.

Although the concept of intercultural maturity has never been applied to adult ESL contexts, cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal outcomes have been empirically linked to experience in intercultural contexts. This following section examines the connection between informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the three dimensions of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Table 3 summarizes what they learn from their experience in adult ESL or similar intercultural contexts.

The cognitive dimension of intercultural maturity focuses on one's epistemology and how it mediates the way people approach issues related to cultural differences (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Teaching in adult ESL contexts is linked with positive effects on cognitive outcomes such as expanded knowledge about the immigrant experience, a greater appreciation for diversity and multiculturalism, and a higher awareness of prejudice and stereotypes (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; J. A. Perry, 2013; Kim, 2005; McBrien, 2008; Primavera, 1999; Stewart, 2015). Such new knowledge often interacted with teachers' preexisting values and dispositions and provoked reflection and self-examination (DeCapua et al., 2017; McBrien, 2008; Primavera, 1999). According to a survey on college students volunteering in a family literacy program, most participants reported gaining significant knowledge about diversity and multiculturalism (Primavera, 1999). Nearly all participants reported that volunteering exposed them to different ways of living. About 49% of participants reported increased appreciation for diversity and multiculturalism. Twenty-seven percent of participants commented on the importance for college students to be exposed to the "other reality" that is significantly different from their own families and college environment. Forty-two percent of participants acknowledged that their volunteer experience helped them problematize the negative stereotypes they had about poor families living in the inner city. This learning experience helped individuals move from a dualistic view

on culture and diversity to a more holistic view where they can consciously shift perspectives and use multiple cultural frames without "losing themselves" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

The intrapersonal dimension of intercultural maturity deals with an individual's capacity to create an internal self that reflects one's sense of purpose and direction (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Volunteer teachers in a migrant worker literacy program in Canada described this process of self-exploration through the position of a privileged outsider as "uncomfortable" (J. A. Perry, 2013). The uneasiness came from their acknowledgement of the social and historical construction of privilege. As one volunteer put it, "It's allowed me to develop a level of analysis of privilege that I wouldn't have developed otherwise" (J. A. Perry, 2013, p. 94). This process of deep analysis is in alignment with the intermediate level of intercultural maturity, characterized by "an intentional self-exploration that allows for simultaneous examination of one's experiences in their own cultural contexts and an examination of that culture in broader social contexts" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 578).

The interpersonal dimension of intercultural maturity is concerned with one's capacity to engage in meaningful interactions with people with different cultural and social backgrounds (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Research has shown that volunteer teachers in adult ESL contexts developed empathy, trust, respect, and commitment to social change as a result of involvement in social issues and interactions with diverse individuals (Einfied & Collins, 2008; J. A. Perry, 2013; Shan & Butterwick, 2014). However, individuals have different capacities to make meaning of intercultural differences. Einfied and Collins (2008), for example, found that AmeriCorps members developed a greater capacity to empathize with the clients they served by working with them and listening to their life experiences. While most participants expressed their continual commitment to serve the community after the end of the AmeriCorps programs, their

increased social and civic responsibility differed as some developed a social justice paradigm (based on promoting social justice) while others adhered to a charitable paradigm (based on offering direct service). This difference might be explained by the transition from an intermediate level to a mature level of intercultural maturity. Though individuals at the intermediate level possessed a greater capacity to explore intergroup differences and effectively interact in intercultural situations, they still sought external approval as a standard for decision making (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Volunteers who developed a charitable paradigm operated in a dualistic mindset where we, the privileged, need to offer service to the disadvantaged, so they can live life in the "right" way. Unlike individuals at the intermediate level, those who move to the mature level of intercultural maturity can engage in interdependent and mutually respectful interactions, as informed by cultural understanding (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Their developmental capacity enables them to "comfortably and more effectively act as advocates or social justice allies across a range of social issues, from civil rights to causes related to specific social identities" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 581). Like the volunteers who adopted a social justice paradigm, J. A. Perry (2013) found that volunteering experiences resulted in some volunteer's "politicization." That is, volunteers learned the importance of being in solidarity with migrant workers while not speaking on behalf of them (J. A. Perry, 2013).

Table 3

Empirical Studies Related to What Teachers Learned in Adult ESL Contexts

Study	Purpose	Sample	Methodology	Cognitive outcome	Intrapersonal outcome	Interpersonal outcome
DeCapua, Marshall, & Frydland (2018)	To examine the transformative learning experience of one volunteer in adult ESL	1 TESOL student	Case study	- Learning about immigrant experiences and other cultures	- Gaining confidence - Solidifying teacher identity	- Making connection with mentors
Einfeld & Collins (2008)	To examine how participants in a long-term service-learning program described their understanding and commitment to social justice, multicultural competence, and civic engagement	9 AmeriCorps volunteers	Interview	- Increasing knowledge and awareness of societal inequality - Increasing awareness of their privilege in terms of economic status or familial stability and upbringing - Problematizing one's own assumption - Empathizing with those whom they served	- Discovering sense of empowerment - Increasing capacities for empathy, patience, attachment, trust, and respect	- Developing reciprocal relationships with clients - Developing understanding of active citizenship and a commitment to serving one's community

J. Erickson (2012)	To examine what elderly volunteers do in refugee settlement program and the ways in which they uphold and contest mainstream ideas about race, class, gender, and culture	5 elderly volunteers	Case study Interview	- Confronting fear of people of color - Challenging racist views	- Developing new meaning of worthy citizenship in senior years	- Making connections with refugee learners
McBrien, 2008	To examine the impact of service learning at a local refugee agency or elementary school	24 undergraduate students	Journal	- Recognizing the struggle experienced by refugee students - Recognizing that they were learning from refugee students		- Making connection with refugee students - Committing to service beyond course requirement
J. A. Perry (2013)	To examine the informal learning of Frontier College volunteer labourer-teachers	6 volunteers	Interview	- Deepening awareness of the reality -Learning issues faced daily by migrant workers -Learning about privilege and oppression	- Increasing self-confidence - Learning the significance of being a witness to injustice -Learning to better understand their own role and status in Canada	-Developing a sense of solidarity with the learners - Learning the importance of listening
Primavera (1999)	To describe the impact of volunteering in	112 volunteers	Questionnaire	- Engaging in reflecting on their	- Feeling satisfied because of the	- Interacting with people

	family literacy program on college student volunteers			volunteering experience - Developing understanding of cultural diversity, poverty and social issues - Challenging one's own assumption and stereotypes	positive response from clients and connection made with them - Generating a feeling of making a difference - Learning something valuable about themselves and experiencing personal growth	from diverse groups - Committing to services
Shan & Butterwick, 2014	To examine the learning experience of volunteer mentors at an immigrant workplace connection program	18 volunteers	Interview	- Learning cultural differences and other professional cultures - De-stereotyping immigrants	- Learning about oneself	- Expanding social network - Becoming more open and compassionate - Committing to advocacy
Stewart, 2015	To describe the use of reading and writing about the refugee experience to know more about the learners and enact more effective instruction	1 teacher	Reflection	- Learning about the refugee experiences and challenges		

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the two theories that guided this study: informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990, 2014) and intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005) and reviewed literature related to the application of these two theories in empirical research, with particular attention to research in adult ESL contexts. This literature review shows that informal and incidental learning is the principal way for teachers in adult ESL to acquire knowledge, skills, and values related to their work. Learning activities identified in adult ESL contexts include learning by doing, learning from students and others with ESL expertise, learning from difficult and negative experiences, apprenticeship and mentorship, and self-directed learning. The ability to engage in critical reflection, building relationships with students, and other contextual factors were found to be critical in enhancing engagement in informal and incidental learning. In addition, studies have shown that adult ESL creates conditions for growth in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity.

Although research has documented the impact of informal and incidental learning on adult ESL teacher's personal development, several gaps exist in the literature. First, few studies have assessed informal and incidental learning among teachers in adult ESL. Although much research has supported that teachers in adult ESL contexts acquire knowledge through informal and incidental learning, none of the studies has quantitatively measured their experiences. Second, there is insufficient research that examines experiences in adult ESL contexts based on a holistic perspective that encompasses cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal outcomes. Intercultural maturity can serve as a framework to understand who teaches in adult ESL contexts and what they can learn through these experiences. Third, there has been very little research comparing the learning experience between paid instructors and volunteers. This is especially

relevant for adult ESL since volunteers who constitute an important component in the workforce. Understanding how paid instructors and volunteers might learn differently and achieve different learning outcomes can inform voluntary organizations to purposefully design volunteering activities and support volunteer on the job learning.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005). This chapter provides details regarding the research questions that guided the study and an overview of the mixed-methods design. Additionally, this chapter describes the design of the study, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures. It is followed by a discussion on the strengths and limitations of the research design.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were:

R1: What informal and incidental learning activities do volunteers and paid instructors in the adult ESL context engage in?

R2: To what extent do informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in the adult ESL context contribute to their intercultural maturity?

R3: To what degree does organizational support moderate the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities and intercultural maturity?

R4: How do teachers in adult ESL programs make meaning of their intercultural learning experience?

Mixed-Methods Research Overview

As illustrated in Figure 5, this study used an explanatory sequential, mixed-methods design (Creswell, 2014) that used both quantitative and qualitative data to address the study's focus on informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of those learning activities on their intercultural maturity. The explanatory sequential design begins with a quantitative phase and follows up with a qualitative phase to assist the interpretation of the quantitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This study started with the collection of quantitative data through surveys and was followed by critical incident interviews.

In the quantitative portion of the study, a survey assessed the participants' participation in informal and incidental learning activities and their level of intercultural maturity. Informal and incidental learning was measured with items adapted from the Learning Practices Audit (LPA; Watkins, 2019). Intercultural maturity was measured by the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI; Braskamp et al., 2014). The survey also collected participants' demographic and organization information. Quantitative data collected at this stage provided a description of teachers in adult ESL contexts, in terms of their background information, their engagement in informal learning activities, and their levels of intercultural maturity. The data also yielded an understanding of how the development of intercultural maturity among participants could be affected by different types of and frequency of informal and incidental learning activities, their personal characteristics, and organizational support factors.

In the qualitative portion of the study, data were generated through interviews informed by the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954). The aim of the critical incident interview was to explore participant's intercultural learning experiences in adult ESL.

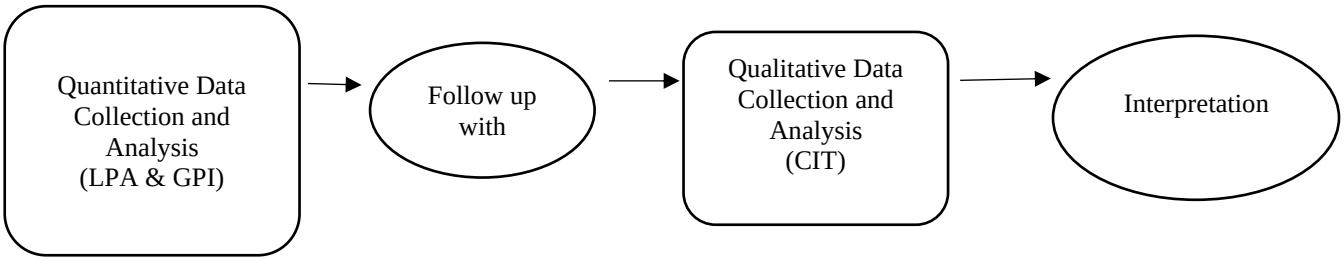

Figure 5. Explanatory sequential mixed methods study. Adapted from Creswell (2014)

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) argued that methodological eclecticism is a general characteristic of mixed-methods research. They defined methodological eclecticism as "selecting and then synergistically integrating the most appropriate techniques from a myriad of Qual, Quant and mixed methods to more thoroughly investigate a phenomenon of interest" (p. 8). The challenge of researching informal and incidental learning is to capture a learning process that many people may not define as learning at all (McGivney, 2006). Surveys designed to measure adults' participation in learning are likely to underestimate the scope and intensity of informal learning (McGivney, 2006). Because of the implicit hierarchy embedded in the concepts of formal, nonformal, and informal learning, surveys employing the language of formal education (e.g., learning and subject) are likely to discourage participants from reporting informal and incidental learning (Duguid et al., 2013a; McGivney, 2006). To elicit more information on this dimension of learning, McGivney (2006) suggested the use of a combination of methods, such as combining surveys with semi-structured interviews about "their activities, interests and aspirations" (p. 15), where most informal and incidental learning are embedded.

Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study for a better understanding of the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and their intercultural maturity. Mixed-methods research allows researchers to

"simultaneously generalize results from a sample to a population and to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of interest" (Hanson et al., 2005, p. 224). Data from the quantitative approach described the population and demonstrated the relationship between informal and incidental learning and intercultural maturity. Data from the qualitative approach explained the main effects discovered from quantitative data analyses (Ivankova et al., 2006). Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data, a mixed-methods approach can minimize the limitations of each approach and offer insights beyond what each approach can afford separately (Creswell, 2014).

Instruments

Several instruments were developed or adapted for both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study. This section describes the instrument development process with a discussion of reliability and validity. The quantitative and qualitative instruments are discussed separately.

Quantitative Data

Teachers' participation in informal and incidental learning and their level of intercultural maturity were measured with a 59-item instrument. Demographic information was collected in a 10-item survey. The primary instrument fully adopted 32 items from the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI; Braskamp et al., 2014), measuring intercultural maturity. The primary instrument also adapted 26 items from the Learning Practices Audit (LPA; Watkins, 2019), which measured informal and incidental learning. The full instrument can be seen in Appendix A. The survey was administered through Qualtrics.

Learning Practices Audit. The Learning Practices Audit was originally developed by Watkins and Cervero (2000) and used in a study of learning activities in certified public

accountancy. The original version was constructed based on workplace learning theories and included 31 possible formal, informal, and incidental learning opportunities available in an organization. The newly revised version (Watkins, 2020) consists of four sections: learning activities (26 items), organizational support (6 items), learning organization (7 items), and demographic information (5 items). In the section that measures learning activities, participants are asked to rate each item in terms of the extent to which they engaged in that activity during the last year at work. A six-item Likert scale is provided for each item (to no extent, to a little extent, to some extent, to a fair extent, to a large extent, and to a great extent). In the current study, a five-item Likert scale was used to be consistent with the GPI and to facilitate analysis across both instruments.

Before a new instrument is piloted with samples from the target group, items should be critiqued to ensure face validity (Passmore et al., 2002). Passmore et al., (2002) suggested three approaches to generate and critique new items: (a) focus group interview with subjects, (2) collaborating with colleagues to review and critique items, and (c) the Delphi technique, where a group of experts nominate and rate new items until reaching consensus. The revised LPA was sent to professors and doctoral students in the field of adult education and human resource development for critique. This process involved classifying the 26 items into either formal learning, informal learning, or incidental learning. Changes in wording and formatting were made if the original items contained ambiguous expressions. Items were adjusted or replaced if they were overlapping. After editing based on feedback from colleagues, the revised LPA was piloted with a group of graduate students who were currently employed and working full time in an organization. Participants in the pilot study were asked to complete the survey and report their concerns or questions about any item on the survey. A pilot study with closed questions can

highlight “whether sufficient response categories are available, and whether any questions are systematically missed by respondents” (Kelly et al., 2003, p.263). Items were re-written or dropped based on the response rate and feedback. Chronbach’s Alpha and exploratory analysis were used to identify low performing items which were later altered or eliminated.

The LPA was designed to measure workplace learning. Some of the LPA items might not be able to capture the phenomenon the current study aimed to address, because the items either assess formal learning or include learning opportunities that are generally not available in the adult ESL context. Several steps were taken to adapt the LPA to make it more appropriate for the current study. First, three items that depict formal training activities (#16, “I learn from attending conferences;” #17, “I learn from training programs;” and #18, “I learn from taking classes”) were removed. Second, eight items (#1, #2, #3, #5, #7, #19, #21, and #23) were adapted to become more relevant for adult ESL contexts. In #9, “I learn from the examples of others” was removed because of its similarity with #23, “I learn from observing others.” Third, five items (“I learn from individuals with ESL experiences”; “I learn from my students in the classroom”; “I learn from planning a lesson”; “I learn from teaching my class”; and “I learn from interacting with my students outside of the classroom”) were added. These five items are especially relevant for volunteering in adult ESL and can be seen in findings from previous qualitative studies (e.g., Abbott & Rossiter, 2011; J. A. Perry, 2013). Finally, the adapted LPA was sent to an experienced volunteer coordinator in an adult ESL program for critique. I discussed the research purpose and research design with her and requested her insight into whether these items represented informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. Minor revisions on the wording were made based on her feedback. The final version included 27 items. A full comparison between the LPA and the Adult ESL LPA can be found in Appendix B.

Global Perspective Inventory. The Global Perspective Inventory (GPI), developed by Braskamp et al. (2014), was used to measure the participants' level of intercultural maturity. After contacting the GPI staff at Iowa State University, I was granted access to use the 35 core items from the GPI for free. Thirty-two items were included in the survey. The remaining three items did not load on any scale and were not included (Research Institute for Studies in Education, 2017). The GPI encompasses two theoretical perspectives: intercultural maturity and intercultural communication. Rooted in perspectives on holistic development, the GPI is based on Robert Kegan's (1994) seminal work, *In Over our Heads*, on adult development (Braskamp et al., 2014). Kegan (1994) has identified three dimensions of human development: cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal. Using Kegan's (1994) work as a foundation, King and Baxter Magolda (2005) proposed a multidimensional framework to describe "how people become increasingly capable of understanding and acting in ways that are interculturally aware and appropriate" (p. 573). This capacity is called intercultural maturity and integrates all three dimensions of human development (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

The GPI was designed for use by individuals of any age or cultural heritage (Braskamp et al., 2014). Even though Braskamp et al. are scholars in the field of higher education, they did not design the instrument to focus exclusively on college students' growth as a result of their educational experiences. They argued that GPI items can "portray markers in a journey in which persons of all ages are constantly asking questions about how they think, feel and relate to others" (Braskamp et al., 2014, p. 4). As of this writing, over 120,000 students, staff, and faculty in over 200 institutions have completed a version of the GPI (Braskamp et al., 2014). The GPI has been used for studies in the context of study abroad (Anderson & Lawton, 2011; Engberg, 2013; Gaia, 2015; Grigorescu 2015; Luchesi, 2014; Smart, 2014), service learning (Engberg,

2013; Engberg & Fox, 2011), pre-college engagement (Engberg & Davidson, 2016), teacher education programs (Poole & Russell, 2015) and minority serving institutions (Durodoye et al., 2011).

The GPI aims to answer three questions:

- How do I know? (cognitive domain)
- Who am I? (intrapersonal domain)
- How do I relate to others? (interpersonal domain)

The GPI was designed to measure an individual's development in these three domains. The cognitive domain is related to one's way of knowing and how one gains knowledge. It contains two subscales: knowing and knowledge. The intrapersonal domain focuses on one's understanding of self. It contains two subscales: identity and affect. The interpersonal domain is centered on one's willingness and ability to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. It contains two subscales: social responsibility and social interaction. The most updated version of the GPI (version 9) has 35 items. A five-item Likert scale is provided (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) for each item.

Table 4 below summarizes the scale and measurement of the GPI.

Table 4

Scales and Measurement of the GPI

GPI domains	Subscale	Measures
Cognitive domain	Knowing	Degree of complexity of individual's view on the importance of cultural context
	Knowledge	Degree of awareness of multiple perspectives and culture's impact on global society
Interpersonal domain	Identity	Level of awareness of one's own identity and acceptance of ethnic, racial and gender dimensions of one's identity

	Affect	Level of emotional intelligence in accepting other cultural perspectives
Intrapersonal domain	Social responsibility	Level of understanding of interdependence and concern for others
	Social interaction	Degree of interaction with people from diverse backgrounds and degree of cultural sensitivity

The validity of the GPI has been investigated and verified by its developers as well as other researchers. Braskamp et al. (2014) addressed validity based on guidelines in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. According to the guidelines developed by the American Educational Research Association (1999), validity refers to "the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of the test scores entailed by the proposed uses of the tests… It is the interpretations of test scores required by proposed uses that are evaluated, not the test itself" (p. 9). To ensure face validity, Braskamp et al. (2014) requested college students and scholars in the field of study abroad and student development review an initial pool of several hundred items in 2007. The researchers eventually selected 69 items. Since publishing the first version of the GPI, Braskamp et al. (2014) have sought feedback from respondents to revise the items and scales. The purpose of soliciting feedback is to ensure the fairness and reasonableness of the GPI to participants. The concurrent validity of the GPI was studied by comparing the GPI to other instruments measuring related constructs. Anderson and Lawton (2011) used the GPI and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) developed by Hammer et al. (2003) to measure the effects of study abroad and on-campus study on college students' intercultural development. They correlated the two instruments and found a 0.23 correlation coefficient between them. That is, the GPI and the IDI do not measure similar characteristics (Braskamp et al., 2014). Braskamp et al. (2014) have also conducted several studies to investigate the construct validity of the GPI. Construct validity refers to the degree to which a

test measures the variables based on the underlying theory (Creswell, 2014). The intercorrelation of the six scales revealed some integration within each domain but also a significant amount of uniqueness. Braskamp et al. (2014) argued that "these scales are sufficiently independent measures of the three dimensions of holistic human development" (p. 14).

The reliability of the GPI was established through a test-retest approach. Braskamp et al. (2014) calculated the correlations of the pretest scores from college students at the beginning of their study abroad semester with the posttest scores from college students at the end of their study abroad semester. In a semester-long study abroad program, the correlations ranged from 0.58 to 0.73. In a three-week study abroad program, they ranged from 0.49 to 0.81 (Braskamp et al., 2014). The correlations revealed the consistency of changes in student's pretest and posttest scores. The internal consistency of the GPI was determined by the coefficient alphas (Braskampl et al., 2014). Based on over 9000 completed GPI surveys from students in over 40 institutions, the coefficient alpha scored for the six scales ranges from 0.657 to 0.740 (Braskamp et al., 2014). Based on the rules of thumb provided by George and Mallery (2003), coefficient alpha > .7 is considered acceptable. Five scales in the GPI have a coefficient alpha larger than .7 (Braskamp et al., 2014).

Qualitative Data

The current study used semi-structured interviews to gather information on how participants made meaning of their intercultural learning experiences in adult ESL. The interviews and subsequent data analysis were informed by the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954; Ellinger & Watkins, 1998).

Critical Incident Technique. The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was developed by Flanagan (1954) and first used in studying pilot training in the Aviation Psychology Program. It

consists of a set of procedures for "collecting direct observation of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327). Flanagan (1954) defined an incident as "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act" (p. 327). An incident is critical when "it makes a significant contribution, either positively or negatively, to the general aim of the activity" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 338). CIT has been applied to a wide range of areas with proven reliability and validity in generating rich qualitative data (Woolsey, 1986). However, the use of CIT to study volunteering is still in the exploratory stages. The only CIT study in the domain of volunteering was by Love et al. (2014) where they explored the critical incidents in sporting event volunteers' experiences. CIT could be a useful tool that offers researchers a "way in" to the phenomenon of informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. First, CIT extends to include a holistic conception of human experience (Hughes et al., 2007). The objective of CIT is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of a critical incident (Chell, 1998). It is in alignment with the concept of intercultural maturity where holistic development is comprised of development in the cognitive, interpersonal (behavioral) and intrapersonal (affective) domains. Thus, it is an appropriate tool to generate data on how informal and incidental learning in adult ESL can impact all three domains of human development. Second, CIT's focus on real-life experiences could help researchers eliminate some of the obstacles of researching informal and incidental learning. CIT can be used to collect data on "factual happening (rather than restricting its use to 'critical incidents'), and on qualities or attributes; to use prototypes to span the various levels of the aim or attribute (low, medium, high); and critical or factual incidents to explore differences or turning points" (Woolsey, 1986,

p. 251). Also, the CIT has been enhanced by Ellinger and Watkins (1998) with their incorporation of a qualitative, constructivist approach. They extended CIT not only to generate data about behaviors, but also to reveal rich narratives of critical incidents, how individuals make meaning of them, and contextual descriptions from the perspectives of the participants (Ellinger & Watkins, 1998).

Developing CIT interview. There are five major steps in CIT: (1) establishing general aims, (2) making plans and specifications, (3) data collection, (4) analyzing data and (5) data interpretation and reporting (Flanagan, 1954). These steps guided the development of the CIT interview used in this study and the subsequent data analysis and interpretation.

The first step in CIT is establishing the general aim of the activity. According to Flanagan (1954), it is impossible to plan or evaluate a specific human behavior without a statement of objective. A general aim is "in its simplest form, the functional description of an activity specifies precisely what it is necessary to do and not to do if participation in the activity is to be judged successful or effective" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 336). Since in certain contexts it is relatively difficult to establish a general aim that can convey uniform meaning to all the participants, Flanagan (1954) suggests that the participants should get an overall impression as close to the desired general aim as possible. For this study, the general aim was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities that lead to the volunteers' development of intercultural maturity in adult ESL contexts. In adopting Ellinger and Watkins' (1998) approach to CIT, this study aimed to not only discover the behavioral patterns of informal and incidental learning, but also to explore how teachers make meaning of their experiences and determine how these experiences contribute to their intercultural maturity.

The second step in CIT is making plans and specifications. Flanagan (1954) argued that specific instructions must be established to ensure that we can focus on the aspects of behaviors that are critical to the activity we are investigating. He outlines four specifications that researchers need to make explicit prior to data collection: (a) the situations observed, (b) the activity's relevance to the general aim, (c) the extent of effects on the general aim, (d) and the persons to make the observations (Flanagan, 1954). The second step in CIT involves developing a detailed plan for data collection (Hughes et al., 2007). This study aimed to capture the experiences of informal and incidental learning associated with teaching in adult ESL contexts. Teachers who had the experience of working in adult ESL settings were asked to recall the critical incidents that are significant to their experiences from their memory.

The third step in CIT is data collection. Flanagan (1954) recommends four ways to collect recalled data: interview, group interview, questionnaires, and record forms. This study used individual interviews to collect qualitative data. It used semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews follow an interview protocol that includes several open-ended questions with probing questions to seek further detail and explanation (Roulston, 2010). Although the interview protocol provides a starting point for all interviews, a semi-structured interview contains certain degrees of flexibility since "each interview will vary according to what was said by individual interviewees, and how each interviewer used follow up questions to elicit further description" (Roulston, 2010. p. 15). Because of this flexibility, semi-structured interviewing "allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of respondents, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 111). The questions being asked of the participants are the most crucial aspect in collecting data related to the critical

incident (Flanagan, 1954). A complete interview protocol can be found in Appendix C. In this study, the critical incidents were obtained by making the following requests:

- Tell me about a time when you felt you have learned something significant in your volunteering/teaching role with adult ESL learners.
- Tell me about a time when you felt surprised in your volunteering/teaching role with adult ESL learners.
- Tell me about a time when you felt you learned something new about yourself through working in adult ESL.
- Tell me about a time when you felt you made a meaningful connection with your students when working in adult ESL.

A pilot study using an earlier version of the interview protocol was conducted in October 2019 as a part of a qualitative class assignment. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the interview protocol and identify practical issues related to accessing and doing research with volunteers in adult ESL contexts. Three participants from a local church-based adult ESL program were interviewed. The participants were recommended by the program coordinator. The pilot study gave me an opportunity to become familiar with CIT and practice my interview skills. The interview protocol was revised for clarity based on the interview process and data collected. The first interview question was added after the pilot study.

Data Collection

This study received IRB approval from the Human Subjects Office at the University of Georgia in November 2019. The study began recruiting participants in Georgia in January 2020. The recruitment in Georgia stopped in March 2020 because many adult ESL programs began to close due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States. The study resumed participant recruitment nationally in late April. The survey closed on June 15, 2020. A total of 12 interviews

were conducted from June to October. The data collection officially ended in October 2020. The following section details the data collection process.

Quantitative Data

In order to conduct comparative analysis between paid instructors and volunteers, the population of this study was defined as teachers (regardless of status) currently working or who have worked in an adult ESL program as a primary instructor, classroom assistant, or tutor. Quantitative data were collected from participants in Georgia and nationwide. To recruit participants in Georgia, an invitation letter (see appendix D) was sent to 103 adult ESL programs in the State. The contacted programs represented a diverse range of host organizations, including technical colleges, church, community and minority serving organizations, literacy centers, and refugee and immigrant agencies. Twenty-one adult ESL programs signed the site permission letter (see appendix E) and agreed to participate in this study. The program either forwarded the survey invitation letter to its instructors or granted the researcher permission to contact its instructors. The survey invitation letter (see appendix F) included an explanation of this study, a confidentiality statement, and a link to the survey. In addition, the Georgia TESOL organization helped forward the invitation letter to its current members. A total of 107 responses from Georgia was used in the final analysis.

To recruit participants nationally, the researcher shared the survey invitation letter on multiple TESOL and adult education forums and professional organization mailing lists, including LINCS Community for Adult Educators, TESOL International Association – Adult Education Interest Section, American Association for Adults and Continuing Education – Commission for Community, Minority and Non-Formal Education and Commission for Adult

Basic Education and Literacy, and Coalition on Adult Basic Education. A total of 105 responses from adult ESL teachers around the nation was used in the final analysis.

Qualitative Data

Purposive sampling is the most common sampling technique in qualitative research (Marshall, 1996). "Information rich" cases, that is individuals who can provide the most insight into the research questions were selected to enhance the understanding of the phenomenon of interest (Devers & Frankel, 2000). Because this study used an explanatory sequential, mixed-methods design, qualitative data were collected after the analysis of quantitative data. The quantitative data were used to "characterize individuals along certain traits of interest related to the research question" (Creswell et al., 2003, p. 176). The analysis of quantitative data informed the selection of interview participants.

At the end of the survey, participants were asked to leave an email address if they were interested in a follow-up interview. The survey received a total of 110 email addresses from interested participants. Participants were split into two groups: Georgia and national. In each group, participants were ranked based on the combination of their mean LPA and GPI score. For each group, the top-ranking and low-ranking participants were invited to participate in the interview. A total of twenty participants were contacted. They received an invitation letter with an explanation of the study, interview protocol, and a link to the consent letter (see appendices G and H). Participants were informed that their participation in the interview was completely voluntary and would not impact their relationship with the organization they worked at or used to work at. I was mindful of the impact of the raging pandemic on participants' psychological and physical wellbeing and honored their choice to decline to participate. Twelve participants signed the consent letter and took part in the interview. Table 5 is a summary of the participant profiles.

Table 5

Profiles of Interview Participants

	Name	Location	Volunteer or Paid instructor	Education	Adult ESL Contexts	Years of teaching
1*	**Elizabeth**	**Georgia**	**Both**	**PhD**	**Community-based program, intensive English program, professional development for ESL teachers**	**40**
	Elizabeth has volunteered in community-based adult ESL programs since 1980 when she was a PhD student in education at a large public university in the Southern United States. She taught students from varied linguistic, educational, and cultural backgrounds for about 10 years. Later she transitioned to an intensive English program at a University. She has been in the field of adult ESL for about 40 years. Now, she develops and delivers professional development for adult ESL teachers. She always appreciated the opportunity to be with people from other cultures and learn from them. To her, one of the perks of being an ESL teacher is to *get to know people who you wouldn't otherwise have met.* She was grateful for the mentors she has met and considered *finding mentors as being a critical need* for adult ESL teachers.					
2	**Emma**	**Georgia**	**Volunteer**	**PhD Candidate**	**Library**	**< 1**
	Emma earned an online certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language and taught in Europe for two years. She was teaching in language schools that geared towards business English. Now she is back in the United States and pursuing a doctoral degree in the field of humanities at a large public university in the Southern United States. She volunteered in an ESL program at a local library near the university. Her students were native Spanish speakers and basic level English learners, so she used both English and Spanish in her instruction. Her PhD research involves the Hispanic population so volunteering also gave her an opportunity to practice Spanish. She considered herself to *learn from the students probably if not way more so than she hoped that they were able to learn from her.* To her, volunteering was *a small way to help to improve [the immigrants'] lives and their experience here.*					
3*	**Amelia**	**Georgia**	**Paid instructor**	**Master**	**Community college**	**2**
	Amelia started teaching adult ESL at a technical college in the Southern United States since 2018. Most of her students were older adults, usually the spouses of Americans or spouses of someone who moved to the United States for a job. She taught students with various English levels. She considered her adult ESL teaching experience to be *very challenging, very enjoyable* and *very rewarding*. Teaching has given her an opportunity to reflect on her own identity and beliefs and to really *understand the breakdown of her own knowledge.* She considered her relationship with her students as interdependent, and it has *stretched her learning.*					
4	**Grace**	**Midwest**	**Volunteer**	**Master**	**Professional English program, literacy center**	**3**
	Grace started her interest in intercultural exchange when she began hosting international exchange students many years ago. Now she works as administrative staff at a medical research center affiliated with a large public university in the Midwestern United States. She became a resource person for the visiting international scholars and eventually started an ESL program at the medical center. The program focuses on three areas: basic English and grammar, academic English, and culture and conversational English. Besides teaching at the medical center, she also volunteers at the local literacy center. Her teaching experience also motivated her to enroll in an MS in TESOL program. She considered teaching ESL to be *the most satisfying work* she does because she loves *helping people feel more comfortable*. For her, the relationship she built with students in the classroom has extended to friendship and family.					
5*	**Elena**	**Georgia**	**Both**	**Master**	**Community college**	**28**
	Elena started volunteering in an ESL program at a technical college in the Southern United States in 1992. After living in Britain for 16 years, she developed great sympathy for adults who were trying to learn English. She volunteered and eventually became a paid instructor in the beginner and low intermediate classes. Most of her students were refugees with low education levels. She developed her own teaching materials and adapted textbooks that were geared towards children. After her retirement, she returned to teaching this year. Her most recent students usually had a high school degree from their home country. Regarding teaching adult ESL, she believed that *it is important to make it democratic and give them as much power as you can*.					
6*	**Clara**	**Georgia**	**Volunteer**	**Master**	**Faith-based ESL program**	**8**
	Clara has a master's degree in Elementary Education and has taught reading to elementary school students for 10 years. She has always been curious about how adults learn a second language. Eight years ago, she received an ESL certificate training at a faith-based ESL program in the Southern United States and started volunteering. Many of the students in the program were advanced degree holders. Her students were mostly females and beginner level English learners. She considered the program to not only be about teaching English but also about *cultural education*. She felt honored to be trusted by her students and considered teaching adult ESL to be *a privilege, a calling, and a great opportunity.*					
7	**Sarah**	**Midwest**	**Volunteer**	**Master**	**Adult education center**	**3**

	Sarah has been volunteering in an adult education program in the Midwestern United States for three years. She started as an assistant in the classroom and later transitioned to a main teacher. She teaches ESL to adult learners from a variety of countries. Her students are usually at the intermediate or low advanced level and a lot of them are highly educated. They are usually the spouses of students at the local university or older adults who have been in the United States for years. She did not have experience or background in education prior to volunteering. After being a stay-at-home mom for years, she used volunteering as an opportunity to *help society* and *make a difference*. This experience also motivated her to enroll in an MS in TESOL degree.					
8	**Eva**	**Midwest**	**Volunteer**	**PhD**	**Literacy center**	**3**
	Eva is professor in the STEM field and has been a volunteer at a literacy center in the Midwestern United States since 2017. Prior to volunteering, she was a research scientist in Europe and enjoyed helping her colleagues with their English pronunciation and presentation. After coming back to the United States, she experienced reverse cultural shock and wanted to reengage in the intercultural interaction she used to have in Europe. Volunteering at the literacy center gave her the opportunity to *connect with some of the diversity that she was missing from living abroad*. She co-taught students at the college and career development level. Most of the students have advanced degrees or have academic aspirations in the United States. She would love to see more teamwork between STEM field volunteers and humanity field volunteers in adult ESL to complement each other and give students more perspectives in the classroom.					
9*	**Mary**	**Northeast and Georgia**	**Paid instructor**	**PhD**	**Community college, intensive English program, professional English program, and nonprofit organization**	**30**
	Mary held an MA in TESOL and a PhD in Applied Linguistics and has been working in adult ESL as a teacher and researcher for 30 years. She has taught in a variety of settings, including in the community college, an intensive English program, and a nonprofit organization. Her students ranged from young adults, nontraditional college students, and advanced degree holders. Currently she works at a Law school at a university in the Southern United States where she teaches English to practicing lawyers from the world who returned to school for a master's degree and to improve their English. Mary also lived in Asia for 10 years where she taught and volunteered in a variety of English programs. She considered her overseas experience to be *invaluable for an ESL teacher* and helped her understand her students so much better. Since her first day in an ESL classroom, Mary loved it and felt that *she found her field, her calling*. She believed that the adult ESL teachers serve a unique role as the *safe confidant* to the students where they could develop a more trustful relationship with each other.					
10	**Caroline**	**Northeast**	**Both**	**Master**	**Community-based program, international nonprofit organization**	**15**
	Caroline has been in the field of adult ESL for 15 years. She started teaching adult ESL while completing her undergraduate degree after a long absence from college. Despite feeling like an imposter initially, she fell in love with teaching adult ESL since her first day of teaching and *decided what she was going to really become was an ESL teacher*. She has been teaching and volunteering primarily in community-based organizations and international nonprofit organizations in a metropolitan area in the Northeastern United States. Most of her students were refugees and asylum seekers from Western African countries or Central American countries with very low literacy skills. Throughout her teaching, she has developed intimate relationships with her students which has *changed her life*. She considered this interconnectedness to be *the first thing that you have to develop in these ESL classrooms in order for the learning to begin*.					
11	**Lola**	**Northeast**	**Paid instructor**	**Bachelor**	**Community-based program**	**10**
	Lola started teaching in adult ESL 10 years ago as a way to connect with and help the Latino community that she identified with. This became *the best decision she ever made*. She currently teaches in a rural community-based program in the Northeastern United States. Her students are predominately adult women from South America and the Caribbean but very diverse in terms of literacy and language levels. Despite the program's focus on workforce development, Lola believes that it is important to *value the student's needs above the needs of the system*. Reflecting on the impact of teaching adult ESL on her own life, she felt she has always been *the one walking way with this changed perspective and heart and just fulfilled so much inside.*					
12*	**June**	**Midwest**	**Both**	**Bachelor**	**Community-based program**	**32**
	June has been teaching in a community-based Adult ESL program for 32 years in the Midwestern United States. Originally a physical health teacher in the public education system, she started as a citizenship teacher and later transitioned to adult ESL in the basic literacy and beginner level. Her students are primarily Hispanic or from South Asia. Reflecting on her 32-years in adult ESL, she believed that students were more likely to come back *when you can establish some kind of a connection.* In her teaching, she often *started with something that's common to develop their English and confidence*. Seeing her students coming back to the class and making progress has encouraged her to continue teaching in adult ESL. Now, she is excited to see young teachers taking an interest in adult ESL again and hopes that more financial resources would come into adult ESL for students and teachers.					

Note. All names are pseudonyms. * denotes participants who were in the 2% on the combination of mean LPA and GPI.

The interviews lasted from 40 to 60 minutes. All interviews were carried out and with the permission of the participants, recorded using Zoom. At the beginning of the interview, participants were given the opportunity to review the purpose of the study and ask clarifying questions about the study. To enrich the data, probing questions were asked based on Ellinger and Watkins' (1998) constructivist approach to CIT. Compared to the traditional Flanagan (1954) approach that would only capture learning strategies and behaviors, Ellinger and Watkins' approach enables researchers to look at contextual factors as well as beliefs, attributions and filters that shape the learning (Ellinger & Watkins, 1998).

Data Analysis

As a mixed-methods study, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were performed. A description of data analysis procedure for both types of data is presented below. Additionally, the trustworthiness of qualitative data is discussed. The quantitative and qualitative data analyses are discussed separately.

Quantitative Data

After completing the data collection, data were entered into Excel for initial screening. The data were then entered into an analytical computer software program, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, V25). Considering the LPA was newly adapted, an exploratory factor analysis was performed to understand the underlying factors of the instrument and to reduce redundant items. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze participants' demographic information, frequency of engagement in informal and incidental learning activities, and levels of intercultural maturity. To gain an in-depth understanding of the sample, independent t-tests were conducted to explore whether LPA and GPI might differ depending on personal and organizational characteristics. And finally, hierarchical multiple regressions were employed to

test the relationship between LPA and GPI. Multiple regression enables researchers to determine a correlation between a combination of two or more independent variables and dependent variables. In this study, the independent variables were the frequency of engagement in different types of informal and incidental learning activities. The dependent variables were the scores on the six scales of the GPI. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to test whether the differences and frequency of informal and incidental learning activities account for the GPI results. Additionally, organizational support was tested as a moderating effect on the relationship. A detailed description of quantitative data analysis and results can be seen in Chapter 4.

Qualitative Data

Initial configuration. The fourth and fifth steps in the CIT are data analysis and interpretation (Flanagan, 1954). Woosley (1986) argued that analyzing the critical incident data would be the most difficult and frustrating part of this method. The first step was transcribing interviews for coding. After each interview was transcribed, the analysis involved reading the transcripts and identifying the initial critical incidents, re-storying, and categorizing critical incidents. Formulating categories is an inductive process through which data are divided into themes (Flanagan, 1954). This process requires the "insight, experience, and judgement" from the researcher and there is no rule available (Flanagan, 1954, p. 344). To facilitate the categorization and analysis of CIT data, narrative analysis was performed after initial data configuration.

Narrative analysis. Riessman (1997) describes narrative inquiry as a process that serves the purpose of "systematic study of personal experiences and meaning: how events have been constructed by active subjects" (p. 70). Researchers who employ narrative inquiry are interested

in understanding the phenomenon of interest, rather than seeking a scientific explanation (Kramp, 2004). CIT used in this study, as enhanced by Ellinger and Watkins (1998), incorporated a constructivist interpretive view and is able to "develop rich narratives of critical incidents that capture both context and meaning from the perspective of the respondents" (p. 4). Thus, narrative analysis is compatible with CIT data. Narrative analysis involves re-storying, the process of "gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then rewriting the story to place it within a chronological sequence" (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 332). Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) observed that a story might not be chronologically articulated when first told by the research participants. Re-storying allows researchers to develop rich details and extract key elements from the narrative (Ollereshaw & Creswell, 2002).

In this study, the problem-solution approach guided the re-storying of critical incidents. The problem-solution approach to narrative analysis has its theoretical perspective in narrative thought (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Narrative thought is the cognitive action of recounting a purposeful activity from the past in a specific setting (Yussen & Ozcan, as cited in Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Raw transcript was analyzed for five elements: characters, setting, problem, actions and resolution. The next step involved "organizing the elements into attempts or events and then sequencing the attempts or events" (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 333). The problem-solution approach was an appropriate analytical method for this study for two reasons. First, this study looked at informal and incidental learning, which is often triggered by "an internal or external stimulus that signals dissatisfaction with current ways of thinking or being" (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p.21). The problem-solution approach mirrors the newly re-cognized Marsick and Watkins' informal and incidental learning model (Watkins & Marsick, 2014) where

individual problem-solving takes place in a social and interpersonal space. Second, this study used Ellinger and Watkins' (1998) constructivist approach to CIT, which allows researchers to "understand the mental models and rationale that guide behaviors, the environmental factors that influence behaviors, and resulting outcomes associated with specific behaviors in addition to the actual behaviors that are described and collected" (p. 7). The problem-solution approach is compatible with the constructivist approach to CIT because they both aim at understanding meaning making in a specific context. Table 6 depicts the template that guided the re-storying process. Each transcript was re-storyed into 4~5 critical incidents. This process resulted in the construction of 64 critical incidents.

Table 6

Template for Narrative Analysis of CIT Data, Adapted from Ollerenshaw & Creswell (2002)

Raw transcript	Characters	Setting	Learning triggers	Action	Lesson learned from the experiences
Raw transcript coded for potential critical incident	Individuals identified in the critical incident and their behaviors, style and patterns	Contextual elements identified in the critical incident including environment, condition, time	The learning triggers identified in the critical incident that led to informal and incidental learning	Movements through the narrative illustrating individual's action, feelings, and reactions	Answers questions associated with intercultural maturity, actions taken, and the significance of the incident

According to F. Erickson (2012), qualitative data analysis is "a boot-strapping operation in which, reflexively, assertions and questions are generated on the basis of evidence, and evidence is defined in relation to assertions and questions" (p. 1458). F. Erickson's technique of finding assertion was used to facilitate the categorization of critical incidents. After the raw

transcript was re-storyed into incidents based on the template above, an assertion was given to each incident. An assertion is a statement that "one would like to be able to make in answer to the main research questions that have been posed in the study" (F. Erickson, 2012, p. 1454). In the context of CIT, an assertion is a statement that connects the essence of the critical incident to the research questions. The process of generating assertions was generally inductive. Inductive coding generates assertions that "stay close to the data, mirroring what is actually in them, rather than the ideas and prior understanding of the researcher, who is working vigorously to remain open-minded" (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2018, p. 263). After a series of assertions were generated for each critical incident, they were grouped deductively into themes based on the theory of intercultural maturity. In this process, 12 initial critical incidents were removed from the final analysis due to their incompleteness or unrelatedness to intercultural maturity. Themes were derived from the assertations generated based on the 52 critical incidents included in the final analysis. Table 7 provides an example of the analytical assertions. The 52 critical incidents are presented in Chapter 5.

Table 7

Analytical Assertion Example

Participant	Incident Plot	Incident Title	Assertion	Theme	Subtheme
Caroline	My student stated that she no longer identified as a man. I prepared a lesson on identity to introduce this concept to my other students who were religiously conservative.	Yesterday Juan, today Juanita	By showing respect for each other and having no tolerance for discrimination, we can create a safe space for immigrant learners.	Continually working for the rights of others	A safe confidant

Trustworthiness

Validity in qualitative research denotes the accuracy of the findings from the qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). Because this was a mixed-methods study, quantitative and qualitative sources of information were triangulated to add validity to the study (Creswell, 2014). Another way to enhance the validity of the qualitative data is through member checking (Creswell, 2014). Guba and Lincoln (1985) considered member checking to be the most important technique to enhance the credibility of qualitative research (Shenton, 2004). The initial critical incidents were shared with participants for suggestions and feedback. Their suggestions included removing country or region information of the students, nuancing interpretation of incidents, and minor editing. In addition, participants were requested to provide a pseudonym.

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the consistency and stability in collecting data and reporting findings (Creswell, 2014). Yin (2009) recommends that qualitative researchers document the procedures of their steps clearly in detail and create a protocol to follow. To ensure the reliability of this study, detailed documentation was created as the study was being developed and implemented. This audit trail detailed the interview protocols, transcripts, data analysis templates, and feedback from participants.

Strengths and Limitations

Adult ESL is a field with a mixture of full-time, part-time, and volunteer teachers. While research on learning among teachers in adult ESL or literacy settings has confirmed that they acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes mostly through self-education or independent study (e.g., K. Perry & Hart, 2012; Ziegler et al., 2009; Belzer, 2006a), it has never been investigated through the lens of informal and incidental learning. Marsick and Watkins' (1990; 2014) theory of informal and incidental learning offered a framework to generate a "better understanding of

the scope, significance, expressions and internal features of informal learning" (Duguid et al., 2013, p. 234). In addition, by sampling both volunteers and paid instructors, this study would be able to offer a comparative analysis of their learning activities and learning outcomes in adult ESL.

Researchers who are interested in informal and incidental learning need to overcome the methodological challenge by developing creative strategies to elicit informal learning since the process of informal learning is not always conscious or recognized (Duguid et al., 2013; McGivney, 2006). A survey-based study could address the gap in the literature by describing a sample of volunteer teachers in terms of who they are, what they do, how they learn, and what they have learned in comparison with their paid counterparts. It is to be noted that a survey-based study has been problematized for not having the capability of capturing the full scope of adult learning activities (Duguid et al., 2013a; McGivney, 2005). Also, studies using the languages of "professional development" (Abbott & Rossiter, 2011) or "preparedness" (K. Perry, 2013) could possibly limit the learning experiences to only those associated with higher levels of intentionality and consciousness, thus leaving out the learning experienced unconsciously. The critical incident technique allowed participants to report events that they determine to be most relevant for the phenomenon being studied (Gremler, 2004). For this study, interviews informed by the CIT provided a rich source of data by eliciting experiences that volunteers determined to be most significant for their work in adult ESL contexts. By implementing a mixed-methods approach, the strength of the CIT could potentially overcome the weakness of a standalone survey-based study and broaden our understanding of the phenomenon.

A number of methodological limitations existed within this study. First, the response rate of a survey can limit its usefulness: the lower the response rate, the greater the possibility that the

participants who respond differ significantly from those who do not (Passmore et al., 2002). Thus, this study might not be able to paint a whole picture of the adult ESL workforce. It also impacted the generalizability of the study to a larger population. Second, there was a lack of a control group in the quantitative phase. A control group would have shown the results on the GPI without the experience of teaching in adult ESL. Because of the lack of a control group, the results of the GPI cannot be interpreted as being caused by the informal and incidental learning activities. Third, this study put the process of immigration and integration as an experience for volunteers to consume, which could potentially alienate immigrant learners and reinforce neoliberalism and racial hierarchy. This was inevitable since this study centered around adult ESL teachers. Thus, this study missed an opportunity to challenge the current discourse of immigrant education and integration.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduces the mixed-methods design that was used for this study. It describes the data collection process, which includes the design of instruments and the development of the interview protocol. The Learning Practices Audit and the Global Perspective Inventory were used in the quantitative phrase. A semi-structured interview, as informed by the Critical Incident Technique was used in the qualitative phase. Then, this chapter discusses the data collection and analysis process. In addition, the issues related to the validity and reliability in the quantitative phase and the trustworthiness in the qualitative phase are addressed. And finally, this chapter discusses the strengths and limitations of the research design.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results of the quantitative data analysis. First, this chapter presents the data preparation process. It includes the results of the exploratory factor analysis of the 27 Learning Practices Audit (LPA) items. Second, this chapter presents an overview of descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. It describes the data profile. To gain an in-depth understanding of the sample and how participants' LPA and GPI scores might depend on personal and organizational characteristics, multiple independent t-tests were conducted. Third, this chapter reports the quantitative results for three of the research questions in this study using multiple regression:

R1: What informal and incidental learning activities do volunteers and paid instructors in the adult ESL contexts engage in?

R2: To what extent do informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in the adult ESL context contribute to their intercultural maturity?

R3: To what degree does organizational support moderate the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities and intercultural maturity?

The final research question was answered in Chapter 5 with qualitative findings.

Data Preparation

Data Preparation

Survey responses were collected through Qualtrics, an online survey management system. A total of 268 survey responses were recorded by Qualtrics. Data were entered into MS

Office Excel to screen for missing data and outliers. Additionally, eleven new variables were generated by computing the means of LPA, GPI, and the GPI subscales.

Even though missing data directly relates to the quality of quantitative data analysis, there is no standard cutoff in the literature related to the acceptable percentage of missing values in a data set (Dong & Peng, 2013). D. Bennett (2000) suggested 10% of missing values in the data set is considered significant and may cause biased analytical results. As long as the participants opened the Qualtrics survey link, their responses would be recorded regardless of how much they completed. A close inspection of the data revealed that most of the partially completed responses contained large amounts of missing values. They either had no responses at all or only responses to the LPA. Thus, listwise deletion was an appropriate technique for handling miss values since responses that only contained information on LPA could not contribute to the analysis of the primary research questions. Fifty-four partially completed responses were removed using listwise deletion.

An outlier is a data point that is far away from the norm of a variable and may have "deleterious effects" on quantitative data analysis (Osborne & Overbay, 2004). Univariate outliers were detected using the standardized score, *z* score. The *z* scores were calculated for mean LPA, mean GPI, and mean organizational support. Tabachnick and Fidell (2012) suggested that a *z* score large than 3.29 might imply an outlier. A total of 214 responses were processed for outliners. No *z* score larger than 3.29 was found in the data set, and no responses were removed for this reason.

Finally, two completed response were removed because the participants identified their teaching context as outside of the United States. The current study focused on teaching in the United States where English is a dominant language (despite not being established as an official

language) as opposed to teaching in a context where English is a foreign language or one of the official languages. Thus, a total of 212 responses were used in this study. Green (1991) recommended using $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (number of predictors) to estimate the adequate sample size for multiple regression. In this study, there was a total of nine predictors (4 demographic variables and 5 informal and incidental learning factors). Thus, the adequate sample size would be 122. The sample size of this study ($N = 212$) was adequate for multiple regression.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Learning Practices Audit (LPA) was newly updated from previous studies and adapted for the current study (see Chapter 3 for the process of adaptation). Thus, it was necessary to conduct a factor analysis to understand the underlying structure before hypothesis testing. Williams et al. (2010) argued that an exploratory factor analysis can serve three purposes. First, it helps reduce items into a smaller set of factors. Second, it explores the underlying latent variables and may provide insight into theory development or formation. Third, it provides construct validity, thus improving the generalizability of the results. To understand the factor structure of the LPA, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted using SPSS.

A principal axis analysis with a varimax rotation of 27 Likert-scale items from the LPA was conducted on data gathered from 212 participants. The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity were performed to examine the appropriateness for exploratory factor analysis. The KMO statistic was .864. The approximate Chi-square was 2621.234 ($df = 351$, $p < .001$). Since KMO > .05 is considered suitable for factor analysis (William et al., 2010), this sample was factorable. When loadings less than 0.46 were excluded, no item was cross loading and the analysis yielded six factors (Eigenvalues > 1.00) explaining a total of 62.372% variance. Three items did not load on any factor: #5 ("I learn from

ESL textbooks"), #25 ("I learn from planning a lesson"), and #27 ("I learn from interacting with my students outside of the classroom"). Gorsuch (1983) suggested that it is important to examine the low or zero loading items in order to confirm the identification of factors. Question 5 was low loading on a factor (.370). It could be due to item redundancy since #14 ("I learn from books") was in the same factor and had a higher loading (.729). Item 27 was low loading on a factor (.352) and did not appear to share the themes of other items in the factor. Item 25 cross-loaded on two factors. Costello and Osborne (2005) suggested that it is a good choice to delete the cross-loading items if there are strong loaders on each factor, which was the case. Thus, #5, #25 and #27 were removed.

A second principal axis analysis was performed with the remaining items. An examination of the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy suggested that the sample was factorable (KMO = .872). When loadings less than 0.42 were excluded, the analysis yielded five factors (Eigenvalues > 1.00) explaining a total of 61.689 % variance. To understand the internal consistency of each factor, Cronbach's alphas were calculated (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Crobach's alphas for each factor were: .894, 802, .806, .710, and .619. Item 2 ("I learn from feedback from my supervisor/volunteer coordinator") was removed because Cronbach's alpha increased from .894 to .895 when the item was deleted.

A third principal axis analysis was performed with 24 items. An examination of the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy suggested that the sample was factorable (KMO = .886). When loadings less than 0.43 were excluded, the analysis yielded five factors (Eigenvalues > 1.00) explaining a total of 62.819 % variance. Question 13 ("I learn from surprises") was removed because it did not load on any factor. Across the three principal axis analyses, five items were omitted, and five factors were extracted.

The next step was labelling the factors. Interpreting and labelling factors is "a subjective, theoretical, and inductive process" (Williams et al., 2010, p.9). Cronbach's alpha for each factor was calculated again and evaluated based on the rules of thumb provided by George and Mallery (2003). According to the rules of thumb provided by George and Mallery (2003), Cronbach's alpha > .8 implies good internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha > .7 implies acceptable internal consistency. And Cronbach's alpha >.6 implies questionable internal consistency.

Factor 1 includes 8 items addressing activities such as interacting with other ESL professionals, experts, or volunteers and was labeled "Learning from and with other ESL educators". It accounts for 33.513% of the variance and has a good internal consistency (.895). Factors 2 includes 4 items addressing teaching activities in the classroom as well as learning from students and was labeled "Learning through teaching". It accounts for 11.171% of the variance and has a good internal consistency (.802). Factor 3 includes 4 items addressing activities that are related to new tasks, challenges, and reflection, and was labeled "Incidental learning". It accounts for 7.785% of the variance and has an acceptable internal consistency (.798). Factor 4 includes 4 items addressing learning activities that involve the assistance of technology and was labeled "Technology assisted learning". It accounts for 5.684% of the variance and has an acceptable internal consistency (.710). The fifth factor has two items and was labelled "Self-directed learning". It accounts for 4.665% of the variance and has an internal consistency of .619. Common reasons for a low Cronbach's alpha include "a low number of questions, poor inter-relatedness between items or heterogeneous constructs" (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011, p.54). There are two items in Factor 5. The Pearson Correlation between the two items is .449 ($p < .01$). According to Taylor (1990), this could be interpreted as a modest or moderate correlation. Taber (2018) suggested that Cronbach's alpha should be interpreted in the

context of the study, “taking into account the expected dimensionally of what they are seeking to measure and the total number of items included in the instrument or scale discussed” (p. 1293). Even though there are only two items in the fifth factor, they collectively demonstrate a sense of intentionality and self-directness that is not seen in other factors. Also, they differ from items in Factor 4, Technology assisted learning, since they are not specifically linked to online learning resources or community. Thus, it was reasonable to include the fifth factor in the analysis despite its low Cronbach’s alpha score. Item descriptions and their rotated factor loadings are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

Item	Rotated factor loading				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
	learning from and with other ESL educators	Learning from teaching	Incidental learning	Technology assisted learning	Self-directed learning
16. I learn from working in teams.	.761				
15. I learn from networking with other ESL instructors.	.732				
1. I learn from talking to other volunteers/teachers.	.706				
23. I learn from individuals with ESL experiences.	.702				
17. I learn from helping other ESL instructors.	.675				
22. I learn from mentors or coaches.	.668				

19. I learn from observing other ESL instructors.	.666				
18. I learn from new policies and laws.	.480				
24. I learn from my students in the classroom.		.706			
3. I learn from feedback from my students.		.670			
26. I learn from teaching my class.		.628			
12. I learn from mistakes.		.575			
10. I learn from trying new things.			.751		
9. I learn from doing challenging tasks.			.680		
11. I learn from reflecting on what worked and what did not.			.489		
21. I learn from new tasks or jobs.			.429		
7. I learn from online communities in adult ESL like blogs, forums, etc.				.682	
6. I learn from searching the internet.				.587	
8. I learn from videos.				.575	
4. I learn from social media.				.440	
20. I learn from studying on my own.					.597
14. I learn from books.					.590

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

Data Profile

A total of 212 responses were used in this study. Table 9 shows the demographic summary of the sample. The participants were predominately white (N = 175, 82.5%). Approximately half of them have been teaching for over three years (N = 105, 49.5%). One third of the participants identified themselves as volunteers (N = 77, 36.3%). For organizations hosting adult ESL programs, close to one third of participants taught in a K-12 school or community college (N = 69, 32.5%). Half of the participants taught predominantly in Georgia (N = 107, 50.5%).

Table 9

Survey Participant Profiles

Variable		n (%)	Variable		n (%)
Role	Volunteer	77 (36.3%)	Program	Church/faith-based program	48 (22.6%)
	Paid	135 (63.7%)		K-12/Community College	69 (32.5%)
				Immigrant or refugee resettlement agency	12 (5.7%)
Location	GA	107 (50.5%)		Community/minority serving organization	22 (10.4%)
	National	105 (49.5%)		Literacy-based program	14 (6.6%)
				Intensive English program/language school/	26 (12.3%)
Race	White	175 (82.5%)		Other	21 (9.9%)
	Non-white	30 (14.2%)			
	N/A	7 (3.3%)	Experience	< 1 year	18 (8.5%)
				1~3 years	40 (18.9%)
				> 3 years	154 (72.6%)

Inferential Statistics

The mean LPA of the sample was 3.54 (*SD* = .623). The mean GPI of the sample was 4.13 (*SD* = .359). Independent sample t-tests were conducted to explore whether participant LPA and GPI might differ depending on personal and organizational characteristics.

Significant differences were found in mean LPA and GPI subscales based on participant's role in adult ESL. Paid instructors scored significantly higher on the LPA than those who were volunteers ($t(126.816) = -5.296$, $p < .001$). Volunteers scored significantly higher on the Intrapersonal scale ($t(210) = 2.434$, $p < .05$) and the Social Responsibility subscale ($t(210) = -2.161$, $p < .05$) than paid instructors.

Significant differences were found in mean LPA and GPI subscales based on participant's years of experience. Teachers with more than 3 years of experience scored significantly higher on the LPA than participants with less than 3 years of experience ($t(82.624) = 3.175$, $p < .05$). Teachers with less than 3 years of experience scored significantly higher on the Intrapersonal scale ($t(142.035) = -3.246$, $p = .001$), the Identity subscale ($t(136.230) = -2.584$, $p < .05$), and the Affect subscale ($t(125.923) = -2.798$, $p = .05$) than teachers with more than 3 years of experience.

Significant differences were found in mean LPA and GPI based on participant's teaching context. Teachers from church-based programs scored significantly lower on the LPA than teachers from other adult ESL programs ($t(210) = -3.828$, $p < .001$). Teachers from intensive English programs scored significantly lower on mean GPI ($t(210) = -3.118$, $p < .05$) than teachers from other adult ESL programs.

No statistically significant difference of mean LPA or GPI was found between teachers based on their race. Because of the limited numbers of participants who identified as races other

than white or preferred not to specify, the t-test was conducted based on teachers who identified as white and teachers who identified as non-white or preferred not to specify.

Because there is an established national mean for each subscale of the GPI, the GPI subscale scores from the sample were compared to the national means using one-sample t-tests. Adult ESL teachers scored significantly higher on every GPI subscale than the national mean. The results of the comparison are shown in table 10.

Table 10

GPI Comparisons Between Participants and National Means

Subscale	Sample mean	National mean	*t* (df=211)	Mean Difference	Sig.
CogKnowing	4.16	3.63	16.171	.53	<.001
CogKnowledge	3.93	3.6	5.772	.23	<.001
Identity	4.20	4.04	4.290	.16	<.001
Affect	4.48	4.14	11.139	.34	<.001
SocInteraction	3.97	3.36	14.590	.61	<.001
SocResponsibility	4.07	3.76	8.419	.31	<.001

In summary, there was a significant difference in the engagement in informal and incidental learning based on participants' role in adult ESL. Paid instructors reported significantly more engagement in informal and incidental learning than volunteers. GPI, on the other hand, seemed to be less subject to the participant's experiences, personal, and organizational characteristics. In general, adult ESL teachers scored higher on each GPI subscale when compared to established national means.

Research Questions and Results

R1: What informal and incidental learning activities do volunteers and paid instructors in the adult ESL context engage in?

An analysis of the LPA data revealed the informal and incidental learning activities that teachers in the adult ESL contexts frequently engaged in. Mean scores of six items on the LPA were higher than 4 (agree). The activities teachers frequently engaged in were #26 ("learning from teaching my class"; *M* = 4.61 , *SD* = .676), #11 ("learning from reflecting on what worked and what did not"; *M* = 4.48 , *SD* = .751), #12 ("learning from mistakes"; *M* = 4.46 , *SD* = .800), #24 ("learning from my students in the classroom"; *M* = 4.32 , *SD* = .908), #10 ("learning from trying new things"; *M* = 4.24 , *SD* = .844) and #3 ("learning from feedback from my students"; *M* = 4.18 , *SD* = .972). Figure 6 is a visual display of the learning activities.

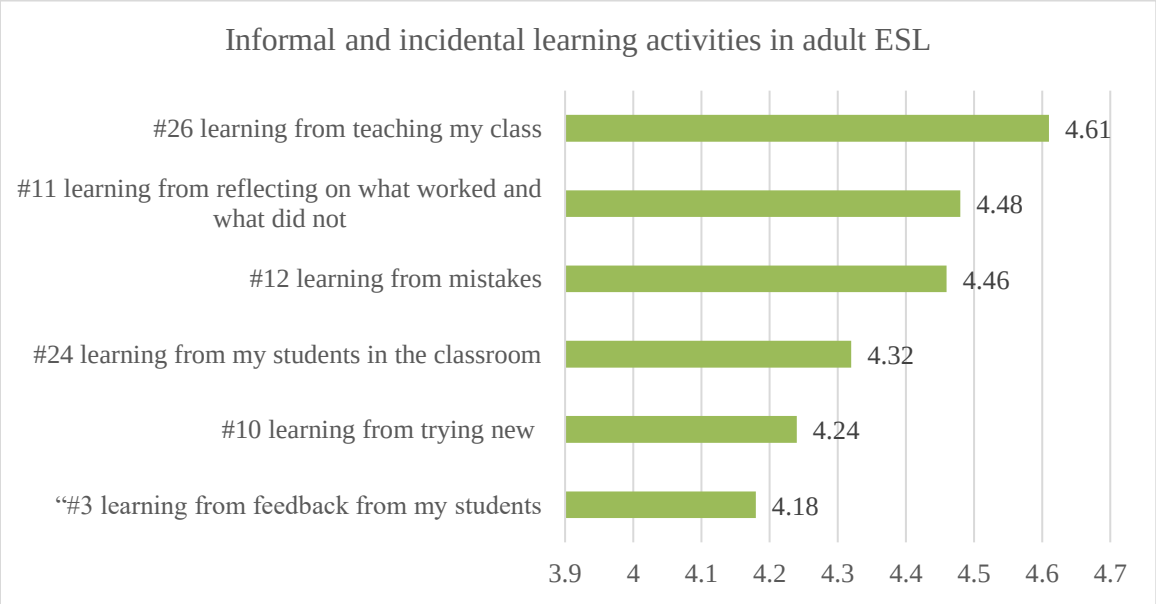

Figure 6. Learning activities in adult ESL

Even though paid instructors scored significantly higher on mean LPA than volunteers, descriptive statistics showed similar patterns between the two groups in terms of the informal and incidental learning activities they engaged in. One notable difference is that the ranking of

"studying on my own" was higher for volunteers than paid instructors. Table 11 shows the comparisons between volunteers and paid instructors in term of their learning activities in adult ESL.

Table 11

LPA Comparisons Between Volunteers and Paid Instructors

Item/Paid instructor	Mean	Ranking	Mean	Item/Volunteer
#26 learning from teaching my class	4.67	1	4.51	#26 learning from teaching my class
#12 learning from mistakes	4.61	2	4.34	#11 learning from reflecting on what worked and what did not
#11 learning from reflecting on what worked and what did not	4.56	3	4.19	#12 learning from mistakes
#24 learning from my students in the classroom	4.43	4	4.12	#24 learning from my students in the classroom
#10 learning from trying new things	4.39	5	3.97	#10 learning from trying new things
#3 learning from feedback from my students	4.30	6	3.96	#3 learning from feedback from my students
#21 learning from new tasks and jobs	4.10	7	3.77	#20 learning from studying on my own
#9 learning from doing challenging tasks	4.10	8	3.51	#1 learning from talking to other volunteers/teachers
#20 learning from studying on my own	4.00	9	3.44	#9 learning from doing challenging tasks

R2: To what extent do informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in the adult ESL context contribute to their intercultural maturity?

Purpose and Hypothesis

The purpose of this question was to explore the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities by adult ESL teachers and their intercultural maturity. The null hypothesis for this question was:

There is no significant relationship between participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity.

Analysis and Results

Prior to performing a hierarchical multiple regression, the assumptions of multiple regression were tested. First, the data were examined through a Matrix Scatterplot. The result indicated the assumption of a linear relationship was satisfied. Second, an examination of the standardized residuals against standardized predicted values suggested there was no systematic relationship between them. The assumption of homoscedasticity was met. Third, multicollinearity of the independent variables was tested. All the collinearity statistics were in the accepted range (Tolerance > .10 and VIF < 10). The assumption of multicollinearity was satisfied.

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity. Race and years of experience were entered in the first regression model to control for demographic variance. Organization type and role were entered in the second regression model. The five LPA factors were entered in the third regression model. Table 12 is the summary of the regression results.

Table 12

Summary of R2 Hierarchical Multiple Regression

		Global Perspectives Inventory	
Model	1	2	3
Control Variables		*Standardized Coefficient Beta*	
Race	-.031	-.029	-.037
Years of Experience	-.062	-.054	-.087
Control Variables			

Organization Type		.006	.017
Role		.021	.128
LPA			
F1: learning from and with other ESL educators			-.082
F2: Learning from teaching			.171 *
F3: Incidental learning			.144
F4: Technology assisted learning			.073
F5: Self-directed learning			.123
Model Summary			
R^2	.004	.005	.108
Adjusted R^2	-.005	0.015	.069
Sig. *F* change	.635	.969	.001 **
Sig.	.635	.915	.005 **

Note. * < .05; ** < .01

When adding the five factors of LPA in Model 3, the amount of explained variance increased significantly (Adjusted R^2 = .069, Sig. *F* change < .001). The final model explained 10.8% of the variance in intercultural maturity. F2: Learning from teaching (β = .171) was positively and significantly associated with intercultural maturity (p < .05). The null hypothesis was rejected.

Additional Analyses

Given the low proportion of the variance for GPI explained by the proposed model, additional analyses were conducted to explore the relationship between LPA and the subscales of GPI.

In the cognitive domain of the GPI, the five factors of LPA increased the explained variance significantly (Adjusted R^2 = .103, Sig. *F* change < .001) The model explained 14.1% of the variance in the cognitive domain of GPI. F1: Learning from and with other ESL educators (β = -.173) was negatively and significantly associated with the cognitive domain (p < .05). F2:

Learning from teaching (β = -.208, p < .05) and F3: Incidental learning (β = -.190, p < .05) were positively and significantly associated with the cognitive domain.

Within the two subscales of the cognitive domain, LPA only had a significant relationship with the Cognitive Knowing subscale. In the Cognitive Knowing subscale of GPI, the five factors of LPA increased the explained variance significantly (Adjusted R^2= .110, Sig. F change < .001). The model explained the cognitive knowing subscale of the GPI by 14.8%. F2: Learning from teaching (β = .203, p < .05) and F3: Incidental learning (β = .228, p < .05) were positively and significantly associated with the Cognitive Knowing subscale.

No significant relationship was found between the LPA and the rest of the GPI subscales.

Summary

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to analyze the relationship between informal and incidental learning experienced by teachers in adult ESL and their level of intercultural maturity. A statistically significant relationship was found between them. Learning from teaching was identified as a significant predictor for intercultural maturity, as measured by the GPI. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Additionally, a significant relationship was found between informal and incidental learning experienced by teachers in adult ESL and the cognitive domain of intercultural maturity.

R3: To what degree does organizational support moderate the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities and intercultural maturity?

Purpose and Hypothesis

The purpose of this question was to explore if organizational support had a moderating effect on the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities by adult ESL teachers and their intercultural maturity. The null hypothesis for this question was:

The relationship between the participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity does not depend on organizational support.

Analysis and Results

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to determine if there was a moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity. Race and years of experience were entered in the first regression model to control for demographic variance. The five LPA factors were entered in the second regression model. Organization type, role and mean organizational support score were entered in the third regression model. The interaction terms of the moderator (organizational support) and the predictor (LPA factors) were entered into the fourth regression model. Table 13 is the summary of the regression results.

Table 13

Summary of R3 Hierarchical Multiple Regression

	Global Perspectives Inventory			
Model	1	2	3	4
Control Variables		*Standardized Coefficient Beta*		
Race	-.031	-.047	-.031	-.026
Years of Experience	-.062	-.121	-.096	-.106
LPA				
F1: learning from and with other ESL educators		-.083	-.117	-.458
F2: Learning from teaching		.165	.158	.247
F3: Incidental learning		.123	.150	-.087
F4: Technology assisted learning		.048	.074	.218

F5: Self-directed learning		.122	.128	-.013
Contextual Factors				
Organization Type			.430	.038
Role			1.423	.093
Organizational Support			.934	.161
Interaction				
F1 x OS				.560
F2 x OS				-.160
F3 x OS				.473
F4 x OS				-.227
F5 x OS				.214
Model Summary				
R^2	.004	.097	.112	.128
Adjusted R^2	-.005	.066	.068	.062
Sig. *F* change	.635	.001 **	.341	.610
Sig.	.635	.004 *	.007 *	.023 *

The final model explained 12.8% of the variance in intercultural maturity. However, no significant interaction term emerged from the analysis. It indicated that organizational support did not moderate the relationship between participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity. Thus, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis.

Additional Analyses

To further explore the role organizational support plays in informal and incidental learning in the adult ESL context, multiple regression was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between organizational support and teacher's participation in informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. A significant relationship was found between organizational support and mean LPA. Organizational support explained 16.7% of the variance

of LPA ($p < .001$). Two organizational support items contributed significantly to the relationship. Program providing opportunities to interact with others with ESL experiences ($\beta = .248$, $p < .05$) and program providing ongoing support during teaching ($\beta = .212$, $p < .05$) emerged as predictors for teacher's participation in informal and incidental learning in adult ESL.

Given that no moderating effect was identified from the proposed model, an additional analysis was conducted to explore whether organizational support plays a moderating role in the relationship between LPA and the subscales of GPI. No moderating factors emerged as significant.

Summary

A hierarchical multiple regression was used to analyze the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between informal and incidental learning experienced by teachers in adult ESL and their level of intercultural maturity. No significant moderating effect was found. No significant moderating effect was found between LPA and GPI subscales either. We failed to reject the null hypothesis.

A significant relationship was found between organizational support and the informal and incidental learning experienced by teachers in adult ESL. Organizational support was identified as a predictor for participation in informal and incidental learning in adult ESL.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the data profile and described the results of the exploratory factor analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics, and hierarchical regressions. The analysis results revealed that adult ESL teachers frequently engaged in on the job informal and incidental learning activities. The regression results supported the positive relationship between adult ESL teachers' participation in informal and incidental learning and their intercultural maturity.

Organizational support did not play a moderating role in this relationship. However, organizational support was positively related to adult ESL teachers' participation in informal and incidental learning. Table 14 summarizes the results of hypothesis testing.

Table 14

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Research question	Null Hypothesis	Result
2	There is no significant relationship between participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity.	Rejected
3	The relationship between the participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity does not depend on organizational support.	Failed to reject

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005).

The following research question guided the qualitative portion of the study:

How do teachers in adult ESL programs make meaning of their intercultural learning experience?

This chapter presents the results of the cross-case analysis of the qualitative data. The analysis identified five themes related to how intercultural learning experiences in adult ESL contributed to participants' intercultural maturity. First, it presents the overall themes and subthemes identified from the critical incidents captured in the interview. Second, it provides a narrative account of each theme and subtheme with critical incidents woven into it.

Overview of Findings

A total of 52 critical incidents were included in the final analysis. An assertion was generated inductively for each critical incident. The assertion served the purpose of linking the critical incident to the research question: How did this intercultural learning experience serve as a trigger for informal and incidental learning? Then, the theory of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005) was used to guide the deductive analysis of the critical incidents. The results confirmed that adult ESL teachers experienced intercultural learning in the cognitive,

intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of the intercultural maturity model. Table 15 summarizes the five identified themes and several sub-themes.

Table 15

Summary of Prominent Themes and Subthemes

Cognitive Learning	
The epistemology of adult ESL	So out of sync with their lives
	I was a co-learner.
Learning about culture and problematizing prejudice	There are rules that are not written.
	Culture is not what I understood it to be.
	Making it OK for people to be different
Intrapersonal Learning	
Reflecting on my positionality	The breakdown of my own knowledge
	I need to check myself.
Interpersonal Learning	
Engaging in intercultural interaction	You can trust this place
	An openness to learn about others
	See something through someone else's eyes
Continually working for the rights of others	A safe confidant
	Dealing with systemic challenges in adult ESL

Research Findings

Theme 1: *Everybody Has Their Own Degree of Knowledge*

Cognitive Learning – The Epistemology of Adult ESL

The cognitive dimension of intercultural maturity is concerned with "the way people think about and understand diversity issues" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 575). A distinct stream of critical incidents shared by the participants noted how teaching and interacting with their students triggered them to reflect on their assumptions of knowledge and education in adult ESL and to explore ways to nurture a learning community where knowledge was co-constructed in the classroom. This theme addressed how adult ESL teachers' assumptions of adult ESL learners and adult ESL education were challenged.

So out of sync with their lives. Adult ESL programs serve learners with diverse backgrounds and needs, which often present varied perspectives on how knowledge is gained, and more specifically in this context, how language is learned. Teachers' assumptions of legitimate and appropriate knowledge in adult ESL, which embodied their assumptions of adult ESL learners and their immigrant experience, were often challenged. The need to reconsider how learning happened in adulthood and in an intercultural context featured prominently among many critical incidents captured in the interviews.

When passionate adult ESL educators met resistance from students in the classroom, it prompted them to consider the possible reasons for such resistance. An incident from Elena highlighted her struggle with a group of students that she believed *did not want to be there*.

> *When I was a new teacher, I often substituted outside of the school at the workplace. I had a friend who was teaching at a mechanical company. One day, she was in tears because she said she couldn't teach this group. They didn't like her. She was just beside herself so she asked me if I could take over. So, I went in. These were hardcore men from Serbia and Bosnia. They were really tough men. I mean, they had been through horrible experiences and they had to give up their break time for these English classes and they didn't want to be there. When I first went in and tried to get them to interact, they wouldn't sit next to each other because there was so much animosity between the Serbs and the Bosnians. They were very uncooperative. Well, I knew their situation, so I guess I didn't blame them. From what they've been through and the kind of job they had and where they'd come from and they were giving up their break to have some what must be done to them and by a young middle-class lady, like they were going to go to a tea party or something. I'd never been confronted with that situation before. So, I just came in the next day with a book. In my mind, I was telling them I was going to be paid for that hour, regardless of their response. While I didn't say it because they wouldn't have understood. But basically, I tried to tell them that if I were them, I probably wouldn't want to do this either. We could try, or you could just have your break and smoke. I was going to sit and read and when they were ready to learn, then they could just let me know because they obviously weren't going to cooperate. After about 15 minutes, some of them said, no teacher, we will try. I was excited to know that they were coming forward and they did want to learn. It was very encouraging when they started to respond, especially the younger ones that said they did want to go to college. I think they just didn't like it being imposed on the way it was. I tried to bring in readings and start discussions that were relative to them. They loved learning things that reflected what they wanted to say and eventually they started working together reluctantly. By the end they got a certificate, and they were awarded their certificate by their bosses and they were very proud of themselves. I was very pleased in the end. I think I learned a very important lesson with this. I had to meet them where they were with what they needed and the experiences they had. I can't just impose a particular way of teaching or a particular set of materials just to everybody. I try to get as much thinking back from the students as I can. I need to have conversation with them more just to get an idea of where they are and what they want. I have to gear it as much as I can to what their needs are and what their experiences are.*

Reflecting on this incident, Elena stressed that it is important for the teacher to *meet them where they were with what they needed and the experiences they had*. Elena attributed the

success of teaching in adult ESL to making the lesson relevant to the student's life and experience. Failure to do so would inevitably result in students' resistance.

Mary shared another incident where she considered ways to deal with student resistance. In the summer class of the intensive English program she taught, one student was particularly unhappy about an assignment.

> *When I was teaching a summer class in the intensive English program at the university, our class had like 15 or 16 students in them. Most of them were young adults in their twenties and their thirties. And then I had this like 40-year-old Russian man. And this Russian man was very, very serious. He was not there to play in the summer. He didn't want to go out at night. He wanted to learn English for his job and his work had sent him there.*
>
> *We had all of these assignments that the students were to do. One of them was a project and I had given kind of parameters for the project. And this Russian man just seemed like, kind of put out, like he wasn't happy in the class. He was kind of complaining a lot and he complained to me a lot and he seemed really upset about the project. When I talked with him one on one, I came to realize that what he was really interested in was the process of translation because he was working as a translator in Russia. He really wanted to use the project to research and learn about different theories of translation. Because of the way I had designed the parameters of the project, he couldn't really do it. Finally, I said to him, why don't you do this? Why don't you do this for your project? Just research translation, write me up something. When you have to give your oral presentation, give it on different theories of translation and which one you might subscribe to or you want to take several things from each different theory. Well, that turned around the whole class for him.*
>
> *This reminded me very much of what Malcolm Knowles, the father of adult education has always said that adults are motivated learners. They have reasons for taking a class. We talk a lot about learner goals in adult education. And what I hadn't quite realized up until that point was that this one student had a very different goal than the rest of the students in the class. And one of the hallmarks of adult education is that we want our learners to set goals. We want them to be goal oriented, and we want our classes to be able to help them achieve their goals. And many times, those words sound really, really good, but we don't look at our classes in terms of how they are helping our learners reach their goals. And this incident with this student kind of made me stop and realize that in order for this student to get something out of the class, it needed to be a way for him to further his movement toward his goal. For me, it gave me a lot of insight into thinking about learner goals, finding out about your learner goals and helping students use a class or a curriculum to further their movement toward their own goals.*

The student's resistance triggered Mary to reflect on how to reshape the course and assignment to support the student's goals. Similar to Elena, she attributed the success of mitigating student resistance to designing lessons that were relevant to the student's goal. By citing Malcolm Knowles, Mary recognized her learners were adults with motivation and goals and the incidents gave insights into helping adult learners achieve their goals.

However, the resources available to teachers in adult ESL might not always be appropriate for the learners or in alignment with their goals. For example, Elena found that she always had to adapt resources geared for children:

It was awful, you know, they were so insulted, and I felt so bad. But that's all there was.

It is not uncommon for teachers in adult ESL to use resources or activities geared for children. Elizabeth, for example, described an incident where she played a children's color game in the classroom *in a spirit of 'we're all gonna learn the colors'*.

> *I was teaching in a big class and the group of students happened to be very heterogeneous in ages. We had some young people and some old people and one man who was quite old. One day I was teaching them colors. I asked them to play this game. Bring me something that's red, bring me something that's yellow, bring me something that's brown. I know this game was probably more focused toward children, but we were doing it in a spirit of we're all gonna learn the colors. So, I thought that it was ok. I didn't think about how an older person might be offended. When the game started, a young man went over and took off the shoes of the old man. The young man held the shoes and told me the color he was looking for. I immediately looked at the old man and he was smiling. Thank goodness. He was smiling. He knew what was happening. He understood it and he didn't take offense. He could have been very upset and he wasn't. The young man might have gone a little bit too far, but I was very relieved that the old man didn't take offense. This reminded me to be careful next time. When an older man came to class, he wanted to be treated like an adult. I need to remember not to do things that could be viewed as childish with people who might be older. I think after this incident I became much more attuned to the needs of my students. I became more focused on who they were and how they might feel about the activities.*

She was very relieved when she saw the older student did not take offense. But it reminded her to be careful and not do things that might be viewed as childish. Thus, the first task for an adult ESL educator might be to acknowledge the adultness of the adult learners and design courses appropriate for adult learners. Like Grace stated, adult ESL learners experienced more profoundly the juxtaposition between being a functioning person in their home country and someone who had to ask questions that *maybe were very basic* in the ESL classroom:

> *They don't want to be perceived as not knowing or like making people think that they're not intelligent or that they don't know what's going on.*

However, their immigrant or refugee experience is often not well-represented in textbooks or instructional materials, which might enhance the feeling of inadequacy. In one

incident, Elena described how she found out the adult ESL materials were so *out of sync with the [student's] life*.

> *I had a lot of women wearing a burka in the classroom. They were pretty much only showing their eyes. One day they were exchanging photos and they called me over. So, I saw the family photos of my students who always dressed black in the classroom. She had long red hair and she had jewelry on, and she had makeup on. I guess it was her honeymoon or just a party. I didn't realize that when they got home and close the door, it was a completely different situation and they would dress for their husbands. They took all that stuff off. I was amazed. It didn't even look like the same person. I don't know if they'd behaved differently, but they were so quiet in school. Not extroverted at all and not very forthcoming. And when I saw these pictures, I was very surprised that they had another side to them, another life I didn't know about in the classroom. I was happy for them because the women just seemed to be like they had no rights. They had to do all of the cooking and they had so many of those holidays where they would just do all the cooking but not eat at all. And the girls couldn't go to college or anything until all of their brothers had gone. They had to take care of their parents too. Now looking back again over 10 years ago, I hope that's not true now. But it really showed what their culture was really like and how the books and some of the materials we used were so out of sync with their life. There weren't any stories then and still aren't stories about things like that now.*

This was a valuable moment for her because how out of sync the adult ESL class could be with the student's life. Looking back again over 10 years, she was disappointed to see that *there still aren't stories about things like that now*. In a sense, Elena began to consider the uncertainty of knowledge in adult ESL since the books and materials were unable to reflect the student's life and experience.

In another incident shared by Elena, she deepened her exploration into how much knowledge, and specifically English words and phrases, was actually useful for a new immigrant in the workplace. While she was teaching *standard English* in the classroom, her students were working with Hispanic or African American supervisors who *used a different code, a different way of saying things*:

> *My older students from Africa kept saying, why do they call those people African Americans? They are Americans. I'm African American. And in the classroom, I was teaching them standard English and they were going to work with Hispanic, or Black supervisors who spoke African American vernacular English. My students would come in and say, my boss said this, and I wouldn't understand it either. So it must've been very difficult to be learning one thing in school so that you could advance educationally and then working all day with people that you couldn't understand that used a different code, a different way of saying things anyway. I think it makes me more aware when I'm teaching. I don't want to come across with stories and experiences and things for them to do that are totally not their experiences. I just try and approach things from how I know that they're having to deal with things.*

Elena's story reflected that there was a mismatch between the standard English she tried to prescribe in the classroom and the reality students encountered. Eva encountered a similar sense of uncertainty of knowledge in adult ESL when she was challenged by her student.

> *A student of mine is a really delightful man from Mexico who's been in the U.S. for some years and is running his own business. He wants to broaden his business and improve his English so that he's not just working with Spanish speakers. He has challenged me in many ways, because many of the things I assume people will know are not a part of his working knowledge, even though he has a great knowledge of the world and how to get around in it. One time we were reading an article about a construction project in the area and his business is in building and building supplies. So, I assumed that he would really understand this article. But the article had a lot of metric units in it. And he was very confused by the metric system. I thought he was confused between the meaning, the meter as something that measures like a parking meter versus the distance meter. So I began explaining that difference and he was like, no, no, I understand that it's a distance, but how much is a meter? And for me, that was an absolute shock because I've not encountered people with higher degrees of education who don't know the metric system. And it was definitely a wake-up moment, a moment where I was like not everybody who is talented, working hard and ambitious has a formal structured education where talking about meters is as natural as talking about feet, inches. So, then we actually just broke into a little side discussion and we had another lesson on words for distance. We were able to create some tables to compare the metric system and the English system. And that was also really useful for everybody else in that class who has come from countries and systems that use the metric system and are completely at a loss when it comes to a pound of meat at the grocery store. It turned out to be a really good learning opportunity for the entire group. I think it's really useful for volunteers coming into these situations to look at their assumptions of class and the bubble that they live in and how bringing that to the table can potentially miss good teaching opportunities. My co-teacher and I both have very similar backgrounds. We have higher levels of education and are married to technical people. So we didn't read this article and think, hey, you know what? It would be really useful to have a discussion in the class of English versus metric units. So I think it would be helpful for volunteers to just be reminded in some ways that their cultural and class assumptions don't necessarily hold for everybody. They might miss good opportunities.*

In this case, Eva found that her unexamined class and cultural assumptions, especially those rooted deeply in a traditional, formal schooling experience almost caused her to miss a good teaching opportunity. The mismatch between her assumptions of knowledge and the different ways of knowing presented in the adult ESL classroom provoked her to *look at [her] assumptions of class and the bubble that [she lives] in and how bringing that to the table can potentially miss good teaching opportunities.*

Eva represented a typical profile of adult ESL educators interviewed for this study, a well-educated person with a traditional schooling experience. For example, Lola described that her pedagogy in adult ESL was a direct result of her own schooling experience:

I have a university training and background, so when I first started teaching adult ESL, I came with this elevated academic understanding of education and sort of this structure that you think you must impart to them. I tried to do the lessons from the books, trying to make sure everything was well-structured and textbook-based.

One day, her conversation with a colleague was overheard by a student. The student asked her *what is this word, dude, I hear it all the time at work*. This was *a light bulb moment* for Lola because it never occurred to her that this would be a worthwhile lesson in the classroom.

One day, I was talking to another teacher during break time and talking much more than I did in the class. I had said the word dude. I said, hey dude, you know, blah, blah, blah. Afterwards, my student Katie, who was working at a factory came to me. She said, teacher, what is this word, dude, I hear it all the time at work. And I don't know what it means. When I heard her question, I was a little taken aback because of course I was like, I never really think about the word dude. I'm like, this is not something I was ever thinking I would teach. It was just not occurring to me. And I said to her, you know, Katie, it's a way that we talk to each other or identify each other so that we get each other's attention, but it's a very friendly and very casual way. So you can see when I say, hey dude, that's like, I'm saying hey friend or hey, you know, it's very exciting and very happy to see you. It's just an identifier. Like we also use buddy, or pal or something like that, but dude is, is how close people identify one another. And she was like, okay. She asked me if it's a good thing. I said, yeah, usually a good thing. It's just a way to get your attention and to identify you, but it's very friendly. This interaction with Katie was just this light bulb moment to me. It made me realize there's such a difference between what we think education is and what we think learning English should be in means and the actual practical application of it in someone's life. You can have all the technical understanding of how to put a sentence together, but you need the casual language, the informal language to make you feel a part of the culture. But if you don't know how people are actually speaking the language colloquially to each other and using the vernacular, you're not really feeling the impact of that language in your life as a connector. It is just a mode of communication then it's not really oh, I'm part of this or I'm getting the joke or I'm in with the group. And that moment was so big for me because I thought I had had this perception because of my formal education that if it's not from a book, it probably shouldn't be taught or might not be valuable. It was a big turning point for me thinking that I need to recognize useful language in my student's life to help them feel a connection rather than just communication rather than just being able to be understood clearly. It was significant because it changed my perspective on the material and the lessons that I think we as teachers feel compelled to teach. It made me realize that you don't have to have the fanciest lessons. Your students don't need to walk away with these perfect academic understandings of preposition or something like that. The words that you're giving them need to really connect to their life. And that was a big moment for me. It was very significant thinking, okay, I can make this fun and, and meaningful for them in a way that maybe I wouldn't have thought was academic.

In a sense, working through their own assumptions about knowledge and education allowed Eva and Lola to place the student's needs and experience at the center of their pedagogy.

I was a co-learner. Adult learners bring a variety of experience and knowledge into the classroom. In a sense, the adult ESL context is a learning forum where knowledge is co-constructed by the teachers and students. Amelia, for example, described an incident where she was surprised that the older students were learning very quickly.

I have more older adults than young adults in my class. The older adults would pick up the language very quickly. It was just surprising because it's harder to learn something new the older you are. It's also surprising because it's harder for older people to dismiss what they already know in order to accept new information. And a lot of times the older adults would take time to help the younger adults understand, especially when they spoke the same language, or they came from the same place. There was a young student from Asia and he must've been about 18 years old. He was really having a hard time. He's very new to America and didn't know any English at all. They just started at a zero level. So he was having a very hard time trying to grasp the grammar. And one of the older Asian students realized that the problem that he was having was because he didn't have a good concept of what grammar was. I did not know, nor did I understand his level or his ability to accept the grammar. She explained to me that in the country that they're from, there are very few people with education. So he did not have a good concept of grammar because he didn't understand the structure. The student only finished elementary school and then did not proceed with any education after that. So the older lady explained to me one, it had been several, several years that he had not had any education. And number two, the education that he did have was at a very low level. So she stepped in to explain to him based on what he already knew and then tried to help him attain a higher level by teaching the grammar that he missed out on in their own language so that he can assimilate it to the grammar and our language. I very much welcomed her help in the classroom. I can't do everything. There's only so much that I can do in the classroom as one person. There are other people in the classroom. Everybody has their own degree of knowledge. Everybody has their own understanding. The class is open and for everyone to participate freely and to share with others. It's not only encouraged a more communal environment, which enhanced the comfortability of the students of learning, but it also opened up new pathways of learning for students to accept teaching strategies, learning strategies, comprehension skills from others versus just from myself.

When the older students in the classroom began helping the younger students, she welcomed such help. Through acknowledging the diverse knowledge and experience adult learners brought into the classroom, Amelia was able to create a communal environment where students could learn from each other rather than just from herself. She described her relationship with her students as *a sense of interdependency*:

> *I think there was a sense of interdependency between us, the students dependent on me to support them, to support their growth, to support their visions. And I think I depended on the students to keep me abreast on my teaching and to help me stretch my learning so that I could teach better.*

However, giving a greater degree of autonomy to students could pose a challenge for teachers who were used to a traditional teacher-centered instructional model. Eva was a college professor and described her professional life as *[having] a set of knowledge that [she] needs [the students] to master*. Reflecting on her professional life as a university professor, she found that teaching in adult ESL was *a big shift*.

Having lived in Europe for a long time, I worked mostly with people whose first language was Germanic, so German or Dutch or something like that. In my first semester at the literacy center, I had the

hardest time understanding a student who was from Latin America. I could not understand her accent. I was so embarrassed because she was trying to ask me a question and I had to ask her to repeat herself like six times. I know my face just began turning red because I could not understand her accent. And finally, I asked her to write it down and she very happily wrote it down. And I then realized that it was just that my ears were not tuned to that accent. I was very sort of shaken by this realization. My co-teacher stepped in and said, you know, this is what happens. Sometimes we can't understand each other. It's totally okay. I think it was a big shift because in my professional life, I am also a teacher. I am a university professor. It's very much like that I have a set of knowledge that I need them to master. But in the ESL classroom, I think it was very important for me to feel like I was a co-learner with my students and I didn't need to bring them to a knowledge base, but that I needed to help them feel comfortable in the language. I don't understand what you're saying, but that's okay. Let's try writing it down and see if we can work out some communication here.

Moving from the position of a teacher to a co-learner might provoke the feeling of vulnerability. Yet, the acceptance of vulnerability is needed to create a co-learning environment that is open to uncertainty and ambiguity. Amelia described an incident where she shared her own struggle in school with her students. When her students asked her how she mastered English grammar so well, she shared her own struggle throughout school and how she had to put extra effort to improve herself.

I remember a time that a student asked me how I knew the English grammar so well, and I was able to share with them a little of my background about how I struggled through school and how I had to put in a lot of extra effort to myself because I had a hard time understanding my teachers and professors and just sharing some of my experiences throughout my own life. Help them to understand that I'm not in a better position than they are, that I'm not any smarter than them. I'm not wiser. I just have adapted different skills and strategies over the years based on my circumstance. When they heard my story, they were very surprised. They were very shocked. But they were also very accepting. They were very excited to understand that I could relate to them more than what they thought. And they realized that that was something that they were able to do too. So with that in mind, they felt more comfortable opening up to me and telling me what they were struggling with and asking more questions without feeling embarrassed. After that incident, I could definitely tell that the students opened up a lot more. They were more receptive. They felt more mentally prepared because they understood that a lot of the physiological barriers they were experiencing were just the fact that they felt overwhelmed, that they felt that they were not capable. And then sharing my own story helped them to understand and realize that they are quite capable more than what they think. And that gave them confidence, which improved their learning abilities. It felt very wonderful and that we were going to make a lot more progress after that experience.

In this case, sharing her struggle has triggered a learning opportunity for both herself and the students. Her students became more open in the classroom and were not afraid to share their struggle anymore. Amelia felt accomplished because she was able to create a learning community that accepted vulnerability and invited openness. In this learning community, the teacher assumed the position of a learner.

Elizabeth shared another incident on a learning community in the classroom where her students *were able to say things they might not have said in a regular normal teacher-directed classroom.*

> *Intensive English program is very different from a community-based program. But I tried to bring games into the classroom as well but structured the game in a way that may seem to be a game, but students are actually learning a language. I remember I brought in Legos to the class one day. Legos might seem to be a child's activity, but I have them divided and the students had to make vehicles. They worked as a group to make the vehicles. They competed for who made the best vehicle. Then they had to write a letter to the company because somebody got killed while driving the vehicle. Everybody just loved that. They learned a whole lot about it. It took over a couple of days to complete the activity and everybody was really into it. It also helped create a community of learners in the classroom. And so that people weren't afraid to say something, then their affective filter was let down. And they were able to say things they might not have said in a regular normal teacher directed classroom. Because they were having so much fun, their affective filter was lower and they were more prepared to learn.*

In this case, the sense of vulnerability was neutered by the fun the game was able to bring. As with the earlier example, this incident further highlights the inextricable link between the cognitive domain and the affective domain in language learning and learning in adulthood.

Theme 2: *People Don't Fit in the Boxes Society Might Dictate*

Cognitive Learning: Learning about Culture and Problematizing Prejudice

In the cognitive dimension, another series of incidents focused on the development of the capacity to understand cultural differences. These incidents often started with the acquisition of culturally relevant knowledge and resulted in a frame-shifting that acknowledged the complexity of culture and problematized personal prejudice and assumptions. In some cases, it resulted in exploring strategies to facilitate intercultural interaction in a culturally diverse classroom.

There are rules that are not written. Managing a class of adult learners with diverse language proficiencies and native language influence could be a challenging task. Even for teachers who had overseas experiences or experiences working with a linguistically diverse population, there could still be moments as Eva described, *my ears were not tuned to that accent*.

Such moments could trigger reflection on one's own language learning experience and increase awareness of linguistic variations among and within languages.

Emma, for example, described an incident where she was helping her Spanish-speaking students differentiate /th/ and /r/. She considered this to be *an eye-opening experience* because they were easily differentiated to her.

> *My students were English learners at a beginner level. Homonyms were a common topic that would come up in the classroom. There were several words that my male student was always having trouble with. He would ask me to repeat over and over again, like bag and bad. Those words usually ended in a different consonant but had very similar vowels. He would constantly ask me to pronounce words and we would spend five minutes going over and saying the words and they would try to say them, differentiate them. I would be like, no, not quite. And there would be sounds that they would try to form, especially like /th/ or /r/ sounds. We would spend so much time just trying to pattern that sound and get that sound differentiated in the head. And then two weeks later and they'd be like, wait, which one was it again? It was a kind of an eye-opening experience to me. To me they were very easily differentiated. I've learned a lot of different languages before and I totally get that learning another language goes from hearing a bunch of undifferentiated mumbling sounds to units of meaning with words in which you identify a particular sound associated with that object or item or meaning. But I have never encountered such a problem in my previous language learning and teaching experience. And so, it was really funny too and it was really interesting and eye opening to me to see at that basic level and especially Spanish to English, English to Spanish, the sounds were so easily confused. I guess I learned how important hearing a sound is to listening and understanding.*

Seeing her students struggling with differentiating sounds led her to reflect on her own language teaching and learning experiences and how those experiences influenced her pedagogy in the classroom. In another incident, she described a series of miscommunications between her and her students. This moment led her to reflect on the variety of Spanish spoken around the world and how her textbook Spanish might *hinder her ability to interact and communicate with them*.

> *I use both English and Spanish in my instruction. I would be using words that I learned in textbook Spanish from the wonderful but not so good books that we have at the university. So, I had a very specific textbook set of vocabulary and then I would try to use these words and they would look at me like I was insane and then I would be like, is this right? And then I would look it up. They would be like, no, that's not what we call that. And part of that was just the specificity of Mexican Spanish they use versus Spain or Cuba or Latin America or Puerto Rico or anywhere else that there are so many different Spanishes throughout the world. It was interesting to see those kinds of linguistic divides and in some ways that has hindered my ability to interact and communicate with them. That was interesting and valuable to me because my current project requires me to work with a variety of Spanish speakers on a daily basis when I'm able to do face to face research again. One of the things that I was trying to be more conscious of was the linguistic variations, varieties that I would encounter in the field. I am trying to be aware of and, and*

learn those, learn different accents, learn different vocabularies, learn slang. So, I didn't look like a gringa trying to speak Spanish.

At the time of data collection, Emma was a PhD student and hoping to resume her fieldwork with Hispanic farm workers farmers when the situation permitted. She expressed that encountering such miscommunication in the classroom highlighted her awareness of linguistic variation in communication. Her stories highlighted that the use of language should be contextualized. The language variations could signify different codes, discourses, and ways of meaning making. Thus, language teaching requires the teacher to be aware of the cultural constructs embedded in language and find ways to communicate those constructs with students. To achieve this, teachers need to work outwards, learning more about their students, and work inwards, being more cautious of their language use. Amelia shared an incident where she had to give students *a breakdown of American culture*. While teaching the concept of coming over to someone's house, she found that the student could not understand it due to *a cultural barrier*.

One day, I was explaining the concept of coming over to someone's house to my students. One of my students was having a very hard time accepting that idea. She was probably in her late forties or early fifties. It turned out that this concept was foreign to her due to a cultural barrier. I was trying to say a word with a specific meaning, and she didn't understand because the meaning didn't make sense to her. That was something that they would never do in their culture. So it wasn't that she could not grasp or understand the word, she could not comprehend the whole concept because the idea was foreign to her. Once I understood that I had to just give her a breakdown of American culture. I had to say, well, you know, and this is specific demographic per se, like the Southern States, the culture is more lenient, and people are welcome in this way. The Northern States, which is more relatable to her culture is not like that at all. There're specific rules that are not written, but they're well known to everyone. So, once I was able to explain that to her and she could understand that even here in America, there are many, many different cultures. From this experience I understood that in order to teach my students, I needed to understand more about them. I could not approach them with my own general knowledge and expect them to become American or to acclimate to our culture without understanding the barriers that they have. They needed more than just context. They needed to understand the background behind it.

The takeaway for her was that she needed to understand more about her students in order to teach them. For her, the incident helped her become aware of the cultural barriers in language learning. The movement was outward as she saw the need to learn more about the student in order to teach her.

For Elena, the movement was inwards as she began to see the *taken for granted* aspect of a language. When her students unexpectedly showed up in her house on Christmas morning, she had to explain to them that *you'll have to come over sometime* does not mean what it appears to be.

> *When Americans say, oh yeah, you'll have to come over sometime. You never go to somebody's house. You can't just show up like that on a Christmas morning. I remember during Christmas time, my parents were visiting my family. And early in the morning, my Laos students just arrived with egg rolls and things when my family were all in pajamas. There were about seven of them coming to visit me. It was just fun, but it was totally inappropriate to do that. I mean they have that custom in their culture, and they go in and out of each other's houses and if somebody comes in, you have to feed them. But if an American told them that y'all have to come and see me sometimes and they showed up at the door. The American would say, I didn't know you were coming in and this isn't convenient. Maybe we could arrange something some other time. But my students don't understand that. I don't understand that really, but that is the way it is. You just don't do that in this culture. So, I explained to them that people say, oh, we'll do lunch and things like that, that it's not a real thing. We just tell people that come to my house or let's have lunch together, but we don't actually mean that. And my students just looked at me like how awful and they would tell me, teacher, they never called. They never came. Nobody asked me to lunch. I don't want to say, well, they were just lying to you. It's not like that. This has helped me realized a lot of like subtle things in the language we use. We pretty much have taken it for granted. There are a lot of cultural things that aren't in the books that I find that they need to know about.*

Mary shared a similar incident where she learned that her student was waiting for his boss in the basement for hours because his boss told him *let's touch base at the end of the day*.

> *When I was teaching at this NGO, it was an evening class and the students worked during the day and then they came to class in the evening. One of the young men came in and he just said to me, wow, I really, really need this English class. And I said, why? And he said, well, because I was working at my job at the bank all day. We had a morning meeting and the bank manager said to me, um, let's touch base at the end of the day. So, he said at the end of the day, I went down into the basement of the building and I waited for two hours for her and she never came. When the student was telling me the story and he told me that his manager said touch base, it didn't even occur to me that he wouldn't understand what that meant. And then when he went on and the poor young man waited in the basement for the manager for two hours, I was kind of horrified as anybody would be. So, first of all, I had explained to him what the idiom touch base means. And second of all, it really made me see that for many adult learners who are working, they obviously feel discomfort and feel not at ease even in their jobs. And even though I'm sure this young man had great skills and was really doing a good job at the bank, language and especially idiomatic expressions were kind of holding him back. Before that, I hadn't realized how many idioms Americans use before. I hadn't thought about my own use of idioms in the classroom. So, that gave me a real insight into what I was presenting in class and just how important it is to teach students idiomatic expressions. I feel really informed because it helped me understand one of the many things about the English language that our learners grapple with. It really helped me understand not only the experience that adult ESL students go through in adapting to the U.S. and learning the language, but also how to be a better teacher.*

For both teachers, these incidents alerted them to *the subtle things and the cultural things* embedded in our everyday language that could be foreign to the learners. As Mary put, she could

see that *language and especially idiomatic expressions were kind of holding [the student] back.* Both teachers expressed that they began to be more cautious of their own use of language in the classroom to avoid miscommunication and prepare lessons that included *cultural things that aren't in the book that I find that they need to know about*.

Culture is not what I understood it to be. Working with diverse students afforded teachers opportunities to reflect on cultural assumptions and how they might have negatively impacted their teaching and relationship with students. Sarah, for example, shared an incident where she came to be aware that *people don't fit in the boxes society might dictate.* She acknowledged that prior to volunteering she had very little experience with people from other cultural backgrounds and might have some biases she *just didn't really think too much about*. When she was assigned to tutor a male student from Saudi Arabia, she was nervous because she was not sure if the student would prefer to be taught by a female teacher.

> *I had very little experiences with people from other cultures prior to volunteering here. I guess I had some biases that I just didn't really think too much about. We had a male student from Saudi Arabia who was so low level. I worked with him one-on-one, so we were kind of apart from the main class. At first, I just wasn't sure if he would want me to be his teacher or something like that. I was thinking that maybe they wouldn't want to learn from a female because they don't like to have female teachers. But he was so warm and welcoming, and we talked about all kinds. He was like "teacher, teacher" and was very respectful. The main teacher had us read at that point. So, we were reading like stories of baby pigs, like this is really odd. I'm like I would not pick this, but he worked fine. So, it taught me a lot about being careful on any prejudices or biases. Everybody's unique and different and doesn't necessarily fit into what you know about the culture or what you see on the news. I think this is showing me a very good example of how people don't fit in the boxes that society might dictate. Now, if I know someone's coming from a certain country or anything, then I just wait to meet the person. I just don't think anything too much, like, about them. I learned to just go with it, you know, meet the person, see how it goes.*

Reflecting on this experience, Sarah noted that it is important to *[be] careful of any prejudices or biases.* Elena shared a similar incident where she became aware of her own ignorance and how that could have negatively impacted her teaching. When she first started teaching, she paired a female student from China and a female student from Japan together thinking that *they would be more comfortable*.

> *When I first started teaching, I had mostly young Somalian men and Ethiopian men in the classroom. I didn't have very many women in that class at the time. So, I put the two Asian women together thinking that they would be more comfortable. And these two women ended up getting put together quite a bit. They went through all the levels together. They have become very good friends. At Christmas time, they came back to give the school a chat with alumni. When they came to me, they laughed and they said, you put China and Japan together, you didn't know we were enemies. It was funny to them because they knew that I didn't know. I guess back then I was just so ignorant about situations in the world. It just wasn't something that I was aware of. I didn't know that China and Japan were archenemies. I didn't know. I thought they should get over those, but I shouldn't. I should've known more. I think it is important to incorporate these in staff training, because you can make so many mistakes, severe mistakes.*

Even though the pairing of a Chinese student and a Japanese student did not result in conflict but rather a beautiful friendship, Elena acknowledged she could have been making *severe mistakes*. This incident allowed Elena to realize that a naïve understanding of culture like *I thought they should get over those* might cause misunderstanding and unwanted conflict in intercultural interaction.

For both Sarah and Elena, there was a lack of prior exposure to diversity, whether in terms of interaction or information. The incidents alerted them that they needed to be more culturally aware in intercultural interactions. Furthermore, Elena believed that training for adult ESL teachers should include culturally related topics to increase such awareness. However, even for teachers who had immersed themselves in other cultures through learning or living abroad, it could still be challenging to make meaning of the complexity of cultures presented in the adult ESL classroom and intercultural interaction. Elizabeth, for example, shared an incident that revealed a sentiment of not knowing enough despite her profound interest in cultures. This incident alerted Elizabeth that she might be getting racist comments from her students because of her lack of knowledge of the ethnic relations in other countries.

> *I'm a person who's interested in world geography, countries and societies, and social organization. Although I've been to many different countries, I haven't been to as many as maybe I should have as an ESL teacher. And there are still ethnic differences in other countries that I wasn't aware of. I had a Chinese student who was just not doing her work. She was supposed to be doing volunteer work somewhere and she never showed up and she forged somebody's name on the paperwork. I had to report it to my superior. And I had to bring her to the ethics committee to address this issue. I don't know how this other Chinese girl in my class found out that there was a problem with this student. But when I was walking out of the classroom, she came up to me and said, you know, that student is an ethnic minority from China. She said it as if it would excuse that student's behavior. She was putting the student down for being an*

ethnic minority. I was very close to this Chinese girl and we had worked on several projects together. I think she wanted to make me feel better by saying that the student was an ethnic minority. The conversation happened so quickly, and I wasn't in a position where I could talk to her to say, tell me more, so I could learn more or to question her for saying it. But what I have learned is that there were ethnic minorities even in China and they may be looked down on by others. Because I still don't know much about the ethnic groups in China, I may get some racist comments from my students. It just gave me a better understanding that there may be problems that I wasn't aware of. I hadn't been aware of it, I would have framed the questions differently or organized the class in different ways. I think that this knowledge could have helped me format classes differently or arrange people differently or take their needs as well as their culture and context into account.

In other incidents, teachers expressed the discrepancy they saw between what they have learned from books and what they experienced as they engaged in intercultural interactions with the students. Elena, for example, described her experience of going to the first Vietnamese wedding she was invited to by her students. After a series of well-intended yet unfortunate events, including arriving too early, bringing an unexpected gift, and trying new dishes, she called this experience *a mixed blessing*.

I remember the first Vietnamese wedding I was invited to. It was an all-day thing and I knew that it started about 10. So, I came at 10. But nobody except the family was there. People didn't come for like two more hours and they didn't know what to do with me because I was too early. That was one of the things just like, let's do lunch at 10 and nobody comes until 1 o'clock. But I didn't know. I also brought a gift and I said, where shall I put this? And they looked at me and they said just over there. And it was the only one because they all gave money. But I didn't know either. They were very forgiving when I did the wrong things. And I also had some wine. I think none of the other women were drinking. And I guess I shouldn't have done that either. One of the students brought me a plate full of food and said, it was only for the teacher, it was special for the teacher. And they were going to let me have it. It looked like a little white egg. And I said, how did I do this? Put all of it in your mouth? That's wonderful. Well, it turned out just to be fat. It was like lard or something, which I guess is very scarce. I don't know how I swallowed that and smiled. Going to my student's wedding is really like a mixed blessing. They insist on filling my plate with what they think I want to eat, which is usually about five times more than I would ever eat and some things that I would never choose to eat, but I just do that anyway and do the best I can. It's just fun to have them share their life like that. And it gives me a way to see their culture which usually it's not the way I understood it to be when I read about it.

The experience of attending a Vietnamese wedding opened up opportunities for Elena to see that discrepancy of culture as presented in books and cultures in motion. In a similar incident, Caroline described how she learned *what it meant really to come from an oral culture and teaching to collectivists from an oral culture.*

I'd been studying a lot about different cultures and how important it is to understand where somebody comes from. So, I had this understanding about collectivism and individualism. And I thought, I knew a lot about understanding cultures. I understood about eye-to-eye contact, how that can be very difficult. I understood about bowing, not touching hands, all kinds of important things. One day I was

teaching a class and I had everyone from a West African country, and everybody spoke French. They were feeling very frustrated. They were learning very slowly. I thought that I would help them out. I asked them to go out and find examples of things that they didn't understand. And I asked them to look for things that were initialism and acronyms. So, I brought in an invitation to a party and then at the bottom it said RSVP. We're going through the parts of the invitation. And then I say to them, ah, what does RSVP stand for? And I think that I'm giving them something very easy because they speak French. A lot of Americans don't know what RSVP means, but they will know what RSVP means because they speak French. Nobody knew what RSVP stands for. None of my students has heard of it. I can't believe it. And then I realize they're coming from a culture where nothing is written. They've never seen RSVP. They've never even seen a paper invitation before. This is what it really means to come from an oral culture. So, I asked them, well, if you're asking someone to your wedding, what do you do? They said we walked to the house and we tell them, we're having a wedding. Next month, we walk to everyone's house. That's how we make the invitation. So, they didn't know what the language was because they had never seen it on a printed invitation. And they didn't know what that kind of initialism was because they don't use that expression. They were not living in Paris. They were living in a village in West Africa. That's when I learned really what it meant to come from an oral culture and teaching to collectivists from an oral culture was different than what I was understanding. Because I had this book knowledge, I thought that I understood so much about it. But I didn't know how it would actually apply to my students. There's a big difference between what you understand in the book and how you actually apply it in the real world and how your students really show you what it means is a completely different thing.

Making it OK for people to be different. Regardless of coming into adult ESL as *I knew a lot about understanding culture* or *I had some biases that I just didn't really think too much about*, as noted in proceeding incidents, adult ESL educators acknowledged the complexities of culture. Many of these complexities revolved around the diversity of culture and the disparity between culture as presented in books and displayed in real life. While many adult ESL educators recognized the need to learn more about culture through staff training, reading, or living abroad, their learning extended beyond the level of knowledge acquisition to include developing capacity to manage a culturally diverse classroom.

June, for example, was surprised to learn that all cultures celebrate Valentine's day (whether it's called this or not) when introducing American holidays to her students. For her, this realization gave her and her students a commonality. Commonality like this helped to build connections and develop empathy in the classroom.

While we cover a lot of content areas besides the English, you know, four basics of reading, writing, listening, speaking. We cover a lot of content to kind of introduce them to what's going on in the state, some of the holidays that Americans celebrate and things like that. And then we start sharing some of what you have in your experience for a big meal or a family celebration. The one surprise to me was Valentine's day. All cultures celebrate Valentine's day. It was amazing all throughout the world, Valentine's day seems to be whether it's called it or not, but primarily celebrated by everybody. And so that gave them

a commonality also to say, Oh, somebody from Russia is celebrating Valentine's day. As somebody from Colombia is, you know, celebrating and somebody from Guatemala and Japan are celebrating. So those kinds of things are very touching. When you see students starting to realize that even though they come from so many different places, there's a lot more things they have in common than they ever would think. And as far as I knew, if we can establish some kind of a connection in the classroom, students are likely to come back. And even if they have to leave for some reason like work schedule or for children, they will come back again because they've made a connection. And so, I think to find those common grounds where they can empathize with each other, with what they're going through, start to develop some friendships. That's pretty, pretty amazing.

In the face of cultural differences, June learned to look for cultural similarity to encourage empathy in intercultural interaction. But it could be challenging to find such similarity when the class consisted of students with different levels and different goals. Amelia, for example, found managing a class with diverse needs and goals to be the most challenging aspect of her job. Their goals included varying degrees of Americanization.

The most challenging aspect of my job was that we had students with different levels and different goals in the classroom. Some students just wanted very simple education. They wanted to know working vocabulary so they could go to work, speak with their boss, speak with the other employees and that's it. And then you have other students that actually wanted to adopt some of the American culture. They wanted to understand that, and they wanted to become Americanized. So, we celebrate different holidays in every culture. Thanksgiving is an American holiday. I explained to the students ahead of time what Thanksgiving was. I explained to the students why it was a holiday. I explained to the students how we celebrated in America. And then I opened up the floor to the students and asked them what did they know about Thanksgiving? Did they celebrate Thanksgiving? Did they want to celebrate Thanksgiving? So we decided as a class that we would celebrate American Thanksgiving and we brought in dishes to share. However, there were some students that did not want to celebrate. Well, I welcomed their choice. I asked their opinion, just looking for more background information, you know, if there was anything that hindered them or if they had specific reasons. And we spoke about that in the class and that opened up a lot of conversation between the students. We all gained a lot of history and a lot of background knowledge about different cultures and different countries. So the end of the class was the time that we celebrated Thanksgiving and the students that didn't want to participate, they were able to leave early and not have to join in the celebration.

In a similar lesson introducing Thanksgiving to students, Amelia let the students take the floor and discuss their understanding and practice of celebrating Thanksgiving. While most students agreed to hold an in-class Thanksgiving celebration, some students declined to participate. For Amelia, the students' different goals in the classroom triggered a learning opportunity that allowed her and the class to engage in a discussion on cultural differences. Her respect of cultural differences opened space for this intercultural interaction.

However, sometimes cultural differences did not create opportunity for interaction, but rather resulted in conflict. Caroline shared an incident where she was yelled at by a student's husband for the way she arranged an activity in the classroom.

> *I was working at a university and it was a very unusual combination of students. My class was filled with students from Saudi Arabia and South Korea. I know a teeny bit of Korean. I never met any Saudis before. There was a couple in my class. They were married. One day, I said to the students turn with your chair and face the person next to you. So at this time, the woman who was from Saudi Arabia was sitting next to a man who was from South Korea. The Saudi woman's husband said, no. I said, excuse me, no, no. I was really shocked. I was shocked that a student would assume this breach of authority like this, because usually in every culture, they respect the teacher so much. And I couldn't believe that somebody was yelling at me and not respecting my authority in the classroom. And I had to turn my back for a moment and collect myself and had to understand what the real objection was here. So, I know he doesn't want his wife to be speaking to this man. Why is that? The man is from another culture or just because he's a man? I'm not sure exactly why, but I can't let him get away with upsetting my classroom. This is my classroom, and this is the United States of America. And he can't stop my student from speaking. So this is what I did. I turned around and I said, okay, let's do something different. Let's make a circle. So, the woman was still sitting next to the South Korean student. But now I say, ask the person next to you this question. And then I waited. No objection. So, we continued with the lesson. I understand that there are cultural differences. I understood like if you look in their eyes, they find that very disturbing because it's rude. It's a sign of disrespect. So, part of the problem is it's a guy, and part of the problem is the face to face. But as soon as they were side to side, she could turn her head and talk to him. And that was okay, but she couldn't sit face to face because it's so confrontational. It's so direct. So, I got to have my class, he got to save his face and we all got through that moment. As ESL teachers, we are going to be having people from all over the world, we have to be able to make it okay for people to be different.*

As with earlier examples, this incident further highlighted the complexities associated with culture. In this case, the conflict could be triggered by the husband viewing looking directly into others' eyes as a sign of disrespect or his desire to exercise patriarchal power over his wife. This moment of conflict triggered a learning opportunity for Caroline to assess and respond to the conflict in the classroom while reclaiming her authority as a teacher. Caroline expressed a similar sense of acknowledgement and respect to cultural differences in the classroom. However, like the question she asked herself, *Why is that? The man is from another culture or just because he's a man,* the incident did not open a space for her to further explore the roots of the conflicts. Her priority was to regain control of the classroom.

Perhaps the incident shared by June best illustrated that cultural identity is multifaceted and negotiated through intercultural interaction. With a background in physical health education,

June liked to incorporate body movement exercises into her adult ESL class. However, she became very cautious when a group of monks from Laos came to the program.

> *Because of my background in physical health education, I was able to do some body movement exercise in class. We have a total physical response time where I can reinforce directions. But we don't call it dance because a couple of years I've had monks, Laotian monks in our class and they came in their orange gown. When they first were introduced to our program, we were told don't put them next to a woman. You know, don't speak directly with them. Don't hand them a paper because you have to put it on the knee. And I would say by the end of the first year and into the second year, they almost responded like this is English class. I'm not a monk in English class. I can interrupt. I can talk and have conversation with women. I can laugh. I can even, I won't call it dance, but I can do physical steps to music. One year we did the bunny hop and it was like the monks joined right into the bunny hop. They've come into a situation that they wanted to learn. They understood there's a little bit of a cultural difference but that is part of their life. They welcomed the fact that they were recognized for themselves, for their name and not just for their status within their community. At the end of the year party, they would make the little friendship bracelets or the little prayer bracelets. We could hold our hand out and they would put it on our wrist for us, men and women. I think some of those little barriers broke down because they wanted to be part of the sharing their history and background but not necessarily their faith.*

But by the end of the year, the monks responded to the class like it is an English class. They were participating in all kind of activities, including dancing and bunny hops. June attributed their engagement in the class to being recognized as a learner, not necessarily a monk, in the classroom.

Theme 3: *How Alienated I Was to My Own Culture*

Intrapersonal Learning: Reflecting on My Positionality

The intrapersonal dimension of intercultural maturity is concerned with "how people view themselves" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 277). It consists of the exploration of multiple identity-related topics and as a result of it, individuals could form a "culturally-sensitive and well-considered basis for making decisions about intercultural interaction" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2002, p. 279). There were occasions that teachers gained a better understanding of how their values were shaped by their own backgrounds and experiences. Some explorations deepened into the acknowledgement of the racial and class privilege they enjoyed. Such acknowledgement also led to reflection on the issues of power and privilege in working with a vulnerable population.

The breakdown of my own knowledge. Intercultural interaction in the adult ESL classroom provoked reflection into how adult ESL teachers related to their culture. Such intentional self-reflection resulted in the acknowledgement that our positionality, a product of personal history intersecting with local and global contexts, influence how we see the world. In one incident, Amelia emphasized intercultural interaction in adult ESL classrooms created a space to reflect on *my own values, my own beliefs, my own level of education and decipher where all these pieces came from in order to create who I am today.*

> *I remember having a discussion on Christmas with my students. They asked if you have a parent that celebrates Christmas versus another parent that doesn't, what do you do? Conversation like this enabled me to reflect on my own values, my own beliefs, my own level of education and decipher where all these pieces came from in order to create who I am today. I have, you know, four or five different cultures from my parents. And then because I've traveled in the United States and several places, I've adopted some beliefs and values, some traditions, um, sayings, cultural sayings, slang from many different places. It was very interesting to see that I adopted one tradition from one parent, whereas I adopted another tradition from another parent. I explained to the students while reflecting on myself, what did I do? Well I just chose which one I liked the best and I went with that and that's what I've been doing ever since. So, it was really interesting for me to really understand the breakdown of my own knowledge and to understand my own background influence and how it has affected me as a person.*

Another incident shared by Eva further highlighted how intercultural interaction afforded her an opportunity to see how our perspectives are shaped by our experiences. Returning to the United States after working in Europe for several years, she found it difficult to reintegrate into her home country and culture. Teaching in adult ESL became a pathway for her to reenter her own culture and consider how our diverse perspectives are shaped by our unique experiences.

> *I moved back to the U.S. in 2017 after living in Europe for a very long time. I absolutely love Europe. I love being a part of a socialist society that valued people. I loved going to a restaurant and knowing that even the minimum wage worker there earned a living wage and had full health benefits. I have a hard time politically accepting that people want to live in the U.S. Just the inequality in our society here really bothers me. It was especially hard for me in my first year of reentry into what was technically my home culture and to see students so grateful and happy to be able to come here. I had one student from an African nation who was here trying to improve his English to get into a master's program. He was taking community college history classes while he was also taking English classes to get the pre-reqs that he needed to get into this master's program. He was just so excited about what he was learning about American history. He would come in with these stories about how great America is. It's weird to be given lectures by my students about how great my country is while I'm sitting there at home going, oh, this country has so many problems. So, when he brought up a story, I would gently say, oh, that's very true. It's really great the way that immigrants were welcomed here in this country. The U.S. has a wonderful history of being a mixing pot. And then I'd say, but there's also sometimes when the U.S. is not good to immigrants. And then I talked a little bit about the Japanese internment camps and asked if he learned about those yet.*

So he was still working on those like the 1850, the 1860 Westward Expansion. I was like, well, you know, the U.S. was great for some people at that time. He was like, oh, no, no, I know it's not perfect. It's not perfect, but it's so much better than my country. Emotionally, it was difficult for me to have these conversations, but it made me realize how alienated I was to my own culture. I was conflicted because I was afraid that the students were just not seeing everything. But we had such different experiences. I was coming back from a foreign country that was equally prosperous to the U.S while he was coming from a country where poverty was much higher. I tried to remind myself that the things that he sees about the U.S. that are so wonderful, depends on his perspective, like where he's, where he started from and the things I'm seeing as wrong with us also depend on where I'm starting. I also try to remind myself that I'm here to teach them English, not history or politics. So, I shouldn't let my own value and judgement weigh too strongly in that, because I'm looking at it from a completely different angle.

I need to check myself. A common theme shared across several incidents was adult ESL teachers' increased awareness and acknowledgement of their privilege, whether through race or class. For example, Elena shared that she and her students had very different experiences when they tried to blend in in a foreign country.

I was very interested in their customs and their cultures. But I had a couple of young students and all they wanted to do was blend in and be American. They didn't want to talk about their customs and things like their parents did. They tried to come dressed like American teenager. I remember one day a young man came in with a shirt that says Tommy. I looked at him and said, your name isn't Tommy. He looked at me like, huh? The other day I was teaching them phrases like what are you going to do, and where are you going to go. I told them that some people might pronounce "going to" like one word. They didn't need to feel like they have to speak bad English or lazy English, but they needed to be able to understand it when they heard it. But what the younger people wanted was that they wanted to sound American. They didn't want to have an accent at all. And I said, you know, let your first language shine through. It's beautiful. People find it attractive. You don't have to sound like an American. You have to have the vocabulary and the correct grammar English, but it doesn't matter if you have an accent, because that's who you are. So let it shine. Don't worry about that. But the younger students didn't want that. They just wanted to be American teenagers. This reminded me of the time when I lived in England. Even in such a similar culture, there were times when I just wanted to blend. I just wanted to be a normal person. So, if I didn't speak, nobody would know, and I could do a pretty good British accent as well. I would just be able to blend. I realized how hard and how impossible in the first place for them to blend because they look different. So, they couldn't do that. This was just a matter of becoming aware of my white privilege.

The comparison triggered Elena to reflect on the social markers of *a normal person* in a predominantly white country like the United States or England. Whether it was her physical appearance as a white person or her ability to mimic a British accent, she acknowledged that there were benefits or advantages that were not shared by her young students *because they look different*. In another incident, Elena witnessed her older students' struggle of raising their children in another country and how their intergenerational dynamics were shifting as the children were going against their cultural traditions and becoming more fluent in English.

I have learned that many of my African students had their kids in high school and that was like a part of their culture. So, their kids couldn't speak to their grandparents because they didn't know the native language. The kids were also going against most of their cultural traditions. Like the daughters just wanted to wear normal clothes and go out on dates. And the sons were getting into gangs and that kind of tough situations. So, the parents in my class were just so stressed and so miserable. They would come and tell me, my daughter wants to do this and it's against my religion. And I couldn't really help them with that. Well, I don't think I told them anything. I tried to reassure them that doing something like just wearing American clothes or having a date when you're 18 is not necessarily the end of the world. It can just be a normal and not disgraceful thing to behave like that. I just tried to let them tell me their stories and ensure them that I understood. I think I would find that awful to go to a different culture and then have my kids completely different and not being able to communicate and having their English better than mine and having to have them as translator and having them fill out your paperwork. I especially can understand the grandparents because they did not speak English and they could not see their grandchildren. I think that would be awful. I'm just glad I never had to go through that with my kids. And this has just made me feel my white privilege or my privilege in general clearer.

The incident again raised her awareness of her privilege and opened her to see the challenges and struggles of parenting in immigrant families. While she felt she could not really interfere with the situation, Elena let the older students share their stories and assured them that their feelings were understood. Elena's gradual awareness of her privilege sparked a desire to help out, even through a small gesture like letting the students tell their stories. Similarly, Sarah described in an incident where her desire to help her students succeed grew out of her acknowledgement of her privileged upbringing.

When I finished my master's degree, I started teaching in a university composition class. In the composition class, I had students who were older than I was. I had students who were trying to work at the same time in many jobs. I remember this young woman came to me one day. She was almost in tears. She was very upset. She told me she needed extensions on assignments because she had to take her mother to the emergency room the night before and translate for her. In that moment, it made me realize how extremely privileged I was in my upbringing and in my background. I had never experienced that type of situation. When I was a student in college, I was basically a full-time student. I love studying and loved my studies. I didn't have to juggle all the responsibilities at the same time. My parents could go to the emergency room on their own. Conversation like this gave me an inside view of my students' lives, that what they were going through and what obstacles they faced nearly every day in just getting to class on time. I think working with those students really made me realize what a privileged background I came from and made me want to try to do whatever I could to help those students succeed. I always gave them extensions and I met with them a lot more individually when they had to miss class.

Conversations like this enabled Sarah to see the drastic differences between her schooling experiences and her students'. The acknowledgement of her privilege led her to find ways to support her students in challenging situations.

While recognizing that they were in a unique position to help adult ESL learners, two

incidents highlighted that the acknowledgement of privilege did not automatically produce power equality in the classroom. Without careful consideration, behaviors that embodied the *white savior complex* could reenforce societal inequality in the classroom. Lola, for example, described an incident where she questioned whether her own behaviors created partnership in the classroom or reproduced hierarchical relationships between students and teachers. Lola always asked her students to call her by her first name. At first, she insisted on this because she wanted to show the students that *we' re friends, we are equal*. As she saw some students still found it uncomfortable to call her by her first name, she realized that this might be a moment to check herself.

> *I always ask students to call me by my first name. And then, one student said, no, no, no, no teacher. Everybody always wants to call me by a title teacher. At first, I kept saying, no, no, call me by my first name. We're friends. We are equal. That is true because I respect them. But I also realized that by forcing them to interact with me on that level, I was not respecting their values of education and culture. I was like I need to check myself because I think I'm doing a good thing. I think I'm making myself accessible to them. And for other students that might be the case. But when a student wants to address you a certain way or talk with you in a certain way, I just need to be aware that I might be making them uncomfortable. They might not want to hug the teacher, or they might not want to call me by my first name, because that is so uncomfortable for them. I have to keep that in mind that just because it's okay with some students, it might not be okay with others. Moments like that made me realize that I got to check myself. I got to check in and make sure, are they doing this because they feel comfortable or are they doing this because I am forcing it on them? I do worry a little bit and I have seen the negatives of the white savior complex, you know, that I'm going to be here and I'm going to teach you how to do this the right way. I think that can be so dangerous and not a healthy way for students to learn English and to interact with American culture. I know we all think we're doing something meaningful and good, but always need to be cautious and recognizing am I coming from a place of privilege. Am I coming from a place that has good intentions but might have negative effects? The relationship we have with student needs to be on equal footing, and we need to make sure where we're seeing each other as partners in this education process and not in this sort of hierarchical relationship.*

As with Lola's incident, she saw her position of privilege intertwined with the ethics of helping a vulnerable population. Without carefully examining such issues, no true partnership could be built in the classroom. Much like Lola, Caroline shared one of the worst moments in her career as an adult ESL teacher where she let her own ego triumph over students' needs. Deeply regretting her behavior, Caroline realized that she has let her own ego take the lead without staying true to her students' need.

I remember this one time when I said something to my students that I'll never forget it because I felt so bad afterwards. I had been teaching them how to read a subway map. And then I gave them kind of a quiz. The map was in front of them. I was teaching them not just how to read the map, but how to understand that if a map is in front of you, you should use that tool, use the tools in the world to learn more English. Anyway, nobody looked at the map. There were several questions and I kept like pointing to the map. It was in the middle of their table and they didn't use it. And so at the end, I said, you're never going to learn English if you don't use the tools around you. The map was on the table. You need to learn to use the map. And they looked at me and they were really, really sad. And I wanted to take back the words immediately. I realized how hurtful they were. And so at that time, I was just thinking about myself and my own ego and how I gave this great lesson. And now they're going to have great answers because I taught them so well, but the truth was I hadn't taught them well, that's why they didn't do well. And I was really angry at myself and I was taking it out on my students. And so that kind of impatience with my students because they're interfering with my feeling good about being a teacher was really just one of the worst moments I've ever had.

Theme 4: *It's Been an Extraordinary Connection.*

Interpersonal Learning: Engaging in Intercultural Interaction

The interpersonal dimension of intercultural maturity is concerned with the ability to engage in intercultural interaction that is "interdependent, respectful, informed by cultural understanding, and mutually negotiated" (p. 280). Participants in this study identified several key factors that could facilitate meaningful intercultural interactions. First, a trusting relationship in the classroom facilitated sharing personal stories. Second, a desire to connect and learn from each other enabled openness and cultivated lasting relationships. Third, empathy allowed them to develop a nuanced understanding of the immigrant experience and encouraged them to help their students when they were in need.

You can trust this place. In adult ESL, the trust described by participants was an antecedent for respectful intercultural interaction where diverse issues could be shared. Sarah shared a unique incident where trust opened the door for intercultural interaction in the virtual space. She has transitioned to online instruction since the beginning of the pandemic. When organizing an online activity, she was surprised to see that students were willing to share very personal religious items with the class.

I was doing an online activity called Find Something That. In this case we had find something that was broken, find something that would make you smile, find something that was unique that you didn't think

anyone else would have, find something that was creative or something like that. I then sent them to find something and bring it back. I had thought that I would see lots of pictures of family or something like that. In the next class, I was surprised that my students brought a whole bunch of religious artifacts. We had everything from like baby Jesus and angels to like Chinese and various Japanese divines. I almost gasped when I saw these artifacts because the first rule in the program is to not talk about religion and politics in the classroom and I have been following it for three years! The first lady was like, I'm Catholic, we have baby Jesus. She was muted so we couldn't hear at that moment, but I knew what she was about to say. I was like, oh no, where are we going? So, I was really careful. I was trying to figure out what I could say, cause no one else was asking anything. One girl was like, this is a picture of a Japanese God, I keep it beside my bed. It is very important to me. A lot of those things were very private and personal items. But they were bringing it to share. They would share and move on to the next person. After the class, I was afraid I was doing something wrong, so I talked to the director. But he was like, no, it's ok. My biggest fear was that topic like religion might cause disunity in the classroom. But everyone was respectful that day. It showed me that the students trusted everybody to share things like that. They weren't going to be made fun of or anything like that. I felt like they wanted to share pieces of their culture that were special, important to them.

When students trusted the teachers and others in the classroom, they felt comfortable sharing their experiences and cultures. Such trustful relationships can sometimes open doors for students to share deep, personal issues with the teachers and the class without feeling embarrassed.

Grace organized a workplace English program for international medical researchers. Working with her students who *may be held in a position of esteem in their home country,* she found trust to be especially important in her context:

> *I think it's so important to have trust because for an adult student to say, I don't know what you're saying is huge. If the students don't have trust in their teacher that they will be treated with dignity, that they're not going to be laughed at, that their teacher isn't going to treat them differently because they don't know things. They have to have that relationship so that they feel comfortable asking questions.*

Grace shared an incident where a female student came to her outside of class and seemed to be very uncomfortable. After few questions, Grace realized the student was distressed because she needed to take a urinalysis test while being on her period. While providing an answer to her student, Grace found this conversation to be *such a moment of trust*.

> *I had a lovely Chinese student in my class. She has a PhD and is very intelligent. She seems to be a shy person and has always been very quiet in my class. One day she came to me outside of the class and was trying to say something to me. I don't know if she didn't have the words or she was just embarrassed to say the words. It seemed that she felt uncomfortable, but I had to ask her a couple of questions to figure out what was happening. It turned out that she had to take a urinalysis test for a job. She was very concerned*

because it was her time of the month and she did not know if it would interfere. When I finally figured out what was happening, I realized how much she trusted me. So, I smiled and I put my arm around her because I wanted to really make her feel accepted. I told her no, no, no, no, you're fine. You're fine. It's no trouble at all. You will be fine. You can go ahead and do that without worrying. And she said, thank you very much. Then she left. I felt like it was such a moment of trust. I did not realize she felt that much trust in our relationship since she has always been quiet in the class. I felt touched very deeply because even though it was just a simple answer, no, it's fine. But her being able to come to me and talking about something maybe considered very private and personal in Chinese culture made me realize that she felt enough trust in me to share that with me. Since then, she and I have gone on to become really good friends and to speak quite often, and she was supposed to come over and then coronavirus hit. We've never spoken of that moment again, but it was so significant to me that she trusted me that much. That moment allowed us to develop a friendship.

Working in a very different context compared to Grace, Lola saw trust as reliability and a record of consistence demonstrated by the teacher. Lola worked in a rural community-based ESL program and used many reflective, journaling, and open-ended activities to create personal bonds and community in the classroom. She emphasized that a community built on trust could create a sense of belonging.

A lot of the lessons I do have a personal reflection component and we also do journaling. We answer a lot of deeper questions and open-ended questions. For one of the students in my class, I don't think she had that kind of educational experience before. As she started making friends with other women in class and started to feel comfortable and saw we were helping each other, I think she slowly started to feel like she could open up about some of the issues she was having. One day, she finally opened up and said, you know, it's very stressful, very hard, and I don't want my children to go with him, but I don't know what to do. It turned out that she was in a domestic violence situation. She and her husband were getting divorced and he was still taking the children on the weekend. It was very dangerous. He was an American and English speaking, so he was very intimidating to her. She was sort of in an ethnic Island on her own. She didn't have any native speakers in her area or any friends of her native speaking language. She was very isolated. When she finally got to that point where she was comfortable enough to say that to me. I was able to say, I've got you. We've got resources. We can help you. We can do this together. So I helped her find resources, get counseling and free legal services to empower her so she can tell him not to see their children. Now she has full custody of her children and she's able to decide whether he sees them or not.

I think as a teacher it wasn't about teaching her English but to make sure that this relationship she had with me is a trusting relationship and I could connect her to these things and change her life in that way. I think it's incredibly important to have a trusting relationship. Anyone who's decided to move, not knowing a language or a culture is incredibly brave. I think we have to recognize that many people come to a class with a variety of issues in front of them and behind them. So I think when you can make meaningful connections with students and you can show them that I am reliable, I have a track record of reliability with you and you can see it that everything's very consistent here. You can trust this place. You can trust this teacher. You can trust this community. That's when they get the most from the program, because then it becomes not just sitting in an English class, but to be part of something here. That's some of the most meaningful work I think you do in adult education. I think it's that feeling that they get that they are safe. They have a place that they belong, and they have a community and resources to connect to.

An openness to learn about others. Some teachers considered it a part of their responsibility to cultivate a sense of openness to intercultural interaction among students in adult

ESL. June described two incidents that revolved around the incorporation of intercultural learning experiences into the adult ESL programs as a means to build community and encourage intercultural interaction. The first incident described how June and her fellow teachers preparing various American traditional dishes during Thanksgiving and demonstrating those dishes to each class.

> *It was probably 18 or 20 years ago. During the holiday time, we decided to try a movable feast for Thanksgiving. So a movable feast was where each teacher prepared an American traditional dish. My job with another teacher was the turkey and the stuffing. We would prepare these dishes ahead of time, bring them in the next morning. I carved a Turkey and shredded it. She made stuffing. Then we would put it on a chart and demonstrate to each class. We had about a 30 rotation within the classes of how you prepared this, had a handout for them, physically demonstrated it with them, and then they sampled it. Because I did the Turkey for couple of years, I also dressed up like a Pilgrim. I gave a little background of immigrants coming over and why they came same as our students. Then we would give them a taste of turkey, stuffing, cranberry, pumpkin pie, you know, some of those very traditional things. And then they got a little history of it as we went around and talked to them. Because it was the holiday time, I wanted to help them become familiar with what's going on, especially if they do have children in our school system. That is a big thing that teachers will use in our school system to show various cultures and various holiday experiences and things like that. So they can now relate with their children and some of the readings that the teachers will give, like handouts for history or cultural experiences or surveys, they can bring those home and then they can talk to their children about it too. It can help make a connection with the importance of education and learning about other people.*

Here, June saw her role as an adult ESL teacher to help start students' interest in American traditions which could encourage them to be more involved in their children's education and see the values of learning about people and cultures. In another incident, she described the annual cultural fair hosted in the program. Students worked in several committees to develop a presentation on their home country.

> *Every end of year, we have a cultural fair where students are grouped into their countries. We used it as a civics lesson. So, the students would meet a couple of weeks before the event and developed as committees. They had to choose a chairperson, they had to choose a secretary and develop what they would do for a presentation about their country. Because we had so many people from Mexico, we grouped them into states. And then at the end we had a wonderful cultural experience. They had to present either a poster or some kind of a writing thing in English. And we invited some people from the community and then they would go station to station. We made up a passport, and in that passport, they would get a little sticker as they talk to the students and experience whether they brought pieces of clothing or a little artifact, or many of them prepared dishes of native foods and would have them ready to taste. And that was very, very successful. I think sharing those cultural* experiences *were just wonderful. They are just so excited to do that and to learn about each other. It develops community. Somebody can leave my classroom and walk outside and see that maybe that person across the street isn't as different as I thought they were, or maybe I'm not alone in this because that person might also be having those experiences. I think it has been wonderful.*

Again, June saw the value of such intercultural learning experiences as developing a sense of community and encouraging students to connect with others. The sense of community could potentially transcend the physical boundary of the classroom.

A close friendship between student and teacher in adult ESL, which was often triggered by the desire to connect and learn from each other, was captured in several incidents. Emma shared a moment of joy when she and her students were waiting for the rain to stop after the class. Without recalling many details of the conversation, Emma considered moments like that to be a starting *point of a friendship.*

> *I remember one time where it was pouring down rain and Emma and I and my male student, like we were standing under the eve of the building, waiting for the rain to stop or at least waiting for it to slow down enough that we could actually like run out to our respective cars. And we sat there, and we talked for probably like 10 minutes and it was just funny cause we would just sit there and laugh about how much it was pouring and how we couldn't go anywhere. And I don't even remember exactly what we were talking about, but as I remember that we all kind of were having fun standing there talking to one another. In the classroom there was always somewhat of an agenda that we were trying to make progress with English. But after that pressure was off, we could build and maintain those relationships through chatting. The brother will Facebook message me and ask me a question or say something or whatever. Relationships are hard because you perceive something that may not be perceived by the other person necessarily. But I enjoyed those relationships. I enjoyed getting to know them, them as people. I liked them as people. I'm interested in people's stories and their experiences. I find that I learn from people and I find that those relationships enrich my life.*

When the pressure of finishing an English lesson was off, Emma felt that she and her students were able to truly know each other and learn about each other's stories. Her experience of maintaining a friendship with students outside of the class was not uncommon. Elizabeth and Caroline both shared incidents where they built *extraordinary connection* with their students and became family. Both of these relationships started from an openness to connect with others.

Elizabeth worked in an intensive English program and organized a series of trips during the summer with her students. Travelling together and cultivating community with her students along the way made it a strong learning experience for them and resulted in a very meaningful connection between her and some Turkish students. One day, the Turkish students started calling

her mom and she happily accepted that. Reflecting on this relationship, she believed it was their mutual openness to learn from each other that enabled it.

> *In one summer, I took my students to a lot of trips in the state as a part of the course in the intensive English program. We went to an island and stayed there for a weekend with an African American family. We watched Fried Green Tomatoes. We went to the famous café. So, we got close doing that. I think the community that we created in the classroom and traveling together made it a stronger learning experience for them. By the end they wrote up whatever we did and we published it in a booklet as a guide to international students as they come to the state. During the class and the trips, I formed a very meaningful connection with a couple of my Turkish students. Turkish education is very strict and very formal so the students were not used to having a teacher being informal. They loved it, but it was something that was new and strange to them. Because we were working together so closely in the summer, they wanted some sort of relationship with me. I guess the closet relationship you can be in is to be a son to somebody. One day, one of the Turkish students started calling me mom. He said, you're like my mom to me here, you know, in the U.S. I said, I'm fine with being your mom. I have a son, but he was not with me at that time. So, I was very happy to have a son. Sometimes I would visit them and bring them coffee or something. When I had a party for my class, my son would help me cook and chop the vegetables in the Turkish style. We spent lots of time talking about the political problems in Turkey and the U.S., which were very similar. He has since moved back to Turkey, but I still feel that he's my son. His twin brother got married first and he said, you've got to come to the wedding. And I said, okay. So I went for four days to Istanbul. Then when my son got married two years later, I went back for four days again for the wedding. Through transcultural interaction, we have made a fictive kinship unit. When I was teaching him, I didn't really have family here. I appreciated family and I always appreciate the chance to enter into another culture. That's part of the perks of being an ESL teacher is you just get to know people who you wouldn't otherwise have met. I know that I wanted to learn about him and his culture, so I became a learner in this situation. It's an openness to learn about others that enables such relationship.*

Caroline worked in a community-based ESL program and worked with several young women in a multigenerational family from the Central African Republic. Amazed by the resilience they had, she gradually built an intimate relationship with them and eventually adopted the mother of the family. Feeling alienated from her own family because of their conflicts of ideology, Caroline felt the extended family she built with them has greatly enriched her life.

> *I come from a very long line of people who were not interested in education. Also, I'm way on the left. And most of my family is not way on the left. I've lived in New York City for a long time, as far away from my family that lives in Alabama and North Carolina. So, I felt alienated from my family and really gave up this idea of really having a family. And then in the last several years, when I started developing close relationships to people, it just sort of happens. I have a student a few years ago and she is from the Central African Republic. She was a remarkable 18-year-old and she just loved learning. When the lower schools were closed for holiday, she would bring her younger siblings to the classroom. I told her they were welcomed to come. Her siblings sat at the table and participated in the class. They were like six and eight and ten. And they sat there very seriously and would raise their hands and answer the questions. They were just so adorable. When she went to public school in the fall, her mother came to the class to study English. When she came to the classroom, I was so in love with this woman for having brought these children through three African countries, walking hundreds of miles, to get to a refugee camp and coming to this country. So I adopted her and now I have six grandchildren because of her. I'm not just the teacher. They called me teacher for a long time, but now they call me grandma.*

This whole entire family is now part of my family. I started off just by inviting them all to my home for Thanksgiving and having them sleep over. And then I started buying them clothes and books, sending them to school. Now they text me in the morning. If there's a deer walking in my yard, or if the birds are eating my sunflowers, I take videos and send them videos. We cook together. I've learned how to cook some African meals for them. During this pandemic, my husband and I would load our car with food and supplies and take them to their home. They have really changed my life. And I do everything I can for these grandchildren. We talk about John Lewis, about my experiences of segregated bathrooms in Montgomery, Alabama in 1959. We talk about racism and it's so important for this African family to have a white person that they can talk to about racism. I can try and explain to them why this country is full of this horrible, horrible thing. It's been four years now. I could never have children myself. So now I feel I have the family that I've always wanted, and they have another grandmother that they so much wanted in this new country. It's been an extraordinary connection. I feel much richer and more fulfilled as a human being, not just to be the teacher, but also to have these intimate and loving relationships.

See something through someone else's eyes. Some teachers shared that learning about immigrant experiences increased their empathy and alerted them to the importance of taking other's perspectives. Grace shared two incidents where she felt increased empathy for her students after learning their stories in the United States. These incidents opened her to see how different their experiences were and altered her ways of presentation in the classroom to better support her students. Working in a medical center populated with international researchers, Grace was used to hearing English with various accents and it never occurred to her that the researchers might have trouble understanding each other. While teaching in the workplace English program in the medical center, she was surprised when her Chinese student told her she could not understand her Indian colleague.

Over the many years, I have become able to understand them, like even with a really heavy accent of whatever kind, I'm able to hear what they're trying to say. It never occurred to me that my students in the class would have a hard time understanding each other. So, my student from India has a very heavy Indian accent. One day, he was saying something, and I was listening to him. And then I went on and one of my students from China said, could you tell us what he just said? And I went, what do you mean? He was speaking English. You did not understand? I was confused because my Chinese' student's English was good. And she said, I never have any idea what he's saying. At the very moment, I said, Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry. I didn't realize that was difficult for you. So, I rephrased what he just said, and she said, oh, okay. That makes sense. And then we went on. From that point forward, I have now started making sure that I pause to rephrase what he says before I go on. Rather than asking the other students, did you understand that? And like putting them on the spot, I just adopted the practice of when he says something kind of rephrasing it as part of what I say, and then going forward and either answering it or onto the next subject. I felt embarrassed that I hadn't considered that before. I wondered how many times before the Indian students said something and I answered it and went on with the rest of my students having no idea what just happened. So how much did they miss out on? It really made me stop to consider that it wasn't just about my interaction with the students, but also about their interaction with each other and how I need to be more aware of that as both the teaching and learning well. I think it gave me a window into their lives as they move through their day. It's not just about not understanding American English, like how much, how

difficult it must be for them, for my students to interact with English speakers from many different countries. I think it made a big difference in how I think about planning my lessons as well and finding ways to facilitate understanding with like that translation. This experience has increased my empathy and it altered my presentation style in the classroom.

From that point forward, she made sure to pause to rephrase or use other techniques to facilitate interaction and mutual understanding in the classroom. She considered this incident to truly open her to the struggles international researchers might face in their work and life.

In another incident, Grace was surprised by how a speeding ticket could be perceived so differently in the eye of a foreigner.

One of my students came to me outside of the class and she was clearly very much in distress. One of the other researchers had brought her and said, come and talk to her about it. So, we had a holiday weekend and she had gone to some place with her husband and she got a speeding ticket. When she brought the ticket home and read the speeding ticket at the bottom, the language of the speeding ticket said, this, this, and this. This offense is punishable by up to $10,000 and up to six months in jail. So, she read that, maybe translate that, and thought that was what was going to happen to her husband. In the past I have gotten a ticket as well, but I ignored that because when I looked at that I knew, oh yeah, that's not going to happen to me. I just paid the fine and moved on. But for her, she was petrified that her husband was going to jail. I am sure those police officers don't have training in ESL. I'm not saying that they were unkind, but they would have no understanding of how to explain it to a foreigner. So, I explained to her that that is not what happens and that this isn't something that you should be worried about. It's generally a fine. For some reasons they had to actually go to court, and they couldn't just mail in the fine. So, I called the court on her behalf and arranged to have an interpreter there for them. I got the court date and gave her that information. I offered to go with her but she said no. Afterwards she told me that everything was Ok. They just had to pay the fine. For a foreigner who is not used to the American culture, they might be super scared and thinks about the worst-case scenario. For me it is surprising to think how many things I, as an English speaker take for granted. When I see something through someone else's eyes, I notice how different it is for them. This experience has increased my empathy for them.

As Grace put, *When I see something through someone else's eyes, I notice how different it is for them*. Clara further acknowledged that it was volunteering in adult ESL that allowed her to witness some of the struggle immigrants faced and enabled her to develop greater empathy for them:

If you just never had a friend that was different from you, you would never feel that.

She was very sad to see her student having very little interaction outside of class and hoping her student could form friendships with someone from her own community.

What really surprised me was how very little interaction with Americans that most of the internationals in our program has. While some people have formed their own community. Like our Chinese community is huge. We have a big Chinese festival celebration every year. They all know one another. They

have Chinese American school. They found one another and they found their community. They are so familiar that they want to be together so they may only interact with Americans in the workplace. But for my students, their level of English is really not high enough for them to get a good job here. The husbands might have different jobs, but the wives were usually just staying at home. We had one student that lived in an apartment behind the church. She is Pakistani and her husband worked during the day, and she has children in the military. So, she is lonely. I knew she was lonely because she asked her teacher, would you like to come to tea? That was the only interaction she has. She has no friends. I felt very sad when I heard that. I guess part of that is cultural. Her husband doesn't want her to get out, which is sad. Once he gets to know her teacher, he may let her teacher take her to the mall, you know? So once in a year we hold a big banquet. Some of these students meet others from their country that they've never met before. I am really hoping that she meets another woman from Pakistan, then she can develop a friendship. I think I just have empathy for her. Let's be honest, to communicate with somebody whose English level is a beginning level from a different culture is hard. Some people are intimidated by it or they just don't want to bother. It takes too much time and energy. If I were in their shoes, I would feel sad.

Theme 5: *Putting Their Needs Above the System*

Interpersonal Learning: Continually Working for the Rights of Others

King and Baxter Magolda (2002) argued that at the mature level of the interpersonal dimension of intercultural maturity, individuals are making meaning of intercultural experiences in a way that enables them to "act as advocates or social justice allies across a range of social issues, from civil rights to causes related to specific social identities" (p. 281). Participants noted in several incidents that they intended to create a safe space in the classroom and discussed the various meanings they attached to a safe space. For some, creating a safe space was their way to become an ally to immigrant and refugee learners. In other incidents, participants responded to the systemic challenges facing both teachers and students in adult ESL.

A safe confidant. Mary expressed that the nature of adult ESL work enabled adult ESL teachers to develop more intimate relationships with their students and become their *safe confidant*. Mary shared an incident where she was able to serve the role of a safe confidant by sharing her own job search stories. By sharing her own job search stories, Mary wanted to connect with students on the basis of a shared experience and offer a sense of hope.

As a teacher, you want to care for the whole student. If students have things that they're worried about or concerned about, they're not going to be able to pay attention well in your class and learn what you're teaching. And by the very nature of what adult ESL teach and help students with, we become kind of a safe confidant. It is a privilege to know the students better and to help them. I think it is helpful to share your own experiences, your own ups, your own downs, the times when you are not sure of yourself, and the

mistakes that you've made in getting along with people. One day we were reading an essay about job discrimination. We were brainstorming and thinking about stories and I shared a story about my own life. When I was getting my master's in TESOL degree, I applied for a position to work as a TA in a brilliant composition program. When I went in for the interview, the director of the program said to me, well, I'll interview you, but I've decided to hire the man who I just interviewed ahead of you. So, I talked to her for a little bit and then went back home. I told my husband that I didn't get that job, so I better go back and look. About two weeks later, the director of this program called me back and she said, have you found anything? Would you still be interested in the program? And I said, yeah, I really would. I ask why she needed somebody now? She said, well, the guy I wanted to hire didn't have a high enough GPA to be a TA. I just told my students that story, first of all, to tell them not to give up that you never know, when you walk out of an interview, what's going to happen, and you can even be rejected and then get called back. And second of all, just to help them understand that the job search process or whatever process they're going through is really difficult for everyone.

Because such personal connections gave adult ESL teachers opportunities to learn about student's immigrant stories and struggles, they felt motivated and obligated to extend their responsibility of teaching English to include nurturing a safe space in the classroom. Clara shared an incident where she learned her student's traumatic immigrant experience when giving the student a ride to school.

We had a few students that were refugees. They had been persecuted and traumatized in their country. It was the first time for me to deal with students who were coming out of a situation where there was emotional trauma. Sometimes they needed a ride to class so I went and picked them up. They started telling me their story in the car. It's amazing what conversations come out and what questions come out in the car. When I started asking about their lives, one would break out in tears. I remember I had a female student from Iran. Her husband was working for our government at the base as a translator. She had family in Iran who had been targeted by the terrorist because they knew that she and her husband were over here helping the Americans. Her families were killed in a car bomb. That was traumatic. When I heard the story, I was broken hearted to know that they had people that they knew that had been killed and would be spit on. Being a white American, I've never experienced anything like that. But it breaks my heart. You can't help but have compassion for them and try to encourage them. I just realized that what they needed from us was to feel safe and to feel we cared about them and we loved them. And I just worked really hard, every week showing them that care and that concern. It's important to see someone as your equal, as important as you are, and as important as God sees them. You need to understand their story and where they're coming from and all of that involves culture. You had no control over where you were born. I had no control. They didn't either, but that it's part of their story and that gives significance and value and tells you who they are.

Acknowledging that the refugee's traumatic experience was not something she could personally relate to, Clara deepened her compassion and saw the need to create a space in the classroom where her students felt safe and loved.

In Caroline's incident, she considered safe space a collective effort and wanted to model the type of behaviors that her students could follow in the classroom. A student in her class came

out as transgender and asked everyone to refer to her as her new name. Realizing that this could be a shocking moment for her religious and conservative students, Caroline decided to create a lesson on identity.

> *We had a young man who had been known as Juan for an entire month in our classroom. One day, he came in and he was dressed like a woman. And he said, I'm no longer Juan. Now I am Juanita. I knew that he was making an asylum request based on the fact that he was transgender and that he could have been killed in the country that he was coming from. But I had conservative Muslim students in my class. I had conservative evangelical students in my class from West Africa. And these students were just really shocked by seeing somebody that we know was Juan yesterday and Juanita today. So I told them that we're going to have a class where we're going to learn about identity, sexual identity and national identity. I use this example of Juan and Juanita as a way for everybody to be able to talk about their own identity and how they get their identity. I said to them this is the United States of America. And in the United States, we accept people from all different ways of life, from different religions and different sexual identities. The students responded very well because here's the thing, the students will follow the teacher. And so, as long as the teacher is saying, oh, yesterday Juan and today Juanita, if I show acceptance like that, they will show acceptance as well. It's really important that we learn to conduct ourselves in a way that makes everyone feel safe and accepted, but where we don't tolerate forms of discrimination and where we always show respect for each other.*

Caroline attributed the success of the lesson to her ability to model a way of conduct that she wanted to see in her classroom. In this sense, a safe space in adult ESL requires a collective way of conduct. By modeling the behaviors of respect and acceptance, Caroline was able to create an environment that everyone felt safe and accepted.

A safe space is not limited to a sense of security, mutual respect, and acceptance. In the incident shared by Emma, a safe space is an extension of allyship grounded in the pursuit of social justice. Having lived in Europe as an English teacher for years, Emma *was aware of how differently structures and things could be and how unsettling that feeling was* for immigrants. Volunteering as an ESL teacher, she wanted to support her students and serve as an ally to them.

> *I remember when I moved to Europe, it was voluntary immigration to try to expand my horizons and see other parts of the world. But it was hard as hell. So, I was aware of how differently structures and things could be and I remembered how unsettling that feeling was. I wanted to support my students, try and maybe in a small way to assist, to help improve their lives and their experience here. I wanted to say like, hey, I remember what this was like and it kind of sucks and it's hard and I can help you out, I want to be able to help you out. I found myself trying to support my students and serve as an ally to them. I tried to serve support by asking about them, asking about their lives, asking about what they did. I was not making it about me, not making it about like, this is the U.S., learn to love it, but trying to find out, trying to broker intercultural dialogue about like, what was your life like back in Mexico? Where did you live? What is your family like? I found myself oftentimes wanting, almost trying to go out of my way to show that that's where I was, that I was a safe space, that I was supportive of them being here no matter of their documentation*

status, which I never asked. But I got the sense that they might not be documented because I know at least the sister was trying to look for work and was often unable to apply to certain places. I've continued to maintain relationships with them to certain degrees on Facebook and via text afterwards. One of the girls was trying to get a cleaning business started and I was trying to help identify people that I knew that she could maybe clean house for. I tried to help on some small levels, and I considered this to be a political move. I just really don't agree with the way that immigrants have been and are being treated currently in the U.S. and I just wanted to be an ally and supportive of them. Um, and just kind of say like, fine, I don't agree with this and this is how I'm making my stand.

By orienting the course towards her students, Emma wanted to create a safe space where they should not fear being who they were, regardless of their immigration status.

Dealing with systemic challenges in adult ESL. Dealing with various challenges in adult ESL contexts, whether in teaching English, classroom management, or interaction with students, was the trigger for learning in many of the critical incidents captured in the study. While some challenges were resolved in the classroom, others spoke to some systemic obstacles that teachers have to face in the adult ESL context.

Both Elizabeth and Clara shared incidents dealing with frustration when *learning wasn't happening* and touched upon the need for a better support system in adult ESL. Coming into ESL without much prior experience, the first group of students Elizabeth volunteered with was illiterate in both English and their native language. She experienced intense frustration because her teaching was not working, and her students were failing.

One of the first groups of students I taught have never learned to read. They were not pre-literate. There was a language, written language in their home country, but they were not-literate. I would try to have them do something and then do it again. And I tried different ways. But the learning wasn't happening. For an adult who tries to learn a second language, lot of transfer goes on from the first language to the second language. Some of it is good, some of it is bad. But at least you have that structure of what a language is. But my student didn't have it. It was an intense frustration that what I was doing wasn't working and the students was failing. They were probably 30, 40 years old. They were adults who probably could do well in their own culture in their own time. They may have come from traumatic situations. Although I felt I could teach, learning wasn't happening. I realized that how different it is when you don't have a language and I didn't really know how to teach non-literate. Because it wasn't working, I had to stop and reflect on why it wasn't working. That reflection led me to talk to people that I knew might have some answers and they did. I asked my mentor friends who had a lot more experience than I did, what should I do? She told me to try realia. I had never heard of the term realia which is to use things that they can touch and feel and handle and introduce vocabulary and words through that method. I think I had some success with them before the course ended, but the frustration that I felt with not being able to have learning occur in the classroom when I was still there—it caused me to reflect a lot about what I should do and what I should be. I realized that maybe I could have been better prepared. Later when I started going

> *to TESOL meetings, international TESOL meetings, I realized it was separate sections for preliterate and non-literate students and how you can teach them. But at that point, I didn't know that.*

Elizabeth's incident spoke to the fact that adult ESL as a profession required a certain level of expertise and on-the-job support. While she was able to reach out to her mentor friends for help, her feeling of frustration remained due to her self-evaluation of unpreparedness. While Elizabeth did not comment on whether she received on-the-job training prior to teaching, it was clear that she did not feel adequately prepared to teach illiterate students and there was no ongoing support from the program.

In Clara's incident, her frustration over her student's lack of progress led her to the decision of taking a break from the lower level. Having a background in elementary education gave Clara a sense of comfort to teach lower-level students, which involved many repetition practices. Yet, she was still troubled by her student's lack of progress. However, one student's lack of progress in pronunciation gave her a deep sense of frustration.

> *I think my background in elementary education has equipped me to teach low level learners. I felt really comfortable with level one students. I'm just used to the repetition that is needed for that level. However, I do think it is the most difficult level to teach. I taught those lower levels by myself several years in a row. I had a Chinese student married to an American, and she's been in this country for several years. She is still level one because her English was frozen. It's been very difficult for us to help her break through that barrier. She's very smart. I mean all of our students have graduate degrees. Her reading of English is just really good, but she just cannot form some of the English sounds. I remember showing her how air passes through the teeth when we make the F sound, and she can do it a couple of times. But then when I let her pronounce "fear", she can't do it. That was so frustrating since she has been here for so long and she still can't get over the hurdle of really learning it in the correct way. I would get impatient in the classroom because of the lack of progress. I would feel frustrated inside. I wouldn't show so they didn't know. But I felt really frustrated inside. So, after teaching level one for several years, I decided to take a break and move up to level four. I think you can get burnout as an ESL teacher fast on the low levels. It's a very hard level to teach and you almost have to get a partner in to share the load. Next year I'll return to teach level one again.*

Eventually, she decided to take a break from the lower-level class. As a volunteer, she noted that it was easy to experience burnout on the lower levels fast and *you almost have to get a partner in to share the load.*

To Elizabeth and Clara, the workload of adult ESL and the depth of knowledge to complete the work exceeded their expectations. To work through their feeling of frustration, they had to seek support through a peer or mentoring relationship. Having worked in various adult ESL programs and now working as an adult ESL teacher trainer, Elizabeth believed mentoring was a critical need for novice ESL teachers:

> *And I had some very, very good mentors at the American language program, which was a paid position. Um, we were very, very supportive of each other and you know, we gave hints and suggestions to anybody who asked… There was always somebody there who could make a suggestion to me. It wasn't part of the volunteer agency* (referring to her first teaching experience). *There was no help there.*

Similarly, Eva shared how valuable it was for her, a novice ESL teacher to be paired with an experienced ESL teacher in the classroom:

> *She (co-teacher) actually has a master's degree in English as a second language education and worked and lived in Japan for some years as an ESL teacher. And so in some cases she has a formalism that I can reference to. My training in pedagogy and teaching has come entirely from a science and STEM side, and that's really different than her education. And that's been really useful to me. And I think it's just very, very valuable to have somebody in the room, at least for me as a, you know, volunteer, complete novice ESL teacher to have somebody in the room who has a lot more experience than me. And it's very valuable in that regard.*

Bringing a STEM education perspective into the classroom, Eva believed her co-teacher and their students benefited from this partnership as well:

> *I know my co-teacher, one of the things she really appreciates about teaching with me, or at least she's told me she appreciates is that I can often answer technical questions with lots and lots of detail…So I really think that the teamwork between STEM field people and humanities people should be encouraged.*

While the above incidents spoke to challenge related to support at a program level, Lola shared two incidents related to the disconnect between policy and practice in adult ESL. Attending training and professional development regularly, she often found that the policies were designed to benefit the system, not to be helpful to the students. Even when the policies were

helpful to students, they were rarely discussed in a practical manner. For example, Lola had to provide family literacy support in the classroom even though she *wasn't supposed to have children in the classroom*. While Lola recognized that family literacy was not the goal of the program, she was still surprised by the lack of policy to support such effort considering the impact it could have on a family.

> *This is not a child program. Yet, I always had students couldn't come because they didn't have childcare. So, I would try to make an exception here or there and let the children come into the class. Every time the children would come, they would be so involved in the English class. And a lot of times they spoke better English than their parents. And they wanted to answer the questions because they knew the answers. Sometimes, I would say, well, we've got to let mom and dad answer the question. I started to curate some resources for the children in the classroom like worksheets, coloring books and bilingual books. So, the children could sit at the table and feel like they're doing schoolwork, but it would give mom and dad the opportunity to focus on class while keeping the kids busy. I would also have the kids participate in activities. If we're doing something involving drawing or, you know, a game of some kind, you know, I would always encourage the kids to participate and I'd ask them to be my helper, so I would say, can you help the teacher? And you know, we're going to hand these out or we're going to do this, or can you be a leader for the team? So, the children could feel that they are a part of the class, but they would not distract their parents from learning.*

> *Every time I see the children and the parents learning together, I was just so surprised at what a beautiful moment that was for the children to see their parents learning and to be a part of the education. I was kind of conflicted because I wasn't supposed to have them in class. And yet I knew the impact adult education could have on the family as a whole. The children could see their parents work hard to learn English and come to class and see the community that they're a part of and feel this connectedness with other immigrants. We always say we're doing this for families. But we're not really making the space for them to come to school with their children or we're not constructing our classes and our program to accept children into them. I understand that's not always the goal of each program, but when you hear a lot of talk about it and then nothing policy-wise is directed to construct that. It was sort of like surprising to me. So many students have such a struggle to find childcare. Why couldn't we incorporate it? I understand from funding points of views and policies and things like that, but I was just really surprised that we don't make family literacy a little bit more of an important part of the programs. Seeing my students with their children in the classroom has changed my way of thinking. Instead of discouraging them from coming, well, no kids allowed, I have decided to find a way to make it work for us so that literacy component for the family was positive.*

In another incident, Lola further reflected on the politics of funding and its impact on adult ESL. Working in a program that received the most funding for workplace development, she found the lessons constructed under the discourse of American work culture did not resonate with her students. Instead, she created lessons that integrated and honored students' immigrant experiences.

> *I would go to staff meetings. I would go to professional development. I would listen to all of the policy webinars from our education department. And I just realized like, none of this is, or most of it is not*

helpful to our students. It's helpful to the system. It's helpful to continue getting funding. A lot of our funding is workforce development. They want some of the indoctrination of American work culture, like being on time and you know and the spoken and the unspoken things. But when I was in the classroom, it didn't matter if I did a work readiness lesson that white hegemonic powers would find you comfortable and acceptable. I started to realize that's not what keeps students coming to class and that's not what's impacting their life. When I do very cut and dry lessons that, an administrator might think, oh, well, that's great, you know, you're getting them to use the present perfect perfectly. Those lessons are not what my students connect with and resonate with. I want to make it meaningful, like incorporating their family, incorporating their culture, and valuing that maybe coming to school on time is not what works for them. Rather than take them out of class, cause they can't follow the American on time value, I can still have them be a part of class and value that that's not stopping them from learning.

So when I was teaching a lesson about being on time, I reframed it for them and saying, you know, Americans have these standards, but let's look at other cultures and let's look at what does time mean for them and making sure that they understand that there's an American way and there is an English component to that. But, but that time in and of itself is bigger than whatever the American cultural perspective is and whatever the book is telling us like you must be 15 minutes early and you can't come late, blah, blah, blah. So we talked about what are the expectations in America and what should you do if you're going to be late. But then we looked at other cultures. What does time mean for you in your country and your culture? What is on time look like? What does that mean when you're at a party versus you're at work, right? Or when you're going to school versus meeting a friend for coffee? A lot of students laughed and told me that it's so different. They are like Americans are very crazy about time. Because I made it an opportunity to share, and I didn't say like, well, this is the standard, and we've all got a rise to it. I said, hey, this is one way, but let's talk about these other ways. It was an opportunity for them to talk about their time and their culture and how that connects to family and enjoying themselves. A lot of them said Americans want to leave right away. They come so early to everything and then they want to leave right away. But we want to stay and we are trying to enjoy ourselves in the moment. If we're supposed to leave at six, well, it doesn't matter. It's when the moment ends. It was really great for them to share.

While both incidents spoke to the struggles at the systemic level that Lola faced as a classroom teacher, she was not discouraged to work out a solution. In fact, she found the context of adult ESL as a source of strength that empowered her to prioritize her students' needs over the system. Reflecting on her schooling experience in the K-12 and higher education systems, Lola *had never really seen education in that way where the student and the teacher, or the professor were equals, and that they both were bringing something to the table.* Adult ESL as a learning forum for both teachers and students empowered her to enact change.

But my students are all knowledgeable themselves. You can't really question them or anything like that. So when there is conflict between the policy and my students, I chose to treat my students as humans, to treat them with respect, to value their needs above the needs of the system. And I don't think that was something when I was younger or as a student that I felt empowered to do.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presents 52 critical incidents and described the results of the qualitative data analysis. It presents five themes and several subthemes as related to how adult ESL teachers make meaning of their intercultural learning experience. The results confirmed that intercultural experiences in adult ESL triggered learning in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005). It used an explanatory sequential, mixed-methods design (Creswell, 2014). Data included survey responses to the Learning Practices Audit (LPA; Watkins, 2019) and the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI; Braskamp et al., 2014) and interviews informed by the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954; Ellinger & Watkins, 1998). A total of 212 adult ESL teachers (77 volunteer teachers) participated in the survey, and subsequently 12 of them (6 volunteer teachers) participated in the interview. Quantitative data analysis procedures included exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, *t*-tests, and hierarchical regression. Narrative analysis (F. Erickson, 2012; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002) was applied to the interview data.

The research questions guiding this study were:

R1: What informal and incidental learning activities do volunteers and paid instructors in the adult ESL context engage in?

R2: To what extent do informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in the adult ESL context contribute to their intercultural maturity?

R3: To what degree does organizational support moderate the relationship between informal and incidental learning activities and intercultural maturity?

R4: How do teachers in adult ESL programs make meaning of their intercultural learning experience?

This chapter discusses the findings from quantitative and qualitative analyses. It presents the conclusions of the study with an updated theoretical framework. It proposes several implications of the study and suggestions for future research.

Findings and Discussion

This mixed-methods study discovered three main findings that may add to the literature of informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. This section summarizes and discusses the three main findings with support from the literature.

Finding 1: Informal and incidental learning is the principal means of volunteer learning in adult ESL.

There are several challenges associated with studying the process and outcome of informal and incidental learning in a volunteering context. First, because volunteering is mostly conceptualized as an activity of doing, learning is rarely considered as a motive for volunteering (Duguid et al., 2012). Second, language used in surveys that contains concepts related to formal education are likely to discourage participants from reporting learning experiences that might be considered informal, non-traditional, and not school/curriculum-based (McGivney, 2006). Third, informal learning through volunteering often results in tacit knowledge which is difficult to identify and articulate (Duguid et al., 2012). Thus, McGivney (2006) recommended researchers who are interested in researching informal learning use a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to help volunteers recognize the depth and scope of their learning. This mixed-methods study revealed that informal and incidental learning was the principal way of learning in adult ESL contexts. The analysis of the LPA data suggested that both volunteers and

paid instructors frequently engaged in a variety of learning activities, mostly in the dimensions of learning from teaching and incidental learning. None of the critical incidents from the interviews was in a formal education or training setting. While some participants discussed the need for formal training, other participants reported that engaging in informal learning activities in and outside the classroom helped them challenge and problematize the training they received. Nevertheless, the analysis of the qualitative data confirmed adult ESL teachers experience intercultural learning mostly in an informal and incidental way.

The LPA is a valid measure of learning practices in adult ESL

This study identified the informal and incidental learning activities that adult ESL teachers frequently engaged in. The activities teachers frequently engaged in were "learning from teaching my class", "learning from reflecting on what worked and what did not", "learning from mistakes", "learning from my students in the classroom", "learning from trying new things" and "learning from feedback from my students". Besides identifying these activities, this study also attempted to validate the Learning Practices Audit (LPA; Watkins, 2019) in the adult ESL context by exploring its underlying constructs. The exploratory factor analysis resulted in five factors: (1) learning from and with other ESL educators, (2) learning from teaching, (3) incidental learning, (4) technology assisted learning, and (5) self-directed learning. All the frequently engaged learning activities fell in the dimensions of learning from teaching and incidental learning.

The results of this study confirmed that adult ESL teachers often engage in informal and incidental learning. The six items identified as the most frequently experienced activities can form an informal and incidental learning circle (Marsick & Watkins, 2014). Such learning happens on the job of teaching ("I learn from teaching my class") and is often triggered by an

unexpected incident ("I learn from mistakes"). Teachers then engage in a series of learning activities that might eventually produce a new approach to teaching ("I learn from reflecting on what worked and what did not", "I learn from trying new things"). Such learning is interactive in nature ("I learn from my students in the classroom" and "I learn from feedback from my students"). Literature suggested that adult ESL teachers' on-the-job learning falls into three main categories: learning through teaching (Belzer, 2006b; Kim, 2005; K. Perry & Hart, 2012; K. Perry, 2013; Stewart, 2015), learning from others with ESL experience or expertise (Abbott & Rossiter, 2014; K. Perry & Hart, 2012; K. Perry, 2013), and self-directed education (K. Perry & Hart, 2012; K. Perry, 2013; Ziegler et al., 2009). Additionally, critical reflection (K. Perry, 2013) and the relationship with students (Shan & Butterwick, 2014; J. A. Perry, 2013) play important roles in facilitating informal and incidental learning. The results of this study supported that most learning in the adult ESL context is on the job and job specific.

Because the LPA was newly revised and adapted in this study, it is worth comparing it to other validated instruments measuring informal and incidental learning. Such comparison can further our understanding of how the concept of informal and incidental learning has been operationalized in different contexts. There is little consensus on how informal learning should be measured (Jeong et al., 2018). Depending on researchers' perspectives on the concept, it could be measured in terms of learning styles, learning activities, learning strategies, learning orientations, or learning approaches (Berings et al., 2006). Table 16 displays a list of instruments that have been explored for underlying factors and examined for rigor and quality.

The factors underlying each instrument generally fall into four dimensions: work experience, interpersonal learning, reflection/incidental learning, and deliberate/self-directed learning. Because these instruments were conceptualized and developed based on different

theoretical frameworks, there could be overlapping areas in these four meta-factors. Nevertheless, they represent the common ways of operationalizing the concept of informal and incidental learning in research. It is worth noticing that the adapted LPA is the only instrument that has a distinct factor on technology assisted learning.

Table 16

Comparisons Between the LPA and other Instruments

Authors	**Learning Practices Audit (Adapted)**	**Noe et al., 2013**	**Decius et al., 2019**	**Froehlich et al., 2017**	**Doornbos et al., 2008**
Theoretical Framework for the instrument	Informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990; Watkins & Marsick, 2014)	Informal learning	Dynamic model of informal learning (Tannenbaum et al., 2010)	Social approaches to work-related informal learning	A model of spontaneous and deliberate types of work-related learning (Doornbos, et al., 2004)
Constructs	5	3	4	4	6
Learning from the job	Learning from teaching		Experience /action		
Interpersonal learning	Learning from and with other ESL educators	Learning from others	Feedback	Feedback-seeking from the supervisor	Learning from new or less experienced colleagues
				Feedback seeking from colleague	Learning from outsiders
				Help seeking	Learning from peer colleagues
					Learning together
					Learning from expert colleagues
Reflection /incidental learning	Incidental learning	Learning from oneself	Reflection	Information seeking	Learning individually
Deliberate /self-directed learning	Technology assisted learning	Learning from non-interpersonal sources	Intent to learn		
	Self-directed learning				

Paid instructors and volunteers participated in learning differently

Volunteers constitute an important workforce in adult education programs. The Adult Education Program and Learner Survey conducted in 2007 showed that full-time employees represented the smallest group of employees in adult education contexts (Tamassia et al., 2007).

Volunteers were highly concentrated in community-based adult education programs and accounted for 43% of the staff in the 1200 adult education programs surveyed for the report (Tamassia et al., 2007). For patterns of credentials and certifications, it was less clear for volunteers in adult education because their certification information was less likely to be documented and reported compared to full-time and part-time staff (Tamassia et al., 2007). Because the current study sampled both volunteers and paid instructors, it was able to offer a comparative analysis of their learning experiences in adult ESL.

The results of this study revealed there was a significant difference between paid instructors and volunteers in their participation in informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. Paid instructors demonstrated a higher level of engagement with a significant higher mean LPA score. Despite the statistical difference, both groups displayed a similar pattern in terms of the informal and incidental learning activities in which they engaged. The top scoring items in both groups all fall into the dimensions of Learning from teaching and Incidental learning. Thus, the statistical difference needs to be cautiously interpreted and contextualized in adult ESL and volunteering contexts.

First, the study confirmed that volunteers in adult ESL are likely to learn in a way that is not traditionally conceived as professional development. Ziegler et al. (2009) supported this idea by surveying 124 volunteer instructors in adult literacy to understand their knowledge of adult literacy instruction. The studies found that hours in training (including independent study) were not significantly related to volunteers' knowledge of adult literacy instruction. However, participants reported that in terms of professional development, they spent the highest amount of time in independent study. Such self-directed learning is seldom "accounted for in determining the level of an instructor's professional development" (Ziegler et al., 2009, p. 412). K. Perry

(2013) also found that self-education with an emphasis on purposeful reflection was an important technique for novice adult ESL or literacy volunteers to develop and become qualified instructors. Therefore, informal and incidental learning is an appropriate lens to study the learning experience of volunteers.

Second, the varying degrees of professionalization in the adult ESL workforce could possibly account for the differences between volunteers and paid instructors in their engagement in informal and incidental learning. The Adult Education Program and Learner Survey (Tamassia et al., 2007) found that part-time paid employees were the main group of instructors in adult education programs. Volunteers also assumed a variety of instructional roles, including lead teachers, tutors, and instructional aides (Tamassia et al., 2007). In adult ESL programs, 5% of full-time employees and 12% of part-time employees have obtained the TESOL certifications (Tamassia et al., 2007). If we consider professionalization as the process of certifying, credentialing, and eventually achieving full-time employee status, then the professionalization of the field is low. Crandall (1933) argued that the efforts to professionalize adult ESL should not be taken as a lack of professionalism in the adult ESL workforce. In fact, Ziegler et al. (2009) found that volunteers and paid instructors in adult literacy programs mastered the same amount knowledge about adult literacy instruction. Yet, in a study of the preparedness and professional development needs of educators in adult ESL and literacy, K. Perry and Hart (2012) found that the participants, a majority of whom were volunteers, had a hard time articulating what they wanted or needed, suggesting the inherent complexity of teaching in adult ESL and literacy and "the lack of awareness of what they were missing" (p. 118). Therefore, the low degree of professionalization in adult ESL could possibly explain the differences between paid instructors and volunteers in terms of on-the-job informal learning.

Years of experience affected participation in learning

The study revealed that teachers with more than 3 years of experience scored significantly higher on the LPA than teachers with less than 3 years of experience, suggesting that experienced teachers are more engaged in informal and incidental learning than novice teachers in adult ESL. Interestingly, a preliminary analysis with quantitative data collected from Georgia (101 responses) yielded an opposite result (Li, 2020). In the survey, *I have been teaching adult ESL for* ____ was used to solicit information on participant's years of experience in teaching adult ESL. Interview data suggested that some teachers have had prior teaching experience in other contexts, e.g., public school, English as a foreign language, and higher education. In addition, each ESL program can vary in frequency of class and length of semester. Thus, it might be difficult to standardize ESL teachers' experience with this survey item.

Previous studies were also in disagreement about whether experienced teachers engage in more informal learning activities (Kyndt et al., 2016). In a systematic review of 74 studies on teachers' informal learning in schools, Kyndt et al., (2016) concluded that novice teachers and experienced teachers might not differ in the informal learning activities they engage in, but rather may differ primarily in their learning attitudes, learning outcomes, and to what degree they are subjected to the culture of the organization/school. Indeed, the current study found teachers with less than 3 years of experience scored significantly higher on the Intrapersonal scale, the Identity subscale, and the Affect subscale of the GPI. Several studies on informal learning of new teachers supported this finding that new teachers' informal learning is concentrated in the relational and emotional dimensions and often facilitates identity formation (McNally, 2006; McNally et al., 2009).

In summary, the study found volunteers in adult ESL frequently engaged in informal and incidental learning. While paid instructors were found to engage in more learning activities than volunteers, learning from teaching was recognized by both groups as the most important source of learning in adult ESL. In addition, experienced and novice ESL teachers differed not necessarily in the learning activities they engaged in, but in the learning outcomes.

Finding 2: Adult ESL teachers' intercultural experience triggers learning in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity.

The primary purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between adult ESL teachers' participation in informal and incidental learning and their intercultural maturity. The results of quantitative analyses revealed that Learning from teaching was positively and significantly associated with intercultural maturity, as measured by the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI; $p < .05$). Specifically, Learning from teaching ($p < .05$) and Incidental learning ($p < .05$) were positively and significantly associated with the cognitive domain and the Cognitive Knowing subscale of the GPI.

Because this study used a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, the quantitative data analysis informed the participants selection for the qualitative phase (Creswell et al., 2003). Based on the combination of mean LPA and GPI, the study sampled participants from both lower group and higher group. The narrative analysis showed that participants, regardless of their scores on the GPI, experienced intercultural learning in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity. This also corresponds with the fact that the participants in the current study scored significantly higher than the established national mean on every subscale of the GPI. Their learning was often triggered by a surprising or unexpected event

growing out of their interaction with students in the classroom and prompted them to engage in reflections on their teaching practice, cultural assumptions, or personal experiences.

The qualitative findings supported the quantitative data in terms of cognitive learning. Cognitively, teaching in adult ESL prompted a process of evaluating their own assumptions related to knowledge and education for immigrants. Participants recognized that their idea of legitimate knowledge was challenged. The shift from viewing knowledge as certain to the increasing acceptance of multiple perspectives signaled shift from initial to intermediate level in the cognitive dimension. As they engaged in intercultural interaction with their learners, they also developed a more nuanced understanding of cultural and linguistic differences and explored strategies to facilitate intercultural interaction in a culturally diverse classroom, indicating progress in the intermediate level and towards the mature level in the cognitive dimension.

The qualitative findings revealed that participants did experience intercultural learning in the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions. In the intrapersonal dimension, teaching in adult ESL triggered learning opportunities to reflect on how their values were shaped by their own experiences and backgrounds. This also involved the recognition of the class or race privileges they enjoyed in everyday life. This recognition further extended to reflection on the effect of power and privilege in adult ESL. Participants' self-exploration suggest that they were making progress in the intermediate level and moving towards the mature level in the intrapersonal dimension.

In the interpersonal domain, participants indicated that trust, openness to learning, and empathy could facilitate intercultural interactions, which were characteristics in the intermediate and mature levels in the interpersonal dimension. They also expressed the desire to act as a safe

confidant to their learners and reflected on the systemic challenges in adult ESL. Specifically, the desire to act as an ally to immigrants represented the mature level in the interpersonal dimension.

The GPI can, to an extent, measure the intercultural maturity of adult ESL teachers

The GPI has been used in a number of studies to examine individual's intercultural maturity development in a variety of settings. However, it has never been used in the adult ESL and volunteering context. Adult ESL teachers in the current study scored significantly higher than the national mean on all GPI subscales, indicating that they possessed certain knowledge and skills to engage in meaningful intercultural interactions. In addition, the study found that the only significant difference in mean GPI was between teachers in university Intensive English Programs (IEP) and teachers in other informal, community-based ESL programs. Teachers in IEP scored significantly lower on the GPI. This is consistent with previous studies showing that "a need for cultural awareness and sensitivity" is particularly strong in adult ESL, and often stronger than studies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or academic ESL contexts (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008).

The regression analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between adult ESL teachers' participation in informal and incidental learning and their level of intercultural maturity. The strongest effect was in the Cognitive Knowing subscale of the GPI. The Cognitive Knowing subscale measures "the degree of complexity of one's view of the importance of cultural context in judging what is important to know and value" (Braskamp et al., 2014, p. 5). No significant relationship was found in other GPI domains and subscales. However, there was clearly divergence of quantitative and qualitative findings. The critical incidents showed that intercultural experiences in adult ESL triggered informal and incidental learning in the interpersonal and intrapersonal domains. It is not uncommon to have divergent results when

measuring intercultural maturity using both quantitative and qualitative data. For example, Luchesi (2014) examined college sophomores' study abroad experiences and found strong divergence between GPI scores and interview data in the cognitive domain. Even though the participants demonstrated the least change in the Cognitive Knowing subscale, they all explicitly expressed how study abroad experiences enriched their frame of meaning-making (Luchesi, 2014). Since the study used a pre-and post-experience test design to measure the development in intercultural maturity, Luchesi (2014) argued that the timing between the post-experience survey (immediately after return) and the interview (4 months after return) could account for the divergence. For the current study, one explanation for the discrepancy could be that the GPI measures intercultural maturity more like a trait than a state. Except for one teaching context (IEP), the GPI mean score was not related to any personal characteristic of adult ESL teachers or any organizational factor, suggesting that intercultural maturity is a more stable and enduring capacity.

Even though the study did not find a significant difference in GPI mean score based on adult ESL teacher's role, there were some interesting findings in the subscales. Specifically, volunteers scored significantly higher than paid instructors on the Intrapersonal scale ($p < .05$) and the Social Responsibility subscale ($p < .05$). The higher score on the Social Responsibility subscale suggests that volunteering in adult ESL is generally an intrinsically motivated activity. It means that volunteers perceive their work of helping others as an internal reward (Meier & Stutzer, 2008). Altruism has been consistently identified as the most important motivation for volunteering. The 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (CSGVP) found that most Canadians volunteered because they believed in the cause of the organizations and wanted to apply their skills in a beneficial way (Stowe, 2013). K. Smith et al's (2010)

comparative analysis of student volunteering in five countries also found that regardless of their status as regular, occasional, or non-volunteers, students ranked "important to help others" as the most important motivation behind volunteering. Because volunteering in adult ESL is an intrinsically motivated activity, there is a strong self-agency related to it. This might explain the higher score for volunteers on the Intrapersonal scale. The Intrapersonal scale in the GPI reflects "one's self-direction and purpose in one's life, becoming more self aware of one's strengths, values, and personal characteristics and sense of self, and viewing one's development in terms of one's self-identity" (Baraskamp et al., 2014, p. 5). People chose to volunteer in adult ESL, not only because they believed in the cause of helping adult English learners, but also because they were confident that they could contribute to this cause. The volunteering experience continually proposes personal questions like "what I want to do, what I really care about and who I want to be" (Narushima, 2005, p. 578). These could trigger deep reflection on personal identity and foster a sense of commitment to social justice. Like in J. A. Perry's (2013) study of labourer-teachers at Frontier College in Canada, immersion in the farmer literacy program gave volunteers a learning opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of their identity and some of them extended the learning to a stronger sense of social responsibility and took action in the local community.

With CIT, the study revealed new insight into intercultural learning in adult ESL

The qualitative findings of the study were mostly consistent with previous studies on teachers' intercultural learning experience in adult ESL. In the cognitive domain, the study confirmed that experience in a multicultural and multilingual environment is linked to positive cognitive outcomes such as expanded knowledge about multicultural issues and social justice, a greater appreciation for diversity and multiculturalism, and a higher awareness of prejudice and

stereotypes (DeCapua et al., 2018; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; J. A. Perry, 2013; McBrien, 2008; Primavera, 1999; Shan & Butterwick, 2014). Such new knowledge often interacted with individual's pre-existent values and dispositions and provoked reflection and self-examination (Duguid et al., 2013). It was evident that almost every critical incident shared by participants involved some degree of self-reflection. Specifically, in the intrapersonal domain, the participants in this study reported engaging in reflection on one's identity, privilege, and role in the society (Einfied & Collins, 2008; Primavera, 1999; J. A. Perry, 2013). Research has also shown that individuals developed empathy, trust, respect, and commitment to social change as a result of involvement in social issues and interactions with diverse individuals (Einfied & Collins, 2008; J. A. Perry, 2013; Shan & Butterwick, 2014).

In previous studies, findings related to intercultural learning in the cognitive domain have focused on acquiring culturally relevant knowledge, increasing appreciation for cultural diversity, and problematizing unexamined assumptions. For example, Primavera's study (1999) on college students' volunteering experience in a family literacy program found that volunteers developed a greater understanding of cultural diversity and social issues faced by community members living in poverty. Volunteers reported that their assumptions about low-income families were challenged as they engaged in volunteer work (Primavera, 1999). While these results were consistent with the current study, this study identified a unique theme from the critical incidents that has not been discussed extensively in previous literature. In particular, the current study found that intercultural experience could potentially trigger an epistemological shift in terms of knowledge construction for adult ESL teachers. The growth in the cognitive dimension of intercultural maturity is the move toward viewing knowledge "as constructed and as grounded in context" (King & Baxter Magolad, 2005, p. 576). The growth also involves the

increasing acknowledgement of "the uncertainty of making a knowledge claim" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p.575). The critical incidents in the theme *the epistemology of adult ESL* signaled a shift from viewing knowledge as static (e.g., based on class and cultural assumptions or based on formal schooling experience) to viewing knowledge as contextualized and co-constructed. This shift resulted in an openness to multiple perspectives and greater understanding for cultural differences in the classroom. And the takeaway for the participants was more than expanded knowledge but an increased capacity to contextualize and co-construct knowledge in an open and respectful manner.

The use of the Critical Incident Technique aided the discovery of this theme. Unlike other qualitative research approaches, a study informed by the CIT "always begins with the example, and then asks the respondent to unpack the meaning of the example, to say what it is about the incident that made it meaningful to them" (Watkins et al., 2018, p. 27). And as is evident from the quantitative findings, *learning from teaching* was ranked as the most frequently engaged in learning activities for adult ESL teachers. Many critical incidents captured in this study were triggered by a surprising or unplanned event in the classroom and often resulted in a reconsideration of pedagogy as a response. The nature of educational activities in adult ESL created the context for teachers to engage in learning, relearning, and unlearning as related to their assumptions of education and knowledge. Thus, CIT has promising potential in researching experiences in adult ESL as it goes beyond requesting opinions on a phenomenon and produces actionable knowledge related to the specific activity (Watkins et al., 2018).

In summary, the study found a positive relationship between informal and incidental learning engaged by teachers in adult ESL and their level of intercultural maturity. It revealed

that intercultural experience in adult ESL triggered learning in cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity.

Finding 3: Organizational support promotes informal and incidental learning in adult ESL.

Because organizational support did not have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between participation in informal and incidental learning activities by teachers in adult ESL and their degree of intercultural maturity, an additional analysis was performed to further explore the relationship between organizational support and informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. The results revealed there was a significant relationship between organizational support and adult ESL teachers' engagement in informal and incidental learning. Moreover, the analysis indicated that programs providing opportunities to interact with other ESL professionals ($p < .05$) and programs providing ongoing support during teaching ($p < .05$) were strong predictors of teachers' participation in informal and incidental learning in adult ESL.

The importance of organizational support for learning

The results confirmed that organizational support for learning can play a critical role in facilitating informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. The result was consistent with Lohman's (2006, 2000) studies on personal and organizational factors that influence teachers' engagement in informal learning activities. Lohman's studies found that teachers' lack of proximity to learning resources like colleagues, learning technologies, and libraries inhibited their ability to engage in informal learning activities. While no study has quantitatively explored the relationship between organizational support and volunteer informal learning in adult ESL, previous research has suggested that beyond training, ESL programs should provide a diverse range of resources and opportunities for professional development. For example, Belzer (2006a)

found training in adult literacy could not always be effectively transferred to volunteer tutor's instruction due to the complexity of adult literacy and the diversity of literacy learners. She recommended a "less may be more" approach where staff could act like subject experts to scaffold and coach novice volunteer tutors. K. Perry and Hart (2012) also recommended that community-based adult education programs consider three approaches to support volunteer professional development: ongoing training, mentoring and other connections with ESL professionals, and curating resources to encourage and support self-education.

The availability of organizational support for learning

While the study revealed the positive relationship between organizational support and informal and incidental learning in adult ESL, a closer look at the data showed the disparity that existed among the availability of organizational support. Opportunities to reflect appeared to be least offered in adult ESL. This finding was consistent with voluntary organizations in general. Duguid et al. (2013) observed that voluntary organizations rarely opened any space for individual or collective reflection on volunteers' learning experiences. Since purposeful reflection could be considered as a positive trait for effective teaching, K. Perry (2013) argued that adult ESL programs should inform their volunteers about the importance of being reflective practitioners and introduce them to resources on action research to support their learning.

An interesting finding was that while the program providing opportunities to interact with ESL professionals was identified as a strong predictor for informal and incidental learning, the actual learning activities related to interaction with ESL professionals did not appear to be one of the learning activities that adult ESL teachers frequently engaged in. It was at a higher ranking (8) for volunteers, but the average score (3.51) was significantly lower than learning from teaching (4.51). A possible reason could be that this type of professional connection existed

disproportionately across adult ESL. The critical incidents from qualitative data revealed that teachers experienced varying degrees of support, e.g., in the form of mentoring, depending on the programs. Another possible reason could be that teachers are unlikely to engage in activities that might be considered as out of the scope of their responsibilities. A study on rural ESL teachers' professional development found that lack of paid opportunities to engage in informal learning activities like mentoring or knowledge sharing contributed to teachers' unwillingness to build a local community of practice (Abbott & Rossiter, 2011). Thus, if ESL programs create opportunities for teachers to meet outside of their normal working hours, they may get less participation than if those opportunities exist during normal working hours and are thus more accessible and seen as within the scope of one's work.

In summary, this study confirmed that organizational support can promote teachers' informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. Consistent with previous studies, adult ESL programs rarely offered opportunities for individual or collective reflection on volunteering experiences.

Conclusions

The study drew the following conclusions based on the findings. Figure 7 is an updated theoretical framework that visualizes the conclusions.

The study demonstrated that volunteering in adult ESL is a powerful source of informal and incidental learning. The learning activities they frequently engage in can form an informal and incidental learning circle (Marsick & Watkins, 2014). In the informal and incidental learning model proposed and revised by Watkins and Marsick (1999, 2014), learning is usually unplanned and "typically triggered by a need, gap, challenge, or opportunity that may grow through

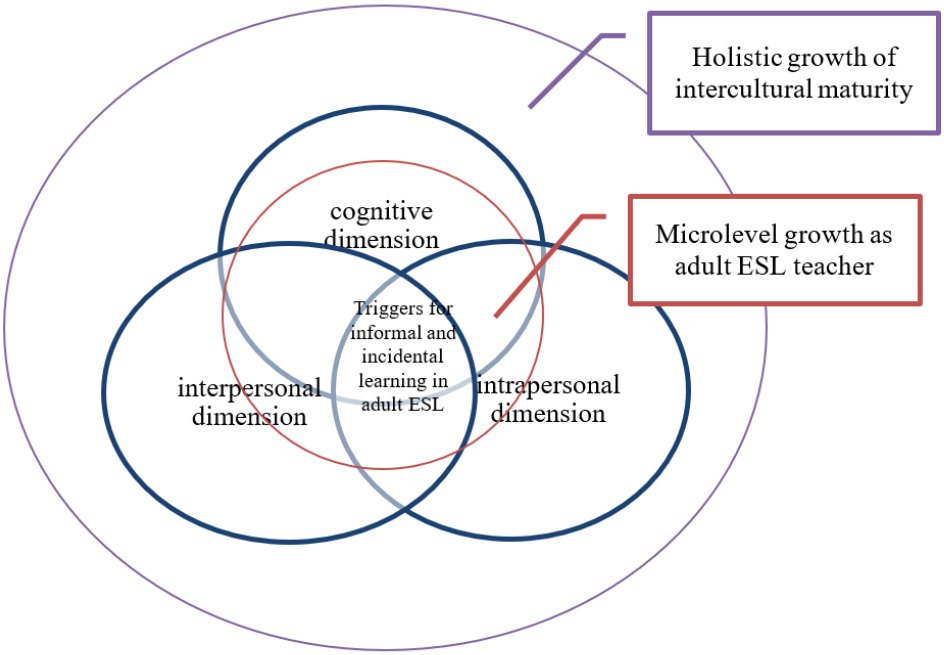

Figure 7. Updated conceptual framework

interaction with others" (Watkins et al., 2018, p, 33). The findings of the study confirmed that adult ESL contexts present many learning triggers, usually in the form of a surprising or unexpected event growing out of interactions with adult learners ("I learn from teaching my class" and "I learn from mistakes"). The trigger is often social and interactive in nature ("I learn from my students in the classroom" and "I learn from feedback from my students"). As volunteers respond to the event, the triggers present an opportunity for them to examine the situation, reflect on their assumptions, and potentially transform their views (Watkins et al., 2018). Every critical incident captured in the interview denoted a certain degree of self-reflection ("I learn from reflecting on what worked and what did not" and "I learn from trying new things"). The final step of the informal and incidental learning cycle is drawing lessons and integrating this new understanding into the frame of meaning-making (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Research in volunteer learning suggests that volunteers are not only acquiring knowledge

and skills relevant to their work but are often capable of transferring those lessons to other spheres of their lives (Duguid et al., 2013). Participants exhibited that at a micro-level—they responded to the unexpected event, grew their expertise as a teacher, and became better at teaching in a multicultural classroom. On a holistic level, they developed their intercultural maturity. Adult ESL teachers in the current study scored significantly higher than the national mean on all GPI subscales. This study provided confirming evidence that intercultural learning in adult ESL is a multidimensional process that involves meaning making in the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). In addition, the critical incidents documented adult ESL teachers' progress from initial to intermediate and toward mature level of intercultural maturity, indicating that adult ESL teachers displayed a series of meaning-making paradigms and the context of adult ESL provided intercultural learning opportunities for individuals at different developmental stages.

Because this study sampled both volunteers and paid instructors, it provided a comparative analysis of their informal and incidental learning experiences and intercultural maturity. Paid instructors demonstrated higher levels of engagement in informal and incidental learning activities than volunteers. Learning from teaching was the most important source of informal and incidental learning for both groups. While there was no significant difference in the mean GPI score between paid instructors and volunteers, volunteers scored significantly higher on the Intrapersonal and Social Responsibility subscales of the GPI. The findings showed that volunteers and paid instructors both learn predominately from their teaching but might differ in their intercultural learning outcomes.

In addition, this study found that organizational support promoted informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. Participants appreciated opportunities like peer teaching and mentoring,

but the support was not always available. This confirmed that the learning environment is shaped by an organization's structure, process. and practices (Marsick & Watkins, 2014)

Implications for Practice

The findings from this study can inform adult educators, volunteer managers, and adult ESL program administrators with knowledge to support teacher learning and development of intercultural maturity in adult ESL and volunteering contexts.

First, the findings of the study highlight that informal and incidental learning is prevalent among volunteers in adult ESL. However, the learning of volunteers is rarely recognized by voluntary programs or organizations (Duguid et al., 2013). One recommendation for adult ESL and other voluntary programs is to promote and recognize volunteering as a learning experience. This acknowledgement can create "a recognized and legitimated space and time" for volunteers to interact, reflect, and plan the next actions (Duguid et al., 2013). It can also help challenge the idea of volunteering being solely the act of providing services and can create space for "true solidarity" between volunteers, voluntary programs, and community members. True solidarity is "a matter of 'power with' between those already more and those less empowered". (Moser, 2013, p. 287). Unlike viewing volunteering as service delivery, it is a multidimensional process of "building relationships among or within stake-holder groups and creating a learning environment that continually peels away the layers of the onion called 'root causes'" (Morton, 1995, p.22). Recognizing volunteering as a learning experience can contribute to the creation of this learning environment and facilitate collaboration between different stakeholders.

Second, a related recommendation is for adult ESL and voluntary programs to encourage reflective practice in volunteering. The findings of the study suggest that reflection is a critical piece in volunteers' informal learning experiences in adult ESL. Reflection is critical in a

teaching context because teachers need to adequately respond to problems that arise in the classroom and make appropriate adjustments to ensure instructional delivery (Cirocki & Farrell, 2017). From an intercultural learning perspective, reflection, and especially guided reflection can foster personal development in areas related to intercultural competence (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Lough, 2010). For a community-based organization, drawing lessons from volunteers' informal learning and acting upon them can possibly create more long-lasting change (Duguid, et al., 2013). Thus, adult ESL and volunteering programs should encourage volunteers to regularly reflect on their experiences and create systematic opportunities for them to reflect and share with others. Group reflective activities can act as a practice of collective consciousness raising and identifying the individual and collective impact of engaging in a community of practice (McGivney, 2006). Lough (2010) recommended that voluntary organizations carefully consider the intercultural competence of assigned staff in facilitating such group dialogue. Encouraging reflective practice in adult ESL and volunteering can not only promote personal growth but also better performance and overall organizational effectiveness (Duguid et al., 2013).

Third, volunteering in adult ESL, now a virtual activity, calls for the reimagination of organizational support. The pandemic has greatly changed how volunteers perform their jobs and how they can be engaged and supported (Sandage, 2020). For example, Georgia Piedmont Technical College had to reduce its part-time adult ESL instructors from 25 to 3 due to low student enrollment when it initially transitioned to online instruction (Baxter, 2020). The remaining instructors demonstrated a high level of flexibility, creativity, and technical skills, which were the critical skills for the transition from in person to online instruction (Baxter, 2020). The implication here is to consider the best practice to support volunteers in the digital space during this time of uncertainty. The results of the study showed that organizational support

can promote volunteer learning in adult ESL. However, organizational support needs to be restructured to match the complexity of the current learning environment (Watkins & Marsick, 2020). Communication is the key to ensure the engagement of virtual volunteering (Lachance, 2020). Voluntary programs can schedule weekly or bi-weekly check-in meetings with volunteers to determine their level of engagement, comfort with adapting to virtual volunteering, and personal wellbeing. These meetings can also serve the purpose of needs assessment to understand volunteers' experiences and provide support accordingly. Besides providing necessary training on instructional technology, voluntary programs should consider creating and updating a list of instructional resources that could be easily adapted by volunteers. In addition, volunteers with an expertise in online instruction could assume more responsibilities like acting as a resource person for other volunteers or engaging in the long-term planning of the program. And finally, volunteering programs can actively frame volunteering in this time of uncertainty as a learning experience, thus encouraging more flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity, and reflective practice.

Limitations and Future Directions of Research

This study had the following limitations and several future research directions were proposed accordingly. First, due to the timeline of data collection, the data set of this study did not reflect the informal and incidental learning experiences of adult ESL teachers in a virtual educational space during the pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly disrupted the instructional mode of adult ESL, which was mostly delivered in-person before the pandemic. The disruption in our work and life caused by the pandemic demands us to "learn our way out" of novel circumstances, which is mostly happening in an informal and incidental way (Watkins & Marsick, 2000). For example, Georgia Piedmont Technical College suspended in person

instruction on March 13th, 2020 and began transitioning to a fully online learning program (Baxter, 2020). By June, students from all levels were participating in the online learning program which consisted of both synchronous instruction and asynchronous instruction (Baxter, 2020). The pandemic not only posed challenges for online instruction in adult ESL but also put stress on the physical and emotional well-being of adult ESL teachers and learners. Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) examined the challenges experienced by ESL teachers during the pandemic in a university intensive English program in Utah and found that ESL teachers were concerned with student well-being, family members' well-being, personal social and mental health, transition to online instruction, and employment and finances. In a recent review of quantitative research in informal learning, Watkins et al. (Forthcoming) found that the organizational contexts and demands often "help shape and extend the range of activities that might be labeled informal" (p. 16). Future research should be conducted to examine the informal and incidental learning experiences of adult ESL volunteers as teaching pivots to a virtual activity.

In addition, this study did not reflect the intercultural learning experience in a digital space due to the timeline of data collection. Only one critical incident captured such experience. The pandemic has created a profound sense of connectedness online. As Watkins and Marsick (2020) noted, "we have to acknowledge there is an interconnectedness now to everything – we're connected globally and transparently in ways never before". The current situation of adult ESL creates an opportunity for researchers to explore volunteers' intercultural learning experiences in a digital space.

Second, this study did not fully consider the effects of adult ESL volunteering on the student population. Entigar (2017) argued that adult education programs in the United States often "ideologically and programmatically homogenize" immigrant learners, thus failing to

adequately respond to their unique epistemology and ontology. For example, J. Erickson (2012) studied the volunteers in a refugee resettlement program and found that the interaction between volunteers and refugees served to solidify racial and social hierarchies and perpetuated hegemony of adult learners. By studying the experiences of volunteers, this study did not fully acknowledge the asymmetrical power relationship in the adult ESL classroom and ran the risk of further homogenizing adult ESL learners. This missing link is especially relevant for volunteering because there could be various motivations and agendas behind volunteering in adult ESL. During data collection, one survey participant emailed the researcher and expressed her concern over the study's use of participants from church-based ESL programs. She stated that volunteers in church-based ESL programs were merely using teaching as a means to convert immigrant adults to Christianity, which represented the initial level of intercultural maturity. This email represented one of the key moral dilemmas in English language teaching, the intersection between Christian beliefs and teaching (Varghese & Johnston, 2007). Future research should contextualize volunteers' intercultural learning experiences more carefully in a way that acknowledges the power they hold in their seemingly value-free work with the use of methodologies like ethnography, critical discourse analysis, and participatory action research. In addition, future research could apply other theoretical framework as an alternative to the model of intercultural maturity. Intercultural maturity was conceptualized as collegiate outcomes around diversity issues (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). It focuses on identifying the educational practices or intercultural experiences that can effectively promote the development of intercultural maturity of college students (in the case of current study, adult ESL teachers). Thus, teaching in adult ESL becomes an experience for the teachers to consume, which could further alienate the adult ESL learners.

Third, this study used self-reported instruments to measure volunteers' intercultural maturity. In a study of the characteristics of good adult ESL teachers and good pedagogical practices from the perspectives of both teachers and students, Shono (2004) found there were several mismatches in terms of expectations and perceptions and teachers were not always aware of the students' perspectives. This suggested that for a comprehensive understanding of an interactive activity like teaching, research needs to explore the experiences from both students' and teachers' perspectives. Deardorff (2009) argued that measurement for intercultural competence should include a "multiple-perspective approach" since certain aspects of intercultural competence can only be evaluated by the other who is also involved in this interaction. Examining the outcomes of intercultural experience by only studying it from the volunteer's perspective could produce biased and usually overly optimistic results (Lough, 2010). However, this type of multidimensional and multiperspective measurement has rarely been implemented (Van de Vijver & Leung, 2009). Future research should consider a more comprehensive approach to measure teacher's intercultural maturity in adult ESL. In addition, future research could apply other quantitative instruments as an alternative to the GPI. This study marked the first step of applying GPI in the adult ESL context. Even though the GPI was designed based on the model of intercultural maturity, there is no direct correlation between GPI scores and an individual's level of intercultural maturity. The developers of the GPI did not provide benchmarks for different levels, making it difficult for researchers to interpret the scores and correspond the scores with the initial, intermediate, and mature levels of intercultural maturity. During data collection, multiple survey participants emailed the researcher and expressed that they did not feel comfortable with certain items on the GPI or filling out a Likert

scale measurement as a proxy to intercultural competence. This indicated that several items from the GPI might be inappropriate for adult ESL teachers.

In summary, because this study used self-report instruments and only studied the experiences of adult ESL teachers, it runs the risk of further alienating the adult ESL population and producing biased or overly optimistic results. Future research should consider using multidimensional and multiperspective instruments to explore adult ESL and the volunteering experience in the digital space with careful examination of the power dynamics in the classroom.

Significance of the Study

In 2019, 63 million volunteers in the United States contributed $27.2 per hour (estimated) of value through their unpaid work to the society (Independent Sector, 2020). Adult ESL as a field has greatly benefited from the work of volunteers. This study gave voice to adult ESL teachers and contributed to the recognition of volunteer work in adult ESL. By sampling both paid instructors and volunteers in adult ESL, the study was able to provide a comparative analysis of their learning experience and learning outcomes. Specifically, it acknowledged that adult ESL teachers are actively engaged in informal and incidental learning. This study confirmed that teaching in adult ESL presents plenty of triggers for learning. And through such on the job learning, they grow as a teacher and develop intercultural maturity. The results of the current study suggest that experience in an intercultural context like adult ESL could facilitate growth in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity. In addition, the study found that organizational support is positively linked to informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. Thus, the findings of the study offer practical implications for adult ESL and volunteering programs.

Methodologically, this study demonstrated the use of a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design to explore the informal and incidental learning experiences by teachers in adult ESL. It integrated both quantitative and qualitative approaches from formulating research purpose and questions to the interpretation of findings (Ivankova et al., 2006). Combining statistical hypothesis testing with critical incidental interviews, they study provided stronger evidence for the positive relationship between informal and incidental learning activities experienced by adult ESL teachers and their level of intercultural maturity. The study also introduced several instruments that have been infrequently used in adult ESL education and volunteering contexts. Because of the difficulty of eliciting informal learning experiences, researchers interested in studying informal learning need to overcome the methodological challenges and develop creative approaches to study this phenomenon (Duguid et al., 2013). This study applied and validated the newly revised Learning Practices Audit in the adult ESL context. Combined with the use of the Critical Incident Technique, the study developed a more nuanced understanding of adult ESL teachers' learning experiences. In addition, this study expanded the use of the Global Perspective Inventory by applying it for the first time in the adult ESL context.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Mangloa, 2005). This chapter presents and discusses the three major findings. First, informal and incidental learning is the principal means for volunteer learning in adult ESL. The study demonstrated that the Learning Practices Audit is a valid instrument in the adult ESL context. Second, this study confirmed that intercultural experiences in adult ESL triggered informal and incidental learning in the cognitive,

interpersonal, and intrapersonal dimensions of intercultural maturity. This study marked the first step of using the Global Perspective Inventory in the adult ESL context. And with the use of the Critical Incident Technique, the study discovered a theme related to cognitive learning in adult ESL that has not been extensively discussed before. Third, organizational support promoted teachers' informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. The study suggested that organizational support could play a critical role in facilitating learning. However, organizational support was not always available, and the least offered support was the opportunity to reflect on practice.

The study drew conclusions based on these findings and provided an updated theoretical framework. This chapter also discusses practical implications for adult ESL education and volunteer management. Lastly, suggestions for future research are offered based on a discussion of the study's limitations.

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Appendix A

Survey

I would appreciate your assistance with my PhD dissertation on informal and incidental learning in adult ESL. This research will help us understand how and what people learn through their work in adult ESL. The results of this study can also inform organizations and practitioners to purposefully design activities that can enhance informal learning and critical reflection.

All you need to do is complete this short questionnaire, which should take no more than 15 minutes. If you do not wish to participate, simply discard the questionnaire. This research involves the transmission of data over the Internet. Every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure the effective use of available technology; however, confidentiality during online communication cannot be guaranteed. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and will not have any bearing on your relationship with the organization for whom you currently teach or previously taught.

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact me by email or telephone.

Beixi Li, B.A., M.Ed.
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You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Karen E. Watkins, Professor, Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy, University of Georgia at kwatkins@uga.edu. If you have additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia at IRB@uga.edu or at 706-542-3199.

Request of your consent to participate:

- o I consent to participate.
- o I do not consent to participate.

Demographic and organizational information

1. I have been teaching adult ESL for ___.
   - o less than 3 months
   - o less than 6 months
   - o less than 1 year
   - o 1-3 years
   - o 3 years and above

2. My race and ethnicity can be best described as _____.
   - o White
   - o Black or African American
   - o Native American
   - o Asian
   - o Hispanic or Latino
   - o Mixed or multiracial
   - o Prefer not to specify

3. My program makes learning resources available to me to support my teaching.
   - o To no extent
   - o To a little extent
   - o To some extent
   - o To a fair extent
   - o To a large extent

4. My program provides me with opportunities to interact with other volunteers, staff and individuals with experiences and expertise in adult ESL.
   - o To no extent
   - o To a little extent
   - o To some extent
   - o To a fair extent
   - o To a large extent

5. My program provides opportunities to reflect on my teaching experience.
   - o To no extent
   - o To a little extent
   - o To some extent
   - o To a fair extent
   - o To a large extent

6. My program provides ongoing support when I am teaching.
   - o To no extent
   - o To a little extent
   - o To some extent
   - o To a fair extent
   - o To a large extent

7. My program is hosted in _____.
   - A church or other religious organization
   - An immigrant or refugee resettlement agency
   - A community or minority serving organization
   - A K-12 school or community/tech college
   - A literacy-based organization
   - Other, please specify _____

8. My role as an adult ESL teacher can be best described as _____.
   - a volunteer
   - a paid instructor

The Learning Practices Audit (2019)

Karen E. Watkins
Revised with Beixi Li and Carrie Starnes Harmon
This section asks you to rate each of the following learning activities in terms of the extent to which you engaged in them as an ESL teacher.

In my teaching in this adult ESL program,

Please respond to the following statement	to no extent	to a little extent	to a fair extent	to a large extent	to a great extent
1. I learn from talking to other volunteers					
2. I learn from feedback from my supervisor/volunteer coordinator					
3. I learn from feedback from my students					
4. I learn from social media					
5. I learn from ESL textbooks					
6. I learn from searching the internet					
7. I learn from online communities in adult ESL like blogs, forums, etc					
8. I learn from videos					
9. I learn from doing challenging tasks					
10. I learn from trying new things					
11. I learn from reflecting on what worked and what did not					
12. I learn from mistakes					
13. I learn from surprises					
14. I learn from books					
15. I learn from networking with other ESL instructors					
16. I learn from working in teams					
17. I learn from helping other ESL instructors					
18. I learn from new policies and laws					
19. I learn from observing other ESL instructors					
20. I learn from studying on my own					
21. I learn from new tasks or jobs					
22. I learn from mentors or coaches					
23. I learn from individuals with ESL experiences					
24. I learn from my students in the classroom					

25. I learn from planning a lesson					
26. I learn from teaching my class					
27. I learn from interacting with my students outside of the classroom					

The Global Perspective Inventory

Larry A. Braskamp, David C. Braskamp, and Mark E. Engberg (2014)
This section asks you to respond to the following statement in terms of your intercultural experiences.

Please respond to the following statement	Strongly agree	agree	Neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
28. When I notice cultural differences, my culture tends to have the better approach.					
29. I have a definite purpose in my life.					
30. I can explain my own personal values to people who are different from me.					
31. Most of my friends are from my own ethnic background.					
32. I think of my life in terms of giving back to society.					
33. Some people have culture and others do not.					
34. In different settings what is right and wrong is simple to determine.					
35. I am informed of current issues that impact international relations.					
36. I know who I am as a person.					
37. I am willing to defend my views when they differ from others.					
38. I understand the reasons and causes of conflict among nations of different cultures.					
39. I work for the rights of others.					
40. I take into account different perspectives before drawing conclusions about the world around me.					
41. I understand how various cultures of this world interact socially.					
42. I put my beliefs into action by standing up for my principles.					
43. I consider different cultural perspectives when evaluating global problems.					
44. I rely primarily on authorities to determine what is true in the world.					

45. I know how to analyze the basic characteristics of a culture.					
46. I am sensitive to those who are discriminated against.					
47. I do not feel threatened emotionally when presented with multiple perspectives.					
48. I frequently interact with people from a race/ethnic group different from my own.					
49. I am accepting of people with different religious and spiritual traditions.					
50. I put the needs of others above my own personal wants.					
51. I can discuss cultural differences from an informed perspective.					
52. I am developing a meaningful philosophy of life.					
53. I intentionally involve people from many cultural backgrounds in my life.					
54. I rarely question what I have been taught about the world around me.					
55. I enjoy when my friends from other cultures teach me about our cultural differences.					
56. I consciously behave in terms of making a difference.					
57. I am open to people who strive to live lives very different from my own life style.					
58. Volunteering is not an important priority in my life.					
59. I frequently interact with people from a country different from my own.					

Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview?

- o Yes. My e-mail address is _____.
- o No

Appendix B

Adapting the Learning Practices Audit

	LPA	LPA in adult ESL
1.	I learn from talking to co-workers	I learn from talking **to other volunteers**
2.	I learn from performance evaluation	I learn from **feedback from my supervisor/volunteer coordinator**
3.	I learn from feedback from our clients	I learn from feedback **from my students**
4.	I learn from social media	I learn from social media
5.	I learn from help tools	I learn from **ESL textbooks**
6.	I learn from searching the internet	I learn from searching the internet
7.	I learn from online communities in my field	I learn from online communities in **adult ESL like blogs, forums, etc**
8.	I learn from videos	I learn from videos
9.	I learn from the examples of others	X
10.	I learn from doing challenging tasks	I learn from doing challenging tasks
11.	I learn from trying new things	I learn from trying new things
12.	I learn from reflecting on what worked and what did not	I learn from reflecting on what worked and what did not
13.	I learn from mistakes	I learn from mistakes
14.	I learn from surprises	I learn from surprises
15.	I learn from books	I learn from books
16.	I learn from attending conferences	X
17.	I learn from training programs	X
18.	I learn from taking classes	X
19.	I learn from networking in my field	I learn from networking **with other instructors**
20.	I learn from working in teams	I learn from working in teams
21.	I learn from teaching or coaching others	I learn from **helping other ESL instructors**
22.	I learn from new policies and laws	I learn from new policies and laws
23.	I learn from observing others	I learn from observing **other ESL instructors**
24.	I learn from studying on my own	I learn from studying on my own
25.	I learn from new tasks or jobs	I learn from new tasks or jobs
26.	I learn from mentors or coaches	I learn from mentors or coaches
27.		I learn from **individuals with ESL experiences**
28.		**I learn from students in the classroom**
29.		**I learn from planning a lesson**
30.		**I learn from teaching my class**

31.		**I learn from interacting with my students outside of the classroom**

Appendix C

Interview protocol

Before the interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of my dissertation is to explore the informal and incidental learning associated with volunteering/teaching in adult ESL context and the impact of learning on volunteer's intercultural maturity. My interest in this research stems from my own experiences as a volunteer in an adult ESL program. For this interview, I am interested in learning more about how you make meaning of your intercultural learning experience in adult ESL context. I would like to ask you some questions about a few of your most significant experiences related to this topic. You can think about your experience as a story or a play. Please be as specific as possible when describing what happened at that moment. Prior to this interview, you have reviewed and signed the consent letter. I want to review some of the items with you again. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes to complete. This interview will be audio recorded. All identifying information will be removed from the transcript. You can skip any question that you do not want to answer or stop the interview at any time. Before we start the interview, you can ask me any question you have about the interview or my research.

Begin the interview

- Please tell me a bit about your volunteering/teaching experiences.
    - When did you start volunteering/teaching?
    - With whom have you volunteered/taught?
    - What is your current/most recent context?

- Tell me about a time when you felt you have learned something significant in your volunteering/teaching role with adult ESL learners.
    - What was happening?
    - Who or what triggered your learning?
    - What did you say or do?
    - What made it significant for you?

- In the classroom, you are working with learners from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Tell me about a time when you felt surprised in your volunteering role with adult ESL learners.
    - What was happening?
    - What made you feel surprised?
    - How did you respond to the surprise?
    - What made it significant for you?

- Intercultural interaction often creates new experiences that might interact with your preexisting values and beliefs and provoke reflection and self-examination about your identity, privilege and role in the society. Tell me about a time when you felt you learned something new about yourself through working in adult ESL.

    - What was happening?
    - How did you come to notice it?
    - What made this self-discovery significant?
    - How did this discovery inform your practice in the future?

- Relationship plays an important role in intercultural interaction. Tell me about a time when you felt you made a meaningful connection with your students when working in adult ESL.
    - What was happening?
    - Who was involved?
    - How would you describe this connection?
    - What made this connection meaningful?

- To wrap up this interview, do you have any final comments on your experience as an adult ESL volunteer/teacher or any significant moment that you would love to share?

Appendix D

Site Invitation Letter

This is Beixi. I am a PhD candidate in Adult Education at the University of Georgia and am in the process of conducting my dissertation research. I am writing to request permission to conduct my dissertation research at X.

The purpose of my dissertation study is to understand the informal and incidental learning of teachers in adult ESL contexts. I am interested in what and how teachers learn through their work in adult ESL, and more specifically, how the learning can impact their intercultural maturity (the ability to act and communicate in a culturally appropriate way). I became interested in this topic because I was a volunteer in adult ESL for two years. This experience has enriched my knowledge of the immigrant/refugee experience, provoked self-reflection on my identity and bias, and inspired my commitment to social justice.

I hope that X will allow me to recruit participants for my research. I am doing a mix-methods research and will collect data through survey and interview. Copies of survey and interview protocol are attached. If approval is granted, I hope to recruit participants from your current and past teachers/tutors in the Adult ESL classes to take a survey. All teachers, whether volunteer or paid instructors, are welcomed to complete the survey. The survey can be completed electronically, either on phone or computer. Depending on the policy at X, either you can help me forward the survey link to your teachers or grant me the access to the list of teacher emails so I can contact them. If the participants are interested in a follow-up interview, they can leave their email address on the survey. I will contact them personally. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. They will sign a consent form before participating in the study. Individual results of this study will remain confidential and anonymous. All identifying information (regarding participant or the research site) will be removed. No costs will be incurred by either X or the individual participants. I will ensure the participants that their participation in the research will not affect their relationship with X.

This study has received the approval from the Human Subject Office at UGA. The purpose of the approval is to ensure the highest ethical and safety standards when conducting research with human subjects. If you are interested in this study, please sign the site authorization form and return it to me. Your authorization for this study will be greatly appreciated. This study can help us understand how teachers learn through their work in adult ESL, which is an understudied topic. It can also inform us how to better support adult ESL teachers, which will ultimately benefit the students as well as the program.

You may contact me via email and I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. We can also talk via zoom, phone or in person. If you agree, please sign the attached site authorization letter and return it to me via email. Again, your support will be greatly appreciated.

Appendix E

Site Permission Letter

Date:
Dear UGA Institutional Review Board:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that I give Beixi Li permission to conduct her dissertation research at _____(Name of Research Site). The dissertation topic is the informal and incidental learning of teachers in adult ESL contexts. We have agreed to the following study procedures: questionnaire and interview for the research. Beixi Li will receive consent from the participants before data collection. Any data collected by Beixi Li will be kept confidential and anonymous. Any identifying information, either regarding the participant or the research site, will be removed.
Sincerely,
_____(Name of Organization grating permission)
_____(Name of Signatory)
_____(Title of Signatory)

Appendix F

Survey Invitation Letter

My name is Beixi, and I am a PhD candidate in the College of Education at the University of Georgia. I am writing to invite you to participate in an online survey for my dissertation research. The purpose of my dissertation research is to understand the informal and incidental learning of teachers in adult ESL contexts. Like many of you, I have the experience of teaching ESL to adult learners. I found this experience challenging as well as rewarding. For my dissertation, I am focusing on what and how teachers learn in adult ESL contexts.

If you are currently teaching or had the experience of teaching in adult ESL, you are invited to take part in this study. All teachers, volunteers or paid instructors are welcomed to participate. If you agree, you will be asked to complete a brief survey that will examine your experiences as an adult ESL teacher. The survey will take no more than 15 minutes to complete. This survey can offer you an opportunity to reflect on your experience and recognize the scope and depth of learning that you have engaged in. This research will help us understand how and what people learn through their work in adult ESL. The results of this study can also inform organizations and practitioners to purposefully design activities that can enhance informal learning and critical reflection.

You can click on the following link to participate in this survey. This survey can be completed on phone or computer. The survey will be closed on XX.

Survey Qualtrics Link

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will not affect your relationship with the organization you are affiliate or used to affiliated with. If you have any questions about this survey or the study, please feel free to contact me (Beixi.Li@uga.edu, 2155887975). You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Karen E. Watkins at kwatkins@uga.edu. Thank you in advance for your help with my research. It is truly appreciated.

Appendix G

Interview Invitation Letter

My name is Beixi and I am a PhD candidate in Adult Education at the University of Georgia. I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview for my dissertation research. You are receiving this request because you have indicated on the survey that you would be interested in a follow-up interview. The purpose of this interview is to explore how volunteers and teachers make meaning of their intercultural learning experiences in adult ESL contexts.
You are eligible to be in this study because you have the experience of teaching in adult ESL contexts and you volunteered to participate in this interview. Your experience and insight will contribute to our understanding of how teachers learn in adult ESL contexts and how they make meaning of their intercultural experiences.

Please review the following questions which will help determine if the current interview protocol will work for you.

1. I am still interested in the interview. (Yes/No)
2. I can join the interview using zoom. (Yes/No)
3. I can allocate at least 1 hour for this interview. (Yes/No)
4. I can schedule an interview before XXXX. (Yes/No)

Please reply to me with your answer to the above four questions. Or you can call or text me directly if you prefer (2155887975). I will send you additional information about this study, including the interview protocol and the consent letter once I receive your reply.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can withdraw from the study at any moment. There is no anticipated risk associated with the study. The interview does not collect personal identifying information. If you have any questions or concerns about this interview or the study, please feel free to contact me (Beixi.Li@uga.edu, 2155887975). You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Karen E. Watkins at kwatkins@uga.edu.
Thank you for your consideration!

Appendix H

Interview Consent Letter

Informal and Incidental Learning of Teachers in Adult ESL Contexts

You are invited to take part in a research study. This consent letter is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. If there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information, please contact the researcher directly. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. The participation in this study is completely voluntary and will not affect your relationship with the organization you currently or used to volunteer/teach at.

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in an interview for a dissertation research study focusing on informal and incidental learning among teachers and volunteers in adult ESL contexts. The purpose of this study is to understand the informal and incidental learning activities experienced by teachers and volunteers in adult ESL contexts and the impact of the learning on their development of intercultural maturity. This study will focus on what and how teachers and volunteers in adult ESL learn from their work and examine how they make meaning of the intercultural learning experiences they encounter in the classroom and the program.

Study Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in a 45-60 minutes interview. All interviews will be digitally recorded for transcription and review. No names or identifying qualities will be retained from the interviews. Interview recordings and any associated identifiers will be retained for no more than one year following the conclusion of the study. You will be given the option to suspend an interview at any time if you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions. This interview protocol is designed based on the critical incident technique. You will be asked to recall incidents that you believe are critical or significant in your experience as a teacher or volunteer in adult ESL. Prior to the interview, you will be asked to review an interview protocol that contains the questions that will be asked during the interview.

Risk and Benefits

There are no anticipated substantive risks associated with this study. Benefits of participation may include providing participants with opportunities to discuss and reflect on their experience as teachers or volunteers in adult ESL and help recognize their informal and incidental learning. You may skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. You may also withdraw from this interview at any time once you notify the researcher.

Audio Recording

This interview will be conducted using Zoom. It will be digitally recorded for transcription and analysis by the researcher. All information collected will be held confidential. Data containing identifying information will be removed. Direct quotes might be used in presentation and publication but will be attributed to a pseudonym. All data will be encrypted and kept in a secured location for one year following the conclusion of the study.

Your consent to be recorded:

Yes, I consent to be recorded.

No, I do not consent to be recorded.

Contact Information

The main researcher of this study is Beixi Li, a doctoral student in Learning, Leadership and Organization Development at the University of Georgia. If you have questions later, please contact Beixi at Beixi.Li@uga.edu or at 215-588-7975. You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Karen Watkins, Professor, Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy, University of Georgia at kwatkins@uga.edu. If you have additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia at IRB@uga.edu or at 706-542-3199.

Your consent to participate in this study:

Yes, I consent to participate.

No, I do not consent to participate.

Name of Participant:

Date of Consent: