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**Educational Barriers for Refugee High School Students Literature
Review**

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Report

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Abstract

Educational Barriers for Refugee High School Students Literature Review

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This report contains a review of the literature concerning the schooling experience of recently migrated refugee high school students. The report first distinguishes the refugee dilemma and why it is a focus of research. This work reviews citations that include literature reviews, empirical studies, ethnographic studies as well as practitioner pieces. The themes found throughout the research fall into the two categories of social and academic context of a school. The aim is to see what the literature has in terms of these categories and then to assess critical issues for future research. The review concludes with a series of recommendations for practitioners to implement in their classrooms with refugee students.

KEYWORDS: refugee students, acculturation, high school, human rights.

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Introduction

In an increasingly global economy, migratory patterns amongst countries have steadily grown. Countries that are experiencing a growth in immigration are also on the quest of finding ways to integrate these populations into their culture. The steady growth of immigration into the United States has impacted the nation's student body composition making one out of five students a child of an immigrant, in fact in the 1990s there was a 72% increase of immigrant students in secondary schools (Capps, Fix, Murray & Passel, 2005). This increase of immigrant students entering secondary schools is of high interest because secondary schools have not been as properly trained as elementary schools to implement language acquisition curricula (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000).

Newly arrived students to the United States often fall into four different categories as immigrants with or without documentation, asylum seekers or refugees and are all classified as immigrants (those who were born abroad) within the school context. As per the definitions of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), an immigrant is someone that is admitted into the US as a Lawful Permanent Resident, whereas an undocumented immigrant has entered without filing the proper legal documents (DHS, 2016). According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), both refugee status and asylum is granted to those who cannot reside in their home country due to fear of persecution, the stark difference amongst the two is that individuals seek asylum once already in the U.S., whereas refugees are granted status outside the U.S. (USCIS, 2015).

In the United States alone, from 2007-2011, there were an average of 62,500 refugees entering the country annually with a third of them being school-aged (Martin & Yankay, 2012). The refugee population differs from immigrants in that refugees tend to be fleeing their country from war or persecution. This factor adds a psychological layer that can heavily impact an individual's transition into a new culture and language. Researching the relationship between refugee students and their experience within the school building could give insight into the programs and educational initiatives that have been implemented to support them. For refugee students, the school building becomes a crucial component to their integration and adaptation in helping them form their identity

It is through their school experience that they have the opportunity to interact with students from the community, learn about the culture and have access to education (Oikonomidou, 2009).

Distinguishing Refugee Students

This review will focus on accounts and research done on refugees as pertaining to the definition provided by the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Stating that a refugee is a person

who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (Convention and Protocol, 1951/1996)

The plight of refugees is one that does not involve voluntary migration or planning and anticipation of the new country they are headed to. Therefore the trajectory of refugees is one that is unpredictable; fleeing war or persecution and often times living in temporary camps until a country has openings for new refugees. These temporary camps are usually kept in poor conditions, promoting a series of health concerns like tuberculosis, hepatitis, malaria, kidney damage, and liver damage (Trueba et al., 1990). The traumatic experience of involuntary migration and transition from the host country to the destination country creates unsteadiness in a refugee's mental and educational life. In fact refugee students that have fled from a war-torn country are more likely to show symptoms of depression and posttraumatic stress (Sack, Angell, Kinzie & Rath, 1984).

Once in their destination country, refugees are then faced with the complexity of adapting to their new country. Immigrants as well as refugees tend to move to areas where affordable housing is available which are usually located in impoverished and racially segregated areas. As a result the schools in these neighborhoods where poverty prevails suffer a shortage of resources. This transitional period results being extremely critical for adolescent refugee students that enter the American education system. Extensive bullying and discrimination at school can perpetuate the trauma of being ostracized from their native country. Learning the language not only helps them

academically, but also allows them to adjust to their school environment. In the US, if they know English “they can say what they need [and] want and speak up. When they can’t they give up, many kid will pick up bad culture and no future” as stated by a Karen refugee in Iowa (Gilhooly and Lee 2016). Education becomes essential for refugee children’s psychological adjustment (McBrien 2005). Learning the language gives them a voice and more advocacies within the classroom and the school building.

Extensive research has led to the hypothesis of the Standard Empirical Model (SEM) of second-language acquisition for immigrants (Hwang and Xi, 2008; van Tubergen and Kalmijn, 2009). The SEM hypothesizes that language is acquired through three general mechanisms; exposure to the language, incentives to learn the language and ability to learn the language. When applying this model to refugees, language proficiency is lower even when the three mechanisms are statistically the same. Van Tubergen (2010) tested the SEM for specific refugee conditions and concluded that integration courses completed prior to starting work or enrolling in school helped with refugees’ language acquisition. These integration courses were basic cultural fundamentals for the refugees to learn about the country as well as beginner language classes, easing them into the transition of work and school.

Purpose of Literature Review

Properly integrating refugee students into the classroom requires both a language component as well as a cultural one. In distinguishing the unique complexities of the refugee dilemma the purpose is to review literature and research specifically pertaining to refugee students' experience in high school spaces in the United States. This review will focus only on refugee students because their traumatic entrance into the United States and its impact on their academics makes them a vulnerable group of students. Additionally it will mostly focus on high school students since they are in a transitional role towards adulthood. Refugee students that come during their high school years are expected to integrate into this monolingual English schooling system with only four years to adapt and sometimes even less. In 2000 the dropout rate amongst ELLs and students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) students was three times higher than for their peers. In fact ELLs who reported having difficulty with English had an 18% chance of graduating from high school. Within the broader context of ELLs, adolescent refugee SLIFE, especially in high school, are also categorized as being "the highest of high-risk students" (Walsh, 1999). The demands expected in secondary schools are much higher and by the time students acquire enough English to navigate their courses, they are significantly behind their classmates.

Theoretical Framework.

Noddings (2003) argues that the concept of care lies at the core of education by stating that the teacher is the one caring and the student is the one being cared for. Following this ideology teachers should always view themselves as being “responsible for empowering their students” (Owens & Ennis, 2005). In the case of refugee students this ethics of care should be the driving force behind any curriculum or school-wide program. Most importantly this ethics of care should never result in a teacher lowering their standards for newcomer youth, therefore it is essential for a teacher to not only exude this concept of care and personal warmth, but also maintain high expectations for each and every one of their students.

In addition to the ethics of caring, fostering a culturally relevant pedagogy for refugee students is essential to empower them within the education system. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Billings, 2014) is “ a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools perpetuate”. At the heart of this literature review is this understanding that the literature will be viewed through this cultural relevant pedagogy and exploring whether or not teachers are culturally and critically forming their curriculum so to facilitate the student’s integration into the United States school system without losing their identity and adopting that of the dominant.

Methods

For the purposes of this literature review I limited my search to the United States and the majority of the research was geared towards high school refugee students. The search terms I utilized were (Refugee or Involuntary Migration) and (Second-language Acquisition) and (Society or Motivation or Social Integration) for one of my searches limiting the articles to peer-reviewed as well as from the year 2000 onwards. The second search terms were (Refugee students or Involuntary Immigrant students) and (High School or Secondary Education) and (United States). From this point I picked articles that I deemed relevant to my line of research and interest, ensuring that all were focused on high school refugee students in the United States. From these articles I furthered my search by extending towards the research cited throughout their literature reviews and investigating further analysis of refugee integration theoretical frames. Throughout the literature I found relevance in various themes particularly in the cultural boundaries students experience and the support given to these students through educators, administration and curriculum implementation. For the purpose of this literature review I have sectioned these themes into two large topics, the social context and the academic context, with their subsequent sub-themes.

Literature Review

Social Context

A refugee student's schooling experience impacts their relationship with the culture of the country as well as their acculturation process. There are three possible patterns for immigration adaptation; straight-line theory, upward mobility and ethnic solidarity and downward spiral into assimilation with poverty (McBrien 2005). The straight-line acculturation theory is when the refugee assimilates to the culture of the country and leaves their own cultural heritage behind, with youth this could be learning the host language and not maintaining their ancestral language (Waters, Tran, Kasinitz & Mollenkopf, 2010). The goal of an educational institution should not be to strip the students of their cultural identity, therefore straight-line theory would continue the power hierarchies instituted by the majority to keep the marginalized culture out of the picture. Upward mobility and ethnic solidarity is one in which cultural pluralism is achieved and the refugee is able to succeed in the new culture (financially or academically) while still maintaining their cultural identity. Then downward spiral into poverty is when these refugee populations assimilate with the poverty of the neighborhoods they live in. Ideally a school environment would encourage and foster upward mobility and ethnic solidarity, where discrimination does not lead to a child abandoning their cultural identity in order to fit in.

Bullying

Education is crucial in restoring both social and emotional healing for refugees, however discrimination can hinder the learning process making it the biggest barrier for refugee children. Few resources exist out there on how to best support refugees within the school buildings. Refugee students undergo bullying through multiple discriminatory forms either through race, religion, or lack of language skills in English. In a study conducted by Shirley Mthethwa-Sommers and Otieno Kisiara they spoke to 12 high school refugee students about their experience with bullying, from their findings they found four coping mechanisms against bullying. The Push-back model is one in which

the student engages in the conversation and retaliates against the bully. For example “when a bully approached one of the participants from Somalia saying ‘You are African, go back to your country,’ the participant fought back by saying ‘Yeah, I do want to go back to my country. If I don’t get a job here I can always go back to my country and get a job or education.’ The Somali student reported further on the conversation: ‘But then I ask him, ‘Do you know where you are from?’ and then he stopped bullying me. He didn’t do it today’” (Mthethwa-Sommers & Kisiara, 2015). The Dignity preservation model is when the victim ignores the comments; this method was a way for the students to demonstrate to the bully that their words were of no importance to them. In the Self-Punishment Model the victims of bullying harm themselves with hopes that physical pain will dwarf emotional pain. Finally in the External Validation Model, victims of bullying reached out to their US-born peers that had cultural capital as allies to defend them. One of the students voiced that when her US-born friends would talk back, the bully would listen more to them than when they push back. These are all coping mechanisms that the students have come to on their own, showing their own agency and resilience.

However, the literature lacks research on behavior models that have been implemented within school buildings that address these issues, which specifically pertain to refugee students. Many anti-bullying campaigns across the United States promote empathy as a form of lowering the level of bullying across the school campus. In an attempt to implement this same strategy, one teacher asked her refugee students to give presentations on their backgrounds and experiences ; however, during the presentation the classmates laughed at the refugee students and used their experiences to further bully them (Mthethwa-Sommers & Kisiara, 2015). More research is needed to create anti-bullying strategies that do not promote further victimization or deficit-perspectives of these students that often times come from under-developed nations. When negative perspectives of underdeveloped nations encounter narrow views of education in US classrooms, additional hurdles emerge for refugee students. If they are to bring in their previous knowledge from their home countries and share it with their US peers without falling into hierarchical power dynamic, then students must be exposed to critical thought

that debunks these social constructs and what they look like in our society as compared to other ones.

Safe Spaces

Within the social context of schools though bullying is common amongst refugee students there are also forms that ease the students into their new environment, which I will refer to as safe spaces. These safe spaces provide refugee students with the opportunity to foster a sense of community in their new country. Schools main form of providing safe spaces for refugee students was through the ESL classrooms. Overall the teachers in these classrooms tended to be more sensitive towards creating a curriculum that was language appropriate and creating an environment that was inviting. Students also voiced that these classrooms were smaller and they felt less insecure about speaking in English because the bullying diminished (Davila, 2012). In fact, one of the teachers in Rabia Hos' study, Mrs. Smith addressed her entire class after they laughed at a student's mispronunciation by asking, "Are you all learning English? Do we laugh when someone makes a mistake"(Hos, 2016). Mrs. Smith was always conscious of making all her students feel comfortable and also made a point to constantly reinforce school and classroom rules since she was aware of the cultural difference between the students prior schooling experience to the US norms.

Another safe space that emerged through Liv Thorstensson Davila's research was the Junior Reserves Officer Training Corps (JROTC) class offered to high school students (Davila, 2012). These JROTC classes were usually smaller and structured around peer interaction and group exercises. The goals of the program were to instill values of citizenship while also fostering team building and develop reading and writing skills as well as critical thinking skills. In Davila's initial study there were four Vietnamese refugee students enrolled in the class that voiced a huge admiration for the skills they were learning there (Davila, 2012). These students belonged to a Vietnamese ethnic group, Mnong that fought alongside the US military against the Vietnamese Communist Regime during the Vietnam War. All of their families had ties with the US

military during the Vietnamese War and for these students it was a way of integrating into US culture with something that reminded them of their home. Specifically the JROTC classes made them feel at ease due to their emphasis on drills and commands rather than a focus on academic content. For Sieng, being in JROTC was a way for him to demonstrate his patriotism as well as taking ownership of his identity as a refugee (Davila, 2014). Sieng had immense pride in being a refugee because it demonstrated his strength and courage, he believed that JROTC would help him rebuild a life in the United States and help inspire future refugees. In these safe spaces provided for the students there was never an explicit effort on the part of the administrators to engage with their prior knowledge as well as foster their home country's culture. However, within the JROTC classes it was the students that took ownership and emphasized their own cultural identity within that context. The limitation of this specific safe space is that it might only elicit this sense of belonging and pride for Vietnamese students due to their historical relationship with the US military.

Academic Context

It is fundamental for the teachers to have an understanding of their student's background as well as be supported by administration with the best intervention programs (McIntyre, Rosebery & Gonzalez, 2001). However, refugee populations tend to "settle where educational infrastructure is already stretched," making it difficult for a school building to properly restore this social injustice (Miller and Windle 2010). These schools with a lack of resources and inadequate funding can barely meet the needs of their US-born students let alone provide instructional material that can benefit refugee students. Refugee students are faced with a challenging task of learning both English as well as academic content. In this section of academic context the subthemes are comprised of counseling, English as a second language and eliciting prior knowledge.

Counseling

As mentioned earlier, refugee students tend to be English language learners as well as students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). Meaning that when they enter high school it is their first time entering the United States school system, which could look completely different to their previous school. Counseling becomes a crucial part of their academic success, being their guide through the system and advising which courses to take in order to complete high school graduation. However, the literature shows a vastly different scenario. At Franklin High School the counselors held an orientation specifically for the newly arrived refugee students to help orient them, though the intent was there the execution failed to engage the students properly (Davila, 2012). The orientation was an hour of counselors talking through power point slides and included a detailed brochure that was all in English, completely failing to acknowledge the fact that most of these students had little to no English language skills. They then place the newcomers into classes based on their age, aptitude and educational background, often times being placed onto vocational tracks like childcare or food preparation (Davila, 2012). Additionally Tandon (YR) found that the majority of refugee parents had no formal education, which increasingly reduced their children's navigational capital. Likewise, Roxas (2008) identified a remarkable correlation between a parent's prior education and their children's future success. When a parent has more experience with the education system they are better equipped to aid their child navigate it (Roxas, 2008). A lack of proper orientation continues this cycle and inhibits refugee students from being able to fully engage with their own education and placing them into these tracks prevents them from being able to qualify for colleges after graduation.

Along with poor orientation programs and vocational tracking, refugee students are often put into ESL and content-area courses through sheltered instruction in English. At Georgetown High School students are placed into the newcomer program for approximately two years in order to help develop their English while simultaneously develop their skills in content-specific classes (Hos, 2016). All of these programs to help develop the students' English do not bear any credit towards graduation. What this does

is elongate the students' trajectory towards graduation, demotivating them towards completion. However, students aren't made aware that these classes do not count towards graduation, counselors do not make a point of clarifying this crucial piece of information (Hos, 2016). These counselors are not taking into consideration the students' backgrounds and how they influence their navigational capital to graduation. Furthermore, considering the amount of ELL students admitted yearly into public schools, if ESL courses bear no credits towards graduation maybe they should be structured in a way to not only teach English as a second language, but also contain content necessary to complete the graduation requirements.

English as a Second Language

When considering the importance of education and language acquisition to the acclimation of refugees in their new country, little research has been made on best pedagogical strategies. While coming to an understanding of the traumatic complexity of refugees is key to developing new intervention programs, more needs to be accomplished within the ESL spectrum. Where the literacy framework begins to hinder language acquisition for second-language learners is in secondary school where a focus on vocabulary is stripped from the curriculum. In fact ESL intervention beyond elementary and middle school becomes better known as survival ESL. Students are taught conversational language skills in order to survive within their new country. In an extensive study of ESL curriculum for young adults language skills were taught for job placements and "survival on the job is often equated with being submissive; students are taught the language associated with being on the bottom of the power hierarchy" (Auerbach and Burgess 1985). They learn how to understand but not how to produce and are hindered from being able to really defend themselves in their new environment.

Often times ELL students are thrown into mainstream classes and expected to meet the requirements set for that grade. At Central City High school where 25% of the student body (about 250 students) was classified as ELL, there was only one full-time ESL teacher that taught four classes with 30 students each. That means that of those 250

students only 120 were being supported with ESL instruction while the rest of the students were in mainstream classrooms with no additional support (Roxas, 2010). Teachers in mainstream classrooms are then left to look inwards for answers on how to cater to these students, while often times lacking the proper training for ESL students. One of the students, Hassan Gudle, voiced that he was placed into mainstream classes his first year and struggled to keep up. The following year, the counselors at the school recognized that he needed ESL support and placed him into remedial courses (Roxas, 2008). This change in schedule delayed Hassan's graduation even further due to the lack of ESL resources at the school. Language can either empower our students or strip them of their identity. Unfortunately, little was found in the literature around the idea of using English as an empowerment tool, but rather as something refugee students lacked. Social Isolation either in ESL courses or within their mainstream classes does not provide refugee students with sufficient exposure to native English-speaking peers and the opportunity to properly develop English. The development of ESL curriculum needs to improve in order to empower the students, not just push the students into a straight-line theory of adapting and leaving their own language/identity behind.

Eliciting Prior Knowledge

In order to foster a school community with culturally relevant pedagogy, eliciting prior knowledge and incorporating it into the curriculum is crucial. For students who have recently moved to the United States, practicing this allows for them to make connections from their prior home to their new one, easing their adaptation and transition. Unfortunately, a common tendency of teachers is to completely avoid the topic of the students' journey to the United States or their past (Roxas, 2011). A lack of teacher preparation on this topic produces a general confusion on how to appropriately access the students' funds of knowledge without provoking negative feelings of their traumatic past. One teacher in attempting to engage the students' prior knowledge during a food ESL assignment asked her students what they had eaten for breakfast, when one of the students responded nothing and got mocked at in class she decided to stop asking

questions like those (Davila, 2015). Rather than assessing the situation and finding ways to diminish bullying or mocking within the classroom, the teacher decided to prevent any sort of outside experience to enter the classroom. Just because someone's past is messy or unpleasant does not mean it should get ignored, these are conversations that every one of our students would benefit from partaking in.

Throughout the literature there were various instances in which teachers failed to really engage with the students as individuals, leading to contrived stereotypical views of the students. Teachers are already stretched thinly with all that is demanded of them and in these schools where refugee students were placed, behavior management became one of the main concerns for teachers. Many refugee students that come from South Asian countries are depicted as model minorities by teachers and are consequently cast to the side (Davila, 2012). Their silence and obedience is thought to portray the characteristics of a 'good' student and their weak performance in the class is merely attributed to their lack of language proficiency, as one of the assistant principals stated "because [Vietnamese Central Highlands students] don't cause trouble, they don't get help" (Davila, 2012).

In another scenario a world literature classroom teacher, Ms. Endicott, had a student Abdullah who continuously fell asleep while the class discussed their reading of Beowulf (Roxas, 2011). The sleeping in class signified to her that Abdullah was not engaged in his own academics, so rather than address the issue she chose to ignore it and dismiss him completely as a student. At no point did Ms. Endicott try to partake in a conversation with Abdullah about the why behind his sleeping. Could it have been that Beowulf was too complex of a text for a newly arrived student who had very little knowledge of English to read? Another one of Abdullah's teachers, Ms. Case, was also aggravated that he would turn in assignments late and skip out on class (Roxas, 2012). Ms. Case was only concerned about the academic component of Abdullah's schooling and not once asked him about his prior schooling experience and tries to explain the schooling culture in the United States. Abdullah and his father Haji were both very proud of him attending school and believed he was performing better than the other Somali

Bantu students. However, there was a remarkable disconnect between their sentiments on Abdullah's performance and the teachers' concerns. This disconnect could be a product of both Abdullah's lack of formal education for ten years prior to enrolling at the school and the lack of conversations the teachers were having with the students and parents.

Seemingly so there are also instances in which teachers embody this ethics of care and engage the students into the classroom and the material. In her ESL class, Mrs. Smith focused on creating a warm and inviting environment by providing students with differentiated tasks to fit the different levels of English in her classroom (Hos, 2016). Her ELL pedagogy was one of high expectations with multiple literacy practices in the form of reading, writing, listening and speaking to develop phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and oral language. Understanding the newness of a US school, Mrs. Smith also provided a consistent routine with clear explanations and repeatedly demonstrated the cultural norms at the school so to facilitate their transition. One of her students was not turning in his homework assignments, and rather than dismiss him, Mrs. Smith offered to call the student every night to remind him. Her ethics of care held a level of demand with a deep understanding of how different schooling cultural practices can be. In a different case, Mr. Wilson's mainstream civics class was an impressive learning space in which all students, six SIFE and twelve long-term English learners, were being engaged in the material (Davila, 2015). This class asked for students to read and analyze the U.S. constitution, a difficult task considering the reading level and lack of personal investment for the refugee students. Mr. Wilson adapted the curriculum to fit his class by forming groups so to ease the interpretation of the constitution, in these groups they analyzed the text then individually reflected upon it and afterwards as a group illustrated their interpretations on a poster. The next day, Mr. Wilson led a class discussion of the differences and similarities in laws amongst the United States and the different countries the students were from. This allowed for the students to freely voice their own knowledge from their home countries as well as for other students to learn about laws throughout the world. Both these examples exhibit an investment on part of the teachers to understand and inclusive of all their students.

In an attempt to develop curriculum and literacy practices aimed towards refugee students, Mary Amanda Stewart at Texas Woman's University conducted a research study on the implementation of refugee-based literature over a four-week period during the summer (Stewart, 2015). They would read books about refugee experiences in migrating to new countries and would then reflect upon the readings. The readings talked about the difficulties of communicating and learning a new language, the importance of maintaining pride in one's culture, their pre-refugee lives, reasons they had to leave as well as challenges they faced during their migration. Each activity was done so to elicit prior knowledge as well as to incorporate reading and writing strategies into their personal narratives. From their writing Stewart learned that one of her students had experienced hearing loss, which hindered her ability to pronounce in English, and that another student had a deaf grandfather they signed with, a hidden skill indeed. The two schools these students had attended for a whole year had no knowledge about the student's hearing loss or the hidden skill of sign language the other student possessed. This is an intentional way of not only unearthing funds of knowledge from refugee students, but also providing a space for students to voice their traumatic pasts and engage in a communal form of wounded healing.

Conclusion

The literature demonstrated the conditions that refugee students must adapt to when attending high school in the United States. Many times refugee families are placed in economically disadvantaged areas with schools that lack the adequate resources to reach all of its students. Once in the school building they are faced with extensive bullying and discrimination on accounts of their race, language skills and religion. Their academic situation within the classroom does not make it better, becoming ostracized and unengaged with the material. It seems as though school buildings have become places where the only importance is given to grades and assessments. This becomes even more relevant throughout the literature as we see how teachers lack the motivation to connect with their students as individuals. When teachers are unaware of whether or not their students are refugees or anything about their backgrounds, that is a bigger problem that goes beyond just education catered towards refugee students. Education should be individualized and humanitarian, meaning that teachers should know these basic things of their students.

Some implications from the literature can be made on bullying and proper ways to engage refugee students in the classroom. In observing how students use the external validation model as a form of resistance against bullying, school administrations could try and develop programs that would facilitate opportunities for refugee students to make friends with US-born students. One of the methods could involve implementing a buddy system where the newly arrived student is paired with a student to ease their transition into the school. These buddies would need to show interest and given some form of training so as to ensure that there is a structure and continuation with the mentoring. In Mary Amanda Stewart's research on the journey of hope and peace many advances were made in terms of curriculum that is specifically targeted towards newly arrived students. This is a piece of literature that would help teachers in their pedagogical approach towards refugee students.

The literature scopes in both the social and academic context of a school building, leaving various gaps that require substantially more research. Particularly in this

upcoming presidential term and political era, as educators we must actively engage in forms to make those newly arrived students feel cared for and feel at home. Most importantly as noted by Miller and Windle “ignoring the intersections between power and pedagogy serves to reinforce coercive and exploitative structures in education. In this tradition of critical scholarship, we understand refugees as the products of a globalizing capitalist system and its colonial legacy” (Miller and Windle 2010). Engaging in a culturally relevant pedagogy is a way of humanizing our refugee students as well as their experience. At a time when our government is leaning on anti-gang sentiment to fuel its immigration policies, it is important to address how these refugee and immigrant populations are integrating into our societies.

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