

ENTRE LES MURS (THE CLASS) AS A CURRICULAR TOOL: WHAT PRESERVICE
TEACHERS THINK ABOUT AND LEARN FROM ENGAGING WITH *THE CLASS*

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Educators have been employing cinema films in their teaching for quite a while. With their power of engaging spectators, films are deemed functional to enrich the quality of teaching in various contexts. The primary purpose of the present study was to explore the usage of a French school film by the name of *Entre Les Murs* (*The Class*, 2008) with preservice teachers in the curriculum of a teacher preparation course in University of Illinois to study these preservice teachers' reaction to this film in terms of everyday curricular issues, problems and matters they might encounter as well as their learnings from the film. The teacher preparation class of interest included 26 preservice teachers, 19 of who participated to the study.

To achieve the aims of the study, I carried out a qualitative inquiry in which I conducted two sets of interviews with participants—one set prior to the screening of this film in the class and another set after the screening. In addition, I observed this teaching class as a participant observer for the entire Spring 2018 semester. Moreover, I moderated open discussions about the film with the participants during the screening of the film. After having this dataset at hand, I analyzed the data with respect to the research questions I have aimed to answer. I utilized ATLAS.ti analysis software to aid me during the analysis, which included coding that resulted with the organization of the themes from the data. To ensure credibility of the study, I employed the method of peer debriefing.

The primary findings of the study revealed that these preservice teachers mainly consider film as entertainment material that can also be employed for teaching students since they can supplement literature. What is more, teachers should not use films just to fill time. Films provide many advantages to teaching such as motivating students, diversifying teaching materials, etc. as well as some disadvantages such as being time consuming and making focusing harder. In terms

of the method of film screening, participants stated teachers should be eclectic in choosing parts of films rather than showing an entire film to a class. Besides, participants argued that school films that depict teachers and students usually present a couple of myths about the profession of teaching. These myths influence the public to have negative connotations about teachers.

Participants furthermore maintained that *The Class* as a school film does not follow these myths in that it presents a realistic and natural perspective on teaching. Participants' evaluation of the teacher character in the film indicated that they are of the opinion that his teaching is not engaging, lively and diversified. Their suggestions to the teaching that takes place in the film related paying attention to students' backgrounds and creating a welcoming teaching environment via communication and healthy relationships with students and parents. Finally, participants discussed that as a school film *The Class* was instrumental in their teaching since it presented a model teaching world to them that they evaluated.

I interpreted the findings of the study that the film is a call for deliberative curriculum approach in educational circles since the film depicts the hardships of a top-down curriculum approach. I concluded the study by arguing that we need to increase the teacher quality to ensure that we avoid the types of problems and issues that teacher in the film encounters over an academic year, and that school films, especially *The Class* in the context of this study, can help us to do that.

Keywords: Entre Les Murs (The Class), Film as Curriculum, Teacher Education, Teaching.

DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this study at hand to—

loving memory of

MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK

a man of great wisdom and vision.

As you rightfully said:

*“To see me does not necessarily mean to see my face.
To understand my thoughts is to have seen me.”*

In this sense, I feel like we have met for a long time.
Therefore, let me modify another one of your sayings:

“One day our mortal bodies will turn to dust, but the Turkish Republic will stand forever!”

AND

to—

my nephews and nieces

BATUHAN, OKAN, RÜVEYDA, NİSA, CAHİT and a new one who does not have a name yet.

Your presence in life teaches me the meaning of true and unconditional love!

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I still remember the good old days when I was younger. In my hometown Elazığ, there wasn't much to do. In the downtown area, there used to be two movie theaters right across each other. My greatest joy during those days was skipping school (don't copy me kids!) and going to see a film in one of these places whenever the very little money I had allowed me to do so. So many times, I would be the only one in the theater wrapped in my coat trying to keep myself warm as I watched a glamorous picture. Since the attendance was very low—only me to be precise—the management wouldn't even turn the heating on. If someone told me in those days that one day I would get a PhD on the educative use of films I adored so much, I would probably laugh and tell that person that she was being silly for saying that.

But life is funny. Here I am. Recently, I was called into the presentation room where I defended this study and was told those magical words: “Congratulations, Dr. Ruzgar.” Times after times on my way to that defense, I asked myself “Is it worth it to go all this trouble?” Trouble, I tell you!—the road to a PhD is paved with troubles! And let me also tell you, the fact that I was dealing with them in a land far away from my own didn't help much. As I would ask that question to myself, I would also answer it in my head: “No, it is not. I am torturing myself.” It is funny—bizarre at the same time—how that thinking changes when one hears the magical words. As I am writing these words, I am happy to say that I am glad I was persistent and got to this point. Once you get a chance to look at the distance you have traveled, it gives one joy to be able to do it.

The travel, let's talk about that. It was on January 24th, 2015 (Saturday) that I arrived at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago to conduct my doctoral studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). It was the first time that I left my country of origin and

came to a completely different land. Some might say that it was the courage of a stupid person to take such a drastic step to leave everything I had back at home and start over here. Yet, in the four and a half years that I have spent in Champaign-Urbana, life taught so many things that I could have never learnt, had I stayed at my comfy home. During my time here, I have developed an interesting relationship with Champaign-Urbana. I have to come to love it and, in some ways, hate it at the same time. One funny thing I noticed about this area is that majority hates it when they are in it attending the university. But once people graduate and leave, they can't stop talking about how much they miss it. I know the same thing will happen to me. Champaign-Urbana, dude, let's get serious. What is wrong with your climate? Why is it so hot during the summer and so unbelievably cold in the winter? I think it requires a sort of special talent to have a temperature range that varies between 100s and -30s. And you have a wind problem. Also, don't get me started on the food issue. Yet, I love how your downtown is a very cool place to hang out. Many nights spent there. Art Theater, I love you and I am going to miss you a lot! Virginia Theatre, don't think I forgot about you. Also Green Street, so many good memories formed there. All the cafés that I used to go to on a daily basis, a different one each day in a rotating fashion. Additionally, of course the community, it is very welcoming. I am so thankful to them that I get to know so many interesting people here and learned a lot from them. All considered, I am confident that my voyage, adventure if you will, since that Saturday till now was in no way a Pyrrhic victory. It established a solid ground on which I am going to have many more adventures from now on. And it was thanks to this area. Champaign-Urbana, I know I complained a lot about you during my time here, but you will always have a special place in my heart no matter where I am.

It is the people that animate a land and make it what it is—if the place deserves an acknowledgement, so should its architects. Let's begin with academic ones. I am grateful to my advisor Dr. Mark Dressman for accepting me to the program at UIUC. Mark helped me to feel welcome in my first couple of months here. That included inviting me to his home, cooking great food and taking me to road trips. For all of these, I am grateful. I am also indebted to Dr. Linda Herrera and Dr. Allison Witt, my committee members, for their guidance and suggestions from the early stages of my dissertation study to the last. A very special word of gratitude must go to Dr. Liora Bresler, also from my committee. Liora has witnessed each and every step of my journey in the program. I have taken many courses from her. Every time I conversed with her, I learned something new. She was on my early research, qualification exams, preliminary exam and final defense committees. Every single feedback she had in all of these contributed to my advancement in the program. And she was there every time when I needed someone to pull me out of a pit I fell in, especially during the final defense process. My academic connection with her started with “the phone incident”—she knows what I mean with this—I hope it will never end. Liora, I have always thought that the good-hearted, helpful and supportive individuals would only be in those films I watched ever since I was little. It was only when I met you that I realized they exist in real life too. Thank you for everything, Liora! Besides, fellow PhD candidates supported me when I needed help. A big thank you goes to Abdullah Mansoor, Özge Evcen, Saad Shehab, Hicham Zemmahi. I am grateful for your help. Furthermore, I got the chance to do my PhD here at UIUC, thanks to a financial support from Ministry of National Education of Turkey, my motherland. To the Ministry I am indebted. Additionally, when it comes to education, it is an observation I have that we frequently use an alarmist and dystopian language that public education is failing. Having spent a semester with the participants of this

study, the vibrant, lovely and energetic future teachers, I have hope for future. I know there are many problems we have to solve in individual schools and in the public-school system in general but interacting with these preservice teachers assured me that we have a chance. For that hope and for their contribution to their study, I thank them.

Let's continue with my friends who made my time a joyful one here in Champaign that I spent so much time with. Alperen Günay, how can I forget your warm friendship? And don't think I forgot we have an album project together! Kadir Amasyalı, you are one of the nicest friends I have ever met in my entire life! If there was a heart shortage on earth, yours would be enough for the rest of the humankind. Gülhanım Kayataş, Yusuf Akemoğlu, Ebru Toprak and Gizem Tabak, I appreciate your friendship, it is great to have known each one of you. I know life will scatter us to different places and maybe we will not get to see each other as often as we did here. But what can distances do to people who feel each other's presence no matter where they are?

During my time here, I also bonded with another group of friends. Özgün Alp Numanoğlu and Thierno Kane. Guys, probably you already know due to being exposed to my dark conversations so many times, I have always felt a black hole in me, pulling me toward itself day by day. And as a result of this, I think I rarely feel belonged to a place when I go somewhere. Champaign-Urbana is one of the few places I felt like I belonged to. I am certain that it is due to your friendship. I think we have a reputation in Champaign-Urbana circles of being the three who always hanged out together. People will always think that we are crazy when we say to each other "The planes were going çiuu, çiuu, çiuu," or "Well, they are humans," or "You see where I am going with this?" and start laughing frantically. Some are born to be importers, others to be baggers, and some come to this world to destroy. I wish both of you the best of everything for

the rest of your lives. We shall hang out again! And Vashish Takoor, I will always admire your ability of asking the most rational question in the most irrational situation! For Muhsin Acar and Okan İlhan, I will only say this: patio of Murhpy's or Blind Pig's! Halay is universal, I know now.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my beloved family. If this PhD process was a challenge to me personally, it was a double challenge to my family, especially to my mom Rüveyda Rüzgar. I lost count of how many times she blessed those who invented internet and video talks. Thanks to that technology, we could see each other and talk every Sunday. I know that made it easier for my mom to bear the burden of having his son millions of kilometers away. I also know that she kept crossing the days on the calendar to mark my return. As I write these sentences, I realize that there is only a small space on the calendar for her to cross. My dad Cahit Rüzgar has always been a great admiration and role model for me. From great thinkers of human history, I learned so many academic things. Yet if there is no heart in a scholar, then, what is the difference between him and a computer. From my dad, I learned how to have a personality and care for other people, how to be a nice person in general. I do not know how well of an apprentice I have been to him in that regard, but any failure is, I declare, on my part, not his. My sister Canan Rüzgar practically raised me and has been the nicest sister any sister could ever be. Believe me when I say that my brother Fatih Rüzgar is the coolest older brother there ever was. You could only agree with me if you got a chance to hang out with the dude. My other older brother Cihan Rüzgar is a source of joy for me since knowing that I will see the gentleman every time I go home makes me happy. And for Can Rüzgar, I still miss you brother.

Is it weird that I would also like to thank myself? Maybe a bit. But I set a goal for myself many years ago. The fact I am writing this is a proof that I was able to do it. I know for sure that it is not the best study, but it is the best I have done so far. I believe I deserve a pat on my back for that reason, if only I could physically do it. Then, this paragraph should do. I have no idea how I will take the type of environment I will be in after Champaign-Urbana, but I am sure that I am going to make use of the experiences I have had here. Now that I am done with this PhD goal, I have set new ones for myself. Dear me, whenever you read this text next time, please be reminded of things you want to achieve and get to work!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION*

Incipit

This study aims to bring together the field of curriculum studies and the use of school films in instruction together in the context of preservice teachers' education, hoping to build cooperation between the two so that the latter might shed light on and improve the former. In the context of the study, school films refer to feature films that depict daily classroom environments where the main characters are usually teachers, students and administrators. The main idea in the present study is to moderate screening of a French school film by the name of *Entre Les Murs* (*The Class*, 2008) with preservice teachers in a teacher preparation class to study their reaction to this film in terms of everyday curricular issues, problems and matters they encounter or might so in future as well as their learnings from the film.

During Spring 2018 semester at the College of Education of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in Midwest, USA, a group of pre-professional teachers attended an introductory teaching course (henceforth I call it Between the Walls, BtW) offered by Professor Norton (pseudonym). This course (BtW) focuses on preparing teachers to teach English in a wide range of school settings. In addition, it primarily aims to acquaint University of Illinois preservice teachers with teaching racially and culturally diverse students in middle- or senior high-school settings. To achieve this purpose, Professor Norton's integrated *The Class* into BtW where preservice teachers engaged with it for two weeks during the semester as an instructional activity to present a visual representation of what it be might like to teach under contemporary

* Various parts of this chapter include writing and ideas from a term paper, an earlier version of my Early Research Study, my general and special field qualification exam papers. Since none of these sources are published materials, I have no way of citing them but to mention them here.

educational settings. The present study commits itself to investigate the employment of *The Class* in BtW by engaging with this class for the whole Spring 2018 semester.

I have to admit that many questions come to mind after reading these introductory sentences: (i) Why do I conduct this research?, (ii) How did I get interested in it?, (iii) Why do I do this study with preservice teachers?, (iv) What do I expect to gain from it?, (v) What is it that I hope that *The Class* can do for preservice teachers?, (vi) What does the literature on the topic have to say about it?, (vi) What is my role in the research project, etc. I will strive to answer these and other questions in the rest of this introduction as well as in the upcoming chapters of this dissertation. However, first, let me take the liberty to rationalize the matters.

Rationale for the Study

The Lumière brothers, Auguste and Louis, who held the world's first public film screening on Dec. 28, 1895, at Grand Café on the *Boulevard des Capucines* in Paris, probably did not think that cinema would one day be considered as a form of art and become a part of our lives since Louis once said that "The cinema is an invention without a future." ("Fascinating Facts About Lumière Brothers," 2005). History had proven Louis wrong. Ever since its emergence at the beginning of 20th century, cinema has become the seventh art and a part of our life, perhaps an inseparable one. Christopher J. Dodd, chairman and chief executive officer of Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), in his letter in the association's 2016 report, presents that global revenue of films reached \$38.6 billion in 2016—\$ 11.4 billion of which was earned solely in the U.S. and Canada—an increase of one percent from the previous year. Mr. Dodd is also very optimistic that the growth rate for the film industry will continue to be very solid since the tendency in spectators' characteristics seems to include young people and diverse populations

compared to previous years. The same report, moreover, reminds us that 71% of the population of the U.S. and Canada, a total of 246 million, are moviegoers who attend a film screening at a film theater at least once in 2016 (Motion Picture Association of America, 2017). In addition, according to a study by Redbox, an American, on average, watches 5040 films in her/his lifetime. Put another way, an American sees approximately 84 films per year—with the help of different platforms. The same study also revealed that 41% of its respondents asserted that films changed the way they see the world and 10% said that a film was influential in their career choice (Smith, 2016; also cited in MSTEOffice, 2017). These data alone attest that cinema is a valid part of modern life in the 21st century.

The field of education has always been eager to adopt new technologies to support student learning. Over the years, new inventions and technologies have drastically changed and altered the environment in the classrooms (Kenney, 2011), the way how students approach learning, and how instruction-teaching is implemented. In addition, Cuban (1993) argues that over the last century, teachers have made some alterations to the ways they teach. New technology or innovations have the potential to influence our schools in one way or another. One of such innovations has been cinema (films and video in general), which have had an impact in learning environments in terms of design and execution of the instruction.

Historically, the road to films' employment in the context of teaching and learning has been a steady and long one. As early as 1926, nevertheless, Crandall asks—has the motion picture a place in education? His answer is a definite yes. Crandall takes the issue to a point where he thinks that the camera is one of the two greatest inventions that helped man in his intellectual conquest. He says: “In man’s intellectual conquest of the world in which he dwells,

there are just two instruments of his own invention that have furthered his progress and made possible his achievement. They are the camera of the explorer and the microscope of the scientist.” (p. 111). Having this high regard for cinema, Crandall (1926) argues that films are excellent sources for teaching.

Expectedly, in this milieu, films as instructional materials have been either employed or their potential discussed in teaching and learning of a variety of disciplines such as science teaching (Efthimiou & Llewellyn, 2004), philosophy (Gold, Revill, & Haigh, 1996; Asma, 1999; Cooke, 2004; Carroll, 2006; Bassham & Austin, 2008; Fildes, 2008; Kerruish, 2013), history (Sprau, 2001), psychology (Dorris & Ducey, 1978; Fleming, Piedmont, Hiam, 1990; Anderson, 1992; Conner, 1996; Bluestone, 2000), political sciences (Lowery, 2002), social work (Liles, 2007), various branches of medical education (Bhagar, 2005; Henry & Newman, 2009; Klemenc-Ketis & Kersnik, 2011; Darbyshire & Baker, 2012; Gorrington & Loy, 2014), etc. In these example studies, teachers employ films to teach students.

Films, by the same logic, can also be used in the teaching of teachers. In other words, just as teachers use films to assist student achievement, we can employ films in preservice teachers' education (Alley-Young, 2008). The education of a teacher is her strongest base that she will enrich with her teaching experiences to touch the lives of hundreds of potential artists, philosophers and scientists of any sort when she becomes an acting teacher. In this sense, preservice teachers need an environment that is intellectually and culturally engaging, enriching as well as challenging during their years at colleges of education. Their immersion in this intellectual environment requires that they encounter not only the findings of the various branches of educational science in addition to their content area but also with a general

intellectual environment. In my mind, a teacher is not just a technician that pours vessels of knowledge into the minds of young flowers in the expectation that they will flourish. Quite the contrary, she is an intellectual that serves as a role model for her students and creates an environment to her students where they can prosper in the direction of their needs and desires. For a teacher candidate to be an intellectual instead of a technician of her content matter, she needs opportunities to initiate herself with higher human achievements that might not be readily available in the curriculum of her college. Films, in the last analysis, are media that have the potential to provide preservice teachers with a realm that is beyond their initial reach that would help them to exceed the banality of being a technician. Tyler praises the value of literature since he believes that it “can provide an opportunity for the individual to explore kinds of life and living far beyond his power immediately to participate in” (1949, p. 57). In my context, I praise films since they can provide opportunities for preservice teachers to explore preliminary professional experiences beyond their initial reach. In the context of this study, I praise *The Class* since it can provide an opportunity for the participants of this study to explore not only their technic knowledge and ability but also a realm of professional learning that might not be readily available to them.

Statement of the Problem

Current scholarship on teacher education has noted that teacher education separates itself from practice, i.e., preservice teachers are presented with knowledge of teaching and their area of specialization; yet, they do not have adequate practical experience when they begin to work as professional teachers (Sykes, Bird & Kennedy, 2010). It is for this reason that Judge (1982) has

referred to teacher education as “a deeply institutionalized error” (p. 34, as cited in Sykes, Bird and Kennedy, 2010, p. 466). My basic assertion in this study comes into the picture exactly here.

Films can provide preservice teachers with exemplary situations that they might face when they enter the world of teaching (Dalton, 2008). Beginning teachers, as I have already noted, enter schools without enough genuine professional experiences in schools. As a result, they usually suffer from reality shock since they lack practical experiences to deal with the different problems they encounter (Veenman, 1984). In a sense, films can prepare them to deal with real situations better. Films can pave the way for a better transition from a prospective teacher to a professional one.

I should confess that the idea to employ cinema films in the education of preservice teachers is neither new nor mine. Quite the contrary, scholars have been using films with preservice teachers for a while (e.g. Brunner, 1991; Giroux, 1994 as cited in Trier 2001a; Brunner, 1994 as cited in Trier 2001a; Robertson, 1995 as cited in Trier 2001a; Trier, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007; Nugent & Shaunessy, 2003; Fontaine, 2010; Kaşkaya, Ünlü, Akar & Özturan Sağırılı, 2011; Ryan & Townsend, 2012). Of all these scholars, Trier has devoted a good portion of his scholarly efforts to this issue. In his dissertation, he cites a journal entry that invites scholars to use films with preservice teachers: “I’m not sure why the academics in education who write analyses about individual films or groups of films haven’t taken these films up in their practices with preservice teachers. It’s probably because they don’t work with preservice teachers, yet they’re interested in the films, so their options are either to analyze the films (as one would analyze a novel or a poem) or to start teaching undergraduates (not likely).” (ARJ, November, 1997 as cited in Trier, 2001a, p. 18). Although there have been more studies

that employ films in the education of preservice teachers since Trier's dissertation, I believe that there is still more space in the literature on this topic. Besides, to my knowledge, no study so far has used *The Class* in the education of preservice teachers.

A closer examination of the scholarship on the use of films with preservice teachers reveal that the majority of them use films as supplementary materials for discussion and reflection to classroom readings (Giroux, 1994 as cited in Trier, 2001a; Giroux, 2008; Trier, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007; Nugent & Shaunessy, 2003; Fontaine, 2010). Thus, based on this scholarship, it seems to be a valid research strategy to examine the presentation of *The Class* to preservice teachers who could discuss and reflect on it so that they would better equip themselves to not to face a reality shock when they become professional teachers.

Purpose of the Study/Research Questions

In the light of the problem statement, the primary purpose of this study is to explore the educative impact of using *The Class* on participants of the study. Congruent with the primary goal, I also aim to understand how this school film can serve as a curricular tool in self-cultivation of preservice teachers. To achieve these purposes, I aim to answer the following questions:

1. How do participants evaluate cinema films in terms of their educative value?
 - a. What does a cinema film mean to participants?
 - b. From the standpoint of participants, what roles can cinema films play in educational milieus?
 - c. According to participants, what advantages and disadvantages do cinema films bring to educational environments?

- d. In the participants' opinion, what method of film screening would be ideal in classrooms?
2. How do participants view school films in terms of...
 - a. their general characteristics?
 - b. their influence on education professionals and the general public?
3. How do participants examine *The Class* as a curricular tool to reflect on the profession of teaching in terms of...
 - a. its educative value,
 - b. the curriculum that is enacted in it,
 - c. the main teacher and his teaching,
 - d. educational themes,
 - e. various teaching situations it depicts,
 - f. dealing with diversity in learning environments?
4. What do participants think about the use of *The Class* in their education?

Justification for the Study

The schools have been becoming more and more diverse, both culturally and racially. Teachers nowadays are expected to teach students who vary in terms of culture, language, ability and other characteristics (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002 as cited in Richards, Brown & Forde, 2007, p. 64). In the United States, a major destination for immigrants, in 2014 for the first time in the history, the total percentage of students of different racial or ethnic backgrounds surpassed that of Whites (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Moreover, Pew Research Center projects that by 2050, “34 percent of U.S. children younger than 17 will either be immigrants themselves or the

children of at least one parent who is an immigrant” (Maxwell, 2014). Finally, according to the Diversity Index that Paul Overberg developed, of all the states in the United States, Hawaii has the highest index, 74, where Vermont has the lowest, 15. Illinois’s diversity index is 65, which means that the possibility that two randomly chosen students from an Illinois school will be racially different is 65 percent (“Diversity in the classroom,” 2015). All these data indicate that teacher education programs in U.S.A should educate preservice teachers not just to be able to teach but to be able to teach racially and culturally diverse classrooms as well. *The Class* depicts a racially and culturally diverse classroom environment. Therefore, the present study of examining the usage of *The Class* in a teaching course might be beneficial to participants to be better-prepared professional teachers by providing them with preliminary experiences during their education.

Teacher education programs are, by definition, responsible for providing their students with necessary theoretical knowledge as well as skills so that these students can present academically cherishing and nourishing environments to pupils when preservice teachers become professional ones by virtue of their occupational competence (Sykes, Bird & Kennedy, 2010). Teachers face many challenges in classrooms that require them to have adequate professional skills (Luke, 1998). The quality of education that teachers receive at their teacher education programs directly and immensely affects their teaching quality, which enables them to solve problems effectively (Rice, 2003). The significance of teacher quality is apparent in the fact that it is the single most important school-related factor that influences individual student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000) and achievement at the country level (Akiba, LeTendre & Scribner, 2007).

As I have already noted in the preceding sections, teacher education programs at present do not adequately equip preservice teachers with real teaching experiences. In this context, it is vital that teacher education institutions provide environments for pre-service teachers where they can have genuine and authentic opportunities to obtain insights of the practice of professional teaching (Haigh, Ell & Mackisack, 2013, p.1). In this context, the study can provide preliminary experiences to preservice teachers through watching and discussing *The Class*, which might pave the way for them to have genuine and authentic teaching opportunities when they become professional teachers.

Significance of the Study

One might think that it is a peculiar idea to screen a film with preservice teachers for the betterment of their education since a film is, at the core, a form of entertainment, not necessarily a scholarly medium. When the weather is inclement and we do not have many options but to stay indoors, films are there to help us; we meet someone of romantic interest, wishing to spend time with her/him, film theaters are ideal places to do that; we are in a company of friends and acquaintances, films are source materials for lively conversation. In these hypothetical situations and many possible others, films provide pure entertainment. However, the belief that a film is just a sort of pure entertainment and entertainment only is not the whole picture. Films not only entertain but also inspire, propagandize as well as educate (Shah, 2011; Giroux, 2008; Silberman-Keller, Bekerman, Giroux & Burbules, 2008). It is the educative function of films that signifies the study at hand.

Giroux (2008) sketches his transformation from a young boy who sneaked into the theaters with his friends for the mere amusement they would get from films to a scholar who

understands and appreciates films as pedagogical tools. He writes: “Hollywood and independent films—especially films about schools, teachers, and students—offer a unique opportunity for academics, teachers, and other concerned citizens to use the medium of film to engage in pedagogical struggles that foster conditions that enable young people to read against the official lies of power, received opinions, and unexamined assumptions that tend to erase everything that matters in a vibrant democracy.” (2008, p. 13). Then, in Giroux’s conception, films are cultural and pedagogical texts that are not only another method for teaching but also, they are social constructs that reflect views on a variety of important aspects of life in society, including education. By analyzing them, researchers shape their view on education in multiple and complex ways (Giroux, 2008). In this sense, it can be inferred from what Giroux (2008) argues that a film about a school offers many unique opportunities for the education of teachers.

I hope to be pardoned for speaking about my individual experiences in trying to explain the significance of this study; however, I believe that these experiences have paved my way to the study, and hence, they are a part of the significance of it. Around the time that I began elementary school, my family had an old television and during that time, a newly formed private TV channel used to air recent films every Sunday calling the activity “Parliament Cinema Club.” The theme music that TV channel used to play prior to broadcasting films is still with me in my mind. After a while, I began to go to work with my father who owns a shop. As was the custom, he would pay me a small amount of weekly money. I would regularly save my money to see a film in one of two theatres of my hometown. Now, as a doctoral student trying to specialize in curriculum studies, I still watch films, sometimes even on a daily basis, putting a considerable amount of effort to make sure that I have time for films on my schedule. My initial involvement with films was, as would be expected, at an elementary level—watching films for the pure

pleasure of watching a film. Such simple assertions as “I like this film very much” or in a more evaluative sense “This is a good film” were the type of the sentences I would utter as a response to seeing a film (Bordwell, Thompson & Smith, 2016). My reactions to films, in this sense, were *evaluative* at a scholarly immature level. However, specifically in *The Class*’s case, I am quite confident that there is a lot more to be gained from it. *The Class* can teach many lessons to teacher educators. Such examples may be helpful to teachers in addition to scholars of education to provide better curricular experiences to students.



CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW*

In this chapter, I will provide the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study, after which I will turn to a review of the literature on the use of cinema in education and teacher preparation.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Perhaps it was imprudent of me to declare that I examine *The Class*, a film, as a curricular tool in this study without explaining what I mean by this declaration. Specifically, I should have asked: “what is a curriculum” and “can a film be a curriculum or curricular tool?” I intend to deal with these questions in this section. A close consideration of the former one shall constitute the first pillar of the theoretical framework of the study. To find a justified answer to the second one demands an exploration in the realm of cinema on what a film is and how it impacts spectators. Thus, a brief tour of the area of film studies shall comprise the second pillar of the theoretical framework of the study.

It is possible that the question “what is curriculum” might be the most frequently asked and examined one in curriculum studies. In the earliest writings in the discipline, Bobbitt (1918) for example, this question is an essential element of the author’s discussion of the field (see Chapter 6 of his *The Curriculum*) or in Charters (1929). It has been a century since the field’s acknowledged inauguration, i.e., from 1918 (Ponder, 1974; Kliebard, 1976) to today.

Nonetheless, we still ask what curriculum and its theory are (see, e.g. Pinar, 2012; Schiro, 2008).

Therefore, because this question is fundamental for the field, I contend that a discussion of it

* Various parts of this chapter include writing and ideas from a term paper, my Early Research Study, my general and special field qualification exam papers. Since none of these sources are published materials, I have no way of citing them but to mention them here.

here might shed light on the conceptual framework that I employ since I claim to treat *The Class* as a curricular tool. Said another way, I believe that I should explain as explicitly as I can what a curriculum is, in my opinion, and hence in the realm of this study, to be able to claim whether a film, *The Class*, can be taken as a curricular or not. It should be noted, however, that my treatment of this question here should not be taken as the final verdict on the issue. I do not have the ability to solve so fundamental an issue all by myself that has occupied scholars of the field for a century. Nevertheless, I now turn to an examination of this problem to see what earlier scholarship on this issue has said so far. It seems that a historical approach in doing that might be congenial since the problem, in itself, has a historical background.

I have noted previously that the field of curriculum formally inaugurated in 1918—with the publication of Bobbitt's *The Curriculum*. In this sense, the field's formal history includes the period between recent times and 1920s. This period has been discussed to have three major spans (see, e.g. Pinar, 2008). Nonetheless, it is worth to note that the nature and exact dates of these three spans show, or might show, some differences for different scholars. Thus, I borrow previous scholarship's classification of the history of the field into three spans; yet, I modify it according to my reading of this history. For instance, Pinar (2008) acknowledges the second of these spans to be reconceptualization of the field whereas the third one to be internationalization of it. However, as I will touch later in my discussion, I read the progression of the field a bit different. In this sense, my organization here consists of three major movements in the field, which I will explain in more detail shortly.

In addition to Bobbitt's first book in the field, a superintendent in 1920s in Denver is sometimes credited with initiating curriculum studies when he managed a system-wide renewal of public schools' curricula (Pinar & Miller, 1982). However, to all intents and purposes of this

part of the chapter, I think that publication of Bobbitt's book is a better alternative for initiation since it reflects the dominant thinking of the field in its early days. Thus, my examination of history of curriculum will begin with the period between 1918 to 1969 (I will focus on Bobbitt, Tyler and Taba for this part since I think that they represent this era better than others)—the reason why I choose 1969 as the end of the first era and the beginning of the second one is the publication of Schwab's monumental paper known as *Practical 1*—then I will continue with Schwab's practical papers dating between 1969 to 1983, finally I will end this section with post-Schwabian times where I will specifically focus on a movement called reconceptualization in addition to two other central figures of the field (Jackson and Eisner) since I believe that reconceptualization and these two scholars satisfactorily symbolize developments in the field after Schwab as I read them. In addition, although some parts of my discussion here follow a chronological nature, it is not completely sequential in time. For instance, I will discuss Jackson after Schwab even though Jackson (1968) published his study before Schwab (1969). A final caveat for the organization here is a point I already stated that I do not claim in any way that it is exhaustive and conclusive. Nor does it talk about ideas of all of the crucial thinkers of the field. Hence, I should state that the theoreticians I focus on and the organization I employ here reflect my thinking and reading of the field so far, which constitutes the framework of the present study.

Bobbitt, Tyler and Taba. For Bobbitt (1918), the only true method of curricular study is what is known as *activity analysis*. Curriculum-discoverer needs nothing but a “pencil, notebook, and a discerning intelligence” (Bobbitt, 1918, p. 48) to make a list of objectives which will determine educational activities, the collection of which will be the curriculum. The curriculum is discovered, in other words, in the deficiencies, shortcomings and errors that students have before curriculum is enacted. The age of Bobbitt was the age of social efficiency. Hence, Bobbitt

applied the ideas of Taylor's scientific management to the field to arrive at a curriculum development theory. Seguel well articulates his criticism (1966, p. 80 also as cited in Tyrrell, 1970, p. 98): "Using industry as his controlling metaphor, Bobbitt began to think about the curriculum. If (he theorized) the school were a factory, the child the raw material, the ideal adult the finished product, the teacher an operative, the supervisor a foreman, and the superintendent a manager, then the curriculum could be thought of as whatever processing the raw-material (the child) needed to change him into the finished product (the desired adult)."

Tyler entered the world of the curriculum when Bobbitt's ideas of social efficiency were the norm in the field. Still, he was able to devise a model that transcended social efficiency. His famous book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*—which Jackson (1992, p. 24) calls *the bible of the field*—is a collection of his suggestions to curriculum makers in their efforts of curriculum making. Tyler (1949) defines four fundamental aspects of the curriculum: (1) behavioral objectives, (2) learning experiences, (3) organization of experiences, and (4) evaluation. Tyler's model is a linear one where the process of curriculum making occurs following the predefined steps. It is also prescriptive rather than being descriptive in that it almost acts as a technological tool, a formula (Antonelli, 1972)—if you have X, Y, Z in such and such fashion, you will receive A, B, C in the form you would like to have them as a product of his model. Therefore, it has been criticized on the grounds that it stabilizes the field and treats students as raw materials to be shaped (Doll, 1993, p. 284).

Tyler invited Taba to work with him for The Eight Year Study when he met her in one of the schools that were part of the project. Her involvement with Tyler had led her to further Tyler's model for curriculum development. Taba (1962) identifies seven steps for curriculum development that resembles Tyler's formulation: (1) diagnosis of needs, (2) formulation of

objectives, (3) selection of content, (4) organization of content, (5) selection of learning experiences, (6) organization of learning experiences, and (7) determination of what to evaluate and of the ways and means of doing it. (1962, p. 12). Again, her approach to curriculum making is a step-by-step weaving of curriculum with regards to curricular decisions and choices (1962). By and large, her theory of curriculum is a guide for school workers to solve the problems they face at schools.

The first fifty years of the field, what I have called here the first span, might perhaps be best understood as a search—a search for *the one best method*. In this sense, the title of the book that Kanigel wrote, biographer of Frederick Winslow Taylor who had been a significant influence on the early scholars of the field that I have mentioned so far, makes much sense: *The One Best Way* (Kanigel, 1997). The quest to the one best method is predicated on the assumption that it is possible to devise a grand theory, which could pave the way for a functional device, a method, to make curriculum regardless of educational level, school, teacher and students—all specifications that create the context of the situation of interest. Do you need a curriculum for a group of kindergarteners in an urban middle-class environment? Apply the one best method, you will get what you are looking for. Alternatively, do you need a program for disadvantaged high-school students whose rural school has no means to support them in mathematics? The one best method is the answer. Should conditions call for a new general education program at an elite metropolitan city private university, the one best method will accomplish the job. All in all, the idea of *the one best method* had characterized the early curricular endeavors.

As the field had been in search of ways of how to develop a curriculum via *the one best method*, political and social changes presented new challenges that the field struggled to handle. Second World War changed the political structure of the world in a way that two victorious

superpowers, the United States and Soviet Russia, found themselves in a head-to-head rivalry. The fear of apocalypse at the hands of communists had become the norm in American society. The United States had to be stronger than the reds, reasoned American society, to protect democracy, freedom and capitalism against communism and socialism both at home and around the globe. Such a belief led to a cold war between Soviet Russia and the United States. In 1957, communist thread reached its climax when Soviets launched first human-made satellite, Sputnik, to space. An uproar from American society followed which resulted in the notion that America did not have the most influential educational system that would produce the greatest minds and scientists to outrun Soviets. As a result of this public dissatisfaction, National Science Foundation funded several projects to reform science curricula at American schools. However, almost exclusively, such projects were undertaken by subject-matter professors from Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, etc.—leaving curriculum scholars as curious spectators. It is in this Post-Sputnik milieu that Schwab published his *Practical 1*.

Schwab and The Practical. Schwab, as a biology professor, was one of the scientists who was asked to reform science curricula. He also had prior experiences with the field of curriculum for 30 years when he published *Practical 1* (Null, 2008). His prior experiences with the field and inability of it to deal with Post-Sputnik context had led him to diagnose some severe problems with the field. In *Practical 1*, he has three major points: (1) the field of curriculum is moribund, (2) the field came to this state because of an overreliance on theory, and (3) there will be a renaissance of the field if the curricular energies are diverted from theoretic to practical (Schwab, 1969, p. 1). In his study, he presents six signs of the crisis: (1) flight of the field itself, professionals of other fields solve problems of curriculum, (2) flight upward, talking about discourses on discourses of the field, from theory to metatheory to metametatheory and so

on, (3) flight downward, curriculum scholars return to the curricular problems without paying attention to already existing principles, in other words, in every new curricular problem, students of curriculum act like they invent the wheel again, (4) flight to the sidelines, curricularists act like historians, critics and commentators of the field, (5) perseverance on old and tried, repetition of old information in new language, and (6) *ad hominem* debates, discussions on people rather than on ideas (Schwab, 1969, pp. 3-4). He believed strongly that the field was misinformed by borrowing theories from social or behavioral sciences—theories of learning, of individuality, etc. We can summarize Schwab's discussion by altering a part of writing from J. R. R. Tolkien to the present context: "No one theory to rule them all, no one theory to find them / No one theory to bring them all, and in the darkness bind them / In the Land of Curriculum where the possibilities lie." In lay language, Schwab (1969) makes the point that curriculum makers should stop their search of theories for they do not guide us how to teach, and get to the schools to deal with practical matters. Only if the field does this, there would be a renaissance of it.

Schwab's conception of the field emanates from "Aristotle's tripartite division of the theoretical, practical, and productive forms of knowledge and John Dewey's love affair with the concept of inquiry" (Eisner, 1984, p. 202). For him, curriculum is "what is successfully conveyed to differing degrees to different students, by committed teachers using appropriate materials and actions, of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skill, taste, and propensity to act and react, which are chosen for instruction after serious reflection and communal decision by representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students who are known to the decision makers." (Schwab, 1983, p. 240). His main argument is that curriculum development is, or should better be, a process of deliberation (deliberative exchange) between what he calls commonplaces—the teacher, students, the subject matter, the milieu and the

curriculum specialist. In short, these commonplaces must deliberate, not discuss, in making of a curriculum in an individual school. Schwab's search is not for a one best method for there cannot be one since there cannot be a single all-encompassing theory. Thus, his advice is, in summary, to take specifics of a curricular situation at hand to deliberate about it.

Schwab's bold declaration in Practical 1 that the field is moribund took the field by storm, triggering many responses and discussion. For example, Huebner echoed Schwab's assertion on moribund state of the field and furthered it by saying that the field was not just moribund but was already dead as the way it had been known for fifty years, and the poor health of the field stemmed from its shift from content to other emphases (Huebner, 1976). It is possible to give accounts of many other scholars' responses to and discussion of Schwab. However, a group of scholars that came to be known as reconceptualists had their roots in Schwab's declaration of moribund-ness to assertively transform the field from its state of crisis.

Reconceptualists. In Foucauldian sense, reconceptualists are conceptual "terrorists" in that their primary aim was to deconstruct the field and reconceptualize it anew (Appelbaum, 2002, p. 7). In this sense, reconceptualists opposed almost everything that is related to the field of curriculum from its inception until to them. Pinar in particular, reconceptualists in general, heavily criticized the state of affairs in the field before them on the grounds that *raison d'être* of their curriculum work had been to help practitioners and that the primary emphasis of traditional curriculum work was on schools (Pinar, 1978a). Pinar goes onto say that the emphasis on schools and desire to help practitioners had wrongfully led the field to focus on curriculum development and development only (1978a; 1978b). The field in the traditionalist sense, thus, included concerns to guide schools with emphasis on evaluation, supervision, curriculum development and implementation above all (Pinar, 1978b). However, reconceptualists claim, the primary

interest in curriculum studies should be on *understanding* the curriculum. Therefore, they favor dense and complicated theorizing over to curriculum development. The bible of reconceptualists, *Understanding Curriculum*—if Tyler’s book is the bible of the field before reconceptualists as Jackson said (1992, p. 24), then, *Understanding Curriculum* is the bible of reconceptualization—by its rather significant name, put it bluntly: “Curriculum Development: Born: 1918. Dead: 1969.” (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 1995, p. 6).

The essence of reconceptualist thought in this light has been a total transformation of the field. It is no surprise then to see that their philosophical orientation is the exact opposite of historic curriculum studies. In this sense, reconceptualization positions itself on poststructuralism (Cherryholmes, 1987), critical theory (see e.g. Freire, 1993; Apple, 2004; Giroux, 2001a)*, feminist theory (Pinar & Miller, 1982) and other similar theoretical backgrounds that can be traced back in general to postmodernism (see Slattery, 2006). Due to this postmodernist philosophical background, reconceptualists consider curriculum as a discourse, as a text, by benefiting from the works of Foucault and Derrida. The chapters in Pinar *et al.*’s (1995) *Understanding Curriculum* attest to this. Understanding Curriculum as Historical, Political, Racial, Gender, Phenomenological, Poststructuralist, Deconstructed, Postmodern, Autobiographical/Biographical, Aesthetic, Theological, Institutionalized, International, Text.

Reconceptualization, in time, has developed into a productive and fruitful scholarship in curriculum studies. In fact, the expansion of reconceptualization has reached to the point that reconceptualists believe that it has become the field—reconceptualization is curriculum and curriculum is reconceptualist, they believe. “So what started as an opposition to the mainstream

* It is important to note that these scholars (Freire, Apple, Giroux among others) influenced reconceptualization movement to a great extent; yet, they are not primarily associated with the movement. For example, Pinar (1999, p. 486) notes that Apple rejected the term reconceptualization.

and the tradition of the field has become the field, although complicated, with several centers of focus,” claims Pinar (1999, p. 489). In that regard, for reconceptualists, the field is no longer arrested, it is no longer moribund since reconceptualization is completed (Pinar & Miller, 1982).

Reconceptualist thought holds that the field of curriculum had been misled by a tendency to focus on curriculum development with a technician mindset. There is some truth in this view, yet, I also think that the early years of the field and its seeds should be considered in the light of mass schooling that is an invention of late 19th and early 20th centuries by taking the realities of this period into consideration to do justice to the earlier periods of the field. When industrial revolution and humanitarian philosophical movements charged political powers to provide a certain level of education to the children of all citizens, states established systems of public education in which they supplied free schooling to all children. It is in this context that curriculum as a formal discipline of the study came into existence since schooling required an organization of what it is to be taught, of how what it is to be taught can be taught, of learning and teaching in general. Hence, the primary object of the curriculum is related to issues of learning and teaching in schools (Young, 2013). Curriculum is to primarily deal with schools and schooling (Westbury, 1999; Klein, 1986), design of instruction (Hlebowitsh, 1999) and providing experiences to children, in general, doing our best to make sure that students have an intellectual environment that is cherishing, academically challenging, and humanitarily engaging in schools. In that regard, I am confident that the reconceptualist agenda of understanding curriculum is eminently valuable, yet, we need more.

To explain the need for the type of the more I am suggesting here, I reiterate my point in that the field has the utmost responsibility of providing sound experiences to children. The vital point, in my opinion, is: *I see no raison d'être for curriculum field than its ability in helping*

students to have absolutely (to the extent possible) positive, rich, satisfying, individual and challenging experiences at schools. Walker (1976, p. 304), in the early days of reconceptualization, observes: “I have the disquieting feeling that to justify its continued existence, research in curriculum will have to do more than increase our comprehension of curricular realities. It may also have to create new curricular possibilities, if it and public education are to survive. Comprehension is a good first step toward improvement, but it is not enough.” The vital issue here is, nevertheless, the necessity that curriculum as text corresponds to curriculum realities; otherwise, it has no impetus of directing practice (Grimmett & Halvorson, 2010). By and large, then, it is safe to say that reconceptualization in its highly theoretical endeavors is yet, if ever, to make a positive impact on schools (Sears, 1992, p. 211), Pinar himself acknowledges this when he talks about a second wave of reconceptualization that if it ever happens, its site will be schools (1999, p. 497, note 71).

So far in my discussion, I introduced curriculum as a product to be arrived at with the help of *one best method*, as a practical deliberative process by paying particular attention to the context, and as a text to be understood through postmodernist analysis with various emphasis. The majority of these views, in one way or another, confabulate discourse on curriculum by referring to issues of formal learning. However, as Dewey said, “Perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time” (cited in Eisner, 1994, p.87). In a Durkheimian sense, schools are social facts and specialized institutions (Young, 2014) where youngsters get acquainted with not only official knowledge but also with some other learnings not specified in the official curriculum. In other words, a school is a functioning system, and students acquire more than what was officially aimed for at the beginning. This realization was mainly brought to the attention of the field by

Jackson in his influential book *Life in Classrooms*. A discussion of his main points here might bring new perspectives to my argumentation.

Life in classrooms and hidden sides. I believe that Jackson's (1968) treatise is specifically significant for the field because it centralizes school as the site of formal educational endeavors. Jackson's concentration on school is congruent with my earlier point that curriculum is inseparable from schooling. For Jackson, life in schools includes three facts of life that all students, from the youngest to the oldest, from novice to seniors, must learn to deal with.

First, schools consist of *crowds*. Classrooms, in public and even in private schools, are learning environments for not only a student but to many. The success of a single student and her quality of life in a classroom is majorly dependent upon this fact. Second, *praise* is an omnipresent element in daily movement of crowds. Although they may take different forms, schools are evaluative settings. A student might enjoy her time if her teacher says that they are going to play a game on a specific date and time, nonetheless, it might be only until that the student finds out the game she has been zealous about is in fact designed to be an evolved form of an educational activity that she might realize that she is actually being tested again—this time with a game. Third, it is the *power* that shapes and drives encounters and relationships in schools. It is obvious that there exists a clear line between teachers and students—albeit to varying degrees in different schools. Teachers, no matter how friendly and understanding they are, decide whether a student can go to the bathroom during a class, whether or not a student should repeat an activity, etc. Authority belongs to teachers as a result of being the responsible adult in the control of cultivation of students; teachers' job includes acting as a supply sergeant (p. 12).

These three qualities, “the crowds, the praise, and the power that combine to give a distinctive flavor to classroom life collectively form a *hidden curriculum* [emphasis added] which each student (and teacher) must master if he is to make his way satisfactorily through the school.” (pp. 33-34). Students are complex beings whose behaviors and actions cannot be explained and controlled by an engineering model of social science; teachers are not robots that follow a predefined set of rules to teach students; families are not ATMs that only provides money when their buttons are pressed in the right combination; finally, administrators are not automatons that monitor the effectiveness of the flow of the school; therefore, these stakeholders create a complex social organism that we call school. Schools, resembling all social organisms, aim to teach official knowledge and techniques; yet, in the process, students also acquire other knowledge just as a result of being there. At this point, I argue that it is acceptable to say that curriculum is a phenomenon of profound significance because of its hidden potential and that the context of individual schools and situations might substantively affect the amount of impact of this hidden potential. Hence, it is worthwhile to delve deeper into the effect of the context on curriculum.

The context and the educational imagination.

If there is one idea that permeates these pages, it is the belief that no single educational program is appropriate for all children, everywhere, forever. Which educational values are appropriate for children and adolescents depends on the characteristics of those the program is designed to serve, the features of the context in which they live, and the values that they and the community embrace. Further, these values and this context itself is likely to change over time. Looked at this way, the practice of education is a dynamic one, subject to change over time. This means that educators cannot rest with fixed solutions to educational problems or with “breakthroughs” that once and for all define or prescribe how and what should be done. Ours is a practical enterprise, and practical enterprises elude fixed solutions. (Eisner, 1994, p. v).

The quotation is Eisner's third paragraph in his book. In just one paragraph, Eisner, artistically and concisely, determines the main problem of the earlier thinking in the field that *one best method* is not possible in education. In addition, he also provides his substitute to the idea of *one best method*: care for context. Educational situations are singular; they are constituted of innumerable and uncountable characteristics that are composed in an almost unpredictable amount of combinations. Each student is unique, she is a cosmos by herself; each teacher is a living human being with emotions and feelings, and these two parties encounter each other in diverse settings. Thus, a teacher-proof curriculum is beyond nonsense; no educational program is valid or effective in all settings regardless of the context that makes that situation what it is. In this sense, schools are complex social institutions that cannot be explained by simple notions, which also complicates making and evaluating a school program. Finally, due to the uniqueness of each educational situation, it is the individual decisions regarding curricular undertakings that matter in the final analysis in the process of education. "Children, as all of us know, do not come in standard sizes." (Eisner, 1994, p. 7). Therefore, ready-to-be-applied, one-size-fits-all solutions, alias recipes, have not worked, do not work and will not work in curricular decision making.

In this lieu, by and large, the curriculum is mainly related to the quality of the experience a child had at a school. It is not related to a piece of paper or a lesson plan. As a result, the vital issue of curricular endeavors requires making wise, rational and effective decisions. Here lies the fundamental axiom of the field of curriculum that some schools of thought miss appreciating from time to time: Planning is a *must*. It is an *indispensable* part of curricular actions to ensure the quality of school experience for students. The curriculum is, then, "a series of planned events that are intended to have educational consequences for one or more students." (Eisner, 1994, p. 31); it is not a natural entity whose characteristics and properties we can discover just as we do

for, say, an atom or an observable organism. Such a realization leads us to the fact that absolute certainty is in the realm of arbitrary in the field of curriculum. What we have, subsequently, an ideology we attach to—it must be noted that our attachment to a single ideology or a combination of a few is never final, set and static—and some practical experience we gather as we work in the field along with “some concepts, rules of thumb, perspectives and frames of reference” (Eisner, 1994, p. 40) to find practical solutions to various problems to provide students with a school experience that is of great quality. Eisner poetically reminds us: “We are ‘condemned’ to a life of exciting uncertainty in which the flexible use of intelligence is our most potent tool” (1994, p. 41).

What does it all mean? I have spent quite a number of pages to provide a background for my use of *The Class* as a curricular tool; yet, I must admit that I am not reasonably adjacent, at this point, to conclude my main argument regarding the discussion here. Perhaps a good way to do that is to embrace a personal incident. My initiation to curriculum studies began at the beginning of my classes for my master’s degree. As enthusiastic as I was to explore this new (to me, back then) interesting field, I remember struggling with putting it into words what exactly it was that I studied. My professors, due to my lack of prior knowledge of the field, were no help; so were a couple of introductory texts that I was assigned in my classes. In fact, my earlier encounters with these sources gave me the impression that a curriculum was a printed document of behavioral objectives, learning activities and some tests to teach something to a group of students. But I just could not explain what, explicitly and specifically, a curriculum was and what my involvement with the field encapsulated. One day, in the midst of this despair, I found myself in a conversation with an acquaintance of a friend of mine, who, upon finding out that I began my master’s in curriculum, asked what it is that we, curriculum people, study for he, although

specialized in another area, has been curious about it. I could have been just blatantly honest and told the gentleman that I had no idea. However, being a part of academia has this strange aura; as a young master student, I was too arrogant to accept that I did not know. I remember murmuring a couple of sentences that we, curriculum people, write objectives and devise tests.

I must admit that although my conception of the field has changed tremendously from a list of objectives as a result of studying the field so far and I am now more confident to talk about the field, I am still not so quite sure to how to explain it. What is it that we call the curriculum? It is not a document of a list of objectives! What does a curriculum person do? Not stating observable behavior changes! In a situation like this, one starts to doubt his intellectual capabilities. Is it just me who suffers from this enigma of being a student of a field for a while and yet not being able to describe thickly (see Geertz, 1973) what it is? Fortunately, along my journey, I observed that I was not the only one who suffers from the conundrum of the field. The revelation revealed itself when I read Posner's *Analyzing the Curriculum* who presents his encounter with a novice student, Peter, in one Posner's graduate level curriculum class:

Recently, a graduate student named Peter came to my class, told me he was very frustrated, and then said this to me: 'I'm totally confused! I came to Cornell to find out how to make curriculum decisions, and all I am learning is that different experts have different answers to basic questions. Now I have more problems than when I started. What are we supposed to do when the so-called experts disagree?'

My initial response to Peter was that he was discovering something inherent in the field of curriculum—and something inescapable about education, for that matter—that others share his frustration, and that he would have to learn to deal with this lack of absolute certainty if he planned to continue with his graduate studies. (Posner, 1995, pp. 3-4).

Posner, after reflecting on “the curse of studying curriculum,” goes on to state that curriculum has been linguistically employed to refer to six different connotations in relation to six concepts that are part of life in schools: “(1) scope and sequence: the depiction of curriculum

as a matrix of objectives assigned to successive grade levels (i.e. sequence) and grouped according to a common theme (i.e. scope), (2) syllabus: a plan for an entire course, typically including rationale, topics, resources, and evaluation, (3) content outline: a list of topics covered organized in outline form, (4) textbooks: instructional materials used as the guide for classroom instruction, (5) course of study: a series of courses that the student must complete, and (6) planned experiences: all experiences students have that are planned by the school, whether academic, athletic, emotional, or social.” (Posner, 1995, pp. 5-11, see Table 1.1 on p. 11).

It is quite possible to trace the change in my thinking on the field that it has moved from the first connotation (remember my encounter with the acquaintance) to the sixth one (the point that I referred to recursively in my discussion that the prime function of any curriculum should be providing positive experiences to students it was made for—this experience theme is quite apparent in Eisner’s thinking as well). Now, I can conclude my argument on *The Class* as a curriculum.

It must have occurred to my reader that in my discussion, the tone of writing when I wrote about Schwab and Eisner took a more passionate direction whereas it was closer to being neutral at other times. I believe that this change in tone hints at the fact that these two scholars significantly influence my theoretical formulation here. Said another way, I employ a Schwabian-Eisnerian conceptual base here. This base induces two aspects to my discussion. First, Schwab’s emphasis of making a distinction between theoretical and practical, and placing most of curricular efforts on practical to solve ordinary problems of places of learning (it is my hope that the term “places of learning” is of a general meaning and it refers to any place that formal learning occurs including schools) instead of exhausting such efforts for theories that do not guide teaching clarifies that a curriculum must provide a real opportunity for learning,

regardless of subject matter, to happen, either as in the form of solving a problem that impedes learning or in the form of a general plan that would lead to learning. Second, we can infer from Eisner's rightful invitation to pay attention to the notion that curriculum is not a *universal* concept; rather, it is a *context-specific* one—the educational situation at hand in a curricular process dictates what basic properties a curriculum, as an ontological thing, carry. I think that at this point an ontological approach to this issue could be informative.

Ontologically, an object, any object for that matter, is said to have some properties in an ontological system called *basic modal characterization*. Such properties converge to two types. An *essential* property is the one that an object has to have to belong to the group of objects that it is identified with. It is usually expressed with the modal verb *must*. On the other hand, an *accidental* property is something that an object might have but not necessarily so to be able to be considered in the group of concept that it is believed to belong to. It is referred to with verb *could*. (Robertson & Atkins, 2016). For instance, what makes a human a human? Humanness is the general concept that basic modal characterization includes where each human being is an instance of humanness. One can argue that being a human accompanies having essential properties that make a human a human whereas accidental properties might be there, but their absence does not necessarily disqualify a human from being a human. A person must have begotten by two humans to be a human, that is his *essential* property whereas he has not to, let us say, have hair for having it is an *accidental* property to be a human. In a similar manner, what makes a curriculum a curriculum ontologically? What are its essential and accidental properties? I answer immediately: The two points I referred to previously that originate from Schwab and Eisner in my formulation here induce one essential declaration for curriculum. It is that a curriculum *has to teach in a formal setting as a planned activity*! Let me repeat. *A curriculum*

must have the essential property of being able to teach regardless of subject matter and level by paying attention particularities of a unique case it deals at a time.

Here one can find my assertion that a film can be a curricular tool. Returning to Eisner, a curriculum is an event that is planned to result with some educational consequences (1994). As I touched on earlier in Introduction chapter of this study, although it is true that a cinema film is made, first and foremost, for artistic and entertainment purposes, films are also complex social phenomena that transcend aesthetic concerns. Put blatantly, films not only entertain but also can teach (Giroux, 2008; Silberman-Keller, Bekerman, Giroux & Burbules, 2008). In the words of Frymer, Kashani, Nocella II & Van Heertum (2010, p. 3), “cinema ruptures while it confirms, critiques while it transcends, and reinforces as it recants. Film is a teaching machine (Giroux, 2002), a medium of communication, and also a complex art form (Kashani, 2009)”. What’s more, “Carlos Cortes (1995) notes that as part of ‘societal curriculum,’ films ‘have a major impact in shaping beliefs, attitudes, values, perceptions, and knowledge and influencing decisions and action. In short, movies teach.’ (p. 75).” (Yosso & Garcia, 2010, p. 85).

I must note, however, that my intent in the assertion on the educative capability of films is not to generalize, i.e., I claim not that any film can be a curricular tool since it is axiomatically apparent that only some films carry essential property of teaching in relation with the content they deal with. In this context, *The Class* can be a curricular tool in the education of future teachers since it has the essential property of teaching. I will expand the discussion on the essential property of teaching of *The Class*—i.e., how and what it teaches—in the next chapter when I provide my curricular reading of it.

There remains only one issue I should scrutinize here. It relates to connotations of curriculum that Posner proposes. One might maintain that *The Class* should be taken as learning

material in a curriculum or as an aid to the learning process. Verily, it is the case that a number of scholars in the field employ one or more films in their instruction treating films as instructional aids (more on the use of films in education will appear in Literature Review section of this chapter). I reply. My treatment of *The Class* in this study is inspired by the sixth connotation of curriculum Posner suggests. That is, *The Class*, in this study, is a planned experience that is intended to have educational consequences for students, in this case, prospective teachers.

Now that I have dealt with the first pillar of the theoretical framework of the study to my ability, it is time to move to the second. I have talked a great deal about that *The Class* can teach. However, how does a film teach what it claims to teach? Is there a theoretical mechanism in which a film invites its spectators to be a part of the universe it creates? Such and similar considerations will constitute the second pillar of the framework.

A short discussion of some of film theories. The critical point that I would like to make here is that a film creates a universe that is not obliged to follow the dynamics of real everyday life. In other words, a film presents its spectators with characters, a story and a plot in the realm of a universe that it creates. These characters experience this universe that is distinctive to that film and to that film only. In this sense, it manipulates our everyday realities to individually give us something to make us sense, perceive, feel, and, in the case of the study at hand, learn. Said another way, “the cinema does something strangely paradoxical. It makes a molding of the object as it exists in time and, furthermore, makes an imprint of the duration of the object” (Bazin, 2009b, p. 346). At this point, consideration of real life and the so-called virtual life that film portrays becomes inevitable as organized in a cinema theory known as cinematic realism.

Issues regarding cinematic realism have been a concern and an aspect to study for film theorists for a long time. Of all theorists of such sort concerned with realism, Bazin, Comolli, and Bordwell and Staiger should be specifically noted. Manovich provides an excellent summary of these scholars' views on realism (Manovich, 2002). Perhaps, the most important critic on realism in cinema, especially for this study, is Bazin for whom reality in film refers to "the reconstruction of a perfect illusion of the outside world in sound, color and relief" (2009a, p. 165). He, moreover, adds that humankind's desire for a true and comprehensive representation of reality in artistic pieces existed in every human's heart even before the technological tools to do so were invented. The same is true for cinema as well. Cinema existed in the hearts of artists even before the necessary technological devices were invented. Bazin (2009a) goes onto say that cinema has been a myth. For him, just as Icarus stands as a myth for human's desire to fly, mimesis has been a myth for total cinema. The idea of true and complete representation of reality has been happening step by step out of original myth with every new technological advancement. Bazin (2009a) discusses:

If the origins of an art reveal something of its nature, then one may legitimately consider the silent and the sound film as stages of a technical development that little by little made a reality out of the original "myth" ... The real primitives of the cinema, existing only in the imaginations of a few men of the nineteenth century, are in complete imitation of nature. Every new development added to the cinema must, paradoxically, take it nearer and nearer to its origins. In short, cinema has not yet been invented! (p. 166).

Little by little, as new advancements and betterment of the cinematic technology and tools allow, the myth of total cinema will become a reality. Therefore, for Bazin (2009a), total cinema is the one without any auditory and visual lack in its recreation of reality and which spectators can experience in the same way as they would experience the events depicted in the

film in real life. Then, I believe that it is fair enough to remark that Bazin's (2009a) total cinema is a projection real of life on a cinematic medium that a viewer would not tell the difference between it and the real life.

Although there have been advancements in cinematic technology since Bazin's days, it is quite apparent that Bazin's (2009a) idea of total cinema has been not achieved yet; *ergo*, his notion that cinema is yet to be invented. Why do I borrow his theoretical formulation here then? What I aim to achieve from discussing Bazin's ideas is that reality of cinema, in the sense of persuasiveness, comes in a spectrum. Even though the myth of total cinema is yet to be arrived, available cinema films and mediums provide spectators with a type of reality that they can experience to fulfill their purpose of watching a film, in this study: to reflect and learn.

One crucial mistake in the theoretical formulation here would be to assume that the value of a cinema film only stems from its ability to represent reality by just recording everyday life and project it to the screen. Nothing could be further away from the truth. Foremost, a cinema film is a piece of art. It can, to the best of available technologies' ability, but does not have to, reflect the real life exactly as it happens. For example, a scholar with whom I have had many exchanges on *The Class* and from whom learned a great deal on cinema and its history raised a concern that a scene toward the end of the film does not make a good job of persuading the audience. She meant to say that a student character's declaration in *The Class* that she read Plato's *Republic* at home could not be the case in real life since almost exclusively students arrive a level of maturation to read such challenging philosophical works when they are at college. My response to the scholar was that the issue regarding this concern is not whether the representation of a character's actions would seem plausible or not; rather, what is vital is *what* the representation of this character yields to spectators to make sense of. Robert C. Allen and

Douglas Gomery observe: “Formative theorists (Hugo Munsterberg, Sergei Eisenstein, and Rudolph Arnheim, among others) argued, however, that so long as the cinema did nothing more than record the visible world, it could never aspire to the level of art. The formativists maintained that in order to become an art, the cinema must go beyond mere mechanical reproduction. Film, they said, should not copy reality, but change it so that it is distinct from nature or visible reality.” (1985, pp .68-69). I, for the purposes of this study, position myself somewhere in between these two ends: realism and formativism. In sum, I assert that *The Class* supplies a to-some-extent manipulated version of everyday realities of schools to spectators to involve them in it to make sense of it as an act of active of (visual) reading.

The process of how a film involves spectators in the universe that it creates deserves some attention as well. The pivotal concept in the involvement process is identification. Suppose a person who is a huge fan of Superman. This person never misses any film that Superman appears and enjoys seeing his favorite character in action on the screen. Imagine another individual who cares more for Sherlock Holmes than Superman. The second one even applies Sherlock’s character traits on herself; she acts like Sherlock in her daily encounters. What makes the former to praise Superman, the latter to Sherlock? Blatantly, the answer is, in my opinion, that the first person identifies himself with Superman while the second one identifies with Sherlock; this is what has been referred to as *spectator identification* in the literature. To elucidate the assertion I just made, I have to discuss another French cinema critic here, Christian Metz (the first one of this sort here was Bazin).

Metz’s formulation rests on two concepts; the first one is the idea of the mirror stage and the other one is semiotics. Here, I will focus on the former rather than the latter. Lacan discussed and popularized the concept of *mirror stage* in his psychoanalytic theory. Mirror stage, Lacan

asserts, is a stage in the life of an early infant that begins to take place at around when the infant is six-months-old. During that time, the infant sees an external image of the body, either in the mirror or represented to her by the mother (or primary caregiver). However, the image that the infant perceives is, in essence, a misrecognition for the whole identity is yet to be formed.

Nevertheless, the infant's identification with a fragmented self (chaotic body) paves the way for the identification with the Ideal-I and helps to constitute ego. In Lacan's words: "What I have called the mirror stage is interesting in that it manifests the affective dynamism by which the subject originally identifies himself with the visual Gestalt of his own body: in relation to the still very profound lack of co-ordination of his own motility, it represents an ideal unity, a salutary imago; it is invested with all the original distress resulting from the child's intra-organic and relational discordance during the first six months, when he bears the signs, neurological and humoral, of a physiological natal prematuration." (2006/1966, pp. 18-19). It is easy to see the mirror stage's appeal to Metz; for him, the spectator sees an *I* in a film to which she identifies herself with. He reminds:

Thus film is like the mirror. But it differs from the primordial mirror in one essential point: although, as in the latter, everything may come to be projected, there is one thing and one thing only that is never reflected in it: the spectator's own body. In a certain emplacement, the mirror suddenly becomes clear glass. (Metz, 2009, p. 696).

The mirror suddenly becomes clear glass since the image reflected on the screen misses one crucial element: the spectator. The spectator is in the position of being *all-perceiving*: "absent from the screen, but certainly present in the auditorium, a great eye and ear without which the perceived would have no one to perceive it, the instance, in other words, which constitutes the *cinema signifier* (*it is I who make the film*) [emphasis mine]." (Metz, 2009, p. 697). Cinema has the peculiar power of including an alien, the spectator, in the story: "the

spectator's identification with the camera is mediated through an engagement with the unfolding of the story.” (Gunning, 1989, p. 9). Metz continues: “In other words, the spectator *identifies with himself*, with himself as a pure act of perception (as wakefulness, alertness): as the condition of possibility of the perceived and hence as a kind of transcendental subject, which comes before every *there is* [emphasis in the original text]. (2009, p. 697).

I highlight that through the process of *spectator identification* preservice teachers are presented to a school-life universe in *The Class* that is pretty much similar to their upcoming everyday life at schools, that their engagement with the film might help them to experience working as a teacher, and that such engagement might be instructive and helpful to them. As a note, before I close this section, I believe that it is worthwhile to mention that Metz's spectatorship theory is also heavily influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure's version of semiotics, and that de Saussure's approach to semiotics have been massively criticized by some theorists, especially in reading studies (e.g., Dressman, 2016). However, my focus on Metz in this study has been on his ideas related to spectator identification as a reinterpretation of Lacan's *mirror stage* rather than his discussion of watching a film as an act of reinterpretation of semiotic signs in a de Saussure-ian sense. Therefore, presently, I leave that discussion untouched. Now, I think that it is time to examine what the previous scholarship has to say about the use of cinema films in education, specifically in the education of pre-professional teachers.

Literature Review

My literature review for this study has a history dating back to at least two years. It was back then when it became clear to me in my mind that I would study cinema films in education—*The Class* in particular—with a curriculum theory focus in my dissertation. Ever since that

revelation, I have been engaging myself with the literature on this or similar points. As a result of this engagement, I have decided to organize this literature review into four main sections here. In the first one, I shall have a broad look into how the literature studies cinema films with educational themes, i.e., school films, to understand what themes and issues arise from such studies. I hope that this section will give the readers clues on how school films represent daily life at schools, how they represent teachers as well as students, and consequently, why I have decided to focus on *The Class*. In the second section, I shall concentrate on the use of cinema films in education in general, i.e., without focusing on a discipline or a level to observe how scholars from a variety of disciplines of education employ cinema films in their studies. The third section shall summarize specifically scholars' use of films in the education of preservice teachers. In the last section, I shall detail scholars' treatment of *The Class* in the literature of various disciplines in addition to education.

A prudent look at school films. The first issue that I must touch upon in this first main section is the term school films. Ever since cinema became a distinctive art of its own, separated from its older counterparts such as theater and literature in the early 1900s, there have been films that have had educational themes in them whether these are main- or sub-elements. However, although other film types evolved into stable genres such as western, crime, psychological thrillers, etc., it is somehow problematic to speak of a distinctive genre of films with educational themes compared to well-established and thoroughly studied genres (for more on the genre issue of films with educational themes see Haulman, 1994). As a result, it seems that there is not even a basic agreement among scholars on what term to use when they refer to cinema films that present spectators with educational themes.

In cinema studies, the concept of genre is a controversial issue (Dalton, 2010) since there are no clear-cut norms or principles that one can use to categorize films, and since any cinema film can encompass principles and aspects of other genres. In this milieu, my intent is referring to this issue is to acknowledge that I am aware of it. However, I must also remark that I am not interested in carrying out a cinema study to deal with the genre issue of films with educational themes. Said another way, I shall not dwell on a cinematic genre study in what follows in the rest of the study. Rather, my intent on referring to this issue is specifically twofold. First, it is to note that I use the term *school films* in this study to refer to feature cinema films that present daily school life to spectators and that portrays common elements of this life in them such as students, teachers, administrators, etc., and that, in general, as a result, evoke in spectators a tendency, through identification with characters, to get involved in discussions of educational and curricular issues. My focus in this study, *The Class*, is one of the school films. Second, it is to paint a general picture of what I term here as school films for I believe that such a panorama would give my readers a chance to see my motivation in focusing on *The Class* specifically.

Regarding school films, the literature review reveals that they generally come with a set of said similar elements. In the process, they create myths about teachers and schooling:

Teacher the great. Over the years, school films created a myth known as the Great Teacher. Teachers in school films save all their students or display superhuman devotion to their profession to change their students' life. Take Jaime Escalante (Edward James Olmos) of *Stand and Deliver* (1988) as an example. He works sixty hours a week, volunteers to teach English to elders in the night school, is present in the class for his students just two days after he had a mild heart attack, and in around two years of work, has his 18 students to pass Advanced Placement Test. Noteworthy to mention is that some of his students could not work on the multiplication

table at the beginning. Mark Thackeray (Sidney Poitier) of *To Sir, With Love* (1967), John Keating (Robin Williams) of *Dead Poets Society* (1989), among many others, share same or very similar superhuman characteristics (on great teacher myth, see Farhi, 1999; Heilman, 1991; Thomsen, 1993; Wells & Serman, 1998).

They don't need no education. Mark Thackeray is an engineer rather than a teacher. Still, he is the one to transform his students of all actual teachers in the school. Like Thackeray, LouAnne Johnson (Michelle Pfeiffer) of *Dangerous Minds* (1995) have no educational background in teaching nor any experience of it—she used to be a marine. However, she is, perhaps, the best teacher her students have had in their educational lives as this film portrays it. Bill Rago (Danny DeVito) of *Renaissance Man* (1994) has neither any teacher education nor experience in the profession but has a master's degree in another field. Still, he can teach Hamlet to the students in the military! In *Teachers* (1984), Herbert Gower (Richard Mulligan) is more than a not-a-teacher: he is a patient of a mental institution! Not surprisingly, he is the only one in the entire school that motivates students to learn. By and large, it seems that Hollywood tells us that teaching is not a profession that requires any formal education or experience. Anybody can teach with high success ratios. Considering near zero professional success of actual teachers in Hollywood school films, it can be said that a degree in education even deteriorates one's ability to teach (on this myth, see Burbach & Figgins, 1993).

The art of being a principal lies in...well... nothing. This myth is at core related to super teacher myth. In his or her conquest to save every student, the super teacher opposes fellow teachers, but most importantly the authorities represented mainly by an incompetent or hateful principal. Eugene Horn (William Schallert) is one clueless principal in *Teachers* (1984) that he prefers to close his door and hide inside when he witnesses a problem just outside his office.

George Grandey (Courtney B. Vance) would not listen to one of his students on a life and death matter since the student failed to knock on the door in *Dangerous Minds*. In short, possibly to increase the dramatic effect, the principal has to be an obstacle for the hero teacher to deal with in education genre (see Wells & Serman, 1998).

Get that kid, the rest will be yours. Emilio (Wade Dominguez) in *Dangerous Minds*, Angel David Guzman (Lou Diamond Phillips) in *Stand and Deliver* (1988), Eddie (Ralph Macchio) in *Teachers* (1994) and their likes are the toughest, the coolest, the most problematic guys in the student body whom the super teacher needs to save. To reach to the rest of the kids, the super teacher must conquer the fort that is the gang leader since the rest of the students eventually follow him.

In terms of the myths I have discussed so far, Dalton (2013) argues:

As part of that established form, a set of common characteristics defines the good teacher in movies; I have termed this the Hollywood Model, and I outlined the traits in *The Hollywood Curriculum: Teachers in the Movies* (ch. 2). This model constructs the good teacher as an outsider not liked by other teachers, someone involved with students on a personal level, someone who learns from students, someone who personalizes the curriculum to meet everyday needs in students' lives, and someone who experiences conflict with administrators. The Hollywood Model of the good teacher is immediately recognizable to anyone who has watched many American films because of the iconic stature accorded these characters... (p. 80).

All in all, in my interpretation, *The Class* does not further these myths about teaching and schooling. What it offers instead of these is a fresh and provocative as well as engaging approach to curricular and instructive issues encapsulated in daily schooling in a middle school. For this reason, I am convinced that it deserves the attention of a research study as here for it has the potential to contribute to the literature.

General use of films in education. I maintain that I have come across four types of studies in general in the literature as a result of my literature review that I shall portray in this section. The classification I assert here is not meant to be final and valid in all cases. Nor is it of a hierarchical nature. Rather, it is my reading and interpretation of the literature. Hence, the four types of studies I suggest here are the main themes that stood out to me as a result of my engagement with the field. These four types are (1) Films as instructional materials, (2) Analysis of films as plot descriptions, (3) Omnipresent theoretical lenses to read films, and (4) Quantifying Films. Let me investigate each one of these, respectively. I should remark that my review here shall be mainly descriptive, aimed at, in a sense, reportage, yet, it would be absurd to try to conceal that at some points it shall take a form of criticism.

Films as instructional materials. In the first type are the studies where films serve as aids to instruction, i.e., a tool to impart knowledge on students. In this conception, a film is an instructional aide, a supplementary teaching material. Films as instructional aides have been either employed or their potential discussed in a variety of disciplines such as science teaching (Efthimiou & Llewellyn, 2004), philosophy (Gold, Revill, & Haigh, 1996; Asma, 1999; Cooke, 2004; Carroll, 2006; Bassham & Austin, 2008; Fildes, 2008; Kerruish, 2013), history (Sprau, 2001), psychology (Dorris & Ducey, 1978; Fleming, Piedmont, Hiam, 1990; Anderson, 1992; Conner, 1996; Bluestone, 2000), political sciences (Lowery, 2002), social work (Liles, 2007), various branches of medical education (Bhagar, 2005; Henry & Newman, 2009; Klemenc-Ketis & Kersnik, 2011; Darbyshire & Baker, 2012; Gorrington & Loy, 2014), etc. These are the studies that scholars show a scene of a film or a whole feature to, say, e.g., discuss a physical concept. Alternatively, teachers assign students to watch a film on their own and to be prepared to discuss

it in class. In what follows, I will examine one study from each discipline I just mentioned to elucidate how these studies employ films in education.

Efthimiou and Llewellyn (2004) aimed to improve public understanding of the basic principles of physical science. This new approach, *Physics in Films*, used popular films to illustrate the principles of physical science, analyzing individual scenes against the background of the fundamental physical laws of mechanics, electricity, optics, and so on. In this study, the authors employed an interpretive approach where they collected data from 1600 students who gave instant answers to the questions authors posed as a part of the research. Authors compared these data with a traditional Physics course that they taught. Main findings indicated that there was a significant improvement in terms of student achievement with *Physics in Films*. Meanwhile, 92% of all students agreed that they learned something from the course while 84% of them found the films interesting. A vital point to note about this study is that authors only used a questionnaire, which could only yield participants' opinions about the effect of films on their learning. In other words, the study presented the results of a small questionnaire instead of getting involved with the phenomena in a more profound way.

Kerruish (2013) is another scholar who also made use of films in her teaching. She argued that an increasing number of students take philosophy courses in their undergraduate education and their instructors face many challenges when they try to help them. She also made the point that using films in the teaching of philosophy is a well-known means of helping students to engage with the philosophical discussions in the class. She approached the issue of employing films in philosophy education with an emphasis on the emotional engagement of students with the films that are shown to them in the classroom. Also, she shared her personal experiences with students when she used films to promote philosophical learning. Finally, she

concluded her study by vitalizing the point that one should choose films that students can feel emotionally connected to since this connection might help students to question their positions and beliefs, thus, encouraging philosophical thinking. Kerruish's study is philosophical, i.e., Kerruish provides her views and reflections on the usage of films in philosophy education.

Sprau (2001) noted that traditional history survey courses suffer from what the majority of history courses suffer: being boring. As a remedy for that, he argued in the study that entertainment has been an inseparable part of American culture, and for that reason, he advocated that history survey courses should incorporate films with historical themes into their curriculum to be more appealing to students. In doing so, he used Kolb's experiential learning theory to inform the process of involvement of films in history survey courses. In addition, he provided an example activity that is organized in accordance with the views he defended in the study. Similar to the other studies I have reviewed so far, Sprau's study is, too, a personal persuasive treatise that recommends employment of films on the grounds that it would be better than not employing films in instruction.

Fleming, Piedmont and Hiam (1990) developed an interdisciplinary course where they included feature films to teach psychology at Boston University. In the process, instructors first lectured on the topic and then screened a film that was related to the discussion. Then, a class discussion on the film and its related themes to topic followed. Discussion process included three phases: (1) In this phase, students were encouraged to talk about the film in general and what they felt about the film, (2) instructors tried to link students' first reflections and feelings to the topic, and (3) they tried to link the readings and the film to the topic. At the end of the class, students completed a 10-item questionnaire that focused on knowledge of mental illnesses and depiction of these illnesses in cinema. Results of the study have shown, researchers argued, that

the films and the course provided an intense depiction of posttraumatic stress syndromes, substance abuse, antisocial behaviors and depressive behaviors.

Lowery (2002) offered an example of the use of a film in teaching political issues. Specifically, his study upheld use of Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) to discuss the issues and problems that occurred as a result of cold war and Soviet nuclear threat in America in the early 1960s. His discussion included a synopsis of the film, and suggestions for a classroom project centered around the film including objectives for the classroom project, the historical background for the project, the characters in the film, time frame for class activities, the class procedure, and extension activities. In short, his study is a step-by-step lesson plan to screen the film. A very similar approach and conclusion to Lowery can also be found in Bostock (2011); this time the film was *5 Fingers* (1952), and the main discussion theme was spying during World War 2. These studies are other examples of how scholars advocate incorporating films into teaching where their presumptions inform their approach.

Liles (2007) published a study in which the aim was to describe how clips from feature films could be used in class to engage students, stimulate discussion, and introduce skill-building exercises in a social work education class. He finished his paper by providing a sample assignment as well as general limitations and technical issues. Liles discussed that feature films or selected clips from them can be fruitful in social work education. In addition, he also included some films that could be used in social work classes. He provided details and explanations for each film he included in the article. Again, Liles's study is an interpretive one where he speaks of his experiences and thoughts. Hence, there are not any results from empirical research in the article.

Klemenc-Ketis and Kersnik (2011) conducted a study in which they analyzed qualitative data collected from a group of eight female fourth-year medical students at University of Maribor, Slovenia to (1) “test the relevance and usefulness of movies in teaching professionalism to fourth year medical students and, (2) assess the impact of this teaching method on students' attitudes towards some professionalism topics.” (p. 2). They discussed that films are in fact controlled environments where students could question their values, beliefs, and attitudes toward various aspects of professionalism that their future job entails without the feeling of threat to their work integrity. The research has concluded that using films to teach professionalism proved to be relevant and useful in the realm of the study.

It would be informative to recapitulate what has emerged from this subsection up to now, in a form of epitome, before moving to the next one. First and foremost, it seems that films, in this type of studies, are taken to be supplementary instructional materials, which are employed to engage students with the subject or to motivate them. Secondly, it emerges that although the disciplines show great variety, the approaches that scholars take in their use of cinema in instruction demonstrate a high level of resemblance, i.e., a film or a scene is presented to highlight main points or to start a discussion. Thirdly, cinema's contribution is almost exclusively accepted *a priori*. Fourthly and lastly, I claim that this subsection hints at the need for more empirical research on the use of cinema in education since the review at hand suggested that there is a lack of empirical research since, as I already mentioned, a number of studies present persuasive arguments instead of empirical data.

Analysis of films as plot descriptions. A second type of studies in education about the use of films is through the efforts of scholars when they attempt to analyze a group of films. For

example, Bulman (2004), in his study of high-school films, divided such films into three categories, i.e. urban public, suburban public and private high school films, to demonstrate that American culture is predicated on individualism that emanates from Protestantism, that social classes of this culture reflect societal expectations from high school students, and that Hollywood high school films auspiciously portray this culture and its expectations. Bulman's study is an extensive sociological effort where he analyzes 177 school films where he treats them as "cultural texts." (Bulman, 2004, p. 3). However, other scholars criticized his study. Dalton wrote: "Overall, his work is useful as a sociological tool. But Bulman views the films in a way I find a bit reductive because he fails to address the competing messages within and among the films he surveys..." (2010, p. 30).

Bulman's critic Dalton, in her book, *The Hollywood Curriculum: Teachers in the Movies*, strived to identify Hollywood school films' portrayal and treatment of teachers, i.e., Hollywood's curriculum of teachers. She employs critical theory as her lens to accentuate that Hollywood's teachers can be identified by using Huebner's "value frameworks:" technical, scientific, (a)esthetic, political and ethical. First two of value frameworks reflect undesirable, bad teachers whereas remaining three connote "hero" teachers. Though, just as Dalton criticized Bulman's study for being reductive, Trier criticized her study. He (2001a, p. 66) writes: "Dalton offers very little beyond simple summaries of scenes in which the teachers exhibit these "good" and "bad" behaviors, so anyone interested in clever or insightful readings of the films—or interested in seeing the films taken up in some unusual way—will be disappointed."

In *Hollywood Films about Schools: Where Race, Politics, and Education Intersect*, Ronald E. Chennault (2006) attempted to study racial representations as well as pedagogical themes in a small set of school films by paying specific attention to issues that were popular

between 1980 to 2000. His study is particularly valuable since he attends to what he terms—borrowing it from Cortés (1992 cited in Chennault, 2006, p. 151)—“movie curriculum,” which refers to specific things that films teach to their spectators. In a sense, I believe that the concept of movie curriculum in Chennault’s treatise refers to the myths I examined earlier. Other research that I consider to be in this second type where the analysis linger over plot descriptions are Wells and Serman’s (1998) chapter in *Imaging Education The Media and Schools in America*, Ayers’ chapter (2001) in *Images of Schoolteachers in America*, Burbach and Figgins (1993), Farhi (1999). For the sake of brevity, I will not discuss the details of these latter studies since the former ones I already discussed to some detail are quite representative of this subsection.

In general, such studies aim at providing an analysis of a group school films. It is usually the case for these studies to treat school films as cultural texts where the aim of *reading* these texts is to arrive at common themes that emerge from the process. It should be mentioned as well that emergent themes are exclusively unique to each reading. Moreover, it appears that each reading is, one way or another, constructed from the conceptual framework (theoretical background) that the scholar judges to be suitable. Thus, such studies as examined here provides a diverse set of discussions on school films that are very valuable to the literature.

Omnipresent theoretical lenses to read films: Some scholars’ use of theoretical background in their readings of school films is more apparent than the last type. I allude to ever-present theoretical approaches here. By and large, such studies predetermine their verdict on films mainly with their theoretical lenses. Said another way, instead of putting *film(s)* at the foreground of the study, authors of such studies treat film(s) to purport that their theoretical background is justified for film(s) at hand is an example proving it. For instance, Giroux (1997) vehemently

discusses that *Dangerous Minds* (1995) is a racist film by basing his arguments on critical pedagogy to which he is a known-admirer. I do not, in any way, claim that Giroux's points on this film are untrue or unjustified; instead, I do think that his critical pedagogical orientation pretty much decides what he would say about the film. Put another way, he is, in his approach to the film, more preoccupied with his orientation to critical pedagogy than what the film would deliver if he had approached it from another perspective. Another example of this type is Bauer (1998) who as a scholar of Women Studies let her feminist background voice be heard throughout her analysis of school films. I should remark here that I do realize an entirely objective approach to a film is impossible and that I, in no way, assert that it is, as a rule, desirable. Nevertheless, I believe that a total devotion to any particular -ism or -isms—theoretical absolutism (Chennault, 2006)—may venture comprehensive understanding of school films.

Quantifying films. In the fourth and final type, there are researchers that have been trying to statisticize films on education. Schwartz (1964), for example, studied an extensive list of school films that appeared on the big screen between 1931-1961 to report how they depict education. Doing so, he shares, for example, the percentages of films that depict teachers favorably or unfavorably. Crume (1988) aimed at discovering images of teachers in films and literature that debuted between 1980-1987. Like Schwartz, Crume reports the percentages or other types of numbers of or about her sample films. Such research grounds itself on statistical data, hence, may enhance our understanding of the *representation* of elements of school films; yet, they are short of answering vital *why* questions behind such representations.

Specific use of cinema films in education of preservice teachers. More and more, researchers use films in education of preservice teachers (see e.g. Brunner, 1991; Trier, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007; Nugent & Shaunessy, 2003; Fontaine, 2010; Kaşkaya, Ünlü, Akar & Özturan Sağırılı, 2011; Ryan & Townsend, 2012). This scholarship on the use of films with preservice teachers attest that the majority of them use films as supplementary materials for discussions and reflection in addition to classroom readings (Giroux, 1994 as cited in Trier, 2001a; Giroux, 2008; Trier, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007; Nugent & Shaunessy, 2003; Fontaine, 2010). In this subsection, I shall provide a review of these studies.

A closer examination of this scholarship reveals that some of the studies I investigated aim primarily at portraying in how school films portray teachers. It has been long argued that cinema is the recreation of real life on a screen. The characters we see on the screen and their portrayal essentially stem from real human beings that constitute the society in which the specific film of consideration is produced. Said another way, it is the society in which the film is produced that gives the production its essential characteristics. For example, a Hollywood production is usually a depiction of the American way of life whereas a French production mimics the French one. What is more, this relationship is cyclical. The way that characters are depicted in a film shapes the society's perception of that specific type of characters. Peculiarly, a school film's characterization of teachers is built upon how teachers are perceived to be in real schools by filmmakers; similarly, how teachers are presented in cinema guides society's perception of teachers. That cinema with its powerful visual depiction affects society's perception of certain things is beyond doubt. For instance, Dowd (2012) carried out a research to examine how American films of the 1990s portray public secondary schools and educators in terms of such questions pertaining to the learning environments, the portrayal of educators and

students, the academic life, etc. where she concluded that negative depictions outrun positive ones. Similarly, Gilbert (2014) investigates the constructed image of female teachers as shown in Hollywood films whereas Tan (2000) benefits from previous literature to reiterate that films reflect the trends of the society in which the production occurs (see also Grobman II, 2002; Cook, 2013). Besides, there are some studies in which the portrayal of teacher images in films is taken under investigation by examining teachers' views instead of analyses of researchers (Rosen, 2004). The portrayal matter is, I maintain, inherently related to the teacher myths that I previously claimed that school films create. Altogether, hence, I find analyses that aim at understanding such portrayals and depictions quite beneficial for the field. Nevertheless, my aims in the study are not related to an analysis of portrayals. Therefore, I will not go into details of such studies since I have already acknowledged them.

In a previous section of the review, I have made the point that a number of scholars who employ films in their teaching treat films as supplementary instructional materials. I assert that a similar fashion is also the case in using films for the education of teachers. In other words, films are fruitful sources materials for preprofessional teachers to help them to learn a specific area of knowledge such as historical thinking (Buchanan, 2012), conscientization (Slaner, 2004), reflective practice and social change (Butler, 2000) or to acquire skills, e.g. diversity and professionalism (Townsel, 2015) or as a professional development activity (Flynn, 2007; Regina, 2008).

A final theme I shall include in this subsection of the review is about the actual ways (i.e., precise methods) how scholars present films to preservice teachers in their education with relation to written texts for I believe that the lessons that I can learn from doing so might illuminate my study. For me, it is apparent from the literature that scholars generally include

films in their teaching in addition to written texts (Giroux, 1994 as cited in Trier, 2001a; Giroux, 2008; Trier, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007). As I noted earlier, of all these scholars, Trier, specifically, published many studies on the use of films in teachers' education. Also, I believe that his methods of presenting films to preservice teachers are representative of the type of studies I focus on here. Thus, in what follows, I shall detail a couple of his publications.

For his dissertation study, Trier (2001a) carried out an action research project in which he had his preservice student-teachers to read a chapter from a book. In addition, his students watched a film by paying specific attention to the concepts that the reading had presented to them. Finally, students either gave a seminar presentation in the class or wrote a paper on the film by paying specific attention to the concepts that the reading had alerted. Consider his paragraph as an example of his way of presenting films to the students:

For example, one student viewed *Dangerous Minds* with this question in mind: What messages or images do you take away from this [film] and how might they relate to your professional life? The student had a negative reaction to the film, which she discussed by drawing upon the essay that we had read and discussed in class by Gloria Ladson-Billings titled "Reading Between the Lines and Beyond the Pages: A Culturally Relevant Approach to Literacy Teaching" (1992). In her class presentation, the student showed an overhead transparency of Ladson-Billings defining culturally relevant teaching." (Trier, 2001a, p. 45).

In another study, Trier (2001b) devoted himself to using a school film, *Teachers* (1984), with his student-teachers where he aimed at challenging practicum teachers' traditional views of literacy. The project he described in this study was centered around the purpose of getting students involved in what he calls a Discourses orientation toward literacy by exposing them to both reading texts and films. In his formulation, a film is, in essence, a visual text, a form of literacy. The different steps of the project included reading these texts (both print and film), writing reactions to them and discussing these reactions. He concluded by writing "students have

explored multiliteracies both in the content of the films they critiqued, as well as in the practice of critiquing the films. In the case of *Teachers*, they explored the multiliteracies that Eddie possessed, while they “read” multiple texts and drew on multiple literacies (print-oriented and film-oriented) to critique the film. My aim is that preservice teachers will take their future students’ multiliteracies as the foundation for the projects that they design.” (Trier, 2001b, p. 313). One can tell by reading this study that his axiom in doing this study was that he believed an immersion in the combination of written texts and the film would help his students to become better professional teachers.

One year later, Trier (2002) published another study. This time, the project aimed at presenting social theories to preservice teachers by having them read some papers and write about popular school films. The prime attention was given to the presentation of the term *habitus* to preprofessional teachers. The paper argued that it is fruitful to get students initiated in social theories, especially *habitus*, that are not part of their official curriculum with the help of school film *Disturbing Behavior* (1998). In his conclusion, Trier remarks “through this description of how I have engaged preservice teachers in thinking critically about *habitus*, I hope I have shown that the students responded insightfully and revealed the kind of relational thinking that I sought to encourage. I also suggest that it is a valuable experience for students to have their own writing validated by becoming the texts that are analyzed by their peers during seminar.” (2002, p. 257). I claim that his remark I just quoted reflects his general belief in the power of school films that through engagement with them, student-teachers respond insightfully and learn as a result.

In 2003, the focus in Trier’s class with preservice teachers was techniques of power as they occur between students and teachers. In line with this, the readings included pieces from Foucault and Gore. The film that he incorporated with these readings was *The Paper Chase*

(1973). The project concluded in five steps: (1) Viewing of *The Paper Chase*, (2) Writing a reflective essay to Gore and Foucault, (3) Reading and responding to Trier's interpretation of the key scenes of the film in relation to readings, (4) Relating the concepts of the power to individual experiences, and (5) Reflecting on the whole process. Trier's conclusion of the study is similar to previous studies by him that I examined here so far.

In another study, Trier (2005) again utilized a school film in preservice teachers' education. In this paper, Trier detailed a multi-phase project where his purpose was to challenge preservice teachers' assumptions, beliefs and knowledge about inner-city schools. The process involved three steps. First, preservice teachers expressed their opinions about inner-city schools before their practicum in such schools either in the form of writing or of in-class discussions. Second, they examined inner-city school images that school films (e.g., *Principal*) portray. Third and last, they rearticulated their opinions about inner-city schools after teaching in them. Trier (2005) argued that being a part of this project gave preservice teachers an avenue to assess the effect of popular representations of schools in shaping their views about them and realizing the discrepancy between their views of inner-city schools after experiencing them personally and the view that school films show.

I will discuss one last study by Trier here. His 2007 study was another multiphase project, which he designed "to engage a group of secondary English preservice teachers in the process of reconceptualizing the initial problematic views of literacy that they held upon entering the Master of Arts Teaching (MAT) program" (Trier, 2007, p. 35). This time he employed François Truffaut's *The 400 Blows* (1959) to achieve his aims for the study. The research process for the study is similar to the ones I have already discussed, which included four steps: (1) Students enunciate their original views of literacy by the way of watching and interpreting a

scene from *The 400 Blows* in terms of its literary content, (2) Students read a chapter by Mary Hamilton where they were presented to literary events, (3) Students re-watched and re-interpreted the same scenes in the light of theoretical framework that reading Hamilton provided to them, and, (4) Students finally watched *The 400 Blows* to its entirety and produced an analytical essay on it they focused on it as a cinematic literacy narrative. His last sentences are “teacher educators have been taking up films in a variety of ways for a variety of critical purposes, and these examples can serve as important models for anyone interested in engaging in a pedagogy involving the coupling of academic and media texts, whether it be to examine issues related to literacy (as in this article), race, ethnicity, power, gender, language, pedagogy, or other important issues in education.” (Trier, 2007, p. 49). In terms of a method of incorporating school films to teacher education and of managing the process, this study is another identical effort by Trier that reflects his basic axioms of using school films in teacher education.

It appears to me that Trier’s efforts to employ school films in preservice teachers’ education are immensely valuable. Especially in terms of the actual ways of doing so, his scholarship is an excellent beginning phase for novice scholars such as myself to note important considerations since his writing is clear, concise and very well detailed. However, I would be remiss if I do not note that his scholarship, when considered as a whole, gives the impression that each piece is too identical to one another. It occurs to me that each of his studies includes a different school film and some readings that are related to concepts of the consideration, let them be habitus, inner-city schools or literary events, where preservice teachers watch the film, read the texts and write essays, all of which Trier transforms into a publication. Said another way, each of his studies feels like a detailed description of a project rather than being a diverse

empirical research study. Now that I have scrutinized the literature on the use of films in teacher education, I move to the final section of the review that examines scholars' take of *The Class*.

The Class in the literature. In the next chapter, I shall provide detailed information about *The Class*; suffice it to mention here that the film is adapted from the biographical novel of François Bégaudeau by the same name. Some of the studies I encountered for this review are wholly about or on the novel version rather than the film. Since my focus is primarily on the film and not on the novel, here, I excluded the studies that examine the novel only.

The Class won Palme d'Or in 2008 Cannes Film Festival. It was the first French film to win this prestigious award since 1982. The film's impact on the film world, both nationally and internationally, is evident (King, 2017). It must be noted too that its impact has not been restricted to cinematic circles; rather, the film has become one of the most watched and taught school films in France and other countries. Michael (2013) regards *The Class* as a touchstone that carries the essential characteristics of the Francophone school films and compares it with Falardeau's adaptation of a stage-play into a full feature film about schools to define characteristics of classroom films. King (2017) reminds us:

Today, *Entre les murs* is one of the most frequently taught films in French schools and university courses in French studies. Multiple French language *cahiers pédagogiques* exist to assist educators in teaching the film, from Zéro de conduite's *collège/lycée*-level "Dossier pédagogique: *Entre les murs*" (compiled in collaboration with Haut et Court, the film's production company) and the Institut Français's "*Entre les murs* de Laurent Cantet," to the Université de Poitiers's "Rencontres cinématographiques pour la solidarité et la tolérance: *Entre les murs*" and Isabelle Vanderschelden's "Fiche pédagogique de film pour l'enseignement du français: *Entre les murs*," among several others. (p. 34).

The impact of the film is due to several reasons. One might be that as a realist social drama (King, 2017), the film does an effective job of engaging spectators. Second, the film was

released at a significant time. Said another way, the film speaks directly to the recent political and social developments and concerns. Tarr (2012), referring to school films in recent French cinema, argues that “this cluster of films builds on a series of representations of the school in French cinema that engage with contemporary anxieties about the problematic role of the French education system and its ability to deliver equality, and by extension integration, in a postcolonial, multicultural France.” (p. 127). Hussein (2011), in his analysis of the film in relation to Beur culture, follows a similar line of thought: “The principle social discourse of the Enlightenment project explored in *Entre les murs* is the French education system, which provides a political terrain to contest issues around class, gendered and ethnic based differences. In the context of recent political changes state education—which is seen as integral to a fully functioning civil society and secular social contract—has now become more central to ideas of citizenship and national identity than in any other period in France’s post-war history.” Moreover, historically, the theoretical concept of *Etat-Nation* (nation-state) mandated establishment a free public education—*une école primaire obligatoire, gratuite et laïc* (an obligatory, free and secular primary school) (Warehime, 2011, p. 84)—that would integrate non-French immigrants from the old colonies of French to the Republic by helping them acquire (a) high level of command on French and (b) national values, the secular French way of life. In other words, as Tarr observes: “the system serves rather to reproduce the dominant culture, one that requires those who wish to be French citizens to distance themselves from the language and culture of their country of origin” (2012, p. 128). Contemporarily, what resulted from this agenda has been discussed to be the marginalization of cultural identities of immigrants (Hussein, 2011). And, this atmosphere is the recent political environment in France that *The Class* captures so well. Hussein observes:

A range of initiatives have been launched by the administration as part of a great public debate on national identity which has been emphasized as integral to reclaiming France's Republican cultural heritage from Jean-Marie Le Pen's Front National in the run-up to the 2007 Presidential Election. Indeed, Besson took part in a controversial live national television debate on this issue with Marine Le Pen the vice president of the Front National in January 2010 so as to highlight the perceived importance of the issue of cultural identities to French society. Sarkozy's UMP has also further intensified police surveillance operations, increased the use of DNA testing and lengthened detention periods for migrants and criminal suspects concentrated in the banlieues through a program of repressive new immigration legislation and policies. (2011, p. 55).

A similar political atmosphere occurred again during the campaigns for presidential election 2017 between the current president of France, Emmanuel Macron, and his closest rival Marine Le Pen. What is more, it seems that although each country has its own political emphasis and red lines, a similar tone of political cacophony has been centered around immigration issues in several countries. For example, a good portion of President Trump's campaign for election in the U.S.A. in 2017 was based upon his stand against immigration and the role of U.S.A. in international economic, political, military rivalry. In addition, due to civil war in Syria, many Syrians had to flee their country and go somewhere else. Turkey is the country that hosts the biggest population of Syrian refugees. The education of Syrian refugees, their accommodation, the amount of money that has been spent on them have been the sources of heated political discussions between the ruling party and main opposition in Turkey. The opposition parties criticized the ruling party for spending almost 30 billion dollars on Syrian refugees and for giving some of them Turkish citizenry. What I want to infer from these examples is to discuss in the light of previous literature on the film that *The Class* captures the recent political and educational problems to a great extent not only in France but also in some other countries.

With its power of engaging its spectators, *The Class* raises fundamental issues on nature of schooling and teaching. The literature has focused on several themes of the sort. Strand (2009) queries how *The Class* (2008) in addition to Abdellatif Kechiche's *The Dodge* (2004) reflects the ways in which the French educational system intends in shaping the national identity of France. Strand focuses explicitly on the French language—the tension between “street French” of students versus bureaucratic French of schools. What is more, Williams (2011) argues, via a close reading of *The Class*, that spatial representation in the film has a political aim, which is—by taking Pierre Bourdieu's notion that French schools always serve to recreate social inequality and stratification—to reconfigure republican space by creating a new spatial dynamic. Finally, Lykidis (2012) examines allegorical connotation of three major spaces in the film—the classroom, the staff room and the playground. Lykidis's analysis mainly situates the film in the context of citizenship, political governance and immigration issues in France.

In an interesting philosophical analysis of the film, Assoulin (2017) traced the narrative structure of *The Class* back to Aristotle where he argued that Mr. Marin's misfortunes resemble the classical attributes of the Aristotelian tragedy: “As such, Marin, as the protagonist, starts the school year happy and full of confidence, however the film ends with a personal and pedagogical crisis. Aristotle's tragic hero as ‘a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgement’ (McKeon 1947: 640) suits Marin's character and shows his downfall to be the result of a series of educational mistakes.” (Assoulin, 2017, pp. 21-22). It is obvious from this remark that Assoulin blames Mr. Marin as a teacher for the tragic events that happen in the film. For example, he criticizes Mr. Marin's insistence on teaching imperfect subjunctive to the students by saying that “students dispute about the necessity of learning this, as this tense has no daily

use, and when it is used is done mainly by the elitist-bourgeois class to express its intellectual superiority over the other societal strata; a matter of snobbism as one of the student calls it” (Assoulin, 2017, pp. 29-30) and then tying this to Bourdieu ““For Example on the educational market, the imperfect subjunctive had a high value in the days of my teachers, who identified their professional identity with using it ... Nowadays that would provoke smiles and can’t be done in front of a student audience, unless you emit a metalinguistic sign to show that although you’re doing it you could equally well no do it (1995: 79)”” (Assoulin, 2017, p. 30). In addition, Assoulin asserts that some of the educational misfortunes occur in the film due to the students’ need to be recognized. Students, he claims, act in certain ways to be recognized by their teacher. Could this recognition need be attributed to the absence of an emotional aspect of learning in the class in *The Class*?

Christou (2016) thinks so. By using extracts from *The Class* as a case study and focusing on one student character (Souleymane), Christou, in a workshop, examined the role of the emotional side of learning and the creation of an emotional atmosphere in class to deal with students’ dysfunctional behaviors. On a different note, I believe that her conclusion of the study where she argued importance of her workshop applies to my study as well: “The ‘dialogue’ that they [teachers] will develop with this artwork, hopefully will turn into an internal dialogue, which would motivate the identification and possible transformation of stereotype perceptions concerning the role of the educator and the dynamics of the pupils’ group while creating conditions that have an impact on the emotional dimension of learning and therefore the development of the pupils’ personality.” (Christou, 2016, p. 218).

Some other studies have examined *The Class* for its representations of specific racial types. For instance, Futamura (2017) examines Asian characters in recent French cinema where,

he argued, that there has been an increasing interest in immigrant identities. Specifically, in the case of *The Class*, he highlighted, two Asian characters attract attention: Wei, a hard-working Chinese student who is the top of his class and his mother who is an illegal immigrant and about to be deported. Futamura (2017) claimed that *The Class* buttresses Asians as nerdy, over-achieving students and illegal immigrants. Gueye (2009), on the other hand, studied *The Class* to understand blackness in France and French visual media. He specifically observed the nonexistence of African-French teachers in the film despite the fact that the majority of the students are Africa-originated. Moreover, for him, the silence of non-white employees mirrors the hierarchical organization of staff. The film shows only one African teacher throughout its running time who has no dialogue. Besides, Souleymane's mother cannot speak French, and she is not even provided a translator. Congruent with Gueye's discussion, Warehime (2011) adds: "As Cantet [director of *The Class*] admits, this lack of a translator is probably not realistic, but it functions dramatically to focus attention on the fact that neither Souleymane nor his mother can effectively speak in his defense." (p. 87). These representation studies are utterly valuable for determining our approach to the film.

I will touch upon two final issues in my review here regarding the film. The first relates to the reaction of public, especially educational circles, toward the film in France whereas the second is on use of the film as an instructional tool in France since this study aims to do so the same but by using a framework of its own in a different context. In terms of reaction to the film in France, it was noted that the school in the film is a candid allegory for French society, "a melting pot where all the questions that heat the country are played out" (Kaganski, 2008). In that sense, the film sparked heated discussions (polemic) regarding social issues such as immigration, assimilation and education in France as evidenced in the media coverage it created

(Bissière, 2013, p. 155; “‘Entre les murs’ : la guerre des mots au college,” 2008; Laurenti, 2008; Bongard, 2008). Étienne & Vanbaelen (2013) write: “*The Class* was the subject of many comments on the crisis of education, the failure of the republican school and the social divide that threatens the French society. Politicians, education specialists, philosophers, have used it to illustrate their theses on multiculturalism, integration, the degradation of culture, the link between school and the formation of national identity, pedagogy, and learning about living together and democracy.” (p. 159). One question that attracted attention in this coverage was whether the film documented the reality of schools truthfully or not, i.e., whether the film’s brutal depiction of classroom environment is real in that it captures the reality of neighborhood, school, class, teacher and students it portrays or not. It appears that there are two camps of thought. One agrees that it does so (Meirieu, n.d.; Laurenti, 2008) whereas the other believes it might be a bit caricatural (see the discussion in Soulé, 2008). I am of the opinion that the issue that whether the film portrays realities of schools or not is significant for the French society since schools are supposed to ensure the survival of the culture that creates them. In a sense, the close interest in the film might be a reflection on the future of society. In an article in *Libération*, Soulé (2008) reports a screening of the film to students and teachers from Paris suburbs organized by an association. There, she shares reactions of both the students and the teachers toward the film where she concludes that positive attitude that the schools are in fact like the one in the film outweighs dissenting one. In another article, Madouas (2008) discusses the opinion of the teachers on the film where one teacher states: “These students are quite representative of their time. They have trouble concentrating; they have little more than five hundred words. They are turbulent, some aggressive.” (para. 2); another one adds: “In my high school, my students are like those in the film: fragile young people from difficult backgrounds, often from foreign

cultures. But these difficulties are also the consequence of deterioration of education.” (para. 3). Finally, in an article in *La Liberté*, Bongard (2008) quotes a teacher: “It [The Class] is a mirror of reality. It shows the different sides of the profession [teaching]” (para. 3).

Perhaps due to its power of engaging the public, many used the film as an educational tool in France as King (2017) concurs. This type of usage of the film generally takes the form of an educational book (teaching guide-*cahiers pédagogique*) or of a compilation of educational files (course guide-*dossiers pédagogique*) with the exception of Bissière (2013), which is a book that uses Francophone films to teach French. As such, these adaptations where *The Class* was employed for teaching seem to be created to be a separate document rather than being incorporated into a whole curriculum for a full course. In other words, these documents are meant to be used to study the film in one setting for a set of purposes. These purposes include (French) language teaching (Bissière, 2013; Vanderschelden, 2010; Leahy, 2008; Zéro de conduit, 2009), film analysis by using techniques of sequence analysis (Mennesson, 2008; Corre & Devillers, 2009) and reconsideration educational issues with respect to social and political problems (Zéro de conduit, 2009; Leahy, 2008). Thematic evaluation of these educational documents reveals that they generally present an autobiography of the director, the writer as well as a synopsis of the film (Corre & Devillers, 2009; Zéro de conduit, 2009; Mennesson, 2008; Vanderschelden, 2010). After that, they include different type of activities such as questions about characters (Vanderschelden, 2010), film’s poster examination (Mennesson, 2008), scene analysis (Corre & Devillers, 2009), an evaluation of characters (Mennesson, 2008), and an analysis of cinematic characteristics of the film such as lighting, camera movement, camera distance, etc. (Leahy, 2008). The present literature review yielded no studies where *The Class* was treated as a curricular tool such that it was integrated into a curriculum of interest nor any

studies where it was used for the purposes of teacher education. Now that I have come to the end of my review, I will provide a summary of it here before moving on to the next chapter.

Summary of the Literature Review

In this literature review, I aimed at drawing a general picture of how scholars in the field of education deal with cinema films. In doing so, I specifically focused on figuring out what is known in the field on this topic. Since it occurred to me that an appropriate way to unravel what is known in the field would be looking at the studies thematically, I organized the literature review into different sections.

I began by looking at the general concept of school films and what they carry in them. My review has revealed that school films generally create an unreal view of schooling and present myths about teachers and teaching profession. A second theme I came up as a result of this review is the general use of cinema films in education regardless of subject matter and educational level. This theme indicated that (1) films are mainly used as instructional material by showing a whole film or scenes of it to instruct students, that (2) scholars analyze films to observe what type of messages they deliver to audiences, that (3) sometimes theoretical background of scholars are ever-present in their analysis of films, and that (4) there exists some studies which aim to look at representations of films statistically. A third theme concentrated on the specific use of cinema films for the education of teachers. It explained that scholars usually treat films as additional materials to more conventional readings where they assign preservice teachers to analyze a film in relation to and in the light of a reading. The notion that cinema films might teach preservice teachers for their profession is omnipresent in these studies—either directly stated or indirectly hinted at so. Finally, the last section disclosed that *The Class* captures

the zeitgeist of contemporary educational and political rhetoric in France and some other countries. As such, it bases the language as the quintessential part of the discussion among different classes of contemporary French society. This last section of the review might be criticized for not going into details of the film's educational and circular discourses. This is what I aim to do in a section in the next chapter where I additionally shall clarify the film's role, my role and preservice teachers' role as participants in the study.



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY*

Three main aspects of the study in terms of the methodology are the film, the participants (preservice teachers) and the researcher. Each one of these shall have a section here explaining their role in the general picture of the study. In addition, I conducted a pilot study so that it would help me to design the actual one. Another section shall include details of this early effort. Let me begin with the film and continue with the pilot study, the participants and the researcher, respectively, and conclude with the actual steps of the research.

A Curricular Analysis of *The Class*

In the previous chapter, I looked at the take of scholars from various fields of *The Class* without necessarily providing a detailed reading of mine of the film in terms of the fields of education and curriculum. In this section, I will provide my analysis of the film. In doing so, I will specifically focus on the film's elements that are related to the teaching profession and students' attitudes. Since I believe that it is crucial to know the basics of the educational system of France to comprehend the film better, my analysis here begins with providing some basic information about the educational system of France as it relates to the context of the film. It continues by providing some details about the production process of *The Class*. What follows in the analysis are some remarks on the characteristics of my analysis. I end this section with a discussion and conclusion of the actual analysis.

Some basics of the educational system in France. Rather than presenting a whole picture of the educational system of France here, which is beyond the scope of the present study,

* Various parts of this chapter include writing and ideas from a term paper, my general and special field qualification exam papers. Specifically, the analysis of *The Class* I provide here is my Early Research Study. Since none of these sources are published materials, I have no way of citing them but to mention them here.

I aim to touch upon some details of that system to give my reader some context that is important to examine the film. In addition, the qualities that I mention here are the basic differences between the education system of France and that of the USA. I would also like to note that I summarize all of the points here from Bissière (2013).

First, the film depicts a school in Paris. Administratively, Paris is divided into different districts that are called *arrondissement*. There are 20 *arrondissements* at the total in Paris. Each one of these districts is known for its certain characteristics. The school in the film is located in the 20th *arrondissement*. This district is a destination for immigrants and known for its low socio-economic status. Second, the educational system in France is a succession of kindergarten (*école maternelle*), elementary school (*école élémentaire*), middle school (*collège*) and high-school (*lycée*), respectively. Middle school level includes four grade levels: *sixième* (sixth), *cinquième* (fifth), *quatrième* (fourth) and *troisième* third; from lower to the upper. The class in the film is a *quatrième* level class—students in the film are fourteen years of age. Third, the academic year in France is divided upon three semesters, each of which is a trimester. Fourth, each class in France is appointed a main classroom teacher (*le/la professeur principal-e*) who teaches a course to the class and also acts to ensure the connection between the students, the parents, other teachers of the class and the administration. The main classroom teacher is the teacher that the families contact the most. Also, he or she is also responsible for addressing any problems that may occur during the year. Mr. Marin, the main teacher character in the film, is the *le professeur principal* for the class in the film. Fifth, each class chooses two students from its body to act as class delegates (student representatives) (*les délégué-e-s des élèves*) as well as two parent delegates (*les délégué-e-s des parents*). In the film, Esmeralda and Louise are the class delegates (representatives) for Mr. Marin's class. Sixth and last, at the end of each trimester, a class

council (*le conseil de classe*) meets to review students' performances for each class. This council includes two student delegates, two parent delegates, teachers, principal and guidance counselor. In addition to all these points about the educational system of French, it is also important to note that the imperfect subjunctive tense in French is a literary one in that it is only used in formal writing. Hence, one might see it in historical text or (old) literature or (old) journalism. In a sense, it is archaic. Said another way, it is not employed in daily language; its usage in contemporary settings is scarce.

The production process of *The Class*. The film (2008) is adapted as a feature from the novel with the same name by François Bégaudeau. The book is an autobiographical account of Bégaudeau's own teaching experiences in the 20th arrondissement of Paris, a culturally multifaceted and stratified area (Taubin, 2009). Laurent Cantet, the director of *The Class*, wanted to make a film on schools, he even had an earlier script, which was the story of Souleymane, a character in the film. When he read Bégaudeau's book, he decided to combine the story he wrote with the book (Vincendeau, 2008). Therefore, the film is a combination of Souleymane's story and the experiences of Bégaudeau.

The production process of the film is different from mainstream conventions in filmmaking. First and foremost, as a casting choice, Cantet convinced Bégaudeau to play the teacher, Mr. Marin, in the film. Taubin's (2009) remark is significant related to Bégaudeau's experience of having served as a teacher in real life and playing the teacher in the film: "Jean-Luc Godard once remarked that it was difficult to show labor in fiction films, given that most actors do not have the skills to perform brain surgery, or, one might add, experience in any profession outside their own. The greatest pleasure in *The Class* is seeing an actual teacher—a skilled, creative teacher—at work." (p. 66). Secondly, Bégaudeau's class in the film, a number of

students from different racial backgrounds, are real-life students, who had been chosen from schools around the area depicted in the film. Once they had been recruited, filmmakers including Bégau and the students met every Wednesday for three hours throughout a good portion of a year to test out different situations and decide which student would play which character (Vincendeau, 2008). Thirdly, Cantet shot the film with three High Definition (HD) cameras instead of one camera, despite the fact that the latter is the common procedure in film production. One of the cameras focused on the teacher, the other was fixed on the students and the last paid specific attention to interesting situations if they occurred during filming. Cantet notes that his decision to employ three cameras: “gave us a lot of freedom, allowing us to improvise, to capture the energy of the pupils rather than interrupt them when we wanted a different angle. With the three cameras, one on the teacher and two on the class, we could shoot really long scenes.” (Vincendeau, 2008, p. 30). The total footage exceeded 140 hours of film, which Cantet cut to the film’s final around-two-hours version. Finally, Cantet provided no line-by-line story to his actors. True, milestones of the story were set and known, yet, the majority of the plot and lines in the film were improvised. Cantet believes that improvisation success of his actors attests to the quality of the film. In a scene, Mr. Marin tries to teach the imperfect subjunctive case, to which Khoumba, a student in the class, reacts that “it is bourgeois language,” a line the actor playing Khoumba improvised. Cantet notes that her improvisation proves that she perfectly understood the essence of the film—“class relations expressed through language.” (Vincendeau, 2008, p. 30).

Production characteristics of the film create its cinematic theory, which is a key to understand it. I shall have two quick points to make regarding the theory behind *The Class*. First, a story of daily life, no professional actors, no music, shooting on location are not only basic

characteristics of *The Class*, but also Italian neorealism. Hence, I assert that *The Class* is Cantet's nod to Italian neorealists. Second, notwithstanding the fact that the film is not a documentary, there is still little or no doubt that it draws heavily on the conventions of the documentary style of filmmaking. That is, it, from time to time, separates its narrative from actual events of the past for the sake of drama; yet, it is still based on some real events. Added to that is the fact that *The Class*'s cinematic conventions rely heavily on the documentary filmmaking styles, most of which were coined by John Grierson (see Grierson, 1946 on documentary style). A thorough discussion of Italian neorealism and documentary style is beyond the scope of my purposes here, yet, it is still important to note that these two points are the underlying causes that create the cinematic effect of the film.

On the method of analysis. I have employed a scene-by-scene analysis to read *The Class* for this type of analysis allowed me to record what I notice and then go back to review them. A scene-by-scene analysis also helped me to gain insights that I would not have achieved in a more holistic approach (Mark Dressman, personal communication, September 22, 2016). Besides, Fabe (2014) reminds us: "shot-by-shot analysis is the best way for film students to learn about and appreciate the filmmaker's art. Having taught film studies for many years, I have learned that viewers trained in close analysis of single film sequences are better able to see and appreciate the rich visual and aural complexity of the film medium. Close analysis unlocks the secrets of how film images, combined with sound, can have such a profound effect on our minds and emotions." (p. xv). Although my analysis is not shot-by-shot, I believe that Fabe's points apply to my analysis too, which is scene-by-scene.

It can be asserted that the first step of a scene-by-scene analysis is the segmentation of the film under scrutiny. As Bordwell, Thompson and Smith (2016) point out, segmentation is an

outline of the film including its major sections; they pointedly remark: “We follow the formal development moment by moment, and we may get more and more involved. But if we want to study the overall form, we need to stand back a bit. Films don’t come with blueprints, but by creating a plot segmentation, we can get a comparable sense of the film’s basic design.” (p. 69).

For the segmentation of *The Class*, I used a document that I adapted from Barsam (2004, p. 112-114) of his segmentation of *Stagecoach* (1939) (see Appendix A). For the scene analysis, I have created a sheet that I adapted from a sequence analysis sheet that I acquired in a course I took in 2016. This sheet includes a row for each scene and a column for scene number, action, setting, duration, characters, camera distance and angle, camera movement, transition, speech, sound and finally my comments (see Appendix B for a sample page of the sheet).

I have identified seven segments in the film. These are: I. New Semester Begins at the School, II. Mr. Marin Aims to Ensure His Authority as a Teacher, III. Parent-Teacher Meeting, IV. Students Study Their Self-Portraits & Present Them, V. Souleymane’s Incident and Its Aftermath, VI. Souleymane’s Disciplinary Meeting, and VII. Last of Everything. Likewise, I have spotted 49 scenes in addition to opening and ending credits. Usually, a scene is “a segment in a narrative film that takes place in one time and space or that uses crosscutting to show two or more simultaneous actions” (Bordwell, Thompson and Smith, 2016, G-5) or “a complete unit of plot action incorporating one or more shots; the setting of that action.” (Barsam, 2004, p.491). Since the place is a very significant cinematic element in *The Class*, I have taken it as the basic criteria of deciding upon these 49 scenes. Yet, there are a few times in the film that the action becomes more important than the place. Hence, a few times, I have divided a segment into scenes even if the place stays the same or changes. Besides, an English version of the entire script is available online. It can be used to identify scenes as the filmmakers imagined them.

However, I reasoned that such a method would leave my voice out of my reading of the film. Therefore, I did not follow that road. Finally, it should also be borne in mind that segmenting a film as well as identifying single scenes is more of an art than a science. In other words, different researchers may identify differing number of scenes since they employ other conceptions of what constitutes a scene. In the analysis, I refer to the scenes that I identified with their accompanying number, e.g., Scene 1, 2, etc. as I numbered them.

The findings of the analysis. I divide the analysis into five parts: (i) The educational characteristics of the teachers in the film, (ii) the general characteristics of the students, (iii) the tension and the distance between Mr. Marin and the students, (iv) the centrality of the space in the film, and (v) postcolonial times in the film.

The educational characteristics of the teachers in the film. We see only Mr. Marin in classroom teaching students throughout the film, hence, it is tricky to speak of types of teachers that the film portrays. Nonetheless, I think that it is essential to identify the general characteristics of the teacher body in the film since I believe their characteristics manifest the school's educational environment. In Scene 3, the teachers are at the first meeting of the new school year, they take turns to introduce themselves. The first interesting thing to notice in this scene is that it starts with maybe the youngest teacher in the teaching staff, physical education teacher Hervé. As the scene continues, we see that teachers presenting themselves are older—although not as a strict rule. The scene ends with maybe the oldest teacher in the staff, who is going to retire at the end of this school year. Hervé in his introduction says: “The students can be tough but they’re good kids.” The significance of this remark lies in the fact that most of the teachers in their early career burn-out owing to low pays, troublesome students, unsupportive administrations, low prestige of the teaching profession, in general, dissatisfaction with being a

teacher. Hervé, a young teacher, warns his colleagues that students can be tough, a remark that one would expect from a more experienced teacher since, by simple logic, younger teachers should have more energy and dedication, put another way, they should be less burned-out. Hervé's remark can be interpreted that he might be close to burn-out. What follows in the scene, we see that Patrick, an older teacher, mockingly jokes that "he is a teacher of multiplication table and occasionally mathematics!" What is more, the last teacher to present himself in this scene is Gilles, another mathematics teacher, who is going to retire at the end of this year. He wishes new arrivals plenty of courage. Dealing with teaching at this "jungle" requires much courage on the part of teachers. Another point is worthy of mention about Scene 3. Not only teachers' experience in the profession gradually increase, but also the number of years that they spent at this school rises as the scene progresses. Hervé has been here for three years whereas Frederick has been a part of this school's teaching staff for more than that, and finally, Gilles is about to retire from years of working at the school. It is Hervé, Frederick and Gilles that make relatively negative comments about the school and its students, about teaching in general, not the other teachers who start working at it as of this new semester. Frédéric, a newly arrived, expresses that he is happy to be in the city now after working in the suburbs for several years. Anne, another new teacher at this school, seizes her time to welcome her co-workers instead of making any comment on the nature of context in the school.

What is also remarkable about Scene 3 is that almost all the faculty—with the exception of one African-French teacher in the background—are White and French. As we see in upcoming scenes, such an unequal distribution skewed toward White race is not the case among students at all. There exists a mismatch between teachers' and students' cultural backgrounds.

Said another way, the contrast that stands out in the teacher's room at Scene 3 is how distant they are from the children they are teaching.

In Scene 12, one of the teachers, Vincent, rushes into the staff room and complains about his students. He says: "They're nothing, they know nothing, they look right through you when you try to teach them. They can stay in their sh*t! I'm not going to help them. They're so basic, so insincere, always looking for trouble. *Go ahead, guys. Stay in your crap neighborhood. You'll be here all your lives and it serves you damn well right!* [italics mine]."

In Scene 30 where Julie (*La CPE*, the supervisor) informs Mr. Marin that some of the students have come to her and complained that Mr. Marin called them "pétasse." (a rough translation of this word is skank). Having heard this, the principal in Scene 38 advises him to mention the *pétasse* remark in his incident report. It seems that administration who are also teachers are more concerned with overcoming bureaucratic necessities and get over with them without getting into trouble instead of getting to the bottom of the issue. Mr. Marin seems to be the only teacher who is genuinely concerned with what would happen to Souleymane after the disciplinary committee.

Scene 34 in which the teachers talk over Souleymane's disciplinary hearing with Mr. Marin also represents teachers' philosophy and qualities. They agree that Souleymane deserves it if he gets expelled from the school. Some think that it will help him to adjust himself in another school. Mr. Marin tells them that he may be sent back to Mali if he is expelled. Others comment that they cannot take parents' place. They must punish Souleymane as a matter of principle. Interesting in this scene is how the camera excludes Mr. Marin from the other teachers. Each time we see him in the frame, he is alone in a medium low angle shot or a close-up low angle one whereas we observe others through over-the-shoulder high angle shots or point of view shots of

Mr. Marin looking at them. The camerawork in this scene might signify that Souleymane's case is a moral and ethical dilemma since, as Mr. Marin reminds them, Souleymane's dismissal would be the antithesis of everything they do in the school for students.

Mr. Marin, the main character in the teaching body, is a dedicated teacher. One important quality of a good teacher emanates from his choice to arrange his lesson plans and materials based on the needs and prior knowledge of his students. We see that Mr. Marin tries to do that in Scene 8 where Frédéric consults him what book he will use for his class. Mr. Marin has not decided on which book he might assign to the class; he also evaluates several alternatives Frédéric suggests. We can interpret Scene 8 that Mr. Marin does not follow a predefined and set reading list; rather, he strives to come up with a selection that might suit his students best as he evaluates their abilities and level. Nevertheless, he assigns *The Diary of a Young Girl* for the class to read, a choice quite peculiar indeed.

Mr. Marin's greatest shortcomings as a teacher emanate from his inability to (1) motivate his students to study, and (2) interest his students in the subject matter. On this issue, we catch a glimpse of his struggle to teach imperfect subjunctive in Scene 9. Students think that even grandparents do not employ imperfect subjunctive in their use of the language. Khoumba expresses that such type of language is bourgeois. Her remark signals the class difference between what Mr. Marin teaches and their actual level on the language. Confronted with students' consistent oppositions on unnecessary of imperfect subjunctive due to its quality of being old, higher level and hard to learn, Mr. Marin cannot provide a satisfactory answer. The camera at that moment captures his struggle and misery well in a close-up low angle shot whereas we see students in a close-up high level where their facial expressions attest that they are unconvinced. He tells them that he and his friends used imperfect subjunctive the other day

while getting coffee. Students request examples of *normal people* who employ imperfect subjunctive. Then, Mr. Marin takes a step back and accepts that imperfect subjunctive may not be very common and only snobs—those people who have high and exaggerated regard for individuals that have socially higher positions than them and who also look pejoratively to those regarded inferior—may use it. At this point, he unintentionally acknowledges that he is a snob. This scene signifies that Mr. Marin cannot motivate his students to be interested in his lesson content and learn, students are interested in more delightful things that they pay attention.

One compelling way to get a better understanding of a character in a film is to take duality between characters if there is any. In Mr. Marin's case, his opposite is History and Geography teacher Frédéric. Scene 14 presents us a staff meeting where some of the teachers propose a new punishment system in which all students would have six points at the beginning of the semester and they would lose points if they misbehave, finally resulting with a disciplinary committee in the case of running out of points. It seems that teachers do not favor the proposed system very well. However, it is the contrast between Mr. Marin and Frédéric that is most distinctive in the scene and that gives a feeling of Mr. Marin's approach to teaching as opposed to Frédéric's.

Mr. Marin:	You know, what you call a sense of impunity gives us room to maneuver. When you're dealing with punishments that are cut and dried, you cannot adapt them to each case.
Frédéric:	No, I don't agree. <i>The rules apply in the same way to all the students</i> [italics mine]. They break them, they're punished. If not, why bother with rules?
Mr. Marin:	Maybe, but dealing with extremely strict rules creates the greatest tension. Take cell phones, for instance. We agreed on a rule that cell phones were not allowed in class. Well, sorry, but I break that rule because I realized it wasn't a problem for me. <i>There's room to maneuver, to be tolerant</i> [italics mine].
Frédéric:	Sure, that's the reign of the arbitrary.

Mr. Marin and Frédéric's exchange alludes to Mr. Marin's thoughts on punishment in schools. The world is not Newtonian in the sense that every action brings about a reaction. The grey area between crime and punishment gives us space to be more tolerant and understanding. It does not result in impunity. Also, what is impunity for this is a school, not a prison or another total institution. One can conclude that Mr. Marin is the liberal and humanitarian teacher in the school since in addition to the dialogue, shot-reverse-shot editing in the scene, which the film includes so little, reminds us of the face-off between Mr. Marin and Frédéric, thus, his refusal of capital punishment ideas of Frédéric.

The ambivalence of Mr. Marin or inconsistency between his ideas and actions is manifested in Scene 27. In a heated discussion between him and the students, he uses the word "pétasse" in his conversation with two female students. When confronted by the students, he denies charges that he meant their behavior is *pétasse*, not themselves as individuals. He keeps denying his fault on this issue until his supervisor tells him that students complained about him to her on the *pétasse* incident, which Mr. Marin did not mention in his incident report. At that point for the first time after Scene 27, he stops denying that he used the word *pétasse*. The said scene might be read as a sign of the complexity of Mr. Marin's character.

Scene 31 is an important scene to grasp "other side of" Mr. Marin's educational personality. When he confronts Esmeralda and Khoumba in the playground, students immediately surround him. At the climax of dispute, Mr. Marin tells the students that a teacher can say certain things, but students cannot. Although it is true that a class environment or the relationship between a teacher and his students is never entirely democratic and equal, Scene 31 indicates explicitly that Mr. Marin might consider himself superior as an authority figure to his students.

The general characteristics of the students. The self-evident characteristics of the students in the film are that they are mostly children of immigrants; their families barely speak French—if at all. The students are a diverse group of individuals whose roots range from Mali, Morocco, to as far as East Asia. It is apparent, then, that they are woven with the values of their families, and that they must adapt to a new culture that is entirely different from their original one to be successful in the school. They are strangers in strange lands. Therefore, they are in a constant struggle to balance their life between adapting to the French way of life and their original culture. Racial, religious and individual differences beget behavioral and attitude problems.

In Scene 7, Esmeralda tells that she thinks she is not French. More correctly, “Well, I am French, but I’m not proud of it.” In scene 23, students are having a dispute over whose national soccer team is superior to whose during their oral presentations. This dispute turns into a verbal attack especially between Souleymane and Carl where Mr. Marin has to take the former to the principal’s office for misbehaving. The comparison that starts the dispute among students is not between *Les Blues* and other national teams; rather, it is either Mali or Morocco. Carl is the only student who thinks that they should support *Les Blues*. In order to get a better understanding of the student body in the film, now, I will focus on three major student characters that are, in my opinion, representative of the student population in the film.

Souleymane. From the beginning of the film, Souleymane’s behavioral problems surface. Mr. Marin’s attempts to help him fail, and he gets expelled. Souleymane’s academic failure stems from his approach to school and his studies. Throughout the film, a full academic year, we recurrently observe that Souleymane is reluctant. He is more interested in taking photos, playing soccer with his friends on the playground, causing trouble to Mr. Marin, downgrading other

students in the class. Even at his hardest time in the film when he is in front of the disciplinary committee which may expel him from the school, he does not abide by the rules. In fact, his mother is more eager than him to empathize with the committee. In a close-up, eye level, side shot of Souleymane and his mother during the committee hearing, we see Souleymane's mother is closer to the committee trying to convince them not to expel her son where Souleymane translates what she says and does nothing to defend himself in front of the committee.

Khoumba. It seems that Khoumba's problems with Mr. Marin that affect her progress in the class stem more from coming-of-age obstacles rather than racial or religious ones. She participates in the class activities and makes progress while enjoying it when she does not have a personal problem with Mr. Marin. Yet, when she has a dispute with Mr. Marin emanating from her refusal to do a reading duty that he assigns her, she resents his authority as a teacher defying him. After her resentment, we notice that she does not enjoy being in the classroom.

Esmeralda. At the beginning of the film, Esmeralda's refusal to write her name on a piece of paper gives us hints that she is a rebel soul. Later, she is among those who question the substantiality of the imperfect subjunctive. Like the other characters in the film, she is presented as complex, too. During teachers' meeting, she, as a student representative, acts in a way that she should not. She also tells her friends their grades when she is not supposed to. As a result of that Mr. Marin tells that she (and another student Louise) acted like "pétasse" during that meeting. She does not submit to Mr. Marin, an authority figure. Her most important moment in the film is, though, Scene 47 that portrays the last day of the school where students, one by one, talk about what they have learned throughout the academic year (It is in this scene that a student approaches Mr. Marin and says that she did not learn anything from the school).

Esmeralda easily claims that she did not learn anything from the school. She adds, however, that she read Plato's *The Republic* at home. She says: "Yeah, Socrates. This guy, he stops people in the street, and he asks them: Are you sure of thinking what you think? Are you sure of doing what you do? And so on. After that, people start getting confused. They ask questions. The guy's too much." Her reference to Plato's *The Republic* is a key point in the film that I will get back to in this analysis.

As I have pointed out so far, the incompatibility of the two cultures (students' and Mr. Marin's) and concealed state of human nature to resist change create the tension, which the film remarkably portrays, between students and teachers. Added to these two causes of tension is students' life period that is coming-of-age, which results in rebelliousness.

The tension and the distance between Mr. Marin and the students. The tension emerges early in the film, as early as Scene 4 where Mr. Marin watches over the students as they enter the classroom and asks students to take their hats off. It is worth mentioning that Scene 4 is the first scene that we see students in the film. As they enter the classroom, Mr. Marin allows them to take some time to settle down. It does not happen, Mr. Marin steps in and complains about the time they might lose if they take such a long time to get ready for the class every time. Students first demur that their class lasts from 8.30 to 9.25, 55 minutes, not an hour. Then, they contest that teachers say that they do a class hour, but that is never the case. Their last dispute for the first day with Mr. Marin is their reluctance to write their names on a piece of paper.

"Bill déguste un succulent cheeseburger" is an example sentence to explain succulent, but succulent is the least of the things that students pay attention. They believe that Mr. Marin prefers "whitey," "frenchie" names over to Ahmed, Rachid, etc. Moreover, what is the deal with cheeseburgers? They stink. Doner or kabab is better. Students' objection to Western names and

icons in Scene 7 attest to the distance between Mr. Marin and his students. It may also, *prima facie*, look like the prime example of the distance and Mr. Marin's inability to reach out to his students. However, I think another scene takes the prime role on this regard. In Scene 13, Boubacar and Rabah talk about things that shame them:

Boubacar (B): You can be ashamed of a pal's mom.
 Mr. Marin (M): Ashamed of a pal's mom. Why? Because you find her ugly?
 B: No, it's not that. For instance, Rabah's mom... She offered me lunch, but I refused because I was ashamed.
 M: You were ashamed to eat with Rabah's mother?
 B: Yeah
 M: Because you think she's unworthy of you?
 B: No
 M: I don't understand. Tell me why, Boubacar
 B: I'm ashamed to eat in front of her because I respect her.
 ...
 Rabah (R): The other week, I was at a party with nothing but Camemberters.
 M: Nothing but Camemberters?
 R: Yeah, like you.
 M: Remind us what a Camembert is.
 R: Someone who stinks of cheese.
 M: So you went to a party where everyone stank of cheese?
 R: They were all in suits and ties. I was in my baggies and got these weird looks.
 M: And you were ashamed?
 R: Yeah. Because of the looks.
 M: Basically, they were embarrassed in front of you and so you felt embarrassed in front of them.
 R: No, they weren't embarrassed. They looked at me like I was an E.T.
 M: I see.
 R: "Why's that Arab here?"
 M: Okay, so it was a race thing or something...
 R: I don't know... I don't know. But the snacks were bacon-flavored.
 M: So? Is that...
 R: So I... abstained
 M: Right. Bacon, ham... Okay, I get it.

Each culture bestows strict rules or conventions to regulate relationships between individuals. In Western cultures including French, it is perfectly okay for a male youngster to eat or spend time with his friend's mother or, in general, with females. However, in Eastern cultures including Boubacar's, such relationships are more restricted. Boubacar claims that he is ashamed to eat in front of his friend's mother because he respects her. Such logic is hard for Westerners to understand just as Boubacar seems to be having problems to adapt French conventions on his relationship with his friend's mother. Rabah is more explicit on the racial side of this distance. He first stereotypes French people by referring them as Camemberters and then he questions his place among them, "Why's that Arab here!" Another aspect of the distance is religion, which surfaces on Rabah's dissatisfaction with bacon-flavored snacks.

The centrality of the space in the film. In portraying teachers versus students in a full academic year at the school, *The Class* delineates three major spaces: (1) the classroom, (2) the teachers' room and (3) the playground. These three spaces approximately constitute 68.7% of the screen time of the film at the total. Approximately, the film devotes 12 scenes, 4097 seconds, to the classroom, which consists of 53.3% of entire screen time. Similarly, seven scenes take place in the teachers' room, which comprises 10.7% of the whole film. Finally, seven scenes eventuate at the playground with 360 seconds and 4.7% of total screen time. These percentages alone attest to the significance of these places. Each carries an allegorical meaning, which requires close investigation.

The teachers' room is the teachers' safe area that is designed as a place for teachers since we never see a single student in this space. Teachers' room is an isolated area for teachers to complain about the student body as when Vincent does in Scene 12 in addition to being a place

where they can renounce their take on students' behavior more explicitly than they would in the other places of the school, especially when students are present. Overall, the teachers' room is the arena of the teacher's so-called authority.

The playground is, as opposed to the teachers' room, students' haven. Students, in the playground, act in ways that they would never do in the other places of the school. They seem to be happy, joyful and relaxed at the playground in opposition to their situation in the classroom. Their depiction when they are at the playground exemplifies the distance between the students and their teacher, Mr. Marin, and hierarchized structure of the school since all scenes, except one, taking place at the playground are high angle long shots.

The classroom is the most dangerous space in the film in the sense that it is where two types of power figures, the teachers and the students, meet. It is not the teachers' room; teachers cannot be as explicit as they are in their room. We see Mr. Marin get in a conflict with the students when he uses the word *pétasse* (Scene 27). It is not the playground either, students cannot act as they do at the playground. For instance, again in Scene 27, Souleymane tries to leave the classroom unexcused after hearing that Mr. Marin called his academic abilities limited in the teachers' meeting and after Mr. Marin uses the word skank toward two student delegates. Mr. Marin strives to stop him, but he pushes him to the side hitting Khoumba in the head, which leads to Souleymane's expulsion after a disciplinary meeting (Scene 27). Therefore, the classroom is a place at the film that both the teacher and the students need to leave their role attributions behind that may get in the way of the students' self-cultivation.

Scene 16 is a prime example in terms of the classroom's role as a space in the film since in this scene the principal, Mr. Marin and the students meet at the classroom. The principal enters the classroom to introduce a new student to the class. He expects all students to stand up

and greet him. He adds, in a long shot taken from behind the students which may signify his desire to extend his presence to the whole classroom: “Everyone has to stand. It’s simply a way of greeting an adult. It doesn’t mean submission or humiliation.” It is not that the principal is a power-hungry totalitarian who enjoys when people submit themselves to him; rather, the principal thinks that it is the right way for students to stand up to greet elders, he believes that he is teaching them manners, which is good for them.

Postcolonial times in the film. Throughout its running time, *The Class* presents signs that its overarching theme is the postcolonial status of France. In Scene 5, the students are unwilling to write their names on a paper since they do not see the merit of it. At the end of the scene, the camera shows us the paper that Cherif wrote his name on, which also includes an Algerian flag. Among numerous alternatives that Cherif could have featured on the paper to represent him, he chooses the flag of his “motherland.” Such a preference strongly indicates that he might not consider himself to be a part of the French body. His motherland is Algeria, which used to be a colony of France. Now the fact that he lives in a country that colonized his motherland and that had rocky relationships with his people might complicate his existence in today’s France. In the same vein, the same fact might also complicate his attitude toward his education at a French school.

Colonialism is predicated on a very simple, yet pejorative assumption that the colonizing culture is superior to the colonized one and that colonizers believe that it is their God-given duty to colonize “backward” people to “modernize” them. In that regard, traces of colonialism can be traced today by looking at two quintessential elements of any culture—language and religion—since colonizers impose their versions of these to peoples they colonize to “change them for better.” Such a realization that language is the basic tool of colonizers brings a new perspective

to my analysis of different elements of *The Class*. With this realization, the students' opposition to the imperfect subjunctive in Scene 9 is not only on the grounds that it is old and nonfunctional in their daily life but also because that it is the language of their colonizers. The film's recurring moments that are, one way or another, related to the language issue indirectly tell us that Flaubert's notion (1913/1954) "COLONIES (OUR). Register sadness in speaking of them (Colonies [nos]: s'attrister quand on en parle)" turns into "PEOPLE FROM COLONIES (OUR). They register sadness in speaking our language, hence, they avoid it." Similarly, the cultural differences—I have already mentioned (Scene 13)—that emanate from religious backgrounds of the students in the class may present threats to the Christian way of living of French people. Finally, the countries that the students are originated from in *The Class* are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Caribbean, to name a few; these are not just any countries but former colonies of France.

Throughout the film, we see that racially and culturally diverse students of Mr. Marin have numerous different approaches to Mr. Marin's curriculum in a postcolonial time. They continuously send direct or indirect signs to Mr. Marin on their approach to his curriculum. Mr. Marin acknowledges some of these signs whereas the majority of them go unnoticed. The direct signs that students express about their take of the curriculum in Mr. Marin's class are their manifest resistance against writing their name on a paper (Scene 5), the imperfect subjunctive (Scene 9), reading *The Diary of a Young Girl* (Scene 13). These are all important expressions from students that Mr. Marin should have paid more attention, yet, I believe that students' indirect manifestations of their approach to Mr. Marin's curriculum are more important since they might stem from Mr. Marin's postcolonial mentality toward his students. A prime example of such a manifestation that reflects Mr. Marin's thinking about his students is in Scene 19 in

which Khoumba and Esmeralda are working on typing their self-portraits when Mr. Marin is surprised to see in their writing that they mention that they travel to different parts of Paris than their neighborhood. Mr. Marin's puzzlement that Esmeralda and Khoumba visit different parts of Paris than their neighborhood is an indication of his approach to his students whereas Khoumba and Esmeralda's annoyance over Mr. Marin's surprise suggests their dissatisfaction with Mr. Marin's approach of them. Together, these two views compose the postcolonial atmosphere in Mr. Marin's class and the school.

Esmeralda (E): How do you spell Lafayette?
 Mr. Marin (M): How do you mean?
 E: Like Galleries Lafayette.
 M: Why are you mentioning that?
 E: I go there often so I want to add it.
 M: That's weird. I mean, it's four metro stops from here. You never usually leave the neighborhood, that's a huge leap in one go.

Khoumba is noticeably annoyed.

Khoumba (K): Hey, we're not hicks!
 E: We're city kids!
 M: Really? You go into the center of Paris?
 E: You bet!
 M: I go everywhere. The 1st, the 5th, the 20th, the 12th, the 19th...
 M: Really? Why do you go to the 5th?
 K: In the 5th, I go to see pals in high school. Near Luxembourg.
 M: I see. You go to the Luxembourg Gardens?
 K: No, not the gardens, I said Luxembourg.

Discussion and conclusion of the analysis. I argue, first and foremost, that we should interpret *The Class* as a reminder to the field of curriculum that we cannot accept centrality and standardization to yield desired results because of social, political and ethical differences among students and daily situations. The centrality and standardization in *The Class* is the result of the

way the school is organized. In general, schools are designed to operate under a well-defined and developed bureaucracy which, without any exception, assumes a top-down hierarchy in addition to centralization. Central authorities define aims for a school. Superintendents are responsible for making sure that the school achieves its aims. School administration, especially principals, respond to the superintendent; teachers to administration and principal; and finally, students to teachers. Said another way, there exists a bureaucratic pyramid in schools, the bottom level of which is home to students. However, Mr. Marin's students are a diverse body of low-income students, they have no interest in the central authority's agenda of combining a French nation under the French flag, speaking the French language. Therefore, their situation suggests that a curriculum theory must acknowledge the impossibility of standardization and centrality so that it can provide a sound base for more inclusive and effective curricula built upon it.

Curriculum development contains two equally essential steps, the first being organization or preparation, the second, delivery. A well-crafted curriculum does not automatically result with student achievement. A well-crafted curriculum plus qualified (complex) teachers help students to learn in schools. We see in *The Class* that teachers usually suffer from burning out because of a number of problems they may face. Their various remarks and behaviors indicate that they lack the necessary professional qualities to further the intellectual environment of their school.

Mr. Marin's case in *The Class* presents blueprints of what teachers can do to handle the delivery part of curriculum making successfully. Two requirements for the success of a curriculum in terms of delivery are vital: student motivation and interest. Motivation is *sine qua non* of learning, without which all efforts toward it is either in vain or inefficient. Moreover, motivation and interest are not two unrelated concepts; rather, they are interlinked because ideally, an interest in the subject should motivate students to study more to acquire it. We

witness Mr. Marin's struggles since he cannot motivate or interest his students. Hence, curricularists must pay specific attention in teacher preparation programs to equip teachers with the right tools so that they can be efficient in terms of students' motivation and interest. Since I think that teachers' behaviors are shaped by their philosophy, teacher education programs should put a good deal of emphasis on the philosophy of education.

Curriculum delivery is not a one-sided endeavor. Certainly, teachers need basic qualifications to be able to teach. Equally as true, students need qualities as well in addition to being motivated and interested to learn. Three important student characters in *The Class* namely Souleymane, Khoumba and Esmeralda signify such qualities. First, Souleymane's case reveals that students should be willing and concerned in the school. Second, Khoumba's changing attitude toward the class demonstrates that teaching involves more than just knowledge delivery since depending on the age level of students, their emotions and attitudes affect their participation to the class and hence learning. Third and last, Esmeralda invites us to find better ways of organizing curricula to help students to learn to think for themselves by choosing appropriate instructional methods and questions.

Esmeralda's mention of *The Republic* provides four lessons that I would like to acknowledge here. First, it seems that she employs a type of skepticism since her reading of *The Republic* brings her to ask questions about the validity of both the physical and intellectual situations she experiences in her daily life (thinking and doing). Moreover, she applies this skeptic approach to her education since we see that she questions the educational undertakings at her school. She criticizes the curriculum by emphasizing thinking critically. During the whole academic year, the film shows us no effort on the side of Mr. Marin to have his students to think, think for themselves; rather, he recurrently teaches the formal subject, not the ability to think.

Esmeralda's point that she did not learn from school anything, in this sense, is a criticism of the curriculum at the school. Curricularists need to be aware of and alert to such criticisms.

Second, *The Republic* is the philosophical manifesto of Plato written in the form of Socratic dialogue. In addition to its extensive use in the areas of philosophy, law and political science, the dialogue is adapted into education too, known as Socratic method that requires a teacher to ask thought-provoking questions to students to elicit responses from them, resulting in a higher level of understanding of phenomena of study than lecturing. We observe in the film that Mr. Marin poses questions, but they are never at a higher level of understanding; rather, they are intellectually lower level ones posited to help students to just recall instead of comprehension, application or evaluation.

Third, *The Republic's* first book deals with justice in which Socrates posits a question to get definitions of justice from his companions. In the film, we see that Esmeralda makes a complaint to Mr. Marin's supervisor regarding Mr. Marin's use of a vulgar word toward her. Considering that her desire of getting Mr. Marin punished does not happen in the film, her remark on *The Republic* can be read as her stress of injustice in the school. Souleymane gets expelled for what he did, in this regard, the justice system in the school works. Yet, the system is insufficient to punish a teacher when he conducts something wrong. Incidents like this contribute to Esmeralda's—and other students'—belief that the system favors authorities, not them.

Fourth and last, we know that the original name of the film *Entre Les Murs* means “Between the Walls” and that the film takes place almost entirely inside a school, very much similar to Plato's Allegory of the Cave in *The Republic*. The allegory refers to a philosopher's agenda—to leave the cave and experience the real world before returning to the cave in an effort to have other prisoners to comprehend outside realities, to know the nature of things and to have

others to find their own way of rescuing themselves from the cave. Esmeralda wants to leave the cave to experience realities.

The Class shows us that an exclusively teacher-centered or a content-centered curriculum is not effective. A curriculum, instead, must be a combination of both by taking students to the center. Students' constant dissatisfaction with the content and their criticism of the way it is delivered to them in the film reveal that students need to value the subject matter that they are supposed to learn, to respect their teacher as a competent deliverer of it, in addition, to have a saying on this content and the way it is presented to them. Accordingly, a curriculum should involve students in its development to be efficient. Developed this way, it can, then, meet basic expectations of students as well as their racial and social class needs stemming from their diverse backgrounds.

To establish an equal, inclusive and achievement-driven atmosphere in schools, I propose, the theory behind curriculum development should be deliberative, curricula should be developed deliberatively, and they should lead to a deliberative atmosphere in schools. In this regard, I interpret the finale of *The Class* to be a reflection of a search for deliberative curriculum making. In the scene before the last one, we see the students and the teachers all together for the first time in the film playing soccer. The teachers are at the power area of students'. However, they all seem to be cheerful and joyful, enjoying themselves. Such an atmosphere is characteristic of good learning environments. True, they are playing against each other, the teachers versus the students, instead of mixing up to form two teams. In addition, the referee is a teacher. Still, the exchange that they experience through soccer that they enjoy together creates an environment at the playground that is preferable to the intense, uncomfortable and nerve-touching atmosphere they had to go through all semester. In the next, and hence, the last scene,

we see two shots of the classroom, now empty, one from the back, the other from the front of it, as their noise from the playground fills it. One cannot stop asking why they did not enjoy their time together in the classroom. The answer, I believe, is that they deliberated to play soccer but did not do so in the classroom.

My discussion so far on the lessons that *The Class* might teach us regards the theory part of curriculum. Yet, I believe that it is equally as important and fruitful to consider what Mr. Marin could have done to overcome specific curricular difficulties—challenges from the students to his curriculum. In other words, *The Class* teaches us a lot about what not to do in postcolonial classrooms, but it may as well present us ways on how to repair it. Zeichner (1992) provides a comprehensive list of critical elements that are effective for teaching culturally diverse group of students. By considering five of these elements that I think are directly related to the curricular challenges that Mr. Marin faces, I present my suggestions that Mr. Marin could have considered providing a better curricular experience to his students. I should also note that my two general points that Mr. Marin's students are not motivated to and interested in his curriculum are woven into to each one of the following solutions that are aimed at providing more practical suggestions to daily curricular issues.

Teachers have a professionally personal relationship with their students. They do not see them as the other. *The Class* eloquently portrays that there exists a dichotomy between the teachers and the students. Vincent's nervous breakdown and his comments, Mr. Marin's astonishment to find out that Esmeralda and Khoumba visit different parts of the city attest to the us-and-them distinction between the teachers and the students. Such a distance between Mr. Marin and his students is detrimental to a fruitful learning environment in his class. Mr. Marin could have designed intra- and extra-curricular activities to change his relationship with his

students for the better. We see the effect of bettering the relationship between the teachers and the students when they play soccer together at the end of the film.

Teachers know their students, personally and culturally, well enough to understand their cultural expectations. Throughout the film's running time, the students constantly challenge Mr. Marin and his teaching. As I discussed, these challenges are in fact signs that students send to Mr. Marin to arrange his curriculum to meet their expectations better. Instead of viewing such invitations as problems that a group of irresponsible students poses to make trouble, Mr. Marin could have seen them as opportunities to communicate with an ensemble of young citizens who could benefit from his guidance. Put another way, Mr. Marin could have put a lot more effort to listen to such invitations from his students to understand them better, specifically on why they act in the ways that they do. For example, when students resist the imperfect subjunctive, instead of persisting on teaching it, he could have debated some other alternatives with his students that could have increased their learning readiness for the imperfect subjunctive. By and large, a healthier communication with his students would increase Mr. Marin's chances to know his students better, which would increase the learning environment in his class. For example, knowing students better, logically, starts with addressing them with their name. Thus, names are vital for instructor-to-student, student-to-student and student-to-instructor communication in classrooms. Mr. Marin is aware of this since he asks his students to write their name on a paper so that everybody can see. When they resist the idea of writing their name on a paper, he cannot find ways of convincing them on the importance of names for in-class communication. Since his students come from very diverse groups, he could have asked them about their names such as what it means, whether they like it or not, etc.

Teachers have high expectations of all their students. They believe that all students can succeed. Mr. Marin's referral to Souleymane's abilities as "limited" hints that his expectations from his students are not the same for all students. Besides, when they study the imperfect subjunctive in class, Mr. Marin says that he does not believe that Khoumba can give an example of it. Students also believe that Mr. Marin values some students (e.g., Wei) over to the other students. Self-fulfilling prophecy is at work. If a teacher believes a student can succeed, that student will succeed since the teacher will provide him or her with right tools to succeed.

Curriculum should be challenging academically by paying specific attention to the development of higher-level skills. One central problem with Mr. Marin's curriculum is that it is not challenging enough. Being challenging does not necessarily mean that the subject must be tough for students to acquire; rather, it means that the subject must be at an optimum level that is neither irksomely above students' level nor tediously below. Esmeralda, in the film, comments that she did not learn anything from the school for a whole academic year that included *The Diary of a Young Girl* that Mr. Marin assigned them to read, but she expresses her reading of *The Republic*. Thus, a challenging curriculum is one that motivates students to achieve a level that is reasonably higher than their level at the beginning of instruction. Mr. Marin could have put more effort to determine his students' level and consult his colleagues to align his curriculum to be optimally challenging.

Teachers make sure that students consider the instructional activities as worthy and meaningful. I have discussed repeatedly that students constantly challenge Mr. Marin's curriculum and that Mr. Marin should have seen these challenges as signs to fix his curriculum. Such signs are implicit indicators that the students do not consider Mr. Marin's instructional activities worthy and valuable at all. Mr. Marin could have chosen his activities from areas that

would motivate and interest his students to participate in such activities. For instance, it is evident from the film that a good portion of these students is interested in soccer. Mr. Marin's activities could have included more elements from it.

Before I conclude my analysis here, I have one more assignment to do. This assignment regards a discussion of how the film examines the five considerations of curriculum: ontological, teleological, political, epistemological, and organizational/logical. Let me discuss them respectively.

Ontologically, the environment in *The Class* gives the impression that the whole educational system primarily aims to *produce* a French society out of students that are from all over the world, especially from the former colonies of French Empire. For this reason, French schools are in fact republican spaces that have the aim of *forging* parts of French society from children of immigrants (Williams, 2011). By and large, schooling, as *The Class* portrays, is a machine that has the function of receiving an immigrant child from one end and delivering a French citizen as a finished product.

Teachers' ontological role in this machine is that of a foreman in traditional factories. They are supposed to supervise the process of making French men and women. Mr. Marin seems to be the most liberal and indulgent teacher in the staff. However, his positive efforts fall short since his students constantly question his curriculum and seem to be lacking motivation and interest. Toward the end of the film, a dark side of him emerges when he tells his students that a teacher is entitled to say certain things and act in certain ways while students cannot. Overall, even at his best moments, he implicates that his subject matter, French, is something that students have to learn without questioning, which is salient in one of the key scenes in the film where he argues the value of imperfect subjunctive with his students when they dispute its value.

Students are supposed to comply with the expectations of the curriculum instead of criticizing it. Their expected ontological role resembles that of a recorder that archives everything that is delivered to it on the assumption that it will be needed later. However, from the beginning of the film to the end, students constantly question Mr. Marin's curriculum. Such oppositions and refusal from students indicate that they are not happy with their role in the class as being the one to abide by the authority and listen carefully to learn from an adult model. They, in a sense, invite Mr. Marin to cooperate with them on an equal foot.

Teleologically, Mr. Marin's curriculum seems to be predicated on the understanding that racially diverse students need to adapt to French culture. They will graduate one day and become a member of the French community. For this reason, they need to speak high-level French. Mr. Marin's curriculum has a strict-and-set definition of this high-level French and stringently expect students to learn this way of French. Thus, its underlying aim is to teach *elite* or *bourgeois* French to students who are probably children of proletariat and immigrants.

The curriculum in *The Class* rejects the street French that students are used to and wants to change it for a better French. However, Strand (2009) argues that "according to linguist Meredith Doran, the alternative French spoken by a population that is both physically and socially excluded from the dominant society allows for an expression of an alternative identity." (p. 263). Then, the reason that students recurrently oppose the curriculum might be related to the aims of the curriculum to alter students' identity. Language is the power and Mr. Marin's curriculum reflect that it is (Strand, 2009). Doran (2007, p. 498) observes: "it is useful to examine the ways in which *banlieue* youth communities are framed in dominant representations, as these hegemonic representations are important sitings [sic] of ideologies which shape youths' self-perceptions and behavior, and provide a backdrop against which youths must negotiate their

sense of self.” Then, it can be said that in its aim of teaching a high-level French, Mr. Marin’s curriculum indirectly aims to adjust students’ identities.

Politically, the film portrays the political agenda of the curriculum through its clever use of the spaces in the film. The playground, the teachers’ room and the classroom are three major spaces, each denoting a different political significance. The film conceives the school as a miniature society where the problems of larger society persist (Williams, 2011, p. 62). Ideally, schools are supposed to solve these problems or work toward them. Yet, the criticism of Pierre Bourdieu reminds us that educational systems always recreate the social inequality and stratification (Tzanakis, 2011). Sullivan (2002) sums it well: “According to Bourdieu, the education systems of industrialized societies function in such a way as to legitimate class inequalities. Success in the education system is facilitated by the possession of cultural capital and of higher-class habitus. Lower-class pupils do not, in general, possess these traits, so the failure of the majority of these pupils is inevitable.” Hence, with a Bourdieuan perspective, it is possible to say that Mr. Marin’s curriculum in the film is politically bound to fail. The film’s unaccustomed portrayal of three major spaces reflects Bourdieu’s notion of lower class students’ lack of cultural capital and higher-class habitus, and the distance between the students and their teacher.

The multiplicity of spaces (the playground, the teachers’ room and the classroom) in the film might be read as diversity. However, I assert that the existence of more spaces for exchange between individuals is something that we need to approach more carefully. The way that the playground depicted in the film reveals that the playground is an alternative avenue for communicative exchange between students and teachers. Lykidis (2012) highlights that “Habermasian notion that a proliferation of public spheres is an inherently anti-democratic

development” (p. 9) since the multiplicity of spaces can give one of the concerned parties a place to avoid the exchange.

Epistemologically, the way that individuals conceive knowledge has an impact on curricula (Benson, 1989). Said another way, teachers present knowledge to their students incongruent with their conception of what knowledge is and what type of knowledge is important for them. In the film, Mr. Marin’s curriculum aims to transmit the type of French knowledge that Mr. Marin thinks that his students should acquire to be a productive member of the French community. His emphasis on the importance of French knowledge can be seen in the scene where he finds himself in a position to defend the value of imperfect subjunctive to the students. He says: “The first thing I notice is, before mastering something, the imperfect subjunctive, you’re already telling me it’s no use. Start by mastering it, then you can call its use into question.” For him, knowledge is something that students have to master even if they see no use and merit in it.

In terms of organization, Mr. Marin’s curriculum can be said to have a linear organization. The problem with this type of organization is that when students are done with a unit, it is rare that they will ever get back to it during their instruction. The logic behind such a linear organization is that content should be arrayed from easy to hard so that students can progress from one to the more advanced while the earlier ones can be prerequisites for the latter ones. In the film, we see that Mr. Marin starts the semester with instructing his students on adjectives, meanings of words and verb conjugations, respectively. He then assigns a reading activity to his students, expects them to prepare a project on their own, and finally present it in front of the class.

To conclude, I would like to return to Esmeralda's reference to Plato's *The Republic* toward the end of film since I believe that her reference to this influential philosophical treatise signifies the meat of *The Class*'s message. For Plato, education should prepare the child for effective involvement in the society; in other words, education is a public matter that aims to ensure the welfare of the society since students of today will be the guardians of the state in the future (Murphy, 2015). In this sense, education, in Plato's thinking, is a social construction (Feinberg, 2016) for the sake of a society where there is unity among its members in their efforts to reach the aims that they set for themselves while each has a responsibility in the process. To make Plato's view clear, let us compare him to Rousseau. Unlike Plato, Rousseau thinks that society is an evil that alienates the child from his true nature. Thus, he advocates keeping the child away from the society until he is brought up in a controlled environment where the child's potential can flourish in the direction of his interests (see Rousseau, 1979). In this sense, education, for Rousseau, is a social *deconstruction* (Feinberg, 2016). In short, Plato forsakes the parts of individual freedom in the interest of an entirely functioning and harmonious society whereas Rousseau highlights the significance of self that is in accordance with nature over to welfare of the society. I believe that it is in this comparison of Plato and Rousseau where the essence of *The Class* is to be found.

The analysis I just provided here is my reading of the film by paying specific attention to curricular and teacher education matters. The actual impact of the film in a teacher preparation course, however, is to be uncovered by studying my participants' reading of it. To decide on the details of the actual study, I have conducted a pilot study as a miniature form of the real one to test things out. Now, I move to a discussion of this diminutive effort.

The Pilot Study

As I decided to study *The Class* for my doctoral degree, I conducted some preliminary studies such as my Early Research Project where I concentrated on the film. During that time, it became apparent to me that the next step after this Early Research experience would be to scrutinize this film with preservice teachers. At the same time, I had some ideas about how to design such a study, how to find my own voice in the study as a researcher, and, of course, how to involve preservice teachers in the process by making it a fruitful experience one for them. However, the ideas I had at the beginning were too messy and unorganized. In other words, one on hand, I vaguely knew what I wanted to achieve with the study, on the other, I did not know how to proceed, how to take a step after another. Therefore, I have concluded that a pilot study was necessary at that point.

After getting the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the pilot study, I became involved in a full semester class for Fall 2017 semester. This class aimed at examining teaching middle-grade students, especially in terms of the curriculum and philosophy, where the central focus was on the acquisition of instructional practices and materials for supporting reading, writing and spoken language development of diverse middle-grade students. I judged the course to be a perfect fit for the pilot study since its emphasis was on the development of language teaching to a diverse group of students reflected perfectly what *The Class* is all about: a language teacher teaching a racially and culturally diverse group of middle-grade students.

From the beginning of the semester, I never considered my role as of an auditor in the position of an outside observer; rather, I strived to become a part of the class by getting involved in in-class activities to familiarize myself with the students in this class. Throughout the semester, I had many experiences to encounter diverse sides of these vibrant preservice teachers.

My main aim in this involvement process was to ensure that watching a film in their education would be fruitful to these preservice teachers.

The majority of these students were senior undergraduates who were about to graduate to become teachers looking for employment opportunities. Similarly, they, almost all of them, were assigned to different schools around the area for their practicum where they assisted their assigned teachers in instruction while observing the actual teaching situations. Also, they taught classes to middle-grade students. As close as they were to their graduation, they all had to take their EdTPAs soon to be able to get their certificates. I did not pay too much attention to their area of concentration since the study I have been planning has centered around teaching in general without focusing on a subject matter such as English or social studies.

These students were assigned to watch *The Class* in the class for two weeks as a part of their curriculum. I was the facilitator for this period. In order to ensure that I would not influence students' interpretation of the film, I did not provide any explanations to them in terms of the film's content or themes before the screening. I only elucidated how the process would go. In the first week, we watched the first half of *The Class* (about an hour at the total). During the screening time, students had all logged into a chat room that was on the course's Moodle where they typed their comments of the film as they watched. As the screening was in process, at some critical points of the film, I stopped it to have an in-class discussion of what we have seen. After the screening of the first half, we had an overall discussion session about what had stood out to these preservice teachers. An identical procedure occurred for the second half of the film. The following week after the screening of the first half of the film, we watched the second half while students posted their comments on Moodle of what they saw as they watched. Similarly, I stopped the film at some points to discuss it with them. I audio recorded all the in-class

discussions—both during-the-screening ones and after-the-screening ones. I also recorded their comments to the Moodle site of the course. At the end of the film as a whole, we had a general discussion of the film. After these weeks and for the rest of the semester, I interviewed six participants individually. Appendix C includes the Interview Protocol for the interviews.

An abridged engagement with the dataset has revealed a couple of points for consideration. I think that such points are twofold. The first is related to actual research questions I had before the process. For example, a common theme that came out from the individual interviews (to my surprise since I did not expect that these students would be engaged with school films in an analytical manner) pointed to the myths that school films create as I discussed in my literature review. One of the interviewees specifically commented when I asked her about the major themes that stood out to her from the film:

I guess I have to differentiate because a lot of times American education films are so like unrealistic of what a classroom is and so I was kind of expecting the same thing just of this film not kind of disregarding that it was foreign. After watching it, I kind of felt like they were more realistic than what a lot of American films portray. So, I thought that was pretty interesting. It felt like a more realistic setting and like more realistic response to distraction in class. It was more realistic of how students respond to things.

Since the primary reason of conducting the pilot study was that it would inform the design of the actual study, I specifically had my eye on the responses I got from these students on their experience of watching the film. I assert that such responses can be grouped into three suggestions to inform the design of the actual study. First and foremost, some students had responded that not knowing what to look at in the film since I did not provide an explanation that would serve a passage to actual screening process restricted their take of the film. However, they also reported they got more used to it and understood why they watch the film as they did.

Secondly, they argued that because the film is in another language, it was hard for them to post their comments on Moodle while keeping up with the film. In this sense, some of them either missed engaging deeply with the film for posting a comment on a previous scene or did not post a comment for not missing a part as they watched. Thirdly, they invariably explained to me that they enjoyed the discussion sessions we had and felt that they learned quite a deal from them. These points were worthy considerations in the design of the actual study.

The Participants

The College of Education at UIUC is a college that offers top programs to its undergraduate students where the student to tenure-track faculty ratio is 11:1 with a total number of 642 undergraduate students during 2016-17 semester. Moreover, for the same period, average undergraduate ACT score is 26.4 where the national average is 20.8. Finally, 13% of undergraduate student population during these semesters is international while 28% of the same group is from underrepresented populations (College of Education, 2017). These data attest that the participants are in a productive environment for their education with room for more improvement.

Undergraduate students at this college during their education get involved with pupils and their parents in local communities, try to gain a set of necessary knowledge and skills for the practice of teaching, and observe classrooms around their area with the help of practicums they attend. These students are explicitly expected to develop a type of competence in their profession by paying attention to the whole development of children (College of Education, 2017). In this milieu, I think that it was appropriate to utilize a cinema film during their education since they

were expected to develop the qualities I just mentioned by engaging with technology and in-depth fieldwork.

At the beginning of the Spring 2018 semester, Between the Walls (BtW) course, the site of the actual study, included a total of 26 registered students. In the third week (January 30th) of this class, at the end of the session, I explained the necessary details of my study to these students and distributed Informed Consent Form giving them time to decide whether to agree to participate to my study or not. As a result, 19 of 26 preservice teachers agreed to participate in the study. However, one student dropped the course later in the semester. Thus, the study is an interpretation of participation of 18 preservice teachers in BtW class.

All of these participants major in English program at UIUC. They also minor in secondary education to get a teaching certificate to become professional English teachers when they get their degree. A common way to present participants to the readers in studies such as this one is by giving a table of participants' relevant characteristics such as gender, race, etc. (e.g., Barnes & Smagorinsky, p. 341). However, since I judged that these characteristics are not directly related to the research questions of the study, I decided to present the participants and the site (the classroom environment) descriptively in a separate section (Chapter 4) rather than with a table.

As I was conducting the actual steps of this study, I was also putting an effort to gain a basic command of the French language out of personal interest. Also, I hoped that doing so would contribute to the quality of the study since the film is a French one. Along those lines, during data collection for the study, I was also a registered student in an introductory French class. As the semester (Spring 2018) progressed, I found out that one of the films that my French class was set to screen was in fact *The Class*. Introductory language courses like the one I

attended where the main aim is to help learners acquire basic structures of a language such as grammar, reading, listening, etc. include films in their presentation of the language to initiate learners to the culture of the language, which is vital to learning a new language. Although the motivation to screen *The Class* with students was utterly different between the French class and BtW, it occurred to me that including views of the students in the French class would enrich the analysis of the study. Since the students in the French class were undergraduates from other fields than education (e.g., engineering, social work, anthropology, art history), I reasoned that their views on the film would provide a distinctive framework, which I could use to discuss the views of the preservice teachers. Thus, I decided to include my classmates in the French class to my study.

To be able to do so expectedly required an amendment on my IRB for the study (see Appendix H for initial IRB approval and Appendix I for amended approval). The aforementioned French class included 22 students at the total. Unfortunately, the turnout rate for the agreement to participate to the study was not as high as it was for the actual site of the study since only five students agreed to be interviewed by me on the film. The analysis of the views of these students who also watched *The Class* but in a different setting with different aims constitutes a section in the findings.

The Researcher

I have had a long-lasting interest in films. However, I have never imagined that I would academically study films one day. Films have always been a source of entertainment for me; something to watch when I was done with more serious stuff, something to talk about with my friends, something to enjoy in the darkness of a film theater or the company of friends. I must

confess that this ever-present interest in films ever since the earlier days of my life has led me to the study at hand. However, it did not equip me with the necessary tools, both technically and psychologically, to conduct this study confidently and academically by realizing my subjectivities as a human being. True, I was interested in conducting this study; still, I realized that I have to ensure that I would follow a path, technically and theoretically, so that I would assure that my interest would not prevent my ability to draw a picture of the site I study. However, I am interested in films so much so that I run the risk of arriving at conclusions without paying the necessary attention to participants' realities of engaging with this film. Said another way, the conclusions of this study should be produced from the voices of the participants as I put them in words. I argue that my reality will always be a part of this study, especially my voice in writing, however, as a researcher, my point of departure, as well as my point of arrival, should be aligned primarily in relation to participants.

The point of departure is a paramount consideration for empirical studies such as the one at hand. Wagner (1993) reminds us that "When we judge a research project solely on the apparent truthfulness of its parts, we neglect its larger purpose: generating new knowledge about education and schooling. To understand when research is likely to achieve this purpose, educational researchers must begin with ignorance, not truth." (p. 15). In the light of this, I assert that my point of departure in the study is ignorance, not the truth. That is, although there are some theoretical mechanisms, such as the ones I discussed in the previous chapter, that could be, I believe, helpful to me in conducting this study, the things I hope to learn from this study exceed a limited number of things that I already know about the study at hand. Expressed another way, I aim not to arrive at universal truths but to reduce ignorance. Again, Wagner argues: "Defining research as a strategy for reducing ignorance may also make it more accessible to people who are

otherwise intimidated by their vision of research as ‘pursuing truth.’” (1993, p. 19). Therefore, my acceptance of ignorance as the point of departure actually hints at my point of arrival: As I already discussed, I want to reduce my ignorance on the phenomena I study here as well as ensuring that the results of the study as an empirical research would help, at least to a small extent, improvement of the practice of teacher preparation.

To deal with the point of arrival, let me take a couple of steps back and focus on why research is essential in education. What good can we gain from educational research? Why should we even bother with it? Creswell (2002) lists four reasons to explain why research in education is important. We conduct educational research: (1) to add to knowledge about educational issues: educators undertake research in order to contribute to existing information about issues. (a) address gaps in knowledge, (b) expand knowledge, (c) replicate knowledge, and (d) add voices of individuals to knowledge; (2) to improve practice: Armed with research results, teachers or other educators become more effective professionals and their effectiveness translates into better learning for kids; (3) to inform important policy issues, (4) to build student research skills. (pp. 3-7).

I assess that my involvement with preservice teachers in this study is motivated by the hope that this research process would take the role of Creswell’s second and fourth reason. That is, my role in this research process is that of a researcher who aims to improve the practice of teacher education for the betterment of teaching in schools since by simple logic better teacher education is expected to result in better student teaching. I anticipate that my interpretation of a group of future teachers in their immersion with *The Class* will contribute to their self-cultivation of becoming professional teachers. Similarly, I believe that the present study will help me to gain better researcher qualities as a result.

Putting It All Together

Design. The present inquiry is a qualitative one that aims to examine its phenomena of interest (school films in teacher education and curriculum theory) from the perspectives of its participants. Therefore, its main feature in terms of design is presenting *the lived experiences* of the participants in BtW as I, the researcher, interpret them. Based on this realization, the present study is a descriptive and interpretive qualitative effort. A researcher's decisions on the design of the study mainly affect the analysis, thus the writing. The design path I followed for the study heavily influenced the analysis and the writing of it. I shall have more to say on this, i.e., explain the analysis and the writing later in the chapter.

Procedure. The exact research process for this study took a whole academic semester. During this time, I acted as a participant observer (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) in each meeting of a semester-long course that aimed to introduce preservice teachers to the profession of teaching in a diverse society. BtW aimed to combine the use of technology in teaching treating technology both as a tool and a context. I judge that this course has been a suitable site for me to conduct the study since its emphasis on teaching in diverse settings fits the diverse classroom that *The Class* depicts. Stake (1995) argues that a researcher should have connoisseur's appetite for the selection of elements such as people, places, etc. in a study. I interpret Stake's suggestion as trust in a researcher's ability to find an ideal site to carry out a study. In light of this interpretation, I assert that this course and its participants constituted an optimal site for me to study the educative impact of *The Class*.

During the semester-long flow of this course, preservice teachers watched *The Class* for two weeks. Although the screening process of the film was two-weeks long, as I already noted, my participation with participants lasted for the whole semester to ensure building rapport, which

is essential for getting closer and closer to the participants' perspective (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) in the research process. Prior to the screening of the film, I conducted the first set of interviews with the participants to have a preliminary understanding of their general characteristics such as their educational background, experiences and reasons why they chose to be in the field of teaching as well as their approach to using cinema films in education between February 13 and 26. All of these interviews were audio-recorded.

I was the moderator for the screening and discussion process of *The Class* in BtW, which lasted two weeks. The screening (on February 27) began with an information session in which I, as the researcher and the facilitator of the screening process, shared some background information since my pilot study revealed that preservice teachers feel lost when they are presented to the film without a clear explanation of why they watch the film in general and what they should look for in it. In this introduction session, my presentation of the film included a compilation of information regarding the film that I presented earlier in the chapter when I discussed the film. After the introduction, the screening started. As we watched the film, I stopped it after some key scenes to discuss students' instant reflections to what just happened, to what they have just seen. I chose the key scenes to stop the film for an instant discussion based on my own analysis of the film that I shared earlier in the chapter. These scenes after which I stopped the film for a discussion of what happened up to it were Scene 9, Scene 13 and Scene 17 (Please refer to my analysis of the film in this chapter more info on these scenes). In the first week, we watched the first half of the film that is approximately one hour long. After the first half of the film, I facilitated an open discussion with preservice teachers to collect their views and ideas of the first half of the film. Both during-the-screening and after-the-screening discussions were audio recorded for transcription later.

The second week of screening (March 6) followed an almost identical procedure as the first one. We watched the second half of the film the second week while stopping the video for instant discussions. The stoppage scenes for this week were Scene 24 and Scene 27 (Please refer to my analysis of the film in this chapter for more info on these scenes). After this second week, we had a general discussion of the whole film in terms of general classroom environment that it depicts, characteristics of students and educative actions of the teacher in the film. I audio-recorded all of these during-the-screening and after-the-screening discussions. In these two weeks of screening of the film, both during- and after-screening discussions were unstructured ones meaning that I did not pose a set of predetermined questions to ensure that preservice teachers could provide their views on the film without being affected by me. In other words, the recorded-discussions were open ones that everybody could contribute.

For the rest of the semester, as my in-class participation in this class continued, I interviewed participants one by one for a second time to ask them about their overall reaction to the film. The second set of interviews took place between April 5 and May 2. As was the case for the first set, I audio-recorded all of the interviews for the second set.

On Data and Techniques to Collect

I collected three types of data for the study. The first is the observational field-notes that I jotted down throughout the semester as a result of my role as a participant observer. The second is individual interviews that I conducted with pre-service teachers both before the screening and after it. The third is open discussions that we had during and after the actual screening.

Moreover, I also employed a contact summary sheet for each week of BtW. Additional data sources included course materials such as the syllabus of BtW or some of the readings that

students had to do, e.g., *The Color of Water* by James McBride or Cooper (2014). In what follows, I share the theoretical background that I employed for each data source as well as actual steps of collecting them in the study.

Observation and field notes. The crucial distinction to note regarding fieldwork for the study at hand is the crucial difference between just being in the field and doing actual fieldwork. Wolcott (2005) writes: “Let me propose a critical distinction between doing fieldwork, a process that assumes a degree of wholehearted commitment, and simply borrowing a fieldwork technique or two to enhance or complement an essentially quantitative or survey approach.” (p. 59). Therefore, my employment of observation for the study has not been to borrow a fieldwork technique; rather, it was to assume a wholehearted commitment. Wolcott continues:

To me, the essence of fieldwork is revealed by intent rather than by location. To repeat the working definition offered earlier, fieldwork is a form of inquiry in which one is immersed personally in the ongoing social activities of some individual or group for the purposes of research. Fieldwork is characterized by personal involvement to achieve a level of understanding that will be shared with others. (2005, p. 58).

In the light of these thoughts, observation gave me a chance to hear, see, experience, and think in the context of my research topic (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) by immersing myself in the classroom I observed. The observation process usually starts with, as suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2007), by jotting down every observation that the researcher notices. These early notes are what is called field notes, “the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 119), which also includes either descriptive or reflective content (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Moreover, Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) mention a key issue in the process of taking field notes: “Deciding whether or not to make jottings presupposes some sense for what to

observe and write about in the first place. But in the flux of their field settings, beginning students are often hesitant and uncertain about what they should pay attention to as potential issues for writing. (p. 26).” In relation to this, I took Emerson, Fretz and Shaw’s (1995, pp. 27-28) suggestions into consideration by “(a) taking note of *initial impressions*, (b) focusing on observing *key events or incidents*, by moving beyond personal reactions to an open sensitivity to what those in the setting experience and react to as ‘significant’ or ‘important.’” The final step in observing and taking notes is to convert them into data records (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In this manner, for this study, I observed my site for a whole academic semester. In each meeting of the class I observed, I took notes of my initial impressions as well as the events I deemed significant. Later, I turned them into my data records by organizing them. Besides, in order to further note vital occurrences in this class, I employed a contact summary sheet for each weekly meeting of the class. I provide the contact summary sheet document I employed in Appendix D. The themes to emerge from the observation process needs to be checked against individual interviews with participants.

Interviews. As I detailed earlier, I conducted two sets of interviews with the participants. Both of the interviews were semi-structured where the set of questions I had for interviewees were supposed to guide the flow of the unfolding process, yet, I had an eye for what was buried deep and not unfolded easily since interviews are expected to result in a profound understanding than other “static” data collection techniques (Silverman, 2000). Dörnyei (2007) notes that qualitative interviews are supposed to flow naturally, and to be rich in detail. Similarly, Alshenqeeti (2014) provides a concise summary on essential characteristics of interviews: “it is therefore necessary for researchers to remember that they are there to ‘listen’ not just speak (ibid). In addition, researchers should not only be neutral, but also at the same time, they should

take Richards's (2003) 'golden advice' which addresses all types of interviewing: interviewers should "always seek the particular" (p. 53). In doing so, the interviewer should establish an appropriate atmosphere through which his/her interviewees would feel more at ease and thus talk freely." In short, the interview is a way of uncovering interviewee's story, making meaning of what she says in the context. Similar thoughts have dramatically influenced my approach to interviews in this study.

The first individual interviews took place before the preservice teachers watched the film in class. The primary aim of these interviews was to understand the general personalities of the participants as well as uncovering their approach to films and the use of films for the purposes of education. The interview protocol for first interviews can be found in Appendix E. In the second interviews, I specifically aimed to arrive at the participants' perspectives on *The Class*. The interview protocol for the second interviews can be found at Appendix F.

In the first set, I conducted 19 interviews. As I already explained before, one of the participants dropped the course after the first set of interviews. Thus, I excluded her responses from the analysis since she was no longer a part of BtW and did not get involved in the second set. In the same way, I conducted 18 interviews after the actual screening of the film in BtW. In addition, I interviewed Professor Norton (the instructor of BtW) as well as Brenda (pseudonym), the teaching assistant for BtW. My purpose of interviewing the professor and the teaching assistant was to get an additional perspective on the overall experience of the class and my role in it. Thus, their responses are not a part of the analysis except for when I present the general aura of the class in Chapter 4 (for example, why the professor decided to have this film in his teaching) and when I talk about the effectiveness of this film in BtW in the findings. On average, each interview lasted approximately 30 mins, the longest being around 40 mins and the shorter

being around 15 to 20 mins. On average, I interviewed each participant approximately for an hour. Besides, each interview of 30 mins amounted around ten pages of transcription. At total, interviews resulted around 360 to 400 pages of data. In the introductory French class that I added to the study during the data collection, I interviewed five students, one of which refused to be audio-recorded. These interviews lasted significantly shorter than the ones I had with actual participants in that the longest was 25 minutes where the shortest was 15 minutes. Upon transcription, the data from these interviews totaled 20 to 30 pages. Besides, the interviews took place either in the College of Education building or in the Main Library of UIUC, depending on where each interview preferred. In order to give my reader a sense of general aura of these interviews, in what follows in this subsection, I give accounts a couple of three exemplary cases of the interviews that are outliers of the general process.

The first interview case I would like to discuss is with Lisa (pseudonym). Before the first set of interviews, I was fearful since I was not sure whether I would be able to conduct rich and detailed interviews that would enrich the study. Nevertheless, after a couple of first interviews with the participants, a feeling of confidence replaced the fear since they followed naturally (there were not any extended silences or suspicious looks on interviewees' faces trying to figure out what they were doing there) and were rich in detail including but not limited to previous experiences, personal preferences and conceptions of teaching as they relate to this study (Dörnyei, 2007). I might have taken this confidence to an unnecessary level with Lisa who was one of the first interviewees. During the interview, I asked her what place cinema films have for her in life as I did to all the other interviewees. She responded that she is not a huge film fan and she feels like she should watch more films. However, she added, this year (2018), she was able to watch more than one film that got nominated for Best Picture Oscar. She had seen four of

them. I asked her which ones she had seen. She replied. I told her I had only seen *Shape of Water* of the ones she mentioned. She reiterated she wanted to watch more films because she thinks that they could be artistic and valuable. Then, I asked her if she preferred reading books to watching films, maybe that was the explanation for not watching as many films she liked. She said that it was just what she happened to do. Besides, she felt like films were a big commitment taking at least an hour and a half—TV shows are less of a commitment since an episode takes shorter than a feature film takes. I do not remember what exactly the connection was in my mind to what she just said, I commented the problem with recent films is that when one watches the trailer, it is like watching the whole thing since they reveal too much. She nodded. I, after that, questioned if she preferred watching films on home media or computer or what else. It turned out that she likes going to theaters. Again, I am not sure how I connected it to the discussion, I commented that my problem as an international student in terms of going to theaters was that there are no intermissions during the screening in the States whereas back in my own country, no matter the length of the film is, there is always a break to freshen up. She laughed and said that when she was in Israel and went to a film theater to watch a film with her friends, they were quite surprised to see that they stopped the film halfway. As surprising as it was, she noted that she understood the logic and appreciated it. Instead of following my set of questions, at this point, I said: “So, you have been to Israel, huh?” I found out that she had been there a couple of times. She was there as a camp counselor in English speaking summer camp there. She was also there another time, thanks to the Birthright program. I had no idea what that was; I had to ask. She explained that the (Birthright) foundation provides Jewish people (apparently who live in other countries) between the ages of 18 to 26 with a free ten-day trip to Israel. Amazed with this new information, I made sure to add that I have always wanted to visit Israel but have not had the

chance yet. Finally, I was able to move to the next question on the protocol. Later on, when I had my initial listening to Lisa's interview that day, I realized that I spent approximately 5 minutes on content that has no relation to the purposes and questions of the study. I thought I was ensuring that the interview would be rich in detail, that I was taking Richard's golden advice by seeking the particular (Alshenqeeti, 2014). However, at the time of the interview, I failed to recognize that the direction that interview took because of my questions were in no way related to study. Additionally, they were not to build rapport since we had already passed that point in the interview. Consequently, after Lisa's interview, I paid specific attention to stay on topic while I try to uncover what is buried deep down.

The second case is with Matilda (pseudonym). She was an exchange student from another country, here to spend a semester taking classes. My experience with the people from her country has been that they usually fear that they cannot communicate effectively due to their poor English. However, it has also been my experience that the fear, just like any other fear, is an irrational one since once they began to communicate in English, they are conversational. I think it is due to this reason that they sit silently in classes just listening rather than actively participating—there might be some other cultural variables at play too. From the beginning of the semester to the first set interviews, I sensed a similar tendency in Matilda. It became apparent that my suspicion was up to point because when I contacted her to set up an interview, she responded by reminding me that English is not her first language. She added that she was afraid that she might not express herself well-enough if the questions were difficult—she did not want to waste my time. I assured her that there are no right or wrong answers. Luckily, she agreed to do the interview. When we met for the interview, before we formally began, to relax her, I talked about how I am a speaker of English as a second language myself. I shared with her the

complexity of articulating oneself in a foreign language. She seemed to relax a bit. Yet, she did not establish eye contact in the first questions, and she kept her answers to only a couple of short sentences. At that point, I stopped the interview and complimented how great she has been doing. I also added that I did not understand why she was worried that she would be wasting my time since the interview has been going great. She opened up a little bit more. Finally, I thought that maybe it would be easier for her to talk about her personal experiences related to my questions. As I asked all the participants, I questioned if she had a favorite teacher before in her educational life. But to her specifically, I inquired what made that specific teacher her favorite, whether she missed being in that favorite teacher's class, and what she would do to be a teacher like her favorite. After that question, I saw the spark in her eyes while she started to talk about her high-school days and how her favorite teacher used to teach. As she kept answering the rest of my questions with articulated answers while looking at me if she has been doing okay or not, I felt an invisible hand congratulating me. However, then the problem became how to keep the interview focused on the purposes of the study to avoid the situation that I had with Lisa. To do that, I had to invent a couple "bridge" questions to keep discussion connected to the focus.

The last case is one of the interviewees from the introductory French class. At total, I conducted 44 interviews for this study. I believe that this particular student was one of the outlier ones. The procedure I came up with for the interviews included meeting the interviewee in her preferred place, thank her for meeting, ask her if I can get her something, explain why I asked her to interview her, go into details of the purposes of the study so that she has an idea of what I am looking for, ask her if she has any questions about anything or any points that she would like me to clarify further, and ask for her permission to record the interview on my mobile phone before asking my questions and listen to her answers. It worked just fine in 43 cases. However,

in the case of this particular student, she said that she was okay with everything before I asked if it was okay to record her responses so that I could transcribe them later for analysis—a point that Informed Consent Form of the study that she signed explained. When I did ask her if I can record the conversation, she said: “of course yes.” We were into the first question for only 30 or 40 seconds after she just said that; she stopped answering my question and asked what that thing was (refers to my phone) and why I would record her responses. She continued that it was distracting to her. I apologized for the whole situation and removed my phone from the table. Yet, the problem was that I had no preparation for that type situation in that I did not have a notepad and a pen or pencil with me to jot down notes of her responses. Thus, I had no way of having a record of her responses to add them to my data pool. Regardless of that, I continued the interview, but her answers took directions that I just could not tie back to the main point of the interview—her reaction to *The Class*—since she kept talking about how our teaching assistant for the French class was not that effective. Consequently, at the end my time with her, what I had was an interesting conversation with her rather than a formal interview.

Reading these outlier cases should give the reader an idea of the typical aura of the interviews I had for this study. All in all, I would like to state that interview process for this study had been an iterative one where I made necessary corrections to my approach with each interview so that I could maintain a standard level of quality in terms of content and flow. In this sense, I believe that the interviews provided me with detailed data to analyze.

Data Analysis

It is daunting to analyze qualitative data for there is no clear-cut process for it. As researchers, we carry our own beliefs, personalities, worldviews, experiences and subjectivities that make us

who we are. Also, since it is an absolute must for a qualitative researcher to be in the site and to be alert completely to its surrounding for an increased understanding of the mini-cosmos around him/her, it is vital that the researcher is utterly engaged with or immersed in this cosmos. As a result of this engagement, the analysis begins when the researcher starts to get involved with the cosmos. In other words, as Saldana (2009) comments, data analysis begins when data collection begins, not when it ends. Similarly, Stake (1995) suggests that data analysis is our omnipresent effort to make sense—of the things, and in research, of phenomena, we study. In my effort to make sense things in the context of this study from its beginning to the point of writing, there has been a critical issue that I paid close attention during data analysis.

Dressman (2008) declares that “data never speak for themselves, that is, that the sense that researchers make of their activities and experience is the product of presuppositions about what research is, about what is and isn’t important, and about what they think the practical and theoretical implications of what they find can, will, and should be” (p. 11). Bresler (2008, p. 271) suggests a similar line of thought: “the cycles of data collection and noting, intertwine with the more leisurely cycles of immersion with the data, letting it sink in and *speak to us*, to dialogue with our assumptions, values, thoughts and feelings.” I accept that these two views, at first, seem to contradict each other. However, my interpretation is not in that direction for I believe that these two views suggest the same thing that data analysis cannot be objective in a positivistic sense. Our reading of the data we collect influences our interpretation. Our ideas, experiences, mindset at the time of the study, and subjectivities ultimately affect the reading.

Having this realization in mind, I employed four stages of data analysis that Bryman (2008) suggests for qualitative research. These stages include: (1) reading through whole text, making notes at the end, (2) reading the text again, but this time underlining, highlighting, (3)

begin coding that is systematically marking the text as well as reviewing the codes to uncover the themes, and (4) interpreting the codes in terms of their relation to research questions and the literature (Bryman, 2008). After I had my dataset that consisted of data from discussions, interviews and field notes, I made use of the theoretical framework of Bryman (2008) to present my findings and then discuss them in their relation to the literature.

With this theoretical framework in my mind, I utilized ATLAS.ti software for practical data analysis. Since our knowledge of how researchers use analysis software in their studies is limited (Woods, Paulus, Atkins & Macklin, 2016), I judge that it is crucial that I succinctly explain how I utilized this software in this study. First, I organized my raw data that came from interviews, discussions and field notes into a form to import them to ATLAS.ti. Second, once they were in the software, I read the whole text to familiarize myself with connections between ideas in the text while taking notes on ATLAS.ti. Third, I reread the text while underlining text and noting connections cross documents. Also in this step, I started creating codes in ATLAS.ti. Fourth, I reviewed all the codes I created in the third. As a result of this review, I merged some of the codes or deleted by using the Code Manager facility of ATLAS.ti, after which I grouped the codes that became the themes. Fifthly, I organized my themes, codes into a logical form ready to be written. Finally, to aid the writing process better, I used Network facility of ATLAS.ti and created visual representations my organization of the data into themes, codes and their relation. These visuals served as the outline of the three findings chapter I have in the study. To indicate my close stance to the data, I added these visual representations to Appendix G so that the reader can follow my thinking in terms of my interpretation of the data. I should also note that my thinking has changed regarding some parts of the organization of the findings after I created these visuals, as is usually the case in qualitative research, therefore, the reader might

expect slight changes between the visuals and the actual writing. In addition to visual reposts, I created textual reports of my codes in ATLAS.ti, which included the codes I organized as well as all the quotations from participants' responses to each code, which I used to a great extent in my writing.

There is one final issue I aim to touch in terms of data analysis. To ensure that the researcher's reality does not interfere his/her ability to study the things, scholars have had devised ways of avoiding absolute relativism, which I interpret as a tendency to analyze data in a way that only presents the researcher's side of the reality without essentially paying attention to the participants' perspectives—their reality. One such way is prolonged engagement that can be said to be an act of immersing researcher's self into the participants' world (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) while another one is peer briefing—“a process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling analytical sessions and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind.” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308).

In order to ensure the credibility of the study, I paid close attention to achieve standards of prolonged engagement by following BtW for the whole semester rather than just the two weeks of film screening, by accessing different types of course materials, by interviewing each participant for a significant amount of time. In addition, I carried out a peer debriefing session. It included four Ph.D. candidates who are familiar with the qualitative research process. The first debriefed works in the field of science education. He specializes in advancing our understanding of collaboration in science classes. The second one's efforts are directed toward discovering the problems that people who speak English as a second language encounter. The third one focuses on education problems of stateless children in a Middle Eastern country. The final one studies

language teaching, Arabic and English. All of them conduct qualitative studies themselves, thus, they have theoretical background as well as practical experience of carrying out qualitative research. During the debriefing, I first explained the aim of the session—presenting different aspects of my study, especially the data, to them so that they could give me feedback. Then, I presented various aspects of my study, i.e., the purpose, research questions, methodology, the data, the analysis, parts of writing, to these experts. I noted their criticism, warnings and feedback, after which we had a discussion about my study where I answered their questions and concerns. For example, one of the debriefers noted that my wording in the research questions was potentially confusing to the reader—repeated words and construction. Another one suggested that it would be helpful to reader if I talked more about the actual analysis steps I have taken. I made the necessary corrections to the study based on this session.

Writing

In the process of moving from the analysis to actual writing process, I had to create a framework to present my findings in a consistent manner that would fit both the design of the study and my conception of it. I first considered presenting my findings by using frequency and percentage tables, which would be a collection of the number of occurrences for a code from the data organized in terms of research questions. Use of numerical data, or transformation of verbal data into numerical, has been a controversial issue in that some claim that doing so is incompatible with the underlying assumptions of qualitative research where others argue that it provides many advantages to researchers (Maxwell, 2010; Sandelowski, 2001). In addition, the inclusion of numerical data in qualitative research has had a political agenda since the inclusion of numerical data was seen a criterion for qualitative studies to prove their scientific rigor (Maxwell, 2010). In

addition, Hannah and Lautsch (2011) suggests avoiding and closeting numerical data in qualitative studies if the researcher judges that some certain situations might impede the purpose of inclusion of numerical data in the first place. One of such situations is the possibility of losing the perspectives of insiders. That is, focusing on presenting numerical data might take the researcher's focus from an etic understanding of the participants. As a researcher, I am not necessarily against using numerical data or transforming qualitative data into numerical; rather, I am of the opinion that such a decision depends on the judgment of the researcher in terms of the purposes, questions and design of the study conducted. But for this study, I have decided that a descriptive and interpretive style in writing rather than numerical data would be more appropriate to keep the focus in my writing on the perspectives of the participants. In addition, this decision is congruent with the descriptive and interpretive design of the study.

In parallel with this descriptive and interpretive approach, I have made references to the data sources in my presentation of the findings. For example, whenever I refer to an idea from a respondent (interview), I cited that idea by using the respondent's pseudonym and interview set. If it was a direct quotation from an interview, I added the date of the interview as well. To differentiate between the interviews from the actual site of the study and the additional one (the introductory French class), I used a different style for each. Similarly, when I refer to a field note, I used a citation format that includes the week and the date of the note. Finally, when I refer to a point from the in-class discussion of the screening, I used a similar citation style. Therefore, the reader should be attentive to these abbreviations of the citations in the text:

BtW

- IFS = Interview First Set,
 - ISS = Interview Second Set,
- Example: idea → (Lisa, IFS)
 quotation → (Lisa, IFS, 2/15/2018)
 French Class

- Int = Interview,
Example: idea → (Dolores, Int)
quotation → (Dolores, Int, 5/29/2018)
- FNfW n = Field Notes from Week n
Example: (Field Notes from Week 1-FNfW1, 1/16/2018)
Or: (FNfW1, 1/16/2018)
- In-CD = In-Class Discussion
Example: (In-Class Discussion, In-CD)
Or: (Lisa, In-CD, 2/5/2018).

Finally, the descriptive approach I employed and the citations to data sources I made required referring to participants personally throughout the text. For obvious ethical reasons, using their real names was out of the question. Then, I needed to employ a pseudonym for each participant. A nice strategy to do so is to ask participants to choose it themselves during contact (Allen & Wiles, 2015). However, that strategy was not possible for this study for I failed to think about it during my contact with the participants, i.e., the pseudonym issue became entirely apparent to me when I started the formal analysis of the data and felt the need for it while thinking about the writing. I considered the possibility of re-contacting the participants through an email asking them to choose a pseudonym for themselves. Yet, I reasoned that this would be an IRB violation. Considering other possibilities, I had the idea of choosing pseudonyms from characters in cinema films since the study is on the use of a school film with preservice teachers. The reason I mention this solution here is that I realized that as I delved into finding pseudonyms from films that I know of, the process of doing so strengthened my analysis. For example, in her first interview when I ask a respondent to talk about her educational background, she mentioned that she was not raised by her biological family. Her father was a criminal—in fact, he was in jail during the time of contact. Her mother was a drug addict. Thus, the state relocated her when she was little to her aunt who raised her. Due to this unpleasant situation, she had to move around a lot from household to household until she settled with her aunt. Yet, she was able to pass an

entrance exam for one of the most prestigious boarding science and math academies in the area. During her time in that academy (high-school), not only she got top grades in her classes, but also, she took an active role in the social side of the school. For example, she reported that she was a part of a program in her academy through which she taught middle-grade student during summers and over the semester. After that, she got accepted to UIUC where she holds a scholarship that pays off her expenses and promises her a teaching position in a school from an underrepresented area after her graduation. Her personal and educational story amazed me. For one thing, thanks to programs and activities she attended so far, she had more teaching experiences than I did. In addition, her answers during our interviews and her responses in class discussions took that amazement to the next level for she exhibited careful-thought and intelligence. Reflecting about her background and the things she has accomplished despite that background in addition to the better things she has potential to accomplish in future, it became crystal-clear to me that only someone with extraordinary strength could accomplish what she accomplished so far. Therefore, I decided that her pseudonym should be Diana—the real name of Wonder Woman. As an another example in terms of pseudonym issue, during my interview with another student, she mentioned that she was a cheerleader back in high school while establishing close relationships with her teachers and that she wants to go back to her high-school as a teacher where she can accomplish the same relationships with her students—advising cheerleaders and being socially involved in the school. Her responses and movement reminded me of the character Cher from the film *Clueless*, thus, her pseudonym. In the same manner, I needed a name for Professor Norton's class as well to be able to refer to it. I could not find any other name that would be as appropriate as the name of the film. The original title of *The Class* is *Entre Les Murs*, a direct translation of which is Between the Walls (BtW)—hence, pseudonym of the

course. I should also note that this issue of pseudonyms sometimes can be problematic since “there is tension between maintaining anonymity and yet producing adequately nuanced ‘thick’ description of a given phenomenon.” (Allen & Wiles, 2015). I assert that pseudonyms from feature films adequately keep the balance between the two.

Summary of the Chapter

In many ways, conducting empirical research is analogous to making of a cinema film. As the researcher, I am a film director. With the help of the camera, I aim to catch singularities of a whole reality and turn it into a representation of it as expressed by me by using techniques of *mise-en-scène*, editing, sound, etc. Spectators (readers) watch (read) this representation. And their reading will complete the study in that they will become a part of it. My role in the process is to act as a medium in the transfusion of reality.

In other words, there is an objective reality in the class I study (I borrow the type of realities I speak here from Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There was a formal time that this class met every week. Each student came there with certain expectations and desires. Each one of them was supposed to provide some documents to the class for evaluation, and so on. Yet, this reality is never to be comprehended to its entirety in a perfect sense. What I have been after, then, is a constructed reality—a version of reality that was only possible to construct by interacting with the participants of this reality in the natural setting of this classroom. The chapter at hand should have explained how I went about doing that.

CHAPTER 4: ANATOMY OF A CLASS AND PROFILE OF ITS PARTICIPANTS

In this chapter, I begin to present my preliminary findings in the context of my purposes. I just called my findings in this chapter preliminary because they are not directly related to my research questions; yet, I anticipate that they shall act as a bridge between earlier chapters and my main findings by giving the reader an explicit view (context) of the class and its participants that I studied. In this lieu, the aim of this chapter is twofold. First, I will provide my readers with the aura of the class that I studied for a semester—the basic structure of it, its purposes, key events, so on and so forth. Second, I will present a more precise profile of my participants than the one I included in the methodology. As a result of this chapter, I hope that the reader will have a sense of what it felt for me to attend this class and what I made out of this attendance.

Chicago, Butter to my Bread

If it is your first time coming to the twin cities of Champaign and Urbana (informally abbreviated as Chambana) in the State of Illinois by plane, the chances are that you will have to stop by Chicago first on your way to your final destination. I would say that you are in for a treat if your stop in Chicago is not just for a connecting flight so that you can experience a bit of what the city has to offer. However, the real surprise of the treat, I believe, would be when you arrive at Chambana after seeing Chicago, in which case, you would have a chance to compare experiencing the city of Chicago to that of Chambana.

Chicago is a metropole whereas Chambana is smaller. It is a university town. In Chicago, one sees spectacular architecture, excellent cuisine, many attractions to visit, all of which, create an ambiance that only a couple of world cities have. Chambana, on the other hand, seems to be a collection of corn fields on very flat land. It is no exaggeration to state that Illinois is a total sum

of Chicago area *and* the rest of the State, known as downstate Illinois so much so that Chicago is the reference of point for downstate. If you were to tell someone that you visited Chambana, Illinois, you would face the question “How far is that from Chicago?”

The contrast between the two opens ways to examinations. Is Chicago a cancerous cell that is dangerous to its neighbors? “Downstaters have always thought of Chicago as a black hole of street violence and political corruption, sucking up tax dollars generated by honest, hard-working farmers” (McClelland, 2017, para. 7). Newport (2018, para. 6) is harsher in his criticism: “The people of Illinois are finally beginning to recognize Chicago for what it is: a parasite that is sucking us dry. Illinois taxpayers are tired of their money being used to prop up Chicago’s underperforming schools, subsidize their mass transit systems and pay for all manner of wealth redistribution programs that disproportionately benefit that corner of the state that Sweeny refers to as a ‘world class city.’” Yet, can downstate survive without Chicago? “Chicagoans have always thought of downstate—when they’ve thought of it at all—as an irrelevant agricultural appendage full of Baptists and gun owners who’d just love to turn Illinois into North Kentucky.” (McClelland, 2017, para. 7). McClelland (2017) argues that Chicago area raises a tax revenue of 10.2 billion dollars by itself whereas downstate raises only 4.5 billion dollars. Just outside Chicago, there is a place called Illinois.

I might have a vantage point in this comparison myself. As a newly admitted doctoral student who was on his way to Chambana to attend graduate school years ago, I had to stop in Chicago first where I got a chance of doing some sightseeing. As I settled in my new home in Chambana, I got a lot more opportunities to go to Chicago while getting a sense of what it feels like living in Chambana and periodically visiting Chicago.

The divergence between the two became more apparent to me during the data collection phase of this study for Lake Michigan is not only a tourist attraction for Chambanians to visit but also a major cause of the climate in Chambana. It, along with numerous corn fields, causes scorching and humid summers as well as teeth-shatteringly cold, mild and long winters. Just as Chambanians go to Chicago to visit the metropole city, Chicagoans (from the city and the area) come to Chambana, albeit for a different reason: to attend University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), which offers students from Chicago proximity to their home, a cheaper living compared to Chicago and a quality education that not many higher education institutions would offer around the area. In other words, Chicago is butter to UIUC's bread for it makes approximately 20% of its budget of 6.5 billion dollars from student tuitions and fees ("Budget and Tuition FAQ," n.d.). Had it not been for Chicago area and students that come from there, UIUC and Chambana would have been in a different situation.

Anatomy of a Class

It was precisely on a cold winter day in Chambana that Between the Walls (BtW) class met for the first time in the semester of Spring 2018, early in the morning, 8 a.m. to be exact. When I arrived at Room 42A, the designated classroom for BtW, it was already packed with vibrant Chicagoan students waiting for the class to start. 42A is not a traditional classroom where students sit at desks and face the teacher in one direction; rather, it includes a couple of tables where students surround them and face their classmates. I anticipated a lot of group work and discussion as a result of this setting. Each one of the three walls of this rectangular place has a glass attached to it, which serves as a writing board. Each also has a wide-screen TV on it rather than a blackboard, which is the standard for so many classrooms. As a result, although the space

seemed too small to me for a class of this size, it included four wide-screen TVs on the three sides of the room. My first impression of it, consequently, was that it was an ideal setting for the screening of *The Class* (Field Notes from Week 1-FNfW1, 1/16/2018).

The first meeting of BtW revolved around two events. The first and obvious one was introductions. To do this, the professor gave index cards to students. They wrote their name, phone, email and something interesting about them. The last part of the name cards led to wild giggles, which, from my perspective, lightened the climate of the class. One student's grandmother slept with Elvis Presley back in her day. He says that she has pictures from that night, she is proud of it and keeps talking about it all the time. Another student had a chance of holding Justin Bieber's hand one time. She feels great about it. One student has seven siblings, all of them younger than him. As I heard him say that, I thought to myself, no wonder he has decided to become a teacher. When it was time for another student in the class to introduce himself, he noted that he realized he came to the wrong classroom and did not want to interrupt it, so he waited (FNfW1, 1/16/2018). The first half of the first day of the class was full of all the peculiar intricacies and wonders that one sees in first of day of any class for a new class is identical to exploring a new universe—full of uncertainty, unknown but along with excitement to uncover.

The syllabus of BtW states that it is an introductory teaching course that aims to prepare preservice teachers to teach English language arts in high-school settings. It reads specifically:

This course is the first in a three-course sequence designed to prepare students to teach the English language arts to high school students in a wide range of school settings. As the introductory course in the sequence, [BtW] performs a wide range of preparatory functions, none of which is more or less important than the others. One function is to introduce college students at the University of Illinois to the complexities of working with secondary students whose social, cultural, and economic backgrounds may differ from their own. A second function is to introduce course participants to the

diverse literacy experiences, needs, and interests of these secondary students. A third function is to introduce students to the discourse of English education as a profession; and a fourth function is to provide preparatory theory/practice in methods of teaching reading, writing, and conducting discussions about a broad range of literary texts.

Course assignments and activities were designed to address these four functions. During the course of this class, students were expected to complete (1) conceptual literature unit, where they prepared a lesson plan to teach a literary unit on a noncanonical text, meaning that it had to be from the literature of a culture other than European or European American, (2) high school redesign, where they approached the design of a classroom with a creative perspective, (3) digital texts activity, where they chose a digital text (blog, podcast, etc.) and developed a plan to teach in a high school classroom, and (4) three lesson plans, the first one on reading, which was a practice for the latter two; they wrote the second and third one within their field placement.

The second event of the first meeting was an activity called Poetry Rorschach where the professor asked the students to write a quick lesson plan on teaching Shakespeare's Sonnet 31. Afterward, students presented their group's plan to the whole class—five plans at the total. A discussion of these plans followed that. One common theme I observed in all of the plans is that students approached this activity formally for all of the plans mentioned that they would have their students study a sonnet's vocabulary, rhyme scheme, literary devices, repetition, verses, alliteration, so on and so forth. The professor declared after these discussions "The plans you made failed. They would all fail when taught in a real class." It appears to me that the purpose of this activity was to spark a discussion on what good teaching is. Questions followed the declaration: What do you think English teaching is? Who do you think students are?, and most importantly, What is a teacher? (FNfW1, 1/16/2018).

Students' answers to the last question reflected how they conceptualize the act of teaching. They commented that a teacher:

- Has reasonably high expectations,
- Stays up-to-date,
- Is relevant and timely,
- Gives students options, empowers them,
- Prepares a lot of materials,
- Creates an environment where students feel comfortable,
- Plays with power structures, changes the teacher's role—not there to teach but there to learn with students,
- Builds the curriculum on students' interests (FNfW1, 1/16/2018).

I think that the discussion on the nature of teaching in the first meeting of BtW is congruent with the aims of the study and a befitting link to the research questions within the context of *The Class*.

Reflecting on the class I attended for a semester, I conclude that it had three phases from the beginning in January to the end in May (FNfW1, 1/16/2018- FNfW15, 5/1/2018). The first phase started with the discussion on the first day of the class whose details I just shared. It ended with the screening of the film of scrutiny here. During its time of eight weeks (six weeks of lecture and two weeks of screening and discussion), the focus of the course was on getting students acquainted with the issues such as what teaching entails especially in diverse high-school settings, what teaching means for the students in class, what role a teacher has in classroom nowadays, what role these students will have when they get to their first students, what language teaching is, why even bother to teach literacy in contemporary settings. Week by week, BtW focused on these or related issues (FNfW1, 1/16/2018- FNfW6, 2/20/2018). And, *The Class*, as the finale of this first phase, served as a grand visual example where students got a chance to see an animated model of all the issues they reflected. In my interview with Norton, the professor of the course, he commented on his choice of *The Class* with similar remarks:

It is a really interesting mirror on what kinds of things that kids [refers to his students in this class] are going to encounter in schools in the United States. It is in an urban environment. It is very multicultural. The teacher is white. Particularly in the context of English language education, he is a French teacher. He is teaching in a very conventional way. The kids fight back. They sent him messages all throughout the film that he could be doing this better and that they have other points of view and different interesting perspectives on language and other things and he just continuously refuses to really deal with that... It is the best movie about teaching and education and what is wrong with formal education I remember seeing. (Interview with Professor Norton, 5/22/2018).

BtW primarily included lecturing and group study/discussion for the first phase. One week, it focused on engaging teaching by using a study on student engagement by Cooper (2014) who relates student engagement to three types of engaging teaching practices—connective instruction, academic rigor, and lively teaching. Students read this study and discussed that all three are part of engaging teaching and characteristics of highly effective teachers although some teachers might put the prime emphasis on one. Firstly, connective instruction includes teaching practices which allow students to engage with the class via personal connections (Cooper, 2014). During the class discussion on connective instruction, participants argued that (1) relevance, (2) relating and understanding students, (3) humor, (4) allowing self-expression from students, (5) affirmation, and (6) showing that you care (FNfW2, 1/23/2018) are major parts of connective instruction. Secondly, academic rigor implies that a classroom environment must place a strong emphasis on (intellectual) learning for it is the prime reason why schools exist (Cooper, 2014). Participants discussed that academic rigor might encapsulate (1) challenging students (with challenging content), (2) having high expectations of students, and (3) consistency (FNfW2, 1/23/2018). Lastly, lively teaching is related to the active delivery of the content where delivery activity fundamentally centers students rather than the teacher (Cooper, 2014). For participants, lively teaching consists of (1) fun activities, (2) collaborative work, and (3) projects/design

experiences (FNfW2, 1/23/2018). The discussion of engaging teaching gave students a conceptual framework that they could use to formulate their ideas on teaching and evaluate Mr. Marin (the teacher character in *The Class*) as an example.

In the first phase, BtW also concentrated on the purpose of teaching in general and purpose of teaching English as a subject. It started this discussion by inviting participants to think about the best classes they have had in their formal education (FNfW3, 1/30/2018). The conclusion was that teaching might be the least effective endeavor from an economic point of view. Students tend to forget the majority of what they were taught only after a short period except for a limited number of classes they enjoy the most and consider them as the best classes they had (FNfW3, 1/30/2018). The question, then, is why we teach when we know it will be forgotten. Put another way, *what is the purpose of teaching?* BtW discussed that the answer is in lieu of the argument that it is not imperative to remember everything from a class since good classes in fact change perspective rather than solely imparting knowledge by being creative. Yet, it is too unfortunate that teaching is not a straightforward undertaking for being creative requires trying out new ways that there is no guarantee that they will work (FNfW3, 1/30/2018). For example, upon learning that a student can play any musical instrument in the first week—she mentioned his as her fun fact during introductions, Norton brought an instrument to the class so that she could perform in one of the upcoming weeks. I deemed this effort as a way to build rapport with students and letting them express themselves in new and creative ways. Unfortunately, trying to accord the instrument, not only the student missed a good deal of that week's session, but she also broke a string of the instrument leaving us with no music (FNfW3, 1/30/2018).

BtW spent the rest of the first phase by focusing on approaches to teach English, analysis of a noncanonical text, namely, *The Color of Water* by James McBride as well as how to write effective lesson plans. As I argued earlier in the chapter, the first phase of the class ended with the two weeks long screening of the film (FNfW1, 1/16/2018- FNfW6, 2/20/2018). Since participants' discussion of the film and what happened during these two weeks constitute the source of coming chapters, I will not discuss them here.

During its second phase, BtW transformed into a class where lecturing existed slightly. In other words, it adopted more of a workshop mode. Students spent the majority of the class time working with their group members on their assignments (high-school redesign project, conceptual unit) for the class while receiving immediate feedback from the professor or the teaching assistant (FNfW9, 3/13/2018- FNfW12, 4/10/2018). In the remaining class time for each week in the second phase, students participated in a poetry activity. For example, in an activity called Skin Poetry, students generated metaphors for their skin and turned them into a poem (FNfW11, 4/3/2018). It was apparent that the focus of the class became writing during the second phase rather than teaching in general and teaching a language.

The third and final phase of BtW encompassed the last three weeks of the semester. The major activity for this phase was students' wrapping up their projects and assignments for the course and presenting them to the class (FNfW13, 4/17/2018- FNfW15, 5/1/2018). What started with all the peculiar intricacies and wonders ended with farewells. As it can be deduced by looking at the length of my writing of them here, the most relevant part of BtW to this study was the first phase. So far, I have had a look at the anatomy of the class, now I move to a closer profile of my participants.

Portrait of the Participants

Chicago is butter to UIUC's bread. Except for a few, the participants are from Chicago—either from the city or the area. One thing I noticed about this city as a result of my travels to it and of my involvement with the participants, it is a divided settlement. A Chicagoan would try to convince you that one should go to South Chicago if and only if it is absolutely necessary. If it is, she would warn you to keep your car doors locked during your whole time there. The same scenario would happen for West Chicago too. You would not hear these concerns if you were to go North or East. My participants' profile reflected this demographic divide and difference in socio-economic status.

Summer commented:

In Chicago, it is like really split up by class and racial background. When I say to someone that I am from Chicago, they are going to have a good idea where I am from. But yes, I went to a neighborhood school. My parents are both immigrants from China (Interview First Set-IFS, 2/16/2018).

Patrick, born and raised in South Chicago, said:

My family owned a nail shop and it was really south side [of Chicago]. So, growing up in these poor education systems, when I came to school [UIUC], I realized the difference between me and other people who went to nicer schools whether it be schools in the city or west or north suburbs. I could definitely and finally understand the true and huge gap between me and other people between my institution compared to theirs. And I think I grew up with the feeling that teachers saying that our institution was fine the way it is, but it was a real smack in the face when I graduated and talked to my teachers after the differences between our educational systems and they agreed that our school was really failing and lacking (IFS, 3/1/2018).

Comparing what Summer and Patrick shared with that of Cameron, who is not from South or West, is a mark of the variety of profile and divide in where the participants are from:

My parents are like upper-middle class, I would say. My dad is a self-employed musician so he plays professional percussion. He has been on

Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He has done operas, he used to play with these all bunch of pop stars. He also does a lot of education. So, I think I get a lot of what I see from him because he does a lot of music outreach. And my mom is a medical assistant. She just taught me how to care for people and treat people with respect (IFS, 2/15/2018).

What brought these students together who have different backgrounds was their desire to become a teacher in the future. BtW was a class full of students who major in English and pursue a secondary education minor in order to get a teaching certificate. Their previous educational experiences brought them to where they were.

Participants' earlier experiences show the real value of public education compared to private schools especially in terms of attending a religious private school. Erin, regarding her experience at a private school, stated:

It [private school] wasn't as great as the public school I went to. But I think that is just because the academic program at public school was so much more accelerated because it was a selected enrollment school. So yeah, it was definitely...I oftentimes felt bored just because I think it wasn't like advanced enough I guess (IFS, 2/26/2018).

The issue of religious private schools became apparent for all the participants that attended one.

Connie said: *I went to Catholic school because my mom is Catholic, and she wanted me to do second sacrament or whatever it is* (IFS, 2/23/2018). Rosemary followed a similar line of reasoning regarding her experiences at a private religious school:

My parents are Christian, so, I went to a Christian private school... My family, my parents made me and my brothers go. My high school experience was good. I think I didn't love going to a private school. I didn't really have a choice. My parents. My classes were very small. My graduating class here in Champaign was 27 people. My class in Ohio had like 45. So it wasn't that many. I didn't like it. I liked having a smaller class sizes I think. I made a lot of friends. But I wish I had more of public education. I didn't really like going to a school that kind of indoctrinated you I guess... At least the school I went to, I don't think it gave us enough freedom to kind of figure out what we wanted to believe for ourselves. It was just very expected you are going to believe religiously, and I didn't love it but it was also a good experience from other aspects too (IFS, 2/22/2018).

Spicolli:

My middle school was kinda crap. I went to a private school K- through 8. It is more focused on the religion aspect than it was, I think, actual school. So high school I felt unprepared.... I felt like the religious school was more focused on... like I said religious aspect, discipline, making sure you are in uniform, you are meeting all these codes. I thought it was more behaviorally based than it was educationally focused (IFS, 12/3/2018).

These participants' dissatisfaction with religious schools are on the grounds that they concentrate on students' belief systems and indoctrinate them rather than giving them enough space to figure out what they want to believe for themselves. Congruent with what participants discussed in class regarding what teaching entails, student-centeredness, i.e., giving enough space for the student as an individual, is *sine qua non* of teaching for this group. Another participant's educational experience made this clearer for me. Leslie was homeschooled for the majority of her educational life since her parents noticed that her self-motivation and independence were major inhibitors for her progress in school. Thus, they decided to take her out of school so that she could get involved in projects and learn by herself. Homeschooling and indoctrination are two ends of a wide spectrum of student-centeredness. They might both be signs for us educators to find a practical middle ground to make schools more enticing.

Fortunately for the purposes of this study, BtW included individuals with diverse and rich educational backgrounds so that I could examine where American schools are in terms of this issue of finding a middle ground or how they differ from schools in other parts of the world. In relation to this matter, Céline is another unique case for the study since she is a child of an American father and French mother. She attended a French school in Chicago for her education K through 12. And now that she attends an American university, she has a one-of-a-kind ground to provide an outsider's perspective (additional look) to American schools. During the discussion and analysis of *The Class* in class and my interviews with her, I could tell she brought a more

informed mindset to the table. In addition, BtW included an exchange student from China. I noticed during my interviews with her that Matilda frequently, and naturally I should also add, made comparisons with schools she saw here and schools she knew from her country. Another student from China, this time a graduate student who was a visiting scholar from China, Fredo, followed the sessions of BtW.

Schools are mirrors of the society which they serve since they take their characteristics from the culture that they emanate from. In America, the culture is individualistic. As a result, the prime emphasis is on self-expression and taking initiatives which require being an active member of one's social group while also collaborating with peers. Regarding this phenomenon, Diana commented: *Especially within America, we are very "you got to be independent, you got to be innovative and collaborative." Those are all things that are super valuable, and you get from a student-run classroom.* (IFS, 2/21/2018). The international community of BtW attested that being student- and discussion-centered is the key difference they have noticed between American classrooms and the ones they had participated before.

From what I have seen at least in my observations so far is that it is a lot more like the American classes are a lot more interactive, they do a lot of activities. When I was in high school, it was a lot of you sit down and teacher talks, and you are taking notes (Céline, IFS, 2/23/2018).

And I also discovered that the lessons here give more opportunities for students to discuss because I see that even though there are some lessons which is the teacher who is doing the lecturing but I have asked the teacher that I follow and she said once a week there will be a lesson that is a discussion circle and students will have to prepare the questions on their own that is related to the reading and they have to ask their peers about what is your opinion on that question like this (Matilda, IFS, 2/26/2018).

As my reader will notice in the upcoming chapters, one of the most frequent criticisms that participants directed at Mr. Marin is that they found his instruction too teacher-centered that lacks discussion, group work, and student participation, in general, too static and boring.

Since one of the goals of BtW was to equip pre-service teachers with necessary theoretical and practical tools so that they would be able to teach culturally diverse groups, I also strived to uncover my participants' previous educational experiences during my contact with them especially in terms of diversity of the schools they attended—student population and faculty. Concerning student diversity, Chicago's diverse and divided demographics brings about diverse schools where there is no majority of one race. Although estimated percentages my participants shared with me as to student diversity in their schools shows no uniformity, it can be deduced from these estimates that schools in Chicago city and area are diverse regarding race and culture. One exception to attending diverse schools deserves attention because it shows the demographics of the site of the study. Leonard is from a small rural town that is approximately 45 minutes of drive away from Champaign, where he attended high school with a graduating class of 87 students. He said that he thinks more than 90% of his high school's student population was White. When it comes to teaching faculty's diversity in the schools that participants attended, the story changes drastically. Connie, a Latina student that attended high school in a Chicago suburb that is predominantly Latina/o, remarked that almost all of the teachers in her school were White who lived in different suburbs and came to her suburb just to teach. In my analysis of *The Class*, we saw a similar situation where the faculty was all White (disregarding one exception) when the student body was racially and culturally diverse.

What are the reasons that brought these students from all over Illinois, especially from the Chicago area, to the College of Education? During the design stage of this study, it became apparent to me that participants' motivation to choose teaching as their profession and their aspirations to become a teacher might inform their analysis of the film and the teacher in it. Consequently, I aimed to figure out why my participants embraced a future career in teaching.

I decided to become a teacher because I had wonderful teachers in high school. “I definitely had good English teachers in high school.” (IFS, 2/20/2018). When I asked George why he was here, why he preferred teaching over to many other alternatives as his profession, he gave me this answer that he had wonderful teachers back in high school who not only did everything their job required but also inspired him to be like them, to become a teacher himself one day. Inspiration seems to be an important concept in the context of the teacher-student relationship. Teachers do not just teach their subject for a given period in a classroom, and by doing so, satisfy their job’s requirements. It is a peculiar burden of teaching that teachers are also role models for students who might look up to them and adopt their characteristics. Therefore, it is not absurd to see that many become teachers because they have had positive experiences with their teachers. In fact, it is often the case that the teacher guides the student on his on her path to take the necessary steps to become a teacher.

I had great teachers who made me want to read texts and stuff like that, who made me want to learn. And I was kind of admired the fact that they had so much knowledge. I know that sounds cheesy but I was like “they know so many things and they are able to tell me these things.” (Céline, IFS, 2/23/2018).

I think that kind of did influence me a lot, seeing how much having a more rigorous program and teachers that care more about your success really can change your education. I think that inspired me a lot. Then the subject I chose to teach influenced my teaching a lot too. (Erin, IFS, 2/26/2018).

I think I really appreciate the effects that some of my teachers had on me. I had some particularly effective teachers like my calculus teacher. He was also Chess club scholastic coach. So I spent a lot of time with him. We got pretty close. I also had a couple of classes with him in Calculus and algebra. I think I really appreciated the effect that a single educator can have on a student’s life. (Leonard, IFS, 2/23/2018).

I decided to become a teacher because I had wonderful teachers in high school, I was really fortunate. I felt I had teachers that cared a lot about me and ran really interesting engaging classes especially my English classes, which is why I chose to be an English major. (Lisa, IFS, 2/15/2018).

I've learned a lot from my teachers more than I ever kind of expected. And I found that teachers could help me through like things in life I was dealing with more than pretty much anybody else. (Malena, IFS, 2/16/2018).

Why I want to become a teacher is that I feel like especially people from working-class families go through a bunch of issues outside of school and I think one person who was there to help me go through these issues was my Spanish teacher. (Patrick, IFS, 3/1/2018).

Participants' emphasis on the positive influences of teachers to inspire them to choose teaching profession attests that teaching does not end when teachers leave their classroom after the bell rings.

I wanted something that was going to make me a little more money. Some are very sure that teaching has been their calling, thanks to all the excellent teachers they have had. However, it is only one side of the whole picture. For others, teaching was their Plan B or back up plan. Given the low profile of the teaching profession nowadays, it is no surprise that teaching is not the most appealing job alternative for youngsters who try to figure out their future career, especially due to dismal salaries. Many teachers leave the profession because of thin paychecks. Why should these students spend years of their life to make less money? Engineering, marketing, finance, law, medicine and many more pay a lot more.

I was not surprised to learn that some participants of the study considered a profession in other fields where they could get paid a lot more than what teaching would pay. Nevertheless, I was surprised to see that they somehow found their way back to teaching after spending some time at other colleges than education. They would take classes in their general education toward a degree in nuclear engineering, medicine, therapy, so on and so forth, but they would either feel very bored because of the subject matter and social environment they were in, or they would miss what teaching might offer to them, or they would simply fail in other areas. In the end,

however, they would take teaching as their final destination where they can find all the things they missed in other fields of study.

I wanted to be an occupational therapist. When I got into this university, my first semester here, I took a rhetoric class and then all science classes. I had to take exclusively gen. ed. and all my other classes were science classes. I wasn't in any English classes and I hated that for a semester, I hated it. I think I had the work ethic like I definitely have gotten better about studying but I just hated what I was learning and I kind of had a pivotal moment, maybe a little identity crisis, I don't know what you want to call it and I did a lot of soul searching and my grades definitely dropped and I started to panic. I figured "Okay, maybe education is what I want to do." That's just why I'm here. I don't really know if I can just explain why. It is just kind of what feels right to me. (Cameron, IFS, 2/15/2018).

When I started here, I was actually studying to get to be a doctor... I did very well. I stuck with it all through freshman year or first semester of freshman year. I got As and Bs, but I was just bored out of my mind. It wasn't a subject that I enjoyed. The people I was surrounded by were just very stressed and very like just not my kind of social people. (George, IFS, 2/20/2018).

I actually started in nuclear engineering here at the university. But I quickly realized that my heart wasn't really in nuclear engineering and I was having a hard time in classes because I wasn't engaged. It wasn't my interest. (Leonard, IFS, 2/23/2018).

Families, as well as cultural expectations, might also have an impact on students who initially aimed for a career in fields with potential to earn more.

I think growing up as Asian American, my parents always stressed down my throat that I had to be a doctor and do something medical because that is just the norm. You have to make money to be successful. And then, that is something I actually came to believe in high school. I was like I am going to be a dentist, I am going to be an optometrist. I am going to do something, become a doctor and be happy. And then I realized that that is not going to make me happy. I really didn't like Biology and Chemistry that much. They never really attracted me. I always like topics that were more personal. (Patrick, IFS, 3/1/2018).

Like Patrick, Summer is also an Asian American and comes from a family of immigrants who place great emphasis on studying for a high-status job during education and making money in

professional life. On this issue, what Summer said is almost identical to what Patrick shared with me.

When I finally realized that I should teach, I guess there were several things. At first, I had a lot of pressure on me to do a STEM field like nursing or pharmaceutical or being a doctor or whatever. So, I took AP Chem, I took AP Bio, I took Physics, I took Calculus. I did all those crap that I failed. (laughing). I wasn't good at it. I hated it. I didn't understand it that well. (Summer, IFS, 2/26/2018).

Teaching is a safe harbor for these students after they struggled hard with storms of other fields that they enjoyed either too little or not at all.

I become a teacher because I come from a family of teachers. Familial influences take a different form than what they were in Summer's and Patrick's case when the student comes from a family of teachers where it is a family tradition for upcoming generations to follow their predecessors to be teachers. It needs not to be a family tradition necessarily. Having teachers in the family whom the student could look up to during his or her career choice might direct the student to a career in teaching. It occurred to me during my contact with the participants who have either their father or mother or a member of the immediate family in the profession of teaching consider a career in teaching. In other words, being close to a teacher parent during adolescence may influence some to follow the same road that his or her elders followed.

I came from a family of teachers. My dad actually is a superintendent of [mentions a school]. One of my aunts is a teacher; one of my aunts is a superintendent down in Southern Illinois. So I've always been around teachers and educators. I've always liked the kind of the field... Growing up in a family of teachers I think I just wanted to kind of carry that on and I realized that is what I was supposed to do. (Rosemary, IFS, 2/22/2018).

Deep in my heart I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I argued earlier that some think that teaching has been their calling owing to the positive influence of their teachers. However, others do not even need that type of positive encounters. I am not trying to say that this

group of preservice teachers has not had pleasant educational experiences during their formal education; rather, what I want to discuss is that they have already made up their mind a long time ago to get involved in the profession of teaching. These students claim that ever since they were little, they always felt it somewhere in their heart that they would become a teacher one day in the future. For these students, teaching is the truest calling. They proudly declare that they are aware of all the negative aspects of teaching, e.g., low salaries, negative public opinion, unsupportive administrations, etc.; still, they are assured that no other job could ever bring the satisfaction to their life that teaching will bring. Either making a difference in someone else's life or helping young minds shine, these students are certain that it is not the money or reputation that will satisfy them; it is the self-satisfaction. *I knew that I wanted to teach basically my whole life.* (Malena, IFS, 2/16/2018). *I always thought about becoming a teacher in high school.* (George, IFS, 2/20/2018). *I always wanted to be a teacher deep down in my heart.* (Leonard, IFS, 2/23/2018).

Postlude to the Chapter

In this chapter, I aimed at providing a detailed description of the class that I studied as well as a closer profile of my participants. In doing so, I wanted to give my reader more context on the study and crucial parts that constitute it. As I observed the class for a semester, I could see that even the small details that may slip someone's attention initially have a profound impact on how a class goes about. For instance, the Chicago impact that I have referred to repeatedly in this chapter had formed the class in many ways. The cold weather throughout the semester influenced the way that the students attended the class. Or, the fact the class was to meet at 8 a.m. affected how students conceived the class and the film screening. Students' earlier

educational experiences, the reasons why they preferred a career in teaching have manifested themselves in their analysis of teaching, *The Class* and Mr. Marin. Upcoming chapters shall discuss these analyses.



CHAPTER 5: ON (SCHOOL) FILMS AND THEIR EDUCATIVE VALUE

My purpose in this chapter is to present my reader with the views and evaluation of my participants regarding films, school films in particular, and their role in teaching students. To do so, I divide the chapter into two main sections. In the first one, I shall construct a framework for the participants' approach to films without narrowing the scope down to school films.

Specifically, I shall answer the following questions: (1) What is a film, (2) What role can films play in curricula for the purposes of teaching students, (3) Why should educators bother with films? In other words, what are their potential advantages and disadvantages, and (4) What method(s) of film screening in educational milieus would be ideal? In the second section, I shall concentrate specifically on school films. My discussion on school films shall have three subsections. First, I shall list the general characteristics of school films. Second, I shall deal with the influence of school films on educators. Third and last, I shall talk about the effect of school films, i.e., the type of expectations they create on people when they watch them. I assert that the discussion here on films, school films and their educational use is a direct link to the next chapter, which will be mainly on *The Class* and Mr. Marin. It is equally worth mentioning that I ground the structure of the chapter in my participants' approach to these concepts.

On Films

What is a film? As simple and basic as the question might be, I wonder how many times during our lifetime we ask ourselves what a film is, exactly, what a film might mean for us. As I stated earlier in my writing, films are ever-present parts of modern life. It is quite important to examine their connotation especially when we attempt to employ them as curricular tools since we need a justification to ensure that we, educators, do not waste valuable—and limited for that

matter—sources we have. For the participants of this study, it appears that there exist two connotations in terms of films. The first one is the notion that a film is, first and foremost, a form of entertainment while the second is that educators can utilize films for teaching students. The first notion is related to the role of films in our everyday lives whereas the second one is on their use in educational situations. Let me begin with the first one.

Film is entertainment. Primarily, watching a film is something that participants do to relax. Considering the fact that our lives in the 21st century are hectic almost always, films serve as an escape from everything including immediate surroundings and responsibilities. Even for an hour or two, people can focus on a film, and thus, not have to worry about other things going on around them (Patrick, IFS). In a sense, we are used to the conviction that one watches a film to relax when she does not have anything more serious to do so since such is a conviction that we learn from an early age. What I mean to argue here is that we grew up by watching, say, Disney films in our childhood or even youth, which were sources of entertainment during those days for us. Similarly, during the later phases of our lives, when we watch a film, it is for a similar reason—just be as calm as possible and not worry about responsibilities (Eva, IFS). In other words, the purpose of watching a film is to entertain. Comic relief is, similarly, significant in this conception (Cher, IFS). In short, entertainment and relaxing (Celine, IFS; Fredo, IFS) go hand in hand in this understanding of what a film is.

I interpret participants' emphasis that a film is a form entertainment and that purpose of watching a film is just to relax as to mean that a film is a way to escape from the burdens of real life. In fact, there exists a cinema theory, escapism, that argues exactly that. It highlights that we go to theaters or watch films via the help of other media of film screening to forget about our real lives—all the burdens, responsibilities and pain of it. A school film by the name of *Ferris*

Bueller's Day Off is a significant case to exemplify the meaning of escapism. In that film, Ferris fakes an illness to skip school—it is his ninth time doing that in the semester. He convinces his friend to ditch school as well so that they can take the Ferrari of that friend's father. They end up spending the whole day goofing around the city and having fun while Ferris tries to prove to his friend that if he takes the stuff in his life seriously, he is going to miss his chance of living an enjoyable life. Overall, Ferris and his friend escape from high-school, something that they dread. Will, in his criticism of the film, refers to it as “the moviest movie,” and writes: “the one most true to the general spirit of movies, the spirit of effortless escapism.” (1986, June 26). What is vital to note in Will's explanation of escapism—he notes this himself—that he prefers the term movie, not cinema nor film.

The careful reader would notice that I pay specific attention to avoid using the term *movie* throughout the writing in this study and instead prefer *cinema* (or *film*) for I conceive that the former has an informal connotation that is not in accordance with the idea that films can be serious sources of intellectual inquiry and teaching. It is for this reason that I note that film perceived just as a form of entertainment might be inimical in our efforts of treating films as scholarly material. What I am trying to argue here is that we should approach Kubrick's (1962) or Lyne's (1997) *Lolita* with the same or similar attention that we would approach the source material of said films, Nabokov's *Lolita*, when we aim to study film versions or use them to teach. We should bear in mind that there are good scholarly materials that we take seriously and scrutinize according to conventions of academic scrutiny, and then, there are not-so-good ones that we might be tended not to bother. The same should be true for cinema films. In general, there is nothing wrong with watching a film for entertainment for laypersons. However, in academia, if we want films to be taken more seriously than what they are being taken, we have to

approach them with a more refined attitude since regarding them just as a form of entertainment and relaxation would do no good in that agenda.

A film is a study tool for learning. Fortunately for the underlying axiom of the study—that cinema films can be credible sources for systematic exploration and teaching—participants favor more than the notion that a film is just a form of entertainment. They argued that films could and should be used as educational material. Films allow for multimodality. Students can look at same themes or same rhetorical structures that they are being presented via other sources but with a different eye for films are more relatable, visual, and hence, they are a lot easier to understand. Therefore, they can function as a bridge and oftentimes as a studying tool (Diana, IFS).

It should be noted that what might make films powerful curricular tools are the fact that they are visual (and temporal). They play out a piece of specific information or a situation by presenting it visually. That way, it becomes easier for students to follow what is going on since they see it come to life. Erin commented:

I remember in my sophomore year of high school we watched Scarlett Letter movie but we would stop and look for the part in the book that compared to the movie. That was really helpful because I was like “Oh now I understand what they are talking about. I understand how this scene works.” You could see it visually played out for you. (IFS, 2/26/2018).

Malena followed an almost identical line of reasoning:

What stands out to me the most is that we would read a novel and then we would watch the film or part of the film and talk about the similarities and differences. Or documentaries, we would watch a lot of documentaries about historical things like U.S. history. (IFS, 2/16/2018).

Rosemary also added: *In high school, what comes to mind is that we read To Kill a Mockingbird and we watched To Kill a Mockingbird. We read The Crucible, the play about trials, and then, we watched the movie. These were the big things I can think of.* (IFS, 2/22/2018). Pairing chunks

of a book to scenes of a film adaptation of that book is beneficial, especially for students who have a harder time reading large chunks of a book (George, IFS). I must note here that I do not argue that watching films should be seen as a substitute to reading text; rather, I assert that films can aid students to improve their reading by presenting a visual panorama of a text that they have a hard time to imagine or comprehend.

For difficult texts, it can be beneficial for students to be able to see how something happens rather than to read it because depending on the text, it can sometimes be hard to picture what a certain scene looks like mentally, and it can hinder students' understanding of what is going on. Thus, being able to see it on some occasions might just make it easier to understand. When students hit a huge snag or when they have a big question, it can be easy to be stuck on that and hard to move past that, to continue to further into text. A film could alleviate some of those issues that one might see in difficult texts. (Leonard, IFS).

The idea of pairing up can be easily extended to a variety of situations. What I mean is that even if there is not a specific text that goes along with a film specifically, one can still use a film to tie it to a different text or a concept that students are learning about in a class (Erin, IFS). Students can watch a film in relation to any concept or information that is in their lesson plan; they can look at the film and discuss it in relation to the thing that they should learn.

Film is a supplementary tool to literature. I am not sure if it is because my participants are all English majors, their examination of films as curricular tools were mainly related to literature in that they consider film as a supplementary tool to reading a text. It is evident from my analysis of data that I collected from them that they think books, articles, and other text-based materials are the main materials in their lesson plans where they do not oppose the idea

that films might supplement these texts, lighten up teaching, make it more interesting, and introduce interesting ideas to discuss.

Participants are of the opinion that if they only employ films in an English class, it would be missing the entire point—unless the point of that class was cinematography. Even if it was a cinematography class, they think that they should have literature backing it up; they should have writing backing it up as well as different activities that would engage different skills because, at the end of the day, watching something is not the point of literature, and hence, that is not the focus of a course. Again, a film is a great supplementary tool, but it could never substitute literature; the focus should always be literature—reading and writing skills (Diana, IFS). In essence, it should always be the case that we use films with a comparison to the text. However, if we just show students a film without having them to read the text, it is not really helpful to them. Hence, the film that we have in our lesson plan should have some connection to the text. It should be used for improving students' understanding of the text (Erin, IFS). In the final analysis, according to this perspective, a film is a visual representation of a text that students read for a class. Within the context of films as supplementary tools, there are two additional points to discuss.

Cinema versus text. In this part of the discussion, I aim to broaden the point that a film should be employed with a text so that it would improve students' comprehension of the latter. Cinema allows us to compare and contrast it with the source material—the text. It is the idea of written art versus the graphic one. Oftentimes, there is a transfer of voice from the novel—what students imagine in their heads versus what they see on the screen. We can help them to use those to compare and get a bigger idea of the full picture. Therefore, films we choose should add to the source material.

Teachers might face a problematic situation when the film adds nothing to the original text; thus, it becomes just a filler. According to this framework, after students read and discuss a book if the film version offers nothing much that the book could not fulfill since it closely follows the book for the most part, it becomes harder for teachers to rationalize why they would include that film in their lesson plan. I shall have more to say about film as filler later in my discussion.

The balance between text and film. According to my participants, the ideal way on the use of films in teaching without disregarding valuable texts appears to be finding a balance between text and film in our teaching where the first one is the main source while the second one is supplementary (FNfW4, 2/6/2018). If we switch all over to the film, we would lose a lot of great texts and a lot of great skills from those texts. Yet, cinema is a part of our modern world, it is everywhere; hence, sticking strictly with text would also be missing valuable visual material (Cameron, IFS). Therefore, a balance is due between text and cinema in our teaching.

What role can films play in curricula for the purposes of teaching students? What would make an experience of watching a film in a classroom as a part of the curriculum for that class a disappointing experience? I assert that my discussion of my participants' view that films either satisfy their function of inspiring and entertaining people or, in the context of education, they are supplementary material to support the study of the main text of a class should answer the question. A teaching experience with a film would be a disappointing one if the teacher did not follow about the film satisfactorily enough, not held enough discussion about it in class or not had students writing about it or not done an activity on it. Films lose their educative value and become entertainment when students do not learn anything from it and watch it just for the

sake of filling up class time. Again, in such situations, they are being used as fillers to pass the time.

A first role that films can play in curricula is related to their power of making us think (Cameron, IFS). I already elaborated on that films could be used to compare and contrast to a text. There are two additional roles I would like to add. Firstly, films can help teachers to introduce a new concept or a subject that would be hard to present via non-visual ways of introduction. Say, a physics teacher is hoping to discuss the observable universe in her class; Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* would be a good point to initiate students with the discussions. Secondly, films may provide a more in-depth analysis of a concept for students since it gives them a visual context that is related to that concept. Therefore, it can be concluded that films have an educative value, thanks to the roles I have stated.

In the context of the assertion that films have an educative value, it should be stated that the film to be shown to the students should be, first and foremost, related to the subject at hand to avoid the misuse of films as fillers. It should also be academically rigorous (Cameron, IFS). Accordingly, it is better if the teacher connects the film to in-class or out-of-class activities so that students can be engaged with the film. If a teacher just shows a film in a class, then, not even let students explain what they think about it; it would not be helpful to students. Having an exercise where students write, say, an alternative ending and explain why they think they should make that change from their perspective in the finale would ensure that the teacher does not show the film just because he does not have anything better or even anything else to do (Erin, IFS). Class time is precious; teachers must make sure that they are not wasting it.

Why should educators bother with films? It is my humble opinion that no single material could be helpful in any given teaching situation regardless of the context. Educators

need to carefully assess each situation that they have to decide informedly on what material would work best under the given circumstances. That is to say, I am aware that it would be farcical of me to argue that a film would be preferable to other teaching materials under any condition. It is false to claim that films are preferable no matter what. They, just like any other potential curricular tools, have advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, it is utmost importance for this study that I discuss these from the perspective of the participants. Let me begin by discussing the advantages.

Films gather attention. No righteous teacher would ever want to bore his students. As my participants stated, including a film in a curriculum is a great way to grab students' attention at least for a time (Cameron, IFS; Cher, IFS) to ensure that they are not bored. The reason why a film is an effective way of gathering students' attention is that it might allow teachers to build rapport with their students as well as initiate discussions and hence contribute to a rich intellectual environment in a class (Diana, IFS). Besides, film as a teaching material is an effectual way to reach out to even the most challenging students in terms of behavioral problems since it presents a visual representation for these students to focus, which might end up working better than oral presentations (George, IFS). Moreover, students are inclined to watch a film rather than read a book (Malena, IFS); thus, films might make it more exciting for students to come to class (Gregory, IFS). In general, when a teacher has a film in her curriculum, she already has her students sitting at the edge of their seats. They might pay more attention to a film than to a text-based or oral material.

Films present visible examples/they put names on faces. Films can bring the text to life for students. When students read a story, it is beneficial for them that they think of scenarios, alternatives, and that they make predictions on what is going to happen next, but to see a visual

representation of what is going on in that story brings a new perspective (Cher, IFS). For instance, a considerable number of my participants have stated that they took a class on Shakespeare where they would read a play by him and then watch different film versions of the plays. It is a bit hard to comprehend text as sophisticated and complex as Shakespearean ones from centuries ago. However, films show step-by-step how the story unfolds while also showing facial expressions, mimics and intonations of actors. Thus, it makes comprehension of such hard texts easier for students. What is noteworthy about this Shakespeare class is that students would watch different film adaptations of the same play, which allowed them to compare the difference in tone and story-telling in these different adaptations. It provides extra intellectual thought for students to articulate why a filmmaker would make some changes in his version while others would follow another path in their adaptations. In short, just seeing Shakespearean language being spoken on big- or small-screen is a fruitful exercise for students to delve deeper into that type of language. As another example, consider *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It is a seminal text that many teachers include in their curricula that also has a nice film adaptation. Students might find it easier reading the text first and then watching the film adaptation to see how people wear, talk, interact, etc. (Céline, IFS).

In general, cinema can make lessons come to life more. When students just read a text, it is harder for them to reflect what the text aims to transmit. For example, if students are learning about history, teachers can show films that demonstrate things that happened visually. Films make it easier for students to conceptualize that the content in the case of history is not imaginary. Cinema helps students reconstruct a reality by showing visuals of it.

Films keep students engaged. It is equally as important to keep students engaged in the material as to gather their attention. In some cases, a teacher might make an interesting

introduction to the class, gather students' attention, but only to lose it after a couple of minutes. It would be disastrous to fail to keep students engaged in the class. Films might help avoid such situations. To exemplify, Gregory (IFS) mentioned a class he had before where he and his friends finished reading *Romeo and Juliet*, the teacher showed them the modern version with Leonardo DiCaprio, which takes place in modern day Miami, and is a very different representation than the source material but also uses the same lines. Gregory, as a result of this experience, commented that he thinks that it is a great way to get students interested for longer periods and make the material relative to them since students see the story in contemporary settings, which they can relate to.

As I already discussed earlier, students deem films more engaging than textual materials. Because of that, films might help teachers to keep their students engaged in the class for a long period since they help them to learn by presenting things acted out or portrayed (Rosemary, IFS). From another perspective, student engagement depends on the diversity of teaching materials and activities since students learn in different ways (Leslie, IFS), their intelligence manifests itself in different ways, i.e., visual, aural, etc. In this lieu, the participants argued that films might aid teaching by diversifying it since they display more emotion and intensity through camera angles and lighting. They evoke more feeling within the viewer rather than the reader because the reader has his image that he projects while cinema creates it for the individual.

Films are interesting tools to learn from. In my discussion of cinema earlier in this chapter, I argued that cinema is typically seen as a form of entertainment. In addition to that, it is a part of our leisure activities in our daily lives. Since films are generally regarded as sources of leisure activity that people watch on their own time, bringing them to the classroom might make the material more interesting (Connie, IFS). Depending on their genre, some films might

especially include fun elements that can lighten up classroom environment. Thanks to these potential fun elements, students can find films more interesting than other traditional source materials, and as a result, learn from films at the same time as they are having fun doing so (Matilda, IFS). All in all, the participants expressed that films are more interesting teaching materials than other ones that are text-based.

Films diversify classroom activities. Good teaching should be creative and flexible so that it can attend to the needs and characteristics of all students in a class. In addition to their advantages I have talked about so far, films can be beneficial to teaching in terms of diversifying classroom activities. They have the potential to help diversify the mode of presentation in a class because they are capable of changing the viewers' perspective. In their educational use, films might widen students' perspective on a subject. By doing so, they may alter students' attitude toward the content in a positive direction. If students are scared of, say, mathematics since they are convinced that it is abstract and difficult to master; a cinema film that depicts omnipresence of mathematics in human life might aid students to realize that the effort they have to put to master mathematics is worthy.

We, educators, are well familiar with the notion that students learn in different ways, that they have varying strengths (Spicolli, IFS; Leslie, IFS; Céline, IFS). This type of thinking allows us to realize that there might be some students in a class who have a hard time to get a grasp of the text. They may get command of it through film adaptation of it since the adaptation might just click rather than the text since they can see images—experiencing a different mode of learning.

Films aid visual learners. In relation to their advantage that they help diversify classroom activities, films specifically aid visual learners. Oftentimes, classroom materials are

not visual. Thus, what students are exposed to in learning environments are non-visual sources. On the other hand, the cinema is visual. To be able to see something first hand, for example in the case of documentaries would be helpful to understanding (Malena, IFS). In addition, especially in literature classes, visual cues are easier for students to process as compared to trying to make sense of compound words on a page that students have to figure out before they can draw meaning from it (Lisa, IFS). Visual representation of complex words is there on the screen for students to process. In short, cinema is advantageous for students who are more visual learners in that it gives a visual representation of what a character looks like in a story rather than reading about that character (Céline, IFS).

A word of caution is due regarding the advantages of cinema films in education. All the advantages I have elaborated so far from the perspective of the participants would be present in practice if and only if films, to be included in a curriculum, are relevant to what is being taught. Otherwise, they are sole entertainment. Beyond the walls of schools, it is normal that they are so, yet, inside schools, they have to be academically significant in addition to being entertaining.

Participants alluded that there can be times when a teacher uses a film, but students do not comprehend how the film connects to what they study in class. Consequently, they find themselves questioning why they watch the film in the class. What is worse, when the teacher starts a discussion on the film to emphasize the issues of attention for the class, students cannot genuinely be engrossed in it since they do not see the significance of the film and in its relation to the subject (Connie, IFS). On that account, it is utterly important to choose the right film that would attract students as well as relate to the subject (Patrick, IFS).

On a different account, it is equally essential to convince students that the film deserves their attention. A useful strategy to do so might be giving enough background information about

the film before the screening. If teachers cannot get students interested before the film starts, then, a lot of them will check out even before the teacher hits the play button (Patrick, IFS). Put another way, one has to ensure that students understand why they are watching the film, why paying attention to it is important, why it would be a fun thing to pay attention to, and why it is relatable to the class (Summer, IFS). Otherwise, the chances would be quite low that a film can accomplish its expected purpose. The relevancy is the key. It is now time in my discussion to advance to disadvantages of films in education.

Films are for day offs. The classroom door is closed. The lights are off; it is all quiet inside. The class is watching a film in the classroom. What better environment is there for students to fall asleep or take their phones out? In direct relation to the notion that film is just entertainment, some students tend to take films not seriously (Eva, IFS). The participants made the point that students think that the day they watch a film in the classroom is a “movie day” that they are not supposed to do anything but just sit there, be there physically, and even worse, sleep there. It is as if they put extra effort to not to pay attention. In such cases, it might be the mindset of students that a film is just a way to relax, so they relax. They lay back, do not even bother to take notes. Is not film screening in classes analogous to “Netflix and chill” at home? (Leslie, IFS). In this conception, participants have mentioned that they relate films to substitute teachers who would just show a film to students until the regular teacher comes back to her class. Shortly, sometimes, unfortunately, a film is a sure way to keep students on their seats until the time is up. There is a danger that it would take over the class.

Films make focusing harder. I already mentioned the importance of keeping students’ attention for longer periods to ensure that they follow the class for the full period. Teachers should be aware that not all students have focused attention in the class when they are watching a

film as an instructional activity (Cameron, IFS). It is quite easy for some to nod off or do homework for another class, thanks to the ambiance of film screening with dimmed lights. Even if one student or a few students check out during the screening and do things that they are not supposed to do during the film, it might affect other members of the classroom since it would become harder for them to focus on the film while seeing their friends are snoring or doing homework or play games on their phones (Céline, IFS; Cher, IFS; Connie, IFS; Patrick, IFS).

Patrick stated:

I think that a movie makes the classroom at least ten times less serious. It is more like you could take your phone out and go to the table if you want to, no one is going to notice, no one is going to yell at you. If you have some other stuff to work on, you could. It is a little less serious. (IFS, 3/12/2018).

Summer added:

People straight talking over the film, you can hear like the film and people talking. It is just getting jungle together. You have people on their phone just like texting instead of watching the film. People straight up sleeping even if you have little questions that you are supposed to answer. (IFS, 2/26/2018).

Films are just for visual pleasure. I have elaborated repetitively in my discussion that cinema has the potential to lighten up teaching by diversifying instructional activities. However, my participants equally proclaimed that films inherently carry the danger that they might deteriorate the scholarly environment of a classroom. This potential danger could especially happen if films are approached noncritically. In other words, what can be problematic is when films are presented noncritically as in it is just presented as the truth rather than one person's perspective, and not followed up by a conversation where it would allow students to dialogue with these films (Leslie, IFS). Besides, my participants' examination of potential disadvantages of films appears to be affected by the fact that my participants are literacy teachers in that as I

stated earlier that they think cinema should supply the text. Céline argued that if educators rely too heavily on film in the case of doing a book to film translation, much scholarly material gets lost in the process since students can rely too heavily on what they see and not too much on what they read. In that case, students rely too much on what is being given to them by the film. Consequently, they do not do enough critical thinking on their own (IFS). To avoid this situation, it is imperative that teachers consider films as scholarly teaching materials and they plan rigorous lesson plans when they include films in their teaching.

Films can be time-consuming. Generally, a class period is 40 minutes K through 12. Considering the fact that a film approximately lasts around an hour and a half on average, it seems clear that screening a whole film as a part of a class could be taking many class periods. Watching a whole film during class time could take three days when it is done in parts. In college, in high school too for that matter, that could take even a whole week out of just 16 weeks. It means that it takes the time away from other things the teacher could teach to the students because there are many different skills that the teacher has to help students to learn. When the teacher decides that the class should watch a film, then, she is taking a specific time frame out of her whole semester to focus on it (Patrick, IFS; Malena, IFS; Lisa, IFS).

Another problem in relation to time management problem that films might cause becomes apparent when one considers that a teacher has to make the film relevant to the students. What I am arguing here is that as I mentioned before, students may not see the point that the teachers want to get across through a film. To do that, she has to pay specific attention to explain the relevance. In that case, not only the teacher explains the lesson plan, she also explains how the film relates to the lesson plan. That might take up more time (Gregory, IFS).

When one considers the disadvantages of cinema films in teaching that I have discussed so far that films are seen as break material, that they can make students go to sleep, and that they can be time-consuming, she might deduce that these all contribute to the possibility that cinema films might make classroom management harder for teachers. My point regarding management is that I accept that employment of cinema films inherently carry these disadvantages, but a qualified teacher can take necessary precautions to overcome them. Such or similar potential disadvantages are there for any other type of teaching material. It is the artwork of a teacher to employ cinema art in her teaching artfully.

Films can be boring. Whether a film is boring or not is in the eye of the beholder since the issue of boring-ness is a result of an individual's personal preferences and likes. Thus, it might be over-generalized and absurd to suggest that teachers should choose entertaining films to not to bore students. Above all, how can one decide which films are boring and which are not, for sure? Yet, when students find a film boring, they are more likely to check out or nod off since they are not interested in what goes on in the plot (Connie, IFS). Such a situation might happen especially in the cases where the film is a documentary (Matilda, IFS).

Films can be distracting. As a final disadvantage of films in their employment in education, I would like to note that in some cases they might be distracting. Consider a class where students have an informative discussion, then, lesson plan requires to show even a part of a film rather than the whole picture; lights go off, students are now surrounded by a different type of aura they were having. When the film ends, and the class returns to its former state, no one can guarantee that students would be as eager as before to participate in the class. In addition, it is not necessarily the influence of the film that might cause this situation. It is the

change in the aura of the class. Eva argued in her evaluation of the use of cinema films in education:

I think they [cinema films] should be used very rarely just because again in one of my field placement, they were watching a video and it was not that long, it was maybe 15 mins, but the kids were really distracted at the end. So I think maybe that's the biggest disadvantage, keeping their interest throughout whole thing. (IFS, 2/22/2018).

What method(s) of film screening would be ideal in educational milieus? The last leg of my discussion of employment of cinema in teaching is on the actual screening process of films in classrooms. Since I aimed to study the use of a school film in a preservice teaching class, I wondered quite a bit how my participants would, in general, conceptualize on steps of film screening in classes. I do not necessarily say that their points informed my presentation (my methods) of *The Class* to them. Yet, their points, I think, informed their evaluation of the experience of watching the said film in their class. I will talk about this evaluation later in the study. Here I present their points of emphasis regarding the exact method of screening of a film in a class.

Watching an entire film in class is not effective. Due to cinema films' length, they take more than one class period. Because of this, my participants argued that watching an entire film during class time is not effective (Cher, IFS). Besides, they are also of the opinion that students check out during a film screening because of films' length since during a screening the lights are off in the classroom for an extended period that students think it is an off day (Diana, IFS).

The issue of whether showing a whole film in a class or not might be settled by looking at what the focus of the class is. Let us say that the focus of a class only relates to a couple of scenes in a film, then, the instructor may present only those scenes to the students since the rest of the film might be seen as fillers that have no potential use for the emphasis of the class

(Brenda, IFS). According to this type of thinking, using smaller scenes or smaller passages from a film is more effective because then teachers are not taking up so much class time, and they can call students back into what is going on in terms of instruction (Diana, IFS). On the other hand, I think that the resolution of this issue is inseparably related to what a teacher does with a film. Even when showing a full film, teachers can set up instructional activities to increase the effectiveness of a film by ensuring prolonged student engagement and active participation.

Chunk it up and then analyze. The solution that a considerable number of my participants suggested in relation to the length of films is that teachers should chunk films up and then analyze these chunks in class—or use them educationally. For instance, a literacy teacher that teaches Shakespeare can use certain scenes from *O Brother Where Art Thou* to connect it to Shakespeare (Diana, IFS). By doing so, they can modernize it and increase the possibility that their students will connect to it. From another perspective, chunking up a film is, in a sense, a close reading of a film by picking a specific clip or clips in the film and paralleling to whatever the class studies. Say the class is reading a seminal text; it is more useful to stop the reading and watch the chunk of the film to go back and connect the text and the film rather than just to watch the whole film (Eva, IFS). When teachers chunk a film up and then analyze for that small period, they can call attention to the details a lot easier.

According to my analysis of participants' responses, there are two ways that a teacher can accomplish chunking a film up and then use it in practice. The first is not showing an entire film to the class. Instead, it is preferable if the teachers choose a couple of scenes and design instructional activities for those specific scenes. The second, however, is pausing the screening and doing the instructional activities at certain points in the entirety of the film.

Pause and Discuss. I name this second solution *Pause and Discuss* and scrutinize it in a subsection of its own since this is the method I employed in my presentation of *The Class* to the participants. It is important to note that participants suggestion of pausing a film during a screening did not inform my design of the study since my method was set before the actual steps of the research. The reason I mention this point here is that congruency between my method and participants' evaluation of the method of the film screening will be important when I discuss participants' evaluation of watching *The Class* in their class.

Céline stated that the best way to show a film to students would be pausing the film and asking students questions on what is going on in the film and what they make out of it (IFS). Recalling previous classroom experiences where her teachers showed a film to her class, Erin mentioned:

I would say some of the problems we ran into was the screenings were that a whole class period we were watching the movie, and there were not any pauses where we would stop and talk about like "hey, what did you think of what just happened." When you are watching the film the whole time, it is not really helpful. (IFS, 2/26/2018).

Pausing the film and discussing the part that the class has seen up to the point of the stop might help eliminate the problem that students might fall asleep. Every once a while, turning the lights on and starting a discussion can help rejuvenate students (Patrick, IFS). Besides, it can also get students ready for the upcoming parts of the film. When a teacher stops a film and asks students questions, she is at the same time encouraging students to think about what is going to happen in the rest of the film (Leslie, IFS; Patrick, IFS). One might argue that pausing and discussing a film to point out to things in it might interrupt the experience of watching the film, but it might ultimately help students to be more critical about it (Lisa, IFS). To conclude, from my

perspective, pause and discuss is a sure way to eliminate a good portion of the disadvantages of cinema films in teaching.

What to do with worksheets. A ubiquitous way that teachers strive to make cinema films instructive for their students is giving worksheets to their students. Usually, these worksheets include a set of questions for students to answer after they finish watching the film. Prima facie, worksheets are easy ways to ensure that a film in a class is not just to pass the time since students need to watch the film carefully to answer the worksheet for introspective and critical thinking purposes. However, worksheets might be more appropriate for lower grades such as primary or middle school (Leonard, IFS) rather than high school and college since students at upper levels might consider worksheets too juvenile. Worksheets point out to certain things that students need to pay attention to. Such help might be necessary for younger students, not for the mature ones.

This last point regarding worksheets concludes my discussion of films in general and their use in teaching. One of the focuses of the present study is on the use of school films specifically. Therefore, it is necessary that I study my participants' conceptualization of school films. I shall do that in the next subsection.

On School Films

Having read the literature review, my reader should already have an idea of general characteristics of school films as these are expressed in the previous studies. There, I argued that school films create certain myths that do injustice to real schools. Here, on the other hand, it is necessary for this study to explore participants' examination of school films to assess their approach to school films since the framework I am about to create here will be useful in my discussion of participants' evaluation of *The Class* and *Mr. Marin*. My present analysis reveals

that participants are aware of the myths that the literature discusses in that they are generally of the opinion that school films present unrealistic situations, and due to that, they put much pressure on real teachers. Owing to this congruency between literature and participant responses, I keep the discussion here shorter to avoid repetition; still, the reader should expect some level of similarity between upcoming discussion and literature review. This section shall include three subsections. Firstly, I will elaborate on the general characteristics of school films from the perspective of the participants. Secondly, I will talk about the impact of school films on educators. Thirdly and lastly, I will go into details of influences of school films on the general public—the type of expectations they create.

Two characteristics of school films. *Outsider teacher hero saves everybody.* With the exception of a few, school films are works of fiction—documentaries are not the focus of discussion here. As such, they usually focus on a teacher in a fictional school setting. It is, most of the time, this teacher who arrives at a new school only to be assigned to a classroom with kids who are not motivated at school somehow. Yet, this hero teacher is like no other; he is full of nontraditional teaching methods (Lisa, IFS). And, through his unconventional methods, he is able to get them involved in the classwork that is unconventional to students (Summer, IFS). In his efforts of saving all of the students, the hero teacher always has to deal with some conflict between him and the society because of his way of teaching (Céline, IFS). Put another way, the one teacher who does not follow all the rules is always the best the teacher and turns the whole school around in some way (Leonard, IFS).

Hero teacher's teaching abilities are up to such a point where he can even invent new methods (Lisa, IFS). He can even put his life in danger and take extra steps to make sure that he teaches his students. Because of this unrealistic portrayal of teachers, school films exhibit an

optimistic vision for teaching. From one perspective, thanks to this optimistic view, they can be very uplifting because they communicate to teachers that they can change students' lives, they can even change the world if they do what the outsider hero did in the film (Leslie, ISS).

Similarly, at the end of such films, it is generally a happy ending where everyone realizes that the outsider hero whom they detested at the beginning is actually a great teacher who did all the great things for the students and resisted pressure from the administration as well as society (Leonard, ISS).

After reading these notes on hero teacher characters, one might ask how school films show other teachers in a school film, i.e., secondary teacher characters. The teachers that are not the protagonist are mundane that they are in a sense dumb-downed since they are expected to be like the controversial hero. Explicitly, other teachers are insufficient because they do not know what they are doing. They have traditional motivations and methods that are not instructive to students (Céline, IFS).

Based on these main and secondary teacher representations in school films, it is safe to conclude that school films create a duality in their presentation of teachers. A teacher is either a hero that saves every student as if teaching is charity work, or someone who cannot even control his class. There is not much space between these two extreme ends. I should also note that there exist some school films where this duality takes a different form where the protagonist is similar to secondary teachers I discussed. They do not care about students at all or about what they are learning; they put on a film or they give them a worksheet just expecting students not to bother them (Connie, IFS). Especially if the school film is not inspirational, teachers are presented as mean. They are just there. They are authority figures or do not care at all (Patrick, IFS).

Student clicks and lame principals. From the perspective of participants, the second characteristics of school films can be seen in their presentation of students. Generally, students in school films are minorities and belong to lower socio-economic status (Eva, IFS). In addition, these students have a distinctive personality. For example, it is quite probable that a viewer would see a brainiac nerd, a popular girl, an athlete, a ghetto criminal, a basket case, etc. in a school film (Gregory, IFS; Patrick, IFS). Moreover, they belong to a certain click, e.g., cheerleaders, jocks, so on and so forth where there is also a social hierarchy between the clicks (Malena, IFS; Cher, In-CD). Finally, school films frequently narrate themes of violence in the family, in gangs and school.

Just as school films portray students to belong to clicks, they depict principals as boring and lame (Lisa, IFS). They are usually shown to be either inadequate or stern to create a healthy school environment. Due to these principals, schools are very uptight where all of the students are expected to obey the rules. As I noted at the beginning of this section, participants' examination of school films is quite similar to the one I provided in my literature review. Although it is true that I discussed school films before film screening in the class I studied, I conducted the first set of interviews before this discussion. Thus, I do not think that I might have affected their examination.

Influence of school films on educators.

I was watching a TV show the other day called *A.P. Bio*, which is a new show by one of the makers of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. It is a hilarious comedy show, but I had my friends asking me "Does that really happen?" "Are teachers like that?" "Is that really going on?" It was crazy because people look at these things and try to understand "Is that really what it is like to be on the other side of the desk?" I guess we look at the cinema and films to tell us what that is like because that is the only way we are able to see it, sometimes by watching something or seeing something on TV. (Diana, IFS, 2/21/2018).

It is evident from her remarks that Diana was surprised when her friends kept asking her if all the crazy things that they see on the comedy show happen in real classrooms. I argue that her friends think that the things that happen in the show would happen in real schools for two reasons. First and obvious, they do not know what goes on in classrooms. Apart from being a student in one or several, they have never been to a real school. They have no professional connection to educational situations; thus, they have no idea what is going on behind the curtains. Second, their only exposure to the profession of teaching in a professional sense is through what media, including but not limited to cinema, portrays. Since the focus of this study is school films, I assert that school films are to blame for the embezzlement of Diana's friends since such films, most often than not, misrepresent educational situations. Public consume those distorted representations. Lisa veritably added:

My roommate is in biology and I would never correct her on anything that has to do with biology, but the minute education comes up, she is an expert. You have no idea what you are talking about. I mean maybe it is because it is publicly funded and in your community, your taxes are going to fund your schools and you have your children in it. You want to have a voice on it. But I think people perhaps overly try to have an opinion on education even if they are not qualified for that opinion and I think those movies reflect it that this outsider can come in and change and improve upon the way that people who are actually educated to teach. They could somehow know something that these people who have been trained to know do not know. (IFS, 2/15/2018).

As Lisa rightfully discussed, everybody is an education expert. The public is so confident in making judgments about education even when they have no professional background in it. I am not sure if they could have the same level of confidence when the subject was something else, e.g., sociology, psychology, etc. What is the role of school films in this confidence? A good number of school films portray teachers in a negative light (Erin, IFS). Equally, a lot of them depict unrealistic classroom situations that would either rarely or never happen in real schools

(Eva, IFS). In general, they present not an accurate picture of education (George, IFS). The picture they put out is the one where a teacher starts in a challenging classroom, and by the end of the film, everybody is friends, and the teacher has made a big difference in the school. That is a motif that runs through a lot of school-based films (Leslie, IFS). In part due to this motif, the public disrespect teachers; they see teaching as something pretty simple and easy. Consequently, according to this view, teaching is an easy job or an easy career (Patrick, IFS). The public expects unreasonably a lot from educators. They expect miracle breakthroughs. They expect teachers to be able to take each student and pinpoint exactly what they are struggling with and then come up with a creative way to solve that (Eva, In-Class Discussion; Cameron, IFS). The education that these films illustrate in them is either a miracle- or charity work; it is not a field of realistic situations where teachers struggle every day and put their best to help students best to their ability. This image that school films are partly to blame for is another problem that on-duty teachers, in fact, all educators have to deal with even the preservice ones. Eva said:

I think sometimes it [school films] puts us on a tight spot. I am not a teacher yet, but when I watch films like that, I put myself under a lot of pressure like I need to change someone's life. I think after watching films like that people have this almost angelic kind of view of teachers like we can actually change the world. It is inspirational, but it is also a lot of pressure. (IFS, 2/22/2018).

Teachers get discredited because they are seen as childish, goofy or sometimes over-inspirational. Sometimes teachers are supposed to be savior figures where they are expected to save the whole school. It puts much stress on teachers to be these *Übermensch* and to spend their whole life just in a school while being focused on saving everybody. That is unrealistic. It might even make many people not want to be teachers one day.

Influence of school films on public. School films shape the way the public view the profession of teaching and teachers. Education is something that a lot of people feel assured that

they have a viable opinion even if they have not been educated in education (Lisa, IFS). It is convenient for individuals that do not have teaching experience to think that teaching is an easy job full of weekend and summer vacations. Their thinking does not cover the hardships of the profession such as lesson plans, management, grading, etc. In short, they do not grasp how challenging teaching is. They are not aware of real educational situations.

Leonard (IFS) stressed that when the public watches school films, they see that students are not doing well. In fact, they have been exposed to an image that the education system and schools are failing. This failing image of education might be instrumental in people's thinking that the education system is not as good as it used to be. It is probably because of one of the evil teachers that are not doing something new or exciting. It allows the public to think every single teacher is potentially one of those not-good teachers that are holding the school back. The teacher has to change something; she is not educating properly.

School films romanticize the role of educator in students' lives. Some teachers are not just in a life situation where they can commit 80 hours a week to their students. In some ways, school films create unrealistic expectations in the minds of the public. So, they expect that teachers, all by themselves, should save hundreds of students—or even thirty students (Summer, IFS). Saving even thirty lives is hard if not impossible.

Public's image of teaching that it is an easy career gets challenged when they contemplate failing image of education. As I already discussed, many people think that teachers have an easy job that they do not deserve to be paid a lot since it is only half a year. All a teacher has to do is to give students materials (Erin, ISS). Mostly they should be fine afterward. The easy job image confronts the alarming language we see in public discussions that schools are failing

devastatingly. Who can blame the public when they blame teachers whom they think cannot do as simple a job as teaching is?

From a different perspective, school films might also drive the public away from schools. Huge lockers, social groups, constant mocking, cruel friends, unsympathetic teachers, etc.; seeing these and many more in school films might scare people on what is going on in real schools (Cher, IFS). Especially, students who are getting ready to go high-school might be influenced by this sharp image of schools in school films. Besides, by the same logic, school films might also disappoint potential teachers. What would a fresh teacher feel when her classroom of disenfranchised students who are from low socio-economic status and who have been labeled as untouchable do not respond to all the creative approaches she tries? In *Freedom Writers* they did. Yet, how about real classrooms? Correspondingly, school films might influence people who want to become teachers and their perception of teaching to think of it as a job to change every single one of students' lives. It is only until they engage with a real classroom that they realize they cannot completely change a student's life, save him and be a hero.

It is true that in my discussion up to here I have employed a negative image of school films that they put unrealistic images in people's mind and unrealistic expectations on teachers. I even stated that school films might scare people away from the teaching profession. However, as some of my participants discussed, it is also true that in some cases they might inspire people to become teachers. When a high school or college student watches a teacher character in a school film, she might dream of becoming a teacher like that character one day (Fredo, IFS). For example, Leslie noted: *I have seen clips of Dead Poets Society that have fundamentally inspired and shaped the way that I view teaching, the way that I articulate why I want to be an English teacher.* (IFS, 2/22/2018).

The exact relation of school films to the present study is their instructive value. Although I will discuss educative merit of school films in the case of *The Class* with my participants in the next chapter, I think an introduction here is called for since my subject in this section is school films. To begin with, thanks to the phenomenon of spectator identification I explained in my literature review, we, the spectators, sometimes learn a lot about ourselves when we watch a film (Patrick, IFS). Besides, being exposed to as many teaching situations as possible is quite important to gain competency in teaching. School films do just that. Leslie discussed:

I think the best way for me to learn how to be a good teacher is by observing as many good teachers as possible. So whether it is a fictional depiction of a good teacher or a real-life teacher, it is important being able to, even through a film, inhabit his classroom for a little while. I think I am able to see approaches that are effective in practice. (IFS, 2/22/2018).

Postlude to the chapter

This chapter aimed at providing a discussion of films and their educative value from the mindset of participants of the study. Teachers can find creative ways of integrating cinema films to their teaching as my participants argued. School films, specifically in the case of this study, might be a part of the education of preservice teachers to show them examples of teachers for good or bad. In other words, watching a school film in a teaching class is an opportunity to preservice teachers to analyze a teacher on the screen. This study has been an effort toward that direction. In the next chapter, I discuss the overall experience of watching *The Class* with the participants.

CHAPTER 6: ON *ENTRE LES MURS* AS A CURRICULAR TOOL FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS

In this chapter, I begin my discussion of *The Class* as a curricular tool in the teaching class I studied. In other words, the present chapter provides the reader with the participants' analysis of the film. There are seven segments of the analysis. The first segment deals with participants' (overall) evaluation of *The Class* as a school film and the depicted curriculum in it. The second part of the analysis focuses on students and Mr. Marin as a teacher. The third one details the educational themes that participants of the study identified as a result of watching the film. The fourth one is a collection of potential strategies that participants argued that they would use to handle diversity in their classes. The fifth contains solutions that the participants stated that they would use if they were the teacher in some particular situations in the film. The sixth section includes an analysis of the film by a group of non-education majors whose approach diverges from that of preservice teachers. The last one concentrates on the process of use of *The Class* as a curricular tool in BtW. I believe that the organization of the findings in this chapter is a comprehensive way of setting forth the analysis of *The Class* by the participants.

Evaluation and Curriculum

There is little doubt that Hollywood, American film making industry, is the most impactful film production system around the world in that it produces the most titles, and that its cultural influence is the most penetrating one. As a result, it should be no surprise to see that American viewers might be tended to approach a foreign film with conceptions that they have acquired from years of watching Hollywood films. In the course of this study, an American acquaintance of mine, another doctoral student in the field of educational sciences, upon hearing that I have

been studying a French school film, took an interest in *The Class* and asked me many questions about it. The next time I saw her, she had already seen the film. She was furious since she thought I wasted two hours of her life by mentioning the film to her, which directed her to watch it. She zealously argued that the film did not make any sense to her. “There was not any conflict resolution, not a good finale [she means a happy one], nothing. I could have had a camera with me, gone to any school in Chicago area, shot students and their teacher in a classroom, and produced a film of my own similar to this,” complained she. I ensured her that not for a second, did I doubt her film making abilities; yet, she should also consider the possibility that she might have had an Americanized approach toward the film since she was looking for an increase in conflict and a happy resolution at the end. “This is raw, this is real; more or less, this is what happens in classrooms around the globe on a daily basis,” I soothed her. My participants’ evaluation attests they agree with that judgment that their attitude to a foreign film, i.e., *The Class*, in this case, might have been influenced by their cultural conventions.

Lisa said: *It [The Class] did not have a typical introduction, rising action, climax, resolution. There was not really a resolution. You do not really feel like the teacher and the students reconciled that relationship as a typical Hollywood movie might.* (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Céline echoed:

I think Americans like having that sort of thing [resolution], and it always has to have a good ending. There always has to be a hero that does very, very well, that has all these incredible values, and does not really have a lot of like faults or anything. I think it is like they have gotten so used to getting that satisfaction of good triumphing over evil sort of plot that if it does not come there, they feel somewhat disappointed or cheated. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

My point here that film evaluation in a formal setting such as in this study might be affected by cultural expectations should not be taken as a generalization. That is, I am not trying to argue that the participants of the study undervalued the film in any sense because they are mostly

American, and the setting is America; rather, I claim that it is likely that the way spectators made judgments about *The Class* based on their suppositions. I have come to this conclusion after I added noneducation majors to the study.

The center of my argument here is that spectators' evaluation of the film in this study inseparably depended upon their major. Education majors appear to think that they benefit from watching *The Class* as an instructional activity even if they do not like the film personally whereas noneducation majors find the film boring and dull without a solid structure that they are used even when the film is employed in their class as a way to lighten the instruction. I shall have more to say about this education and noneducation major divergence in section six. Here, I focus on the participants' evaluation of the film.

“As a teacher, what you see during the eight hours is what you have during the day.” The film is mostly set in a classroom. Except for a couple of scenes where teachers are in meetings, participants get to see students only inside a classroom and in the playground (Diana, ISS). The fact that we see students only in the school conveys how illogical it is to expect teachers to be fully aware of every struggle that their students are going through and every hardship that they face or have ever faced (Cameron, ISS; Fredo, ISS). Since the participants did not get to see the students' personal lives at all in the film, the relationship between the students and their teacher remained as a professional one from the perspective of the participants. Besides, the students in the film are not full-fledged apathetic characters. So often in school films, the students are excused for many things that they do because of their outside storylines (Lisa, ISS).

***The Class* shows what actual teaching can be; it is accurate and realistic.** *The Class* exposes the realities of a classroom by not sugarcoating any component of that reality (Cher,

ISS) in that it portrays an accurate representation of how it is like dealing with students from the teacher's perspective (Connie, ISS; Malena, ISS, In-CD; Brenda, ISS). In doing so, from a professional point of view, it does a better job than a lot of school films portraying what teaching is like and the kind of challenges teachers face (Diana, ISS). In other words, it does not idealize teaching (Leonard, ISS); it puts a more realistic perspective to it (Erin, ISS). Cameron summed up this point:

I think it [*The Class*] did a great job of showing what teaching can actually be like. It is actually the challenges that a teacher faces every day and even when they think they are doing the right thing or when they are trying to do their best for the students even, it can fall apart, and kind of get derailed and there is not a whole lot of control over the situation that they always have. So I really enjoyed that. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

Malena stated:

I really liked that all we saw was what the teacher would have seen. We heard about the home lives, heard about what was going on, but it was very realistic, and the stuff that we saw was what we would see as teachers. So we do not follow the kids home and see how they hang out with their friends or how their relationship with the parents is, you just kind of do your best to figure it out from what you see in the classroom. (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

I am aware that my participants are preservice teachers and so they do not have too much teaching experience. However, the amount of the experiences they have had up to the point of the study via their field placement and observation appears to be convergent to the realistic situations in *The Class*. Leslie commented:

I would say based on my observations in schools, I think this film accurately captures a lot of the challenges of teaching and a lot of the disillusionment that teachers experience after they have been working for a little while. A lot of the teachers in the school portrayed in the film are very jaded, very pessimistic about students' character, about their potential. And based on the way I hear teachers talk in schools that I have observed or the way they treat their students, I think that is fairly accurate. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Rosemary added:

At least based on what I have seen in my class that I am in right now, we do not have a class quite that bad, but I mean we have kids that are similar. Some kids, you know, with attitude issues. And so I think it is realistic. (ISS, 4/19/2018).

The Class feels authentic. I assert that the reason why the participants think that *The Class* is realistic and accurate is that they find the film authentic. Interactions between actors, i.e., between teachers and students as well as students and students feel authentic (Céline, ISS; Leslie, In-CD). The film's portrayal of an accurate representation how it might feel from a teacher's perspective dealing with his students both increases authenticity of the film; it also adds to the credibility of it (Connie, ISS). In this sense, due to its authenticity, the film portrays how stressful the teaching profession can be at times, how demanding it is that teachers have many responsibilities on their shoulders. As a result of this authenticity, the film might help people to appreciate teachers. Teacher candidates will likely be in the position of Mr. Marin one day. The film might help them be aware of how their future job may be at times (Connie, ISS). Consequently, it also aids them to realize that teaching is what they signed up for when they decided to pursue teaching. In other words, the film motivates preservice teachers to appreciate their own teachers and try harder to be a better one.

The film's authenticity has another potential benefit for participants. From a professional point of view, one of the film's insights is how a teacher can become susceptible to emotions. Teaching is not always a profession where everything is simple, and decisions follow one another as a procedure. Therefore, the film's depiction of raw emotions, the teacher's and students' as well, increases the authenticity of it (Leonard, ISS). The film helps preservice teachers realize that it is not always the case they would feel good about themselves in the end as other school films depict that they might. It is a relatable situation in the film that preservice

teachers may notice that the challenges of the profession are not just for them; other colleagues suffer from the same or similar issues (Erin, ISS).

The Class do not idealize teaching. In the course of my contact with my participants and my analysis of the data for the study, I have come to realization that what they hated the most about school films is that these films idealize teaching to such a point that it becomes hard, if not impossible, for the general public to take real educators seriously. By the same logic, their belief that *The Class* does not do that should be the thing they like most about it. Cameron argued that *The Class* is a film for educators to see since it did not idealize everything about education; it did not make everything bright and happy. He went on to say:

The way that our culture and our media represent school teaching is that it is almost romanticized. It is all very idealistic, and everything is going to work out, everything is going to be fine. The jock is going to get with the cheerleader, and then, the nerd is always going to get the girl at prom, and everyone is going to be happy. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

Diana widened the discussion:

I think they [makers of *The Class*] did a really good job of showing that there are grey areas [in teaching] and you are not always going to know what is right to do. That is really the experience of teaching: not always knowing what to do, not always knowing if that is going to be the right choice, and maybe there is not the right choice. So overall, I would say, from a professional standpoint, I think they did a really good job of getting the audience to feel what a teacher might feel or those kinds of frustrations that real life teachers feel. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Céline stated:

Especially the scenes with Souleymane like disciplinary committee and stuff; those are really hard decisions to make, and you can see that teachers are discussing it and they are thinking about it and like that, not everything is always black and white when you are teaching. (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

Lisa concluded the point that *The Class* does not idealize teaching and the importance of that:

It is important that we kind of de-glamorize teachers and de-glamorize the potential relationship that students and teachers are supposed to have because there is too much of an expectation on teachers to be these heroes

and have an amazing relationship with every student in their room and fix everything. That is not really fair, I do not think. (ISS, 4/24/2018).

The Class is a manifesto against saving students' lives. As a result of the previous point, participants stated that *The Class* is a worthwhile example to be used against the unrealistic expectation on teachers to save students' lives. That view, as I discussed earlier, is not professional; in fact, it is only as real as Campanella's city. In reality, teachers can only see what happens in the school even if parents have a strong interest in their children's education. Yet, in many school films, the teacher might get a peek into what is happening at students' home or what is happening outside of school. By using that outside knowledge, they might improve how they are teaching. However, a teacher only rarely gets that privilege. She does not get to know what students do on the weekends. Expecting teachers to take their responsibilities to unbelievable levels and save students just as a charity worker might do is an unrealistic burden on teachers. It is not the case that teachers never have impressive success stories where they help students with problems that affect students' performance at school. Just as the notion that teachers have an easy job with a lot of off days is erroneous, so is the expectation that teachers should be super heroes.

The Class provides a different perspective to teaching. *The Class* provides a different portrayal of teaching instead of the conventional depictions that the public is accustomed to from other school films in regard to how students behave, to student personalities and to the way that the teacher responds (Cher, ISS; Erin, ISS). Thus, it provides a fresh look for preservice teachers to reflect on education (Gregory, ISS). It is possible that teachers themselves experience the type of challenging situations in the film in their teaching. This different look to the profession of teaching might equip them with the necessary tools to deal with such situations. Connie stated:

It [*The Class*] made me think that I need to prepare myself mentally, emotionally for things like that because you know teachers are put in tough

situation sometimes, and you do not realize it until it actually happens and then you think and end up doing something that you realize that it was totally wrong until later on. I definitely thought it was like the most realistic teacher school movie I have ever seen. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

The Class is an example universe for me to watch and analyze. The underlying assumption for this study was that screening of *The Class* in this introductory teaching course would provide an example for the participants in that engaging with this film would be instructive to them. In the course of this study, participants connected the situations they saw in this film to their observations as a part of their field placement. Cameron argued that as a preservice teacher who has been observing teachers in schools, he thinks that this film was the right film to show since he could see similarities between his observations and the situations in the film in terms of students' and teachers' behaviors (ISS; Leslie, In-CD). Similarly, Céline stated that her observations at real schools gave her signs to analyze the teacher in the film in what he could have done to deal with some of the situations he faced in the film (ISS). Additionally, Erin commented that she has been in classrooms where students behaved in similar ways to the students in the film (ISS). She also added:

I have definitely been in classrooms that had kids like that. The class that I observed like a few days ago was exactly like this. The thing that comes up first is that you notice that it is like they are almost actively trying not to learn as hard as they can. Whatever it is, there is really nothing that should be distracting them. It is just like they are trying as hard as possible to not learn from you. You want to like convince them that what you are teaching them is valuable and that is pretty much the hardest part: it is getting them to settle down and be like, "Hey, this is important" and make everything not seem urgent other than like, "It is due today, and that is why it is urgent." (ISS, 4/11/2018).

The resemblance between participants' observations and the situations in the film is of the essence because it creates awareness in participants to realize what they should expect when they get to schools teaching. In other words, *The Class* is a way to look at what they are getting themselves into by choosing a career in teaching (Cameron, ISS). It makes preservice teachers

realize the struggles that they might face as a teacher in the future. After watching this film, it is a valuable question for preservice teachers to ask themselves whether or not they agree with Mr. Marin's approach in the film since by trying to find answers to that question they consider the possibilities of how they can adapt that their future teaching (Connie, ISS). Besides, recounting these types of teaching situations before they become a professional teacher may also serve to reassure preservice teachers on their career choice. Erin noted:

I would not say it [*The Class*] is threatening. I went into teaching knowing that there were going to be problems, so I do not feel threatened by it. I felt like it was more reassuring because it is like "These are problems that you are going to have, but you just have to work with your students and figure out how you are going to solve them." And it is probably going to happen whether you like it or not. (ISS, 4/11/2018).

As an instructional activity, *The Class* provides an exemplary universe for preservice teachers to analyze. In the future, it is likely that these teachers will have to deal with many problems and problematic situations that may or may not be similar to the ones in the film. Despite the uniqueness of each educational problem, this example universe is a way for preservice teachers to gain teaching experiences since it causes thinking in their mind about the potential problematic situations they might face. Therefore, the film helps preservice teachers to gain experiences through the questions it sparks (Fredo, ISS). Matilda explained:

I think this film is good because as a future teacher after I watched this film, I was thinking about what I would do in certain scenes. And I also feel it could probably happen in my future. I think that I reflected on the film after I watched it. I think it is quite good for educators. (ISS, 4/10/2018).

Summer said:

Cinematically speaking, it really puts you into the mind and perspective of a teacher: Relationships and the tension that arises in the classroom because like everyone, if you are on the public school or traditional school systems, spends a large amount of their time in school and within the walls of the school. So I think it does have some merit to reflect on a piece like this. We have all spent so much time in the classroom while teaching in it. (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Concerning Summer's point from another perspective, this example universe can be seen as a way for preservice teachers to watch and role play (Leslie, In-CD). Céline summarized this point elegantly:

[As you watch the film,] You can tell you feel it in yourself, you start to get tense. So, I think seeing that situation from afar, you know, that you have to deescalate a situation, you realize that you need to get other kids to be quiet so you can have a conversation where there is so many people talking at the same time and things getting misinterpreted. So, I think that one of the important things is to see situations from the outside and then maybe even role play those situations with other teachers or something just so you understand like what is aggravating the situation, how could you stop it from aggravating the situation, stuff like that. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

The fact that participants actively looked at a teaching scenario and thought about what they would do in those situations teaches people how to teach better since the film showed them what they needed to see as opposed to, say, an oral discussion or typing and writing down lecture notes. Through this mental role-playing, participants could empathize with what was going on. They were also exposed to new perspectives (Cher, ISS). In that sense, *The Class* is another opportunity to observe a classroom in addition to real classrooms they observed throughout the semester as a requirement of their field placement (Fredo, ISS, Leslie, ISS; Connie, ISS; Leslie, In-CD).

It would be too naïve to discuss that all the things that participants argued that they learned from this film were positive things. On the contrary, some participants thought that the film taught them quite a bit on teaching, but on how not to teach or what not to do if a teacher ever faces the situations in the film. By analyzing his responses and reaction to the film, I can state that Gregory—Eva as well—did not like the film that much. Yet, he still declared:

In terms of entertainment, it [the film] was not that interesting, but in terms of learning something from it, I would say, you can learn a lot. You can learn a decent amount from it, just do not do what this teacher is doing in this film. We know what a terrible way to react to a certain situation. The

entire time, or the entire second half of the movie, I was like, all right, I know what not to do in these situations. (ISS, 5/2/2018).

Some of the participants argued that the film teaches preservice teachers what not to do and how not to act in problematic teaching situations (Gregory, ISS; Patrick, ISS; Eva, ISS).

One might contend that another activity might have provided all the perspectives that participants argued that *The Class* provided to them. Put another way, here in my discussion, I aim to question the uniqueness of analyzing the film as a curricular tool from the perspective of participants instead of another instructional activity. Cher attested that the film was needed since it helped to complement all the projects and assignments they had been doing. In addition, Cameron stated:

I am sure I would have gotten something out of it [if the class did another activity instead of watching this film], but I do not think it would have been as memorable if we would have done another two weeks of just talking about skin poetry [a topic for a week in BtW], for example, or something like that. They have their place, but I think that the movie was able to bring something to the table that you cannot really teach without seeing it if that makes sense. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

As a part of my analysis, I claim that a useful perspective to study participants' evaluation of the film is to peruse how they view the ending of it. As simple as it looks, the participants' reaction to the ending could be divided into two camps. On the one hand, some thought that it was good and satisfactory since it was open-ended, which shows life goes on; there was not a big triumphant, the superhero did not come in and saved the day (Cher, ISS). In addition, teachers and students could come together at the end to play soccer despite all the negative things that have happened throughout the semester (Cameron). On the other hand, some participants voiced their dissatisfaction with the ending. This dissatisfaction mainly stems from the fact that participants did not think that justice was done in that Mr. Marin did not get punished for his faults in the film. James argued that the finale was a little bit unsatisfying

because he did not expect the film to end that way. Matilda shared that she felt disappointed after the film because of the ending since she predicted something negative would happen to Mr. Marin (ISS). George confessed that he expected a happier ending, and he was surprised when he did not see one in the film (ISS). Overall, the participants' reaction to ending might be one way or another, but it is for sure that they found the film as an instructive curricular tool—either as an example or as a counter-example.

So far in my discussion here, I have focused on my participants' analysis of *The Class* as a curricular tool. In addition to that, I would like to take the discussion to a different aspect; namely, I would like to concentrate on how the participants scrutinized the curriculum that they saw Mr. Marin enact in the film. The first issue I want to touch upon in regard to that is that they thought that the film did not show Mr. Marin's teaching in action to the extent that they would have enough ground to analyze his curriculum (Connie, ISS; Malena, ISS; Motildor, Int.). Apart from a couple of scenes, they asserted, the spectators do not get to see the actual curriculum in that class. Therefore, the discussion of the curriculum in the film here does not go into specific details; rather, it highlights three general points that I present from most general one to the least.

The hierarchical system is the main problem with the curriculum in the film.

Participants were aware that teachers in the film, significantly Mr. Marin, did not have much control over his curriculum. It is true that he had some authority in the classroom, but it does not go as far as being let to adapt his curriculum. The administration, in fact, the educational bureaucracy, controls, the standards, and more importantly, the curriculum to be enacted in the class. That makes it harder for teachers because they cannot explain to the students why they need to work with the curriculum at hand. He cannot change it, say, eliminate imperfect

subjunctive since students oppose it as a topic the most (Connie, ISS). It is a given curriculum, and his job is to enact it in class.

The reading by Anne Frank as a part of the curriculum is good since it is relatable to the students. The use of Anne Frank as a reading for the class is beneficial to the students in the film since it, as a text, is historically accurate and it has got some weight to it in that it includes material that students can talk about (Summer, In-CD; Diana, In-CD). Also, Anne Frank, when she wrote her diary, was close to the age of students in the film (Cameron, ISS). Therefore, Mr. Marin's selection of that book was a wise choice in terms of curricular decisions in that class considering these benefits. In addition, one can argue that the reason why Mr. Marin chose that book compared to other alternatives was that he thought the book would be a way for students to talk about themselves, which, as a result, might lead to better communication in that class and better relationships with his students since he would get to know them better (Diana, In-CD). Besides, one might further this line of thinking by arguing that Anne Frank's memoir was an earlier step to autobiography assignment in Mr. Marin's class.

Autobiography project is a good idea. Participants asserted that the prime of Mr. Marin teaching and his curriculum in the film was the autobiography assignment (Céline, ISS; Cher, ISS; Connie, ISS; Erin, ISS; Fredo, ISS; George, ISS; Leslie, ISS; Malena, ISS;) since it was one of the few, if not the only, parts of his curriculum that worked since students seem to engage in it (Diana, ISS). With the autobiography project, Mr. Marin tried to get his students engaged. It enabled them to connect in a more meaningful, personal way with Anne Frank's account and think about who they are (Leslie, ISS). Besides, the autobiography project was a positive reinforcement for students in the class. Notably, in Souleymane's case, Mr. Marin allowed him to include photos in his self-portrait and praised his works in front of his classmates (Lisa, ISS).

In general, participants thought that the execution of this project would have been better dealt in terms of not picking students to present but asking them to volunteer (Leslie, ISS; Cher, ISS); still, it was the most effective part of his curriculum.

Mr. Marin as a teacher and his students

The Class depicts the year-long experiences of Mr. Marin when he tries to teach French to his culturally and racially diverse students in Paris. The film puts a considerable amount of its screening time to portray the hardships of Mr. Marin as a teacher. Due to this emphasis, it is necessary for this study to examine how participants who are going to be teachers themselves in the relatively near future evaluate Mr. Marin as a teacher. Just as my point that *The Class* can be taken either as an example or as a counter-example teaching observation, Mr. Marin, too, is either someone to appreciate or someone whose teaching style should be avoided. Besides, it logically follows that a teaching style to be adopted by a teacher should better be in accordance with students. Therefore, it is also necessary for an analysis of *The Class* by preservice teachers to include an examination of students in it too. In what follows in this subsection, I present my participants' evaluation of Mr. Marin and students, respectively.

Mr. Marin's teaching is not lively teaching, it is boring. Participants discussed that, in the class, Mr. Marin was on the board most of the time, writing things up or lecturing, which was boring. Had he had pictures or some videos—they need not be long—his teaching might have had been more engaging than just writing words on the board (Summer, In-CD; Diana, In-CD). Instead, he just stood in front of the class and lectured (Connie, ISS). In the jargon of BtW, one might argue that his teaching is connective and academically rigorous to some level. However, it was not lively (Leslie, In-CD; Diana, ISS; Leonard, ISS; Rosemary, ISS). He would have looked

at his curriculum and his objectives, and then asked himself how he could arrange his teaching to be less dry when trying to achieve that objective (Patrick, ISS). He could have found ways of how the objective can be taught in a manner that meets students on their playing fields. Meeting students at their level, of course, does not necessarily mean lowering the level of the content or to just do whatever students want; rather, it means to take a second and consider whether students are engaged or not (Diana, ISS). Put another way, it means devising activities that would have outlets for students' interests, their energies and the type of things that they like to do. The class can become a hostile environment when a teacher takes high energy and vocal students and has them sit all the time listening to the lecture (Summer, ISS).

Teachers should be quick on their feet—if something that they planned does not work, it is imperative that they adopt the plan or formulate a new one (Patrick, In-CD; Céline, In-CD). Not only Mr. Marin's teaching is formulaic but also, he is not flexible as a teacher. He does not take the necessary steps when he notices that something is not working, he just keeps barreling forward, which resulted in catastrophe time and time again (Leslie, ISS). It is inevitable that non-varied teaching would end up that way. Furthermore, it was because of teaching that was not lively that a lot of the behavioral problems that surfaced in the classroom stem from because the students were bored and not engaged. They probably did not feel like what they were learning was very relevant to them (Lisa, ISS; Leslie, ISS).

Mr. Marin's teaching needs to be more interactive. How could Mr. Marin have done his teaching livelier? According to the participants, one sure way to do so would be transforming the classroom into an interactive environment. As minor as it may seem, even changing the sitting arrangement in the classroom would do the job. Mr. Marin would have had his students to

sit in a way that it would be easier for them to interact with each other and interact with him (Céline, ISS).

The seating arrangement for an interactive class goes hand in hand with the type of activities to take place during instruction. A seating arrangement that would allow interaction would also call for group work, which is necessary for good teaching as participants stated (FNfW2, 1/23/2018). Breaking students down into smaller groups helps to facilitate student discussion, which was necessary for Mr. Marin' class since it appeared to be full of lecturing resulting in a big separation between him and his students. He was always talking to them, and whatever they said to him, it was, in fact, a one-way conversation. He was disseminating information, and they could not bring information. Thus, it was not a conversation. The remedy would be breaking the students down and getting the students talking amongst themselves, bouncing off ideas between each other. It would make the class more manageable and less intimidating since it would be a student-and-student collaboration rather than teacher versus student face-off. They would feel more comfortable talking because they would be bringing forth the opinions of three or four students opposed to their one opinion versus the teachers' in front of all the other students (Leonard, ISS). Group work would go a long way in his class especially for a more interactive environment (Lisa, ISS). Lisa discussed:

It seems like he did the exact same thing every day where he taught the lesson standing at the board, and they were expected just to listen and absorb it. He did not vary his teaching style very much at least that we saw. So if you could like potentially split them up into group work or have them do different activities where they are not constantly just sitting there passively expected to absorb information. Everything was like "I stand in the front and teach, and you learn." (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

Mr. Marin's teaching needs to be more diversified. If one were to deduce Mr. Marin's teaching philosophy by watching his teaching in the film, she would probably conclude that he has a teacher-centered approach. Even when Mr. Marin had students to participate in the instruction, it was only one student who just went to the board and stood in front of the class. Instead, maybe he could have devised, say, instructional games where students do more engaging activities (Patrick, ISS). In other words, Mr. Marin should have presented his teaching in a way that it would have alternative activities to increase student engagement (Malena, In-CD; FNfW11, 4/3/2018). All Mr. Marin did as a teacher was writing on the board and talk (Summer, ISS; Leslie, In-CD; Lisa, In-CD). Even when it was an activity reading, students were reading for him; not for their classmates. Throughout the film, students constantly talk, which was interruptive to the instruction. A skilled teacher can channel that in a way so that students' talkativeness would be in favor of the instruction by way of diversifying his teaching (Malena, In-CD). Overall, every single day, it was the same thing that Mr. Marin's class went through except for one time when they were in a computer lab, which seemed to be the most productive part of his teaching (Summer, ISS).

Mr. Marin does not rationalize the content, his words and his actions. Maybe it is due to a lack of healthy communication between himself and his students, a good deal of Mr. Marin's problems in his class appeared to surface because he could not convince his students in the significance of the content and the merit of his behaviors. In terms of content, the most obvious thing that comes to mind is imperfect subjunctive. He was not persuasive enough to convince his students that they need to learn it. It is evident that students are more motivated to learn if they see a relation between whatever they are learning in school and their lives (Céline, ISS). It is a rare occurrence that a student would be intrinsically motivated to learn a school

subject; it is the teacher's responsibility to prove to the student that the school subject is on the agenda for a reason. This persuasiveness on the part of teachers is vital, especially in earlier grades. A professor, offering a graduate or even undergraduate level course, would not necessarily have to spend too much to rationalize his curriculum to the students; they should come ready. However, given the grade level of the students in the film, one may attempt to blame students for not being willing to learn imperfect subjunctive; yet, it was Mr. Marin who could have handled that willingness problem as the professional expert.

In terms of his words and actions, there were many instances where he instructed his students to act in a way or to do something. Yet, it was rare, if not nonexistent, that he explained to them why he asked them to do what he asked them to do. Put another way, instead of saying "Do not be disrespectful to me," he should have said, "I am trying to respect you, and I want that you respect me so that we can have a good relationship." (Céline, ISS). He does not go into the depths of the explanation. If students understood why they were asked to do something, it would create a better learning environment in class. He had a problem with clarifying his side of the story (Connie, ISS). Gregory argued:

He [Mr. Marin] probably should have explained himself a little bit more. The entire time in the film, he was snapping back at them instead of articulating something properly in a respectable manner, especially when you are talking to the middle schoolers who are... They are not adults, but they are not stupid either. (ISS, 5/2/2018).

Rosemary: *I do not know if he responded very well to his students when they were like, "why do we have to learn this?" He kind of just was like, "well, you have to." I feel like he could have done better at explaining.* (4/19/2018).

Mr. Marin is a bit too impudent. Participants think that Mr. Marin was impertinent at times. Students talked back to him; he responded to them. It might be a friendly exchange at the

beginning, but it got out of hand at some point (Cher, ISS) that his responses provoked students. The way he directed conversations and his tone might have caused the severe problems in the film (Matilda, In-CD; Lisa, In-CD). The worst he has done in the film was his use of a vulgar word toward two students in his class; it is quite likely that it might have been a result of his unawareness of how his tone and his attitude would end up in a formal setting (Diana, ISS, In-CD). Getting in one-on-one arguments with students in class where every else was watching would not happen in a class with strong classroom management (Patrick, ISS). Related to this issue, Lisa discussed:

He should remember that he is the teacher and it is useless to attempt to fight with students as if they are also teachers or as if you are also a student because they are in different positions of power. It was just a waste of time like when they were fighting about the names that he was using in an example. I think I mentioned this in class: instead of arguing with this eighth-grade student about defending his position as an adult, he probably just should have said, “okay” and maybe given into them in that instance and then spend that remaining time teaching instead of arguing about something pointless. I think that sometimes with his arguments, he seemed a little too emotionally invested, which you need to like maintain that distance from students and not kind of sink down to their level. I think that was the biggest thing that I would tell him: just to remember that you are on different planes than your students and you cannot pretend that you are on the same plane of. (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Mr. Marin has a timing problem. Participants asserted that Mr. Marin has a timing problem as a teacher. There were instances in the film where he was late to act or to interrupt a situation on time to prevent it from getting worse (Cameron, ISS; Gregory, ISS). Céline stated:

I think there was one where Souleymane was showing his tattoo or something, and then Esmeralda is like, “oh, shut up.” And then he is telling her to shut up. They had something there. I feel like M. Marin waited until the last second to intervene. Whereas personally, I feel like that should have been shut down from the beginning. You do not talk like that to each other. You stay respectful to each other. Whereas he just let it play out first. I think some of his weaknesses is because of coming in too late. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

I believe that this shortcoming of Mr. Marin might have stemmed initially from his poor classroom management strategies. Had he been able to intervene on time to some of the problematic situations, the class would have avoided some of the disasters that happened.

Mr. Marin needs more formative assessment. At the end of the film, one of the students from whom we heard nothing all through the screening time comes to Mr. Marin and says that she learned nothing all semester and that she is afraid that she will have to go to a vocational school. When I asked my participants what they would do if they were the teacher in that situation, their responses revolved around their belief that Mr. Marin should have noticed earlier that the student was lagging. There would not be much to do at that last minute. This notion indirectly signifies the power of formative assessment in formal learning situations.

Cameron said:

I wish someone would have caught it or she would have said something, or he would have realized earlier on, you know, halfway through the semester that she is not learning anything. I think that is where assessments have their strengths because you can see if a student is getting what you are teaching and if you are consistently getting this one student who is not understanding a single thing, then you need to realize after the first assessment that they are not getting it. And if it is repeated again and again, you need to start talking to them, and you need to start working with them as early as possible and not on the last day.

Formative assessment is not just there to put a numerical value on students' performance. It is also a way for the teacher to make changes in his teaching if necessary. In other words, it is a quality check for the teacher in terms of his delivery. Especially considering the fact that the French educational system works on a trimester schedule rather than the semester system of the United States and other Anglo-Saxon cultures, Mr. Marin could have questioned if there were students that were visibly lagging than his or her classmates at the end of first or second trimester rather than waiting till the last day (Céline, ISS). To do that, Mr. Marin should have checked

more often whether his students were learning or not. After maybe a unit or after the class reads a book, Mr. Marin could have asked, “what was the biggest thing you learned from the last two weeks or three weeks or what is it that you learned from this one book” by way of opening conversation as opposed to doing it at the very end of the year (Malena, ISS). Diana talked about what her feelings would be and what she would do if a student of hers were to tell her that he learned nothing a whole year:

It is your [teacher’s] job to pay attention to who is being reached and who is not being reached. You need to know your students better than that. I guess I would feel sad, and I would feel disappointed in myself first and foremost, but from there, I would take a moment of reflection and asked myself, “well, what did I do wrong that let the students slip through the cracks?” And then I would talk to her more specifically about giving education another chance and about if she did not want to do that, what are her other options. And are those really options that she wants to take? (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Mr. Marin might be getting off track pretty easily. Khouamba’s refusal to read a passage that Mr. Marin asks her to leads to an exchange between the two where she has to write a letter to him as well as apologize to him for being disrespectful. Cameron said that he would let it go with Khoumba when she refused to read instead of making it something bigger (ISS; Eva, In-CD; Summer, In-CD). Alternatively, Mr. Marin could have explained his side better why it was important for Khoumba to participate in the class (Connie, ISS; Eva, ISS, In-CD) rather than forcing her to apologize to him (Lisa, ISS). Lisa argued:

I would not force her to apologize to me, and I would try to create a space that is more respectful of her feelings. I would admit where I did something wrong, whereas Francois kind of struggled with that, and just validate how she is feeling and how she is feeling towards me as a teacher and like actively attempt to change the way that I am interacting with her, especially after she sent that letter.

I assert that the underlying reason why participants think that Mr. Marin should have dealt with Khoumba situation better is that they believe that Mr. Marin lost focus pretty easily. In Khoumba's case, the focus was to keep her interested in the class and learn, yet, Mr. Marin lost that and turned it into a power play by asking her to apologize to him (Connie, In-CD; Lisa, In-CD; Summer, In-CD).

Sometimes students can sense if they can manipulate their teacher in a certain way to waste time rather than study in class. In class, when Mr. Marin tried to focus on one topic, a student would ask something unrelated, then another would ask something else; instead of keeping the focus on subject matter, Mr. Marin spent too much time talking about the unrelated stuff that students would bring up. In that sense, he quickly gets off topic and loses valuable class time that could be spent to study material (Leonard, ISS; Eva, In-CD; Erin, In-CD; Céline, In-CD). Lisa commented: *“And that seems like what they [students] wanted, they wanted to take time away from class and instead argue about his sexuality or about his use of names or about this, that, or the other thing. And it was just a waste of time.”* (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Mr. Marin is not respected by his students. A classroom should be a place for mutual respect between a teacher and her students. Gregory argued that as a teacher candidate respect is a vital thing for him, and he thought none of the students in the film respected Mr. Marin (ISS). To gain respect from students requires a commanding presence by the teacher in the classroom, which he lacked (Leonard, ISS). It is necessary to realize that some boundaries need to be set up between teachers and students in order to establish and maintain a respectful academic environment. Sometimes teachers might share pieces of their personal life with students when it is appropriate, or they can have deep conversations about challenging things, or they can joke around and build rapport in any of these ways (Leslie, ISS). However, there is a certain point that

needs to stop. Only a teacher with a strong presence in class can manage such a balance since she would respect her students, and her students would respect her (Matilda, ISS; Leslie, In-CD; Spicolli, In-CD).

Mr. Marin needs to be more reflective as a teacher. Being able to deal with the type of teaching situations that Mr. Marin encountered in the film requires the ability to think before taking action or before saying something. Generally, it is easier to be reflective after some certain situations happened. Yet, it is necessary that teachers can reflect at the moment of happening as well, to carry that reflectiveness in the classroom (Diana, ISS; Lisa, In-CD). According to the participants, Mr. Marin lacked that ability. George argued:

The idea of stopping and thinking before you act, watching your words, and how you interact with people and not engaging the students in a kind of fight. It does not have to be authoritative. “I am the teacher, you are the student. You are going to listen” and just be like, “There is this misunderstanding here. This is what I meant by this. I was actually trying to do this by myself.” (ISS, 4/10/2018).

Reading the discussion of Mr. Marin’s teaching personality, my reader might have noticed that participants generally have a negative interpretation of him and his teaching. I had a similar feeling during my encounter with participants when they formulated a negative view of Mr. Marin. Thus, I questioned if participants thought that Mr. Marin’s teaching shortcomings solely contributed to the problems in the film or if there were maybe some factors that were also instrumental in the picture. The only additional factor that might have influenced Mr. Marin’s teaching is the hierarchical system of the school, participants claimed. Céline stated:

I think that his weaknesses might be aggravated by the system, the fact that it is hierarchical. Since he is having problems with discipline, it is kind of like this vicious circle. He cannot necessarily fix it because the system does not really allow to or all those sorts of things. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

Despite this emphasis on the problematic hierarchical system, it is mostly Mr. Marin himself to be blamed for most of what happened in the film. After all, who could Mr. Marin blame for calling students skanks apart from himself? Gregory blatantly expressed that he hopes not to be that stupid to call his students names (ISS). Eva, similarly, discussed that the teacher in the film should not have used some of the words he used (ISS; In-CD). Besides, who forced Mr. Marin to go to the playground to confront his students after they complained about him? The playground is supposed to be an area for students where they can relax and not worry about school. By going there, especially to confront students in a manner that he did, Mr. Marin overstepped his boundaries (Cameron, ISS; Cher, ISS; Eva, ISS).

Despite all his shortcomings and falls, the participants were of the opinion that as a teacher Mr. Marin had good intentions, i.e., he did not sabotage students' education on purpose. He wanted to be a good teacher although most of his efforts failed. Put another way, his heart was in the right place, he cared about his students; but apparently he had fallbacks and he had aspects that were lacking in many ways and made wrong decisions throughout the film (Diana, ISS, In-CD; George, ISS; Leslie, ISS; Lisa, ISS; Matilda, ISS; Patrick, ISS; Summer, ISS; Molitor, ISS; Connie, In-CD). Leonard commented:

I think he tried his best, and I think he had good methods and approaches. But I think we can see that despite however strong his curriculum might have been, it was not as effective as it could have been. I think there are definitely students that did well and there were students that did not do well and I think you could probably tie that back to something missing in the curriculum that did not quite cater to the students well enough. (ISS, 4/19/2018).

In addition, the participants believe that Mr. Marin was also persistent in that he seems to have a lot more patience than some teachers do (Erin, ISS; Eva, ISS; Malena, ISS; Summer, ISS). He is much more resilient; he is optimistic in students themselves. He feels compassion for them and

believes that they can do better (Summer, ISS). He was able to maintain a calm and controlled attitude in class for the most part. It must take great courage to be that persistence and face that classroom every day, especially after the skank and Souleymane incidents happened. Besides, sometimes he was able to be humorous with his students even though students did not take some of his jokes positively (Malena, ISS; Céline, ISS). Finally, he showed signs that he could be flexible in his teaching when he allowed Souleymane to put pictures in his self-portrait instead of forcing him to write a traditional one (Cameron, ISS; Connie, ISS). I argue that it is pretty ironic that the only student he was the most flexible with was the one who got expelled at the end of the film.

What did participants think of the students in the film? Given that teachers must be able to adapt their teaching to the needs of their students, I judged that it would be fruitful for the purposes of this study to study participants' analysis of the students in the film. Just as Mr. Marin is an example teacher that preservice teachers can watch and learn from, students are case studies for them. Here, I present three themes that emerged from my analysis of participants responses in relation to the students in the film. I have to admit that I am surprised that the participants did not have much to discuss students.

Students are pretty wild bunch. At least at times, students were a pretty wild bunch, said Cameron (ISS). During my second interview with him, I asked what would be a couple of things that would come to his mind about the students if he was to substitute Mr. Marin for a period, i.e., he was to teach the same students as they are depicted in the film for a while instead of Mr. Marin. I assert that his reaction adequately summarizes participants' view of the students in the film; he looked me in the eye, smiled and (with a serious tone) said he would be happy that he was just a substitute. Congruently, Leslie (ISS) said that as she watched the film, she thought

that the students' attitude toward school and the teacher are fairly negative. They would not go as far as engaging in a physical attack against the teacher, but they are not afraid of raising their voice and rebel. They are reactive, quick-witted, rowdy and loud; they like to talk (Céline, ISS; Gregory, ISS). Overall, participants thought that Mr. Marin's students were very disrespectful (Connie, ISS; Gregory, ISS; Rosemary, ISS; Eva, In-CD; Leslie, In-CD). I guess that my participants would be alert to teach this group of students or any other similar group.

Students are diverse. The second thing participants reported about the students in the film is that they are very diverse (Fredo, ISS; George, ISS; Leonard, ISS; Malena, ISS; Matilda, ISS; Rosemary, ISS; Summer, ISS). I believe that the fact participants were able to notice student diversity shows that they find it significant for teaching. Equally as important is how they would positively manage this diversity to create racially- and culturally-responsive and -respectful learning environments in their classrooms. I will discuss this issue later in another section of the chapter.

Themes

It is a compelling film analysis strategy to look for the themes that came to spectators' attention from a film. For that reason, I asked my participants to name three educational themes that the film brought to their attention. Here, I organize these themes and present them in the order of frequency. I postulate that these themes are the manifestations that reflect the points that stood out to the participants the most.

Relationship with students/parents/staff. The disconnect between administration and teachers as well as between teachers and students is a guaranteed way to failure in a school for good teaching requires community support and rapport in the classroom (Diana, In-CD).

Especially in the classroom that we see in the film where there exist multiple different languages that are being spoken, it is imperative that teachers at least try to include parents in the school for parents have no idea what it is like to be a teacher (Rosemary, ISS). Also, participants repeatedly referred to the notion that Mr. Marin had serious problems in terms of student-teacher relationship in that he did not know his students well enough (Cher, ISS; Eva, ISS; Fredo, ISS; Gregory, ISS; Leonard; ISS; Matilda, In-CD).

Connection. It is by way of establishing connections with students in a class to achieve a healthy relationship with students. Mr. Marin in the film had issues with connecting with his students even though he had taken preliminary steps toward that direction (Leonard, ISS). He did not get to know his students better, their backgrounds and their situations (Matilda, ISS); he did not understand them well enough so that he would be able to handle certain things if they were to happen in the future (Gregory, ISS). The disconnection between students and Mr. Marin caused the problems that the latter had in the film as a teacher. Leslie argued:

One thing I noticed was tension between the teacher and the students. So there was a disconnect between the teacher and the students and an inability or a struggle to relate. So the rapport that was in the classroom was kind of lacking. That was something that he seemed to desire but did not really know how to achieve. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Student diversity. As I discussed in the last section when I presented participants' view of students, participants think that one of the most significant things to be aware of about these students is that they are a diverse group with different backgrounds. Their diversity is also one of the most frequently mentioned themes that participants paid attention in the film (Erin, ISS; Gregory, ISS; Leslie, ISS; Matilda, ISS; Rosemary, ISS; Summer, ISS). Diversity is important to pay attention to so that educators can be aware of their privileges (Summer, ISS). Erin noted:

“And then I would say student diversity, it was a big theme of the movie too. A lot of the students are different from each other. They kind of have problems with that, within their own group and then teacher to student.” (ISS, 4/11/2018).

Discipline. Classrooms should have some order so that educators can provide a peaceful and safe environment for students. Participants argued that, among other things, discipline was something that Mr. Marin’s class missed (Connie, ISS; Erin, ISS; Malena, ISS). Mr. Marin spent a considerable part of his teaching time to discipline the class. One can question his ways of doing so, or how much he succeeded at the end of the film. Yet, discipline, or the lack of it, was something that stood out to the participants.

Communication. Relationship and connection with students to ensure healthy relationships are the two most important themes that participants kept referring to. Equally important is the necessity of communication. Communication is *sine qua non* of teacher-student interaction (FNfW4, 2/6/2018). Participants are of the opinion that Mr. Marin could not communicate with his students efficiently (Eva, ISS; Gregory, ISS; Leonard, ISS; Matilda, In-CD).

Community. I estimate that only a few may reject the claim that there are parts of the film that might be frustrating to teachers to watch. I assert that it is why the emotional reaction to the film is strong. It is strenuous to watch the lack of disjunct not only between the teacher and students but between the teacher and administration since the school is not a community (George, ISS; Diana, In-CD). Diana stated:

There were aspects of the film where you could definitely tell that the teachers were developing a community, but I think if anything, this film showed the dangers of a lack of community and a lack of communication within a community. I feel as if that would probably be the one thing that

really could have improved the school as more of a sense of togetherness. So I feel like the lack of that showed the theme of how important that is. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Céline paid attention to the sense of community between teachers, which was not the case for students:

Just from the very short scene, you see the teacher's lounge. The teachers really create a community. There is this woman walking around and giving them biscuits. You could tell that they are close to each other.

[Discussion Question]: You did not get that sense for students?

Well, not necessarily. The kids have their friendships, and you can kind of tell that there are the two girls, Khoumba and Esmeralda, where they are really close, and they are paired off with them, and they have their little units, but the teachers are like there is group of them, they all know each other and they seem to be on friendly terms with each other. (In-CD, 2/27/2018).

Interaction with students. Gregory (ISS) emphasized the importance of getting to know students better by way of taking an interest in their backgrounds, likes, dislikes, so on and so forth. Taking an interest in students results with sound and encouraging interaction between teacher and students. Such interactions may also open the way for positive interactions among students as well.

Reflection. In a classroom environment, everybody is responsible for his or her actions that might lead to consequences that s/he has to endure. In that sense, each has to be reflective of his actions and words—thinking carefully before acting and talking. In the film, neither Mr. Marin nor the students reflected on their actions (Eva, ISS; George, ISS; Gregory, ISS).

Teaching philosophy. For some participants, the majority of the problems in class occurred because of Mr. Marin's teaching philosophy, which informs his teaching style. Matilda stated:

His way of teaching, I mean his teaching style. Sometimes I feel like he does not know how to respond to students. Sometimes, for example, students may ask him questions that are not related to the content, he still answered that. It is just his teaching style. (ISS, 4/10/2018).

Classroom management. One of Mr. Marin's weaknesses is not being able to positively gauge the interactions between some of the students in terms of what they were saying to each other (Céline, ISS). The reason behind it is that his classroom management is poor. In the end, it is his poor management that creates a hostile environment that causes many problems (Patrick, ISS; Matilda, ISS; Malena, ISS).

Academic practices. In direct relation to Mr. Marin's teaching philosophy, his academic practice is another important theme in participants' analysis of the film. From beginning to end, every time Mr. Marin is teaching, we see him standing in front of the class and lecturing. The only activity students seem to be engaged in is when the class is the computer lab working on their self-portraits. He relies too heavily on lecturing, and hence his academic practices do not cover a wide array of interesting activities (Lisa, ISS; Matilda, ISS).

Failure. Before the interviews with my participants, I thought of asking them whether they were under the impression that Mr. Marin failed as a teacher or not. Later on, I gave up on that idea because I deemed that such a question would be too simplistic given the complexities of the teaching profession and the complex situations Mr. Marin encountered in his class. My analysis showed that it is more of a matter of having the courage to continue and improve oneself as a teacher rather than labeling a teacher as a failure. Diana explained:

I think films do not oftentimes show the reality of failure and how often failure can happen and just kind of the ways that you can handle it. So I would say this film did a really good job of showing how someone can deal with failure and in the face of that still try and try again until maybe you do not get a direct success but you get closer to it. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Determination. Congruently, the film depicted Mr. Marin as willing to continue his teaching even after a failure during the semester. In that sense, he did not give up on his students and kept facing them each day. Thus, it might be said that the film thematizes determination (Cher, ISS; George, ISS; Diana, ISS).

Disrespectful students. Participants think that in addition to being diverse, a lot of the students in the film are disrespectful. By being so, they set themselves up for failure in the future. In other words, they do not appreciate Mr. Marin's efforts as their teacher (Connie, ISS).

Teacher burnout. On one hand, some participants are appreciative of Mr. Marin's determination to continue his efforts instead of just giving up on his students. On the other, participants observed that teacher burnout was present in the film, especially in the case of one teacher who rushed to teacher's lounge after having a hard time with his students (Erin, ISS). Teachers should be equipped to manage even the most stressful situation for the sake of public education. Leslie stated:

I think that kind of reflects teacher burnout. The teacher that I worked with this semester is actually retiring in a couple of years. And I think he kind of has that attitude sometimes like "this is just really challenging, and you are getting yourself into a career that's always going to be very tough." (In-CD, 2/27/2018).

Empathy. Empathy is another theme that participants named as a theme from the film. George said:

Probably the idea of trying to put yourself in the shoes of the student beforehand because I felt like a lot of the problems, the teacher did not totally know what was going on with the students at home as well as the students did. So the students had a totally different perspective than the

teacher. Without that kind of perspective, you are not really able to make the right call. (ISS, 4/10/2018).

What would you do?

Through the mechanism of *spectator identification* that I explained in Chapter 2, one of my expectations from the study at hand was that it would allow participants to re-live the teaching situations from the film in their mind, which would be a fruitful experience for preservice teachers. For that reason, I examined how my participants would react to some of the certain scenes in the film if they were the teacher in that situation, i.e., if they were on Mr. Marin's shoes. For this inquiry, I identified five key scenes from the film. The reader may want to refer to my curricular analysis of the film in Chapter 3 for detailed information on these scenes. To succinctly recapitulate, the first scene is the one where students oppose Mr. Marin on the grounds that imperfect subjunctive is useless (Scene 9). Thus, I asked my participants what they would do to make their curriculum relevant to the students if they question it. The second situation is when students criticize Mr. Marin for always choosing white names rather than having a set of names that would represent diversity better (Scene 7). By including this situation in the what-they-would-do brain-storming here, I wanted to see how they would deal with diversity in class. Dealing with the diversity issue is also the subject of another section in the chapter. In the third scene, students verbally attack each other during their self-portrait presentations (Scene 23). By this scene, I hoped to see how participants would establish classroom management in problematic situations. The fourth scene is the climax of the film when Mr. Marin calls two student representations *les pétasses*, which is followed by Souleymane's leaving the classroom and hitting Khoumba in the face (Scene 27). I anticipated that this scene would help participants to consider their abilities to abort or manage crises in

class. The last scene is the one when a student comes to Mr. Marin at the very end of the semester and tells him that she did not learn anything from school and that she does not want to attend vocational school (Scene 47). This scene would, I reasoned, remind the hardships of the teaching profession and sharpen their consistency abilities in the profession. In what follows in this subsection, I present my participants' strategies of managing each situation in the scenes I just summarized.

Imperfect Subjunctive/Making it Relevant. Relevance is one of the most important considerations for a class. When students see no value in a subject, it is no surprise that they would not be enthusiastic to learn it. In the film, Mr. Marin tries to teach imperfect subjunctive to his class, but students see no value in it. What would my participants do if they were in that situation?

I would make it relevant by coming up with an example situation. To say the least, it is surprising that Mr. Marin did not come up with an activity where students would be required to use imperfect subjunctive or with an example where it is already employed so that students can see for themselves why imperfect subjunctive is relevant. In other words, it would have been a useful strategy to expose them to imperfect subjunctive rather than saying that they have to learn it just because. Along those lines, Cameron (ISS) argued that he would probably come up with a situation where it makes sense to use the imperfect subjunctive in a normal way and show them that it is actually relevant. For example, he suggested using a mock interview where students would need to use it. From a different perspective, Céline (ISS) approached the issue with a social perspective. By mastering this nuanced tense, students can enter into circles of people who use it, which would allow them to experience different social circles than their own. Cher (ISS) had a market solution. She said she would convince her students that they can get better jobs in

the future if they master such distinctive language forms that they might need to use in business communications such as letters, reports, emails, etc. Lisa had the most realistic strategy for this situation. Since imperfect subjunctive is a literary form that one would not find in daily conversation or communication, the place to look for it in literary texts. She stated:

I think the biggest thing is just to provide a relevant example that does explain why this is important. So maybe if you can bring out a piece of literature that really uses that form. If you can exemplify to the students that this author would lose so much of his meaning if he did not use this form (ISS, 4/24/2018).

I would try to rationalize it by pointing out to its historical significance. Another strategy that my participant suggested to convince students that imperfect subjunctive is worthwhile to learn is emphasizing its historical significance. This view advocates that it might be true that most of the people who speak French do not even mention imperfect subjunctive in their talk, but it is necessary to know where it came from and why it is still there because that is how the language has evolved. In order to understand how we talk now, we have to understand where it came from and that is why we still have to learn the old structures (Connie, ISS). In this sense, it is better for us to know how the language was in the past when we learn a language. Although it is history, something in the past, students should learn it because it is what happened. It is a part of that language's reality. George commented:

If I had to teach it to them, what I would say is “because we can only learn where we are now from what we used to have” because that is what I have learned as an English person as well that we learned about the former English, not because we continually use them, but the transformation that has gotten us to where we are now. Also, if we do not learn from the past, how can we move forward to the future? (ISS, 4/10/2018).

I would make it relevant by prefacing it. Another strategy is to talk about the relevance of this form before starting the lesson on it. By prefacing a subject, a teacher can let her students

know why it is important. This way, she can avoid diving into the subject directly, which decreases the chances of getting inflammatory remarks from students. Leonard (ISS) reasoned that even starting with a short discussion of it before getting to it, e.g., asking them if they think it is important or not, would give a chance to the teacher to rationalize the subject so that students would not be discouraged to learn it. In essence, it is vital that students know why they do what they do in class. Malena stated:

I encountered that also while I am tutoring writing in terms of how formal a piece of writing needs to be. So, I would say, “This is a formal piece of writing. Your word choice needs to reflect that even if you do not necessarily talk like that in real life.” So, I would certainly address that question, and I think I would be very happy that a student cared enough to ask exactly why. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

I would try to teach them to be eclectic. In certain times and at certain places, students will have to use their academic discourse because that is the way people will judge them or respect them. Sometimes it is the way to get a job. Or, it is the way to impress a girlfriend’s parents. Thus, it is better if students know this so that they can keep moving forward in the world that we live in. Consequently, Eva (ISS) suggested that she would focus on not trying to justify why they are doing it but explaining to them why it is important because they do not necessarily have to believe that it is the right way (Cameron, In-CD). She would just want them to understand that sometimes they will need to know these things so that they can be eclectic about the situations that they can use imperfect subjunctive.

What is in a name/Why not choose diverse ones. Students did not like that Mr. Marin chose Bill as an example name in an example sentence. They went as far as saying that he always chooses White names rather than including names from other cultures. Mr. Marin

responded that it would take all day to come up with names that would be satisfactory for everybody. What would my participants do?

I would accept my mistake and then try to come up with representative names.

Cameron (ISS) agreed with students in that it was Mr. Marin's fault not choosing more diverse names. His solution is owning up to his mistake, accepting that he was wrong to do that. Also, it is not enough to own up to the mistake; what is needed is apologizing to the students for not recognizing that before (Cher, ISS; Erin, ISS; Leslie, ISS; Matilda; ISS; Rosemary). Eva (ISS) took the apology issue to the next level and reasoned that she would apologize regardless of whether or not they were right or wrong since she would not want them to feel excluded in class. The actual solution that the participants came up with is asking for names from the class and using them instead (Céline, ISS; Diana; ISS; Erin, ISS; Leslie, ISS). This way, they can avoid wasting a considerable amount of time on this issue (Lisa, ISS; Summer, In-CD). Diana stated:

I would say accepting that you made a mistake as a teacher is the best thing you can do to gain your students' respect, not to lose it. I would say, "Oh, you are so right. That is so crazy of me to think. Here, okay, well, what is the name you want? Sure. Cool." Put it on the board, move on, be done. Like just kind of addressing and saying "Oh yeah, I did not think about that. Thank you for addressing that. That was really thoughtful of you." (ISS, 4/12/2018).

I would use names of students from class. In relation to this issue, James mentioned a teacher he had before who would use names of his students in the examples or tests. This strategy is the second solution that participants came up with in relation to the name issue. They argued that they would use the names of their actual students (Cher, In-CD). Summer (ISS) stated that she would use the name of the student who brought up the name issue in the film. I am not quite sure whatever this solution would necessarily solve the representative name issue in the class, but participants thought it would be a fun way to deal with it. Céline said:

As soon as students said that to me, I would have been like, “oh yeah, I did not notice that. Okay, let me switch the name, someone, give me a name.” Or, I think the best solution to that is using names from the classroom, I had teachers who just did that for math problems or something. And so, if their names are not Frenchie and whitie names, then they are still going to be used. I think definitely if the students notice that and they find it problematic to change it, I mean it is not that big of a deal, I do not feel like. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

I would explain that the names I use are common in my own culture. It is not surprising that teachers bring their own cultural values and background to their classroom. Participants who argued that they would use this strategy to manage the name problem in class said that they would try to explain to students that the names that they would be tended to use in class are the ones they have prior exposure to (Connie, ISS; Fredo, ISS; Leslie, ISS; Eva, In-CD). Gregory explained that since he was born in America and raised in the American culture, the names he would have the closest contact are American names. He added that if he were in a situation similar to the one in the film, he would probably try to explain to the students that he did not mean to disvalue students’ cultures. Leonard (ISS, 4/19/2018) summarized:

“Well, you know, these are the names of the kids I grew up with or this is the name of my best friend,” that kind of thing. I feel like you can justify whatever name just happened to come to your mind because, as a teacher, that is your prior knowledge. And that does not necessarily equate to, “I do not appreciate names of different countries or the names from different countries or different nationalities or ethnicities.”

Autobiography presentations/Classroom management. When Mr. Marin’s students present their self-portraits, a dispute breaks between students on their likes and dislikes. Especially Souleymane and Carl engage in a heated exchange which national soccer team they should support. The scene ends with Mr. Marin sending Souleymane to the principal’s office. All considered, it is a rough situation for a teacher to find herself in since it requires good classroom

management strategies as well as crisis management. How do my participants think that they would manage that situation?

I would set up ground rules from the first day. A considerable amount of the participants thought that the best thing to do to avoid that situation is setting up ground rules from the very first days rather than waiting till the minute a (verbal) fight breaks up (Eva, ISS; George, ISS; Gregory, ISS; Leonard, ISS; Malena, ISS; Matilda, ISS; Summer, ISS). This strategy can be said to be an agreement between the students and the teacher. For example, it can be one of the rules that no one interrupts others to ensure that discussions in class remain civil and respectful. Conceptualized this way, it reminds me of Rousseau's idea of social contract in relation to his philosophy of state, which argues that citizenship is a social contract between a state and its members who give up on their freedom to a level in exchange for the benefits that state provide to them such as order, security, collectivity, etc. Similarly, setting up ground rules is a social contract between a teacher and her students where students agree to abide by some mutually-agreed rules so that a mutually-respectful environment would flourish in class. Lisa explained:

Firstly what I would do is hopefully create a classroom where raising your hand is consistently set as an expectation. So you have to start from the very first day, you are not going to engage with students that call out, you are not going to engage with students that do not raise their hand, you are only going to offer that positive reinforcement and like eye contact and conversation with students who raised their hand. (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Diana comprehensively put the idea into the words:

I would set off a set of standards on the very first day. I would come in, I would say, "okay, listen, being a teacher and being a student, it is kind of like we have a contract between the two of us. We both have expectations for each other and just as much as you have a right to have me perform your expectations, I have a right to have you perform my expectations. So let us talk about those expectations. What do you expect from me as a teacher? Okay, I will do my best to do these things. Here is my contract. I promise I am going to do my best to fulfill those things. Now here are my expectations." And once you have that laid out, I think students then have

an idea of how they are supposed to function within the classroom. And then, when something goes wrong, you can refer back to that same, “Well, no, we discussed that. You told me like you have this expectation for me. I had this expectation for you.” (ISS, 4/12/2018).

I would redirect their attention to something else to use it as a connection to a bigger discussion. Another group of participants was confident in their ability that they could turn that verbal feud into a bigger conversation as a whole-group discussion (George, ISS; Leonard, ISS; Leslie, ISS; Lisa, ISS; Rosemary, ISS). Céline stated that if she saw that her students are starting to fight during a discussion, she would try to take the spotlight off of that topic and turn it into something else so that students can calm down, also that it can become a group discussion where everybody can share views about it (ISS). Cher mentioned that it would be useful to construct two groups in class with different viewpoints in the form of controlled debate where students can share their views (ISS). The key idea in this strategy is to stop the fight by any means necessary and hopefully start something useful off of that (Summer, In-CD; Spicolli, In-CD). Erin asserted:

I think in that situation it would definitely be a good opportunity to ask students, “Do you want to have a debate about it?” It could actually be a really good learning experience for them to have each side to give an explanation for why they think they are right and then use their words to debate in a way that can actually improve their language and their writing skills and persuasive rhetoric. That would be a really good opportunity to do that as long as you are the moderator and you control it a little bit when it gets out of hand. (ISS, 4/11/2018).

Also, George stated:

I think the point was to get emotionally charged to have a discussion and debate, but I think what he could have done is set a precedent for how we want them to conduct it like do not use the alert language, do not personally attack people; debate, talk about the debate, not each other. (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

I would stop that argument as soon as possible. This strategy is very similar, if not identical, to the last one. However, the difference that separates the two is that the idea in the former one was to stop the fight to turn it into a more useful conversation whereas here it is to stop the argument and focus solely on presentations or give up the presentations entirely to do something else (Erin, ISS; Leonard, ISS; Summer, ISS; Brenda; Spicolli, In-CD; Lisa, In-CD). Cameron (ISS) attested that he would jump in to stop the feud and tell them assuredly that they have to stick to presentations rather than engaging with each other. His point was to stop the argument as early as possible. Malena, on the other hand, said that she would explain that it is unacceptable that they talk like that to their peers. She would shut down the presentations and move on the next thing (ISS). An important matter to mention here in relation to this problematic situation in the class is participants' judgment that Mr. Marin had a timing problem to interfere. Lisa expressed: "*I think I would have put a stop to it much earlier than he did because it was obvious that the students were getting emotionally involved.*" (ISS, 4/24/2018). Summer also voiced:

First thing I would do is diffuse. He asked them more question about it. He kind of kept it going. I would have done the opposite. I would not have kept going. I would have diffused it once it started to get heated." (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Lisa discussed:

I was just going to say, it seems he let it go on for too long. If one student had gone up to talk about their feelings on like the match, then fine, but if you saw that it was obviously emotionally affecting the other students, I do not know why he let it go instead of saying "we will not talk about this subject anymore." (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

Souleymane incident/crisis management. Souleymane is perhaps the student whom Mr. Marin tried the most to win (in an academic sense). However, he is the one student who got expelled at the end. As ironic as this is, the scene where Souleymane found out that Mr. Marin

called his academic abilities limited after which Mr. Marin called two class representatives *les pétasses* is a disastrous situation that not many teachers would like to be in. Still, it is important that preservice teachers have an idea of what they might do in a tragic situation like that—crisis management.

Student representatives at performance review meetings is not a good idea. Although this is not an actual strategy to manage this situation, a group of participants strongly stressed that having student representatives at meetings where teachers discuss student performance is not an effective idea (Eva, In-CD; Connie, In-CD) since what happened at the teacher meeting lead to Souleymane's outburst in the film (Connie, ISS; Eva, ISS). Cameron stated:

I am really glad that the American school system does not allow students in meetings like that. Because when I saw that in the movie, I was like, what are these students? Why are they listening to performance reviews of all the other students like that? That just seems so wrong for me. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

I would let Souleymane just leave. This strategy stems from participants' belief that Mr. Marin was not justified to try to stop Souleymane physically since when Souleymane tried to get Mr. Marin to get off of him, he accidentally hit Khoumba in the head, which ended up with his expulsion (Leonard, ISS; Lisa, ISS; Malena, ISS; Summer, In-CD). Lisa mockingly argued that she is five feet three, she would never try to stop any of her students physically; rather, she would be looking for ways to address that later (ISS). Summer summarized:

I would not have touched him or try to prevent him. I think that is the first rule of being a teacher in the classroom: You do not touch your students. Especially if they are feeling or looking aggressive, not even to protect yourself, but a lot of schools have policies in which if students accidentally harm a teacher, they will get expelled. He [Souleymane] accidentally harmed a student and he was expelled. It is just safer for the student if you do not get involved in their personal space. So, I would not have done that. I would not have involved in that way and let him walk out. (ISS, 4/24/2018).

I would warn student representatives that they cannot share that information. The idea here is that the climax started with student representatives' false reportage. Thus, the optimal way to deal with it would be warning them that first, they cannot share that information, second, their reportage was not the truth (Cameron, ISS; Cher, ISS; Matilda, ISS). Cameron explained that the best thing to do there would be to talk to representatives, Souleymane and any other students that were upset about it. Talking Souleymane would be to ensure that he realizes Mr. Marin did not try to disrespect him; in fact, he was trying to defend him in front of other teachers. Talking to representatives would be to make them realize that they transgressed in that situation and they overused their privileges for which they need to face the consequences.

I would explain the situation better. Just as participants thought that Mr. Marin has a timing problem, some of them argued that he did not explain himself and the situation better to his students. George mentioned that he thought that the situation was a misunderstanding. He added that Mr. Marin attacked the girls and by doing that he focused on individuals rather than focusing on words. Matilda also thought that Mr. Marin could have explained the situation better to Souleymane.

I would leave the discussion of it to after class. Souleymane's incident was not something that would interest the rest of the class. Hence, dealing with it in front of the whole class during class time is wasting other students' time. It is for this reason that Rosemary (ISS) claimed that Mr. Marin should have had shut down the conversation surrounding it and continued with his class. In addition, George (ISS) reasoned that he would shut it and then told the class if they want to talk about it, they can stay after the class or he can arrange an extra session just to do that. In fact, I believe that Mr. Marin tried to do that at the beginning of the

climax, but it did not work and resulted with Mr. Marin's mistake to call his students (or their behavior) *les pétasses*, which was indeed the beginning of the end for Souleymane. Lisa argued:

When the students started asking about their grades and Souleymane started asking about how he talked about him in the meeting, Mr. Marin should have easily just been "talk to me after class." Like "that is not what we are doing right now." There is absolutely no reason to have that come out in front of the class. (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

I would make clear of the role I played in Souleymane's incident. This is not an actual strategy for managing the situation of interest, but participants showed the sensitivity that Mr. Marin was wrong for not clarifying the role he played in the incident earlier. It will be remembered from the film that after the Souleymane incident happened in the class, Mr. Marin did not mention in his report that he used an inappropriate word toward class representatives, which influenced how events occurred. Malena discussed that it was horrible that Mr. Marin waited until students complained about him to the administration that he mentioned his role in the incident. She stated:

But in terms of the actual expulsion, I think it is horrible that he did not explain exactly what led up to that actual physical confrontation. And I think the teacher was trying to cover his own rear end as opposed to protecting his student. So yeah, I think that is very unjust personally that Souleymane got expelled and the teacher really did not face much consequence. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

Lisa added:

I would hope that I would tell my supervisor or whatever the part that I played in it before some student does and before there are all these rumors spreading about me. I think that is really important to own up to what you did. I mean, especially since like it was already out, the students knew there was no hiding it. So I would definitely at that point would be like, "you need to hear this from me and not from all the students that what I call these students." (ISS, 4/24/2018).

Spicolli maintained:

I have been thinking about how the administration was kind of painting that incident as a violent assault. I saw it, it was more like the bag and the girl.. it was more of like a jerk reaction from Mr. Marin grabbing him. So I kept on wondering to what extent Mr. Marin was actually advocating for Souleymane, what extent he would just kind of like covering for himself for the part he played in the incident. He definitely played a role to me. I thought that he made the first kind of aggressive gesture on grabbing him. (In-CD, 3/6/2018).

There exist some additional strategies participants suggested that they would do if they were the teacher during Souleymane's incident. For instance, Cameron suggested that the ideal way to manage that situation would be talking to class representatives and then talking to Souleymane to apologize to him since it was obvious that he was hurt as a result of what happened and what class representatives told Souleymane that Mr. Marin said about him (ISS). In addition, in relation to Souleymane's feelings, Diana reasoned that she would let Souleymane express his feelings and explain why he felt that way. She added that letting Souleymane express himself would help ease the situation. Besides, Eva claimed that Mr. Marin put out on a show for the whole class to watch since he let that incident happen in class. She said that at the moment class representatives talked about what happened in the teacher meeting, she would take Souleymane out and talk him one on one rather than discussing the matter in front all of his friends.

I did not learn anything/Failure-Devastation. Toward the end of the film, when all of the students leave the classroom, one of the students tells Mr. Marin that she did not learn anything from the school and that she does not want to go to vocational school. In my opinion, this is one of the worst teaching moments that any teacher would fear to face in his or her class. I asked my participants what they would do if it happened to them.

Rather than talking about what they would in such a situation, participants mainly mentioned how devastated they would be if something like that happens to them. They argued

that they would feel like a failure since it would suggest that they did not do their job throughout the whole semester (Cameron, ISS; Connie, ISS). Also, they added it would lead them to question themselves as a teacher (Céline, ISS, In-CD). Feeling of sadness and shame might also be present in that case (Diana, ISS; Matilda, ISS; Rosemary, ISS).

I would question my teaching to improve it. As much as it might be taken as an embarrassing situation for a teacher to find himself in, I think it is also a chance for teachers to check their teaching to make it better. Céline (ISS) argued that if something like this happened to her, she would reflect on the ways to prevent such an unpleasant event from happening. In other words, this strategy is a way of learning from one's mistakes to not to repeat those mistakes. Matilda (ISS) followed a similar line of reasoning and said that she would consider changing her teaching approaches by way of asking feedback from students about her teaching. Diana said: *So I guess I would feel sad and I would feel disappointed in myself first and foremost, but from there, I would take a moment of reflection and ask myself, "well, what did I do wrong that let the students slip through the cracks?"* (ISS, 4/12/2018).

I would try to involve her family. Participants also thought that it would be of utmost importance to involve that student's family to the picture after she told the teacher that she did not learn anything (Celine, ISS; Cher, ISS; Summer, ISS). By doing that, the teacher can figure out why she felt that way by acquiring more context about the student. Also, doing so would give the teacher the opportunity to follow up what happens with that student, e.g., if she is going to summer school or getting some additional help.

I would provide her with extra material. The only actual strategy that can be done at the moment in this situation that participants offered is providing extra material to the student so that she could maybe study over the summer by herself and compensate for what she missed over the

semester (Cameron, ISS). Another way of doing is tutoring the student when the teacher has free time that he can devote to her (Eva, ISS; Fredo, ISS). By tutoring the student and giving her extra material, a teacher may guide her to avoid a future in vocational school.

Dealing with Diversity

In the context of this study, I was interested in examining how my participants would manage the diversity in their classes when they become actual teachers. For that reason, I inquired how the participants would act, i.e., what they would do to manage the diverse students in the film if they were the teacher instead of Mr. Marin.

Representing different cultures in the curriculum. One of the best ways to deal with diversity in the class is to incorporate in the curriculum (including but not limited to texts, activities, etc.) as many cultures as possible since it is the way to show the students that their cultures are acknowledged and appreciated (Cameron, ISS). In this regard, Mr. Marin could have included texts that were more geared toward students' cultural backgrounds. There exists literature that comes from Francophone countries that are not France. With students that come from immigrant families, it would have been interesting for them to have material from their original culture (Céline, ISS). Similarly, maybe he could have organized the flow of the class in a way to allow the study of a different culture each week (Fredo, ISS). Said another way, it is possible to use texts that are from where majority population of the students is from, not just using Eurocentric text, and having a curriculum that introduces a variety of different cultures (Summer, ISS). Seeing their culture represented in the class would most probably interest students immensely. Also, by incorporating students' cultures in the curriculum, Mr. Marin could have given students something that they can relate to. Let us say that the class is reading a

francophone text, which has words that are from African culture, and there is a student in the class from that culture. The teacher can ask him or her to talk about what that word means or give a small presentation about it. This way, the student would feel like she can bring something into the classroom, which would make her more engaged. She could teach her classroom friends (Céline, ISS).

Finding ways for students to present their culture to the class. It is crucial for teachers to allow their students to explore their identity in the context of the classroom (Eva, ISS). It is equally important to permit students to express their culture to their friends. Via the way of exploring one's culture and presenting it to the rest of the class, students can flourish in a teaching environment that would advocate understanding and acceptance of different cultures. Participants argued that Mr. Marin's class could have benefited a lot from a mutual dialogue on different cultures, which would have solved a lot of the problems that Mr. Marin encountered in the class. This strategy would give a chance to students to get to know each other better.

Lisa (ISS) maintained that she would allow her students to communicate in their ways. It does not invalidate the teaching of the standard language. Conversely, it might even improve the teaching of standard language since students would empower students to approach it with their prior knowledge that stems from their own culture. Diana stated:

I would try to find ways for students to express to the rest of the class what their culture is and to try to find ways to incorporate different ways for students to express the diversity and to feel validated being different from other students because I think that is, if anything, just a really strong point because if that is the point of literature: to look at other people's different situations and the kind of gain an understanding of a different world view for a second. So I would try to find a way to have assignments that allowed students to express that. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Having students to work together. Participants mentioned group work as a way for managing diversity in a diverse classroom. Students can think wider (globally)—not just about themselves and their identity—by way of working together and looking at the world. It is a good start to break down the barriers that may exist between students (Cameron, ISS). When a class comes to understand each other, they can work better together. A lot of the problems that Mr. Marin was having with discipline might be contributed to the fact that students were in a mode to fight with each other—saying rude things to each other and engaging in unacceptable ways with one another. Having students understand each other and know that their differences are not something to divide them, but an opportunity for mutual dialogue is a sure method to deal with diversity (Erin, ISS). Group work is a valuable way to commence this understanding process. Mr. Marin would have assigned students from different cultural backgrounds to the same group so that a cultural exchange would happen (Fredo, ISS).

It should also be noted that it is necessary that teachers teach respectful dialogue that students could involve in their exchanges during group work. Leslie said:

I think, teaching them respectful dialogue and the skills to be able to respectfully engage others and ask critical questions in a constructive way. So, “I have always thought of that differently. Could you please explain to me how you came to that conclusion,” type of thing. I think generally people do not know how to do that and that contributes to a lot of the tensions that we experience in a very diverse society. I would focus a lot on that. Doing things like maybe Socratic seminars or debates. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

Getting to know different cultures. It can be said that to start a cultural dialogue in the classroom among students would cover the teacher too. Probably, it is not very likely that a teacher can create a welcoming academic environment in a class without having some knowledge about students’ backgrounds. Thus, it is vital that teachers get to know their students’ background and culture better. To do so, they need to show an interest in their students. In terms

of getting to know students, Rosemary argued: *I would want to try to learn as much as I could about them [students] and their families, maybe at the beginning of the year to try to figure out where they are coming from, their with families, backgrounds, just so I can kind of try to get a baseline of why kids act the way they do.* (ISS, 4/19/2018).

Spectators from another class

I have already mentioned that spectators' reaction to the film *The Class* appears to depend on their major. For education majors, the film is valuable since they realize that they watch the film as a professional activity whereas, for students from other majors, there is no point in boring themselves watching this film. In this subsection, I would like to widen the discussion of the difference in the analysis of the film by a group of students other than my participants in the teaching class. As I explained in the Methodology chapter, these students are undergraduate students from a variety of fields other than education. They were students at an introductory French class—hereafter I shall refer to it as IF—in which *The Class* was shown sometime in the semester.

Blatantly and directly, the first reaction of IF students toward the film was that it was simply dull. They did not see the point why people who are responsible for organizing their French class would show this film to them. Dolores put:

I was not a huge fan of it. I thought it was pretty boring. You know I like the whole action film thing, and this is something that was like super realistic, and I think kind of seemed like the documentary style. But yeah, I cannot say it was a huge fan. (Int, 5/29/2018).

Similar to Dolores, Neil thought that the film is boring. However, he added he somewhat understood the reason why it was shown to him, yet, he was still not eager to watch something like that in his French class:

I thought the film was kind of boring. And there was not much of a plot and none of the kids really improve, they kind of just were just as bad at the beginning as at the end. I could see what they were trying to do, somewhat interesting from that perspective. But just coming out of high school three years ago, it is not really something I am really interested in watching. (Int, 5/3/2018).

One reason why the film was boring to IF students might be that it is not that interesting to them and they do not have initiatives that BtW students had to watch the film. In that regard, the film is realistic and very dramatic at some points, but it barely gets interesting compared to other school films for students whose field is not education (Dolores, Int) since there is not any character development (Neil, Int). In addition, not only it is not that interesting, but also watching it frustrates the spectators. Neil said:

I was pretty frustrated the whole time. I felt like they were so mean to him, and he was not the nicest person back to them. And, I do not know, I felt like there was something he could have done the whole time, or he could have done differently. (Int, 5/3/2018).

An interpretation of negative connotations that IF students assigned to the film might be that the film was able to show them the hardships of the teaching profession. In that sense, it might be said that the film could be seen as a useful start for challenging the public's view of the profession that I talked about earlier in the study. Dolores noted:

I think it definitely made me think a lot more about how hard teachers have to work, especially when the kids are not willing to meet them halfway and how frustrating it must be. Especially that one scene in the break room where the other teacher comes in, and he is like, "oh, I cannot do this anymore. This is just too much. These kids are the worst." And then there are other teachers who are fighting for the kids even when the kids do not really want to fight for themselves. So I think it is a very difficult profession and I think it gets even more difficult depending on what school you are teaching in. (Int, 5/29/2018).

How closely do the teaching situation situations in the film differ from the educational experiences of IF students? I had this question in my mind when I interviewed them because I

assumed that the reason why they found the film boring and frustrating—I had that suspicion before the interviews because of the discussion sessions we had in IF on the film—might be due to a divergence between the film and their experiences in schools. Dolores explained that she attended a private school for middle school and half of high school and a high-end public school for the rest of high school, thus, her experiences during her formal education were entirely different than what the film depicts. She stated:

My experience with teachers in my entire life has been very different. I think I have gone to schools that are a little more, I want to say refined. So I personally would not want to be taught by him [Mr. Marin] because I feel like he let the students get away with so much. And then when he finally came to his breaking point, he completely exploded and treated them like very unfairly. And yeah, I do not really agree with his style of teaching. But that being said, I also went to schools that were very different in comparison to the one in the film. (Int, 5/29/2018).

James voiced similar thoughts:

In my experience that I had in my high school, I took honors classes. I feel like I was at the higher end of tracking and whatever, not to conceit or anything, but that is just usually was. So I feel like I typically experienced more, not better classes, but as far as behavior goes, definitely better classes. (Int, 5/7/2018).

Neil added:

I went to a private Lutheran school, so the teachers were really strict, and we could not speak out of turn. We could not talk back at all. Some of the questions they ask, we would never ask. So in that regards, it was different because it was definitely less strict... (Int, 5/3/2018).

Based on this dissimilitude between the teaching situations in the film and IF students' experiences in the schools they attended, I maintain that it is fair to conclude that IF students might not be at a point to see what BtW students saw in the film.

In addition to the dissimilitude that I just mentioned, the public view of school films that I detailed earlier in the study might also influence IF students' approach to the film. James (Int)

straightforwardly stated that he expected that Mr. Marin would use his authority in some way and save Souleymane from getting expelled. His expectation of a heroic act from Mr. Marin at the end of the film is a reflection of the hero myth that school films create.

IF students' analysis of the film differs from that of BtW students in significant ways. It is enough to look at the themes they got out of the film to assert that. BtW students typically mentioned themes that are related to teaching as a profession such as community, communication, the relationship between the teacher and the students, etc. whereas IF students alluded to the existence of themes that are different. Although immigration did not come up as a theme from BtW students, it was one of the themes that IF students involved in their analysis of the film. In relation to immigration as a theme from the film, Molitor argued:

With Wei and with when they talk about football, they are talking about African Cup nations. So, obviously, most of the students in the class are someone who are from French-speaking nations, then, who immigrated. And Souleymane as well, being sent back. So all of those, I think immigration was a big topic. (Int, 5/2/2018).

As it would be expected, immigration as a theme gives way to socio-economic status (SES) and poverty. SES was not a theme that BtW students came up with. Yet, Dolores (Int) mentioned that the SES of students was a prominent factor that led to some of what happened in the film. According to her, SES, in that sense, might be responsible for student behavior, which she found as unacceptable. It is quite interesting to note that BtW students saw no connection between students' SES and their clamorous behavior. The final theme that IF students made mention of is respect for Mr. Marin for caring enough to keep teaching these students. Dolores explained her views in detail:

The teachers that are willing to undertake, you know, teaching in a public school for students that are so disrespectful and so unattached to their education. They do not really value their education whatsoever or at least in

the movie it does not really seem like many of them do. And they were incredibly disrespectful. So it is interesting for me to watch that and see how, you know, the main character, the teacher in this movie, sticks up for his students and he does try eventually until he breaks to make sure that they are valuing their education, that, you know, he is trying to teach them whereas there are other teachers in the movie that just cannot stand in there and go, “I cannot do this anymore. This is too much.” So I think it is interesting to see that they took on that job and how both of them like handle the responsibilities as a teacher differently. (Int, 5/29/2018).

In my opinion, it is apparent that BtW students took watching this film as a teaching activity where they could think about what was wrong in the film in terms of planning and execution of instruction, about how Mr. Marin could have done a better job, about how they would react if they were the teacher in the film, so on and so forth whereas IF students seem to blame students for being disrespectful whose social class and background are to be blamed for their behavior.

***The Class* in a Teaching Class and the Process of Watching a Film for Learning**

In the last subsection of this chapter, I concentrate on including *The Class* in the curriculum of BtW and on the actual process of screening this film over two weeks during the semester. My discussion here will include three parts. First, I present participants’ views on the use of *The Class* as a learning activity in their class. Second, I list the problems that participants reported they had during the screening process. Third and last, I note down suggestions that participants had for screening a film for academic purposes in a class in relation to *The Class*.

Views on the use of *The Class*. Participants noted that watching this film in their class while also stopping at some points and having a discussion on it was a helpful learning activity for them (Malena, ISS). Being able to pause and critique Mr. Marin’s strategies is a useful thing to do when one learns about the profession since it bestows a chance to preservice teachers to observe different teaching styles and to offer input on them. It also provides blueprints on how

one might deal with a certain situation or should not (Lisa, ISS). From another perspective, this activity also gave preservice teachers a portfolio of what their future colleagues' ideas and strategies on issues that are related to teaching, which sparked a discussion and engagement on teaching a diverse group of students. Céline (ISS) discussed:

Being able to hear what everyone else was going to say and what they thought...I think there were some very extreme differences in the class. I know [another student in the class whose name I do not mention here since he did not agree to participate to the study] was kind of defensive of M. Marin, I was also kind of defensive. So, I was like, "Yeah, that is true." But then someone else said something, I was like, "That is also kind of true, but I disagree." So, I liked being able to talk about it with other students and other preservice teachers like they are at the same level as what I am right now. (4/6/2018).

Patrick made this point:

For our experience, I think it was a good learning experience for everybody since we paused throughout the film and shared our feedback, what we thought of the situation and what was right and wrong. You see different ideas coming into play. I might believe something different than somebody else, they would have handled the situation differently. (ISS, 4/5/2018).

To see what participants thought of watching this film in the class, I also asked them whether or not they would have liked if their curriculum in BtW included another activity instead of engaging with this film. Cameron responded:

I am sure I would have gotten something out of it [another activity], but I do not think it would have been as memorable if we would have done another two weeks of just talking about skin poetry, for example, or something like that. They have their place, but I think that the movie was able to bring something to the table that you cannot really teach without seeing it if that makes sense. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

Céline had a detailed answer:

I think M. Marin was a good learning tool for preservice teachers in order to see like this is something that could happen, and these are some of the reactions that some teachers may have. It is good to evaluate what those sorts of things are, like what we were doing in class [refers to screening and discussion], "Do you agree with what he said, and do you think he did a

good job with it or how would you have done it differently?” I think those are good questions for preservice teachers to be thinking about because it is not necessarily something that is on our mind. A lot of times when we are even in our CI [Curriculum and Instruction] class, we are focused on lesson plans, and our focus is about what they should be learning, but we do not necessarily focus on what are the behaviors they can have. And what are some of the questions that are not related to your text or whatever you are learning, what are some of the questions that can come up. So, I think it is good for preservice teachers to see stuff that can happen in the classroom that does not necessarily have to do with what they are reading or writing. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

I postulate that the positive attitude toward this film as a learning activity mostly stemmed from the fact that an open discussion accompanied the screening. Cher argued that the flow of the activity—watch, stop, discuss and watch more—kept them engaged with the film (ISS). In that regard, it was a useful strategy to stop the film and get feedback from students (Connie, ISS; George, ISS). Erin maintained:

I thought it was nice that we would stop, ask questions and have a discussion about it because some teachers will just show a movie and then talk about it at the end and you are like, “wait, what was the one part,” and you do not remember. I think it was good to stop it at certain moments that were good to talk about. (ISS, 4/11/2018).

It is essential to find an optimum balance between stopping films too many times and stopping it not enough times. Malena noted:

I think it is a very delicate balance of how often you stop the film because that will drive you nuts if you have to stop a film every five minutes. But I think you stopped it enough where we could talk about the important things but still watched the film. So I think that was great. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

In terms of actual stop points we had during the screening, participants claimed that they were fruitful points to do so in the film. Cameron had this to say: *I think you picked some great moments to stop it because they were right when it was like something had happened that we were all like, “oh, we all had a reaction to.”* (ISS, 4/6/2018). Cher agreed with Cameron: *The*

brief pauses where exact moments that we were all like, “Oh, I have been wanting to discuss.” So, they were good. (ISS, 4/24/2018). Brenda was also of the same opinion: “I think your questions were good like the places where you chose to stop and have questions. I think those were effective points to stop at and effective things for questions.” (Int, 5/21/2018).

It would be a false characterization of the participants’ reaction to this film as a curricular tool if I depicted it here as unanimously positive. Some participants did not appreciate the film that much although they stated that they understood why their instruction included this film. Therefore, I claim that their somewhat animadversive reaction was because of two things. First, they did not find the film entertaining (Gregory, ISS). Second, they did not agree with Mr. Marin approach—more explicitly, they detested him as an educator (Gregory, ISS; Eva, ISS). As for the first issue, since this activity of watching *The Class* as a learning activity for preservice teachers was a formal instructional activity, the issue of personal like or dislike of the film should be not a point of consideration. Yet, it is reassuring to see that even if students did not like it personally, they were able to appreciate the purpose of the activity. As for the second, if students did not like the film because of their dislike for Mr. Marin as a teacher, it shows that they already evaluated Mr. Marin as an educator in their mind and concluded that he is not a good teacher. It attests that the activity might be said to serve its point of being included in the curriculum—showing preservice teachers an example teacher that they can analyze. In my view, the negative reaction toward the film was an exception rather than the rule in the class.

Problems during screening and discussion. As an instructional activity, film screening requires careful planning and execution. Yet, sometimes problems are unavoidable. I inquired my participants to uncover what problems they thought they experienced during the screening or

what they thought could have done better. These problems can be points for educators to consider when they plan to include a film in their curriculum.

Some people were not paying attention. In a previous chapter, I detailed how students sometimes consider film screening as a “goofy” activity that they do not need to pay much attention and concentrate on doing other things. Some participants argued that it was the case for screening *The Class* for some students. The importance of this issue magnifies itself when one considers that if some students do not pay attention to the film and instead go on their laptops, for instance, it bothers other students too since it becomes harder for other students to focus.

Gregory said:

A lot of other people were either on their laptops or just did not think the film was that interesting. I do not know if they were just not interested or did not understand it as well. And then on top of that, a lot of people thought it was boring. That is really hard to garner. We can take it academically, and we are used to that, but we are also used to giving academic blend answers then as well. (ISS, 5/2/2018).

Erin and Leslie agreed with the notion that some people did not pay attention and went online on their laptops during the screening (ISSs). Nonetheless, Erin (ISS) argued that it is unavoidable since there would always be someone who would not just pay attention whereas Leslie claimed that it happened because those students who did not pay attention knew that they would not get assessed on the film (ISS).

Screening time was a bit too early. Diana argued that she thinks that the activity achieved its purpose because a good number of students were eager to participate in the discussion. She said that she observed that many students raised their hands and contributed to the session. However, the only problem was it was 8 a.m. She uttered:

I think that really showed by the fact that during an 8:00 a.m. class people were raising their hand. I do not mean myself. I came the first morning with

no breakfast, no coffee and I had not slept very much. I went in class and I said, “I am not participating today. No Way. No how.” (ISS, 4/12/2018).

There is not much that an educator can do when it comes not having a class early in the morning, yet, some of the participants were of the opinion that the difficulty they had with screening and discussion was that it was too early in the morning in that it affected students’ participation to the process (Cameron, ISS; Céline, ISS; Malena, ISS).

In addition to these two main problems that participants mainly referred to, there was mention of a couple of minor issues. For example, George argued that when we stopped the film for a discussion, we did not turn on the lights at one instance. He said that it was hard for him to contribute to that discussion because he could not even see his classmates. He would expectedly have preferred to have the lights off during the screenings, but they should be on during the discussions (ISS). Besides, he also stated that he felt like the classroom discussions of the film were in the form that a number of same students always contributed while others stayed passive rather than being an active whole class discussion (ISS). Brenda (Int) also voiced the same concern. It is true, to some extent, that some of the students in BtW did not participate to the discussions in class, yet, I am still of the opinion that the activity was useful overall since those students were significantly smaller in number than the ones who actively participated.

Suggestions for what to do after screening. In the last part of my second interview with the participants, I asked them if they had any suggestions for the process—whether they would have liked to do something else in addition to what we have already done. Although it is quite interesting that only a few of the participants had suggestions for the process, I still present them here for they might be of help to the reader. One explanation for limited suggestions from the participants might be that they were satisfied with the process and did not have anything to add.

Leslie discussed that it would have been more helpful if the class did some additional activity so that those students who did not participate in the discussion would have an incentive to do so. Though Leslie did not detail an actual activity, she stated:

I think it could have been more productive for some students, or maybe for all of us if we had to do some sort of activity in response to the film. Just because, like I said, I think a lot of students knew that they did not have to respond and so they did not really invest or pay attention. (ISS, 4/12/2018).

George, on the other hand, had explained an actual activity that he thought the class could have done. He suggested that they could have been assigned a writing activity where they would have engaged with the film at a deeper level. He said:

Maybe have some more discussion questions and maybe like some kind of, not an assessment but just like maybe have a page on moodle like a blog thing and then pose a couple of questions. “Hey, in two to three sentences just answer this or talk amongst yourselves as a group or something like that.” (ISS, 4/10/2018).

Malena had another suggestion. She thought it would be as well fruitful to compare their actual experiences from their field placement to the teaching situations in the film. Though not in the classroom, we did what Malena had to suggest as I discussed that previously in the study. She stated:

The one thing that I do think would do a similar job to what I learned would be to discuss our own experiences and our placements, which we have not really done very much of. So maybe one of my peers experienced a confrontation with the students and wanting to talk about it with the class as a whole. And I think that would be just as valuable, if not more valuable because it is actual real interaction. So as opposed to analyzing, the class, teacher response, we could talk about my peers’ responses to certain scenarios that they are experiencing every day in their placements. (ISS, 4/6/2018).

Postlude to the Chapter

In this chapter, I aimed to provide a detailed presentation of my participants' analysis of the film *The Class* and their views on the process of studying it in their class. The framework I strove to employ here to do so included different aspects of teaching such as the curriculum in the film, Mr. Marin as a teacher, the students, different teaching situations in the film among others. It also incorporated a general analysis of the film as a school film and participants' reaction to the process of studying this film as an instructional activity. The end of this chapter marks the conclusion of my findings from the data for the study and my organization of it. The next chapter shall present my discussion of these findings.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the educative impact of the school film *The Class* on participants of the study (beginning teachers) in an introductory teaching class that they registered for the Spring 2018 semester at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In parallel with this primary goal, I specifically aimed at understanding how this cinema film can serve as a curricular tool in self-cultivation of the preservice teachers. I strived to answer the following research questions: (1) How do participants evaluate cinema films in terms of their educative value? (2) How do participants view school films in terms of their general characteristics and of their influence on education professionals and the general public? (3) How do participants reflect on *The Class* as a curricular tool in relation to their future profession in terms of various aspects?, and (4) What do participants think about the use of *The Class* in their teaching class?

The main findings of the study suggest that although participants believe that cinema films are mainly to be used as entertainment, they also purport that films have an educational value where they can be employed as supplementary materials to canonical texts. In relation to this, it is essential to find a balance between cinema films and text in classrooms to ensure that the former does not dominate the latter. The prime emphasis in employing cinema films in education should be making sure that they teach rather than fill the time. Films enrich curricula since they are interesting and engaging, and by being so, they aid visual learners, and they diversify teaching. However, at the same time, there is a chance that they might be distracting and time-consuming. To ensure that educators avoid using cinema films negatively, they might have to make sure that they carefully plan film screening activities in their classes. It is imperative that they devise screening activities in a way to ensure that students engage with the

film. Besides, school films present the profession of teaching something as simple and easy that anybody can do. School films are full of outsider hero teachers and violent student clicks subtexts. *The Class* is an exception since it is natural, accurate and realistic depicting daily classroom situations. It is refreshing to watch that it does not romantically idealize teaching.

Mr. Marin's teaching is boring in that it is not interactive and diversified. Along these lines, the majority of the themes in the findings relate to issues of relationship with students, classroom management, discipline, interaction, etc. In addition, the findings also show that participants engaged themselves with the film to find solutions to the problematic situations that Mr. Marin encountered in the film. Similarly, as a result of reflecting on this film, participants might have equipped themselves with strategies to deal with diversity in their future classrooms. What is more, the findings indicate that spectators' reaction to the film depends heavily on their major since noneducation majors examined the film negatively. Finally, the findings support the notion that school films invigorate the education of preprofessional teachers.

The finding of the present study that cinema films can assist student learning is in conformity with the previous studies from a variety of different disciplines (Efthimiou & Llewellyn, 2004; Gold, Revill, & Haigh, 1996; Asma, 1999; Cooke, 2004; Carroll, 2006; Bassham & Austin, 2008; Fildes, 2008; Kerruish, 2013; Sprau, 2001; Dorris & Ducey, 1978; Fleming, Piedmont, Hiam, 1990; Anderson, 1992; Conner, 1996; Bluestone, 2000; Lowery, 2002; Liles, 2007; Bhagar, 2005; Henry & Newman, 2009; Klemenc-Ketis & Kersnik, 2011; Darbyshire & Baker, 2012; Gorrington & Loy, 2014). Despite this congruency with the existing literature on use of cinema films in education, it is necessary to note that not all of the aforementioned studies arrived at this finding by studying preservice teachers. In this context, therefore, it is safe to argue that the present study adds up not only to the research where the aim

was to study improvement of teaching of other subject matters such as philosophy, psychology, science education, history, medicine, etc. but also to the studies where the content is education of future teachers. Said another way, this study discusses that cinema films can aid education. Besides, it is worth to mention that the study at hand might contribute to filling up a gap that the literature review pointed to that there is a lack of empirical research on the use of cinema films in education. In line with this, the present research offers a different perspective than previous scholarship on educative use of cinema films by treating a cinema film as a curricular tool rather than as a cultural text (Bulman, 2004; Dalton, 2010; Chennault, 2006; Wells & Serman, 1998; Ayers, 2001; Burbach & Figgins, 1993; Farhi, 1999) or as something to be quantified (Schwartz, 1964; Crume, 1988).

My present discussion should not be mistaken to mean that it criticizes the studies where films are taken to be cultural texts. On the contrary, it points to a difference between how films were approached in other studies and the study here. In the previous literature that I just referred, the term *text* applies directly to the cinema—cinema films are something to be read just as someone would read a written text with a given theoretical framework. In this sense, I agree with Giroux when he argues: “At best, film offers students an opportunity to connect the theoretical discourses we engage in classes to a range of social issues” (2001b, p. 589) whereas here, as findings suggest, films are curricular tools that educators can include in their curriculum to supplement actual written texts and diversify their teaching.

Wenger (1943) maintains that films are helpful to ensure success in teaching (as cited in Kaşkaya, Ünlü, Akar & Özturan Sağırılı, 2011, p. 1779). In addition, Tibus, Heier and Schwan (2013) write that “due to their realistic, vivid, experience-driven way of conveying information, videotapes and films are more frequently used as instructional media in school than other media,

such as newspaper or magazine articles, computers, and video cameras” (p. 329) since “films show actual objects and realistic scenes, sequences in motion and perspectives that are difficult or impossible to observe in real life (Wetzel et al., 1994)” (p. 338). I advance this line of thinking and claim that “films show actual objects and realistic scenes, sequences in motion and perspectives that are difficult or impossible to” (p. 338) *experience when the medium is written text*. Thus, I conclude that cinema films can complement written text for the aim of enhancing student comprehension.

As discussed by Tibus, Heier and Schwan (2013), some studies have concluded that adults have better retention and comprehension rates when text is the medium of content presentation rather than films potentially because watching a film as an activity is usually a passive one that does not ensure spectator’s intellectual engagement with the content. In other words, we sometimes tend to watch films passively. Tibus, Heier and Schwan (2013) presented two lines of arguments for this case that they located from the literature. The first argument is that films evoke shallow processing than texts because films present their content with more realistic and believable attributes. It is believed to be easier to watch a film rather than read a book since films bespeak to visual perception whereas texts require the reader’s imagination for deep intellectual engagement. Secondly, it has been asserted that films’ flow of presentation is exclusively faster than our comprehension rate (see Hochberg & Brooks, 1978; Robinson, 1988 as cited in Tibus, Heier & Schwan, 2013); *ergo*, the reaction we are used to observing when someone watches a film a second time and notices something completely new that was missed in the first viewing. Said another way, the spectators cannot control the pace of information that a film has. We can read, reread and re-reread parts of texts as long as we like at a pace that suits us; however, a film’s pace of presentation is fixed and final. As a result of this study, I maintain

that such concerns can be eliminated by making sure that a film is thoroughly elaborated with students when it is employed in classes and by providing opportunities to students so that they can, at least to some extent, control the flow so that they engage with the film in an intellectually deeper level rather than shallow watching. Merkt, Weigand, Heier & Schwan (2011) conducted a study where they “compared the usage patterns and the effectiveness of interactive videos and illustrated textbooks” (p. 687). They concluded that the effectiveness of interactive videos was at least tantamount to that of print. Although their study examined interactive videos—not necessarily cinema films—I believe that their suggestion applies to the case of films as well.

It is true that films teach, however, what is the direction of this teaching? What if, in an attempt to teach students by using films, we end up miseducating them? Fontaine (2010), in his study, dealt precisely with this possibility. By studying *Hidalgo* with his students, his purpose was to investigate “the extent to which the pre-service teachers in this study interpreted *Hidalgo* as a proposal for how the post-9/11 American ‘nation’ and the Muslims within and without it should be imagined, and whether and the extent to which the pre-service teachers agreed with that proposal” (Fontaine, 2010, p. 37). His analysis revealed that three main themes that emerged from his interviews of preservice teachers were victory, tolerance and torture. He concluded that he was disheartened to see in these preservice teachers that they saw torture as a legitimate way of assimilation for Muslim immigrants to the host culture. Now, we should ask: Did these teachers already have such ideas before watching *Hidalgo*? Or, did they acquire them as a result of watching the film? In either case, the result is the same. In the first case, the film promotes their ideas whereas the second one results in the acquirement of such ideas. What are we to do in this situation? Should we give up showing some films to the students to rule out the possibility that some of them might (misinterpret a film and) learn undesired knowledge or skills? For

instance, should we burn every copy of *Gone with the Wind*—although a masterpiece film in every term, also a racist one that appraises Ku Klux Klan—so that no educator can show it to their students in their classes? I defend quite a different approach. I assert that said risk is another call to study films with students because doing so ensures that they acquire necessary knowledge-base and skills to critically watch films and learn right things from them even if the film of interest at the time is potentially miseducative. It is impossible for us educators to hide from the cinema; instead, we should courageously face films.

Mathews (2011, April 06) reports frustration of some parents in a local school, which showed Disney films to students so that they could relax a bit after a standardized test. One of the parents stated: “the rest of the school day, the entire afternoon, is wasted on a movie that was a special treat when the kids were in preschool” (Mathews, 2011, April 06. para. 6) where another one added: “Yesterday was a beautiful day; I appreciate the fact that there is a great deal of pressure on the teaching staff to make sure the kids excel at standardized tests. I just fail to see how making them sit still and watch movies prepares them for the rest of the testing cycle. Is there truly nothing else they could be doing?” (Mathews, 2011, April 06. para. 6). It is not my intention to take a side in this face-off between angry parents and tired teaching staff. What stands out to me the most from this particular instance is that it shows that teaching staff had students watch a film because they thought it would calm down students whereas parents believed that films wasted their students' educational time. In both of these views, films are viewed as a time-filler, not scholarly materials that could be used for teaching students. In his seminal book titled *A Place Called School*, Goodlad (1984), regarding his visit to a school, writes:

In one of the two other rooms with closed doors, the students were watching a film. It appeared to be on the cause and prevention of soil erosion. In the

other, the teacher was putting an algebraic equation on the chalkboard and explaining its components to the class. In visits to several other academic classes that day, I witnessed no marked variations on these pedagogical procedures and student activities. Driving from the building, my companion commented, “I saw hardly any teaching all day.” Was he right? Was there hardly any teaching—learning either? (p. 93).

During Goodlad’s visit, he could have seen some good teaching, had the teacher showing the film on soil erosion devised an instructional activity around the film rather than just showing the film to the students. The purpose of including a film in our teaching may vary. It could be to initiate discussion in the class for which films are quite powerful (Slaner, 2004; Ismaili, 2013; Champoux, 1999). Or, it could be to promote a more in-depth analysis of a term or concept. Berk (2009, p. 14) argues: “The research on videos and multimedia learning provides an empirical foundation for their use in teaching, especially with introductory courses and novice learners, to increase memory, comprehension, understanding, and deeper learning.” Therefore, along with the previous literature, I argue that it is imperative that educators discard the notion that films are just for fun and for off days and engage with films at an intellectually deeper level.

Doing so might help teachers to benefit from numerous advantages of the use of films in education that the present study identifies. The most apparent of such is that film motivates students in the learning environment (Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003; Ebrahimi, Kargar & Zareian, 2018). Besides, films gather students’ attention more than classical materials might do (Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Barnett et al., 2006) for they not only gather students’ attention but also keep them engaged, which has the potential to result with greater learning and achievement. Goldenberg, Lee and O’Bannon (2010, p. 5) suggest: “Movies can be used to create a connection between educational topics and the current generation of learners. Movies can help students understand concepts that are relevant in their lives (Marshall, 2002) and facilitate a more active and engaging curriculum, which today’s students prefer (Barron & Arcodia, 2002).” Films are

effective learning and teaching tools because they are visual (Engert & Spencer, 2009; Gregg, Hosley, Weng & Montemayor, 1995). The visuality of films is a significant issue for educators when one considers the theory of multiple intelligences, which differentiates intelligence into seven different segments rather than arguing that it is a single entity where each individual's intellectual strength might be on one aspect than the others (Gardner, 1991). "The aesthetic experience of films always involves the transmission of emotion to an audience via the human technology of speech, facial expression, gestures, touch, spatial distances, and the nonhuman technology of scenery, sound, and lighting so that audiences may feel along with the film characters." (Gladstein & Feldstein, 1983, p. 128). Thus, films might aid visual as well as auditory learners by way of diversifying teaching methods of a teacher.

The findings of the study indicate that there exist some disadvantages of using film in teaching that educators should be aware of while designing instructional activities with cinema films. Paying attention to these potential disadvantages ensures that films are not used as time fillers. I argue that this issue is, at the core, an issue of attitude toward cinema films. If a teacher approaches a film as entertainment, then, the chances are quite high that the resulting so-called activity will be an activity for an off day. Said another way, teachers should make sure that they turn entertainment to edutainment (Anikina & Yakimenko, 2015). A couple of practical disadvantages that teachers should pay attention are that films might make it harder for students to focus on the objectives of the session (Ebrahimi, Kargar & Zareian, 2018). In addition, given that classroom sessions usually last between 40 minutes and 50 minutes depending on the school and level, it is evident that films are too long; thus, they can take up multiple sessions of a course during an academic semester (Ebrahimi, Kargar & Zareian, 2018). The longevity of films is the

cause of the time constraint problem (Hudock & Gallegher Warden, 2001; Ismaili, 2013). Due to the constraint problem, sometimes film might be distracting to students.

To avoid these disadvantages, the lion share of responsibility is on teachers as the planner of film screening activities in classes. If the teacher is grading student work in his table or sleeping somewhere in class, students, of course, will slack during the screening. Alternatively, a teacher shows a film in class just because he does not have anything else planned; students know that the teacher is doing so to fill up time. It is a convenient way of filling three class periods if the teacher is, intellectually or figuratively, busy with other things. Teachers have to ensure that students pay attention to the film, that they do not check out during the screening. To do so, they must approach films seriously and follow them up with relevant activities. In other words, employing a film as a curricular tool requires an extensive process that should begin with careful planning and be followed by attentive execution. In other words, teachers must take a film seriously so that students would do so, too.

It is vital that teachers reflect critically and pragmatically when they want to employ cinema films in their teaching to make informed decisions regarding time management. Logically, one might try to solve this problem by assigning students to watch the film on their own time rather than in class or setting up an extra class meeting to watch a film. Yet, this solution has its problems too. For example, what if some of the students do not do the required watching on their own or do not come to the extra session? I will not focus on this solution of assigning students to watch films outside of class since the focus of the study at hand is exclusively on the screening of films in classes. However, I would like to note that the time constraint problem seems to be related to, again, people's perception of films. It is hard for a teacher to explain to someone, say, to a superior, that she is planning to spend however many

class periods to watch a film. Yet, the same is not the case when the material is a book. Put another way, it is not that hard to devote five class periods to get through a book, but it might be unacceptable to give up five class periods to get through a film.

It is crucial for teachers to pay attention to the film they want to show in the class, especially to its boring-ness factor. I do not believe that there could ever be certain criteria or standards to judge the boring-ness level of a film. However, teachers can still make informed guesses to decide on a film by using their previous experiences and rules of thumb. For example, if a teacher showed a film to her previous classes and received positive comments from the students, it is likely that her upcoming classes where she wants to employ a film will find that film engaging provided that the film is congruent with the purposes of the upcoming class. Or, as a rule of thumb, teachers can rely on their own knowledge of cinema films and choose films that students might click with, especially in earlier grade levels. A film by Kubrick, Godard, P. Thomas Anderson or Lynch might not possibly be the best choice for a middle-grade class and lower.

The present study indicates that watching an entire film in class might not be a convenient way of using film in teaching. The alternative that emerges from the study is analyzing parts of the film in class rather than the whole. It follows that teachers need to edit parts of films if they want to use them in their classes. However, the literature attests that editing parts of a film to use in class requires extra effort and time (Hudock & Gallegher Warden, 2001), thus, makes it impractical for teachers to use films. It is for this reason that I suggest that teachers limit the number of films they end up employing in the curriculum. The suggestion of just put forward relates to the actual method of analyzing a film in a classroom setting.

Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) proposes a method for watching films in the classroom that they refer to as the Watch-Read-Watch-Read (W-R-W-R) cycle. The said cycle stems from Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA) formulated by Stauffer (1969). In its resemblance to DRTA, the steps of W-R-W-R includes: (1) introducing the novel that the class will read. This ensures that teacher gains an idea of students' prior knowledge, (2) introducing the first clip of the movie that is a film adaptation of the text, (3) watching the clip, (4) processing the crucial elements of the film clip while making predictions about what would happen next, (5) reading the parallel text, (6) discussing what students just read at same time making connections to the visual they saw in the clip, (7) watching the second clip, (8) discussing the part they just watched and making predictions, and (9) the cycle of watch, discuss, read continues until class finishes the novel. (summarized from Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003, p. 767). It is evident that W-R-W-R is a method for using films for teaching reading. Since the focus of the study at hand is on the use of cinema films in teacher education, I propose a simpler method that I refer to as Pause and Discuss (P&D). The findings suggest that school films are useful curricular tools that can be used in preservice teacher education where students analyze the educational situations in the film. Based on the specific film, preservice teachers can learn what to do or what not to do when they are in classrooms. In that regard, P&D can be said to consist of the following steps:

1. The professor chooses a school film to integrate into his/her curriculum. The film choice must be made in relation to the objectives of the curriculum and student (preservice teacher) population. Professor also identifies some key scenes in the film that s/he would use as a stopping point during screening.

2. Before the screening, the professor introduces the film to the students by providing them with the necessary background information. This not only ensures to see students' prior knowledge of the film and what it stands for but also equips them with the context that would strengthen their analysis.
3. Students watch the first part until the professor stops the film at the first stop point.
4. The class discusses the part they just watched. Professor ensures that discussion covers the critical points of the film in relation to the aims of the activity. Professor also asks preservice teachers to predict what will happen next.
5. The process continues until the class finishes watching the whole film. Then, the class has another general discussion on the film. This time, emphasis is on the emotional and intellectual reaction of the students toward the film. Preferably, the professor can adapt the process by including, say, other activities at stop points or the end. For example, the professor can assign students to relate their own experiences to the ones they saw in the film and discuss that.

Formulated this way, P&D provides a couple of advantages to teacher educators. First, it eliminates the possibility that watching an entire film with no stops might deteriorate the integrity of a teacher education class. Second, it also gets rid of the time constraint problem since P&D can extend to more than one session. In addition, more than one session might give students a chance to focus more in-depth on the film through repetition. Third and last, it allows a prolonged engagement with the film via the discussions.

It goes without saying that the type of the film I just referred to be used in teacher education is school films. Regarding school films, Hill (1995) writes: “Idealistic teacher, fresh out of college, gets first teaching job, preferably at hellish Inner-City school. Encounters ‘difficult’ students and cynical colleagues. Tries teaching methods learned in school, to no avail. On the verge of giving up when breakthrough occurs with students. Discovers he or she is a ‘natural’ teacher after all. Decides to sign up for another year.” (p. 40). Burbach and Figgins (1993) maintains: “The storyline is familiar: a young idealistic teacher launches into the school year only to confront the harsh realities of a very difficult job.” (p. 66). Besides, Reed (1989) observes: “High School is so simpleminded a genre. To say we have it because it’s kind of picture kids would go to, to say that its form is the kind of thing kids will like, or that Teen Splatter (...) features the sort of mayhem teens talk about, to say that Carrie’s revenge is the kind of revenge teens might seek is not tautology, but probably defines the essence of the High School Picture. It’s like that: flat-footed, forward, kind of dumb.” (p. 132).

As I have already argued in my literature review, school films present myths about the act and the profession of teaching. The present study is another addition to the notion that school films unrealistically idealize teaching through these myths. To succinctly recapitulate, these myths that I asserted in the literature review are *Teacher the Great* (Farhi, 1999; Heilman, 1991; Thomsen, 1993; Wells & Serman, 1998), *They Don’t Need No Education* (Burbach & Figgins, 1993), *The Art of Being a Principal Lies in... Well... Nothing* (Wells & Serman, 1998), and *Get That Kid, The Rest Will Be Yours*. Of these four, the findings appear to revolve mostly around the first (representation of teachers) and the last (students). Based on the findings of the study, I report that preservice teachers are dissatisfied with these coded—and thus—cliché representations as well as expectations that they create on teachers.

Preservice teachers would like the public to realize that teaching is not a profession of miracles in that teachers are not miracle workers. They cannot be expected to save students' lives. On the contrary, there is a subject matter that they need to cover by using a set of different methods and approaches to teaching. Their profession, just like any other, requires them doing their best and hoping for the maximum results. In those lines, it is a brutally realistic job. Besides, preservice teachers expect the public to become aware of the fact that teaching is not an easy and simple job full of summer and weekend vacations. Everybody seems to be an expert when it comes to teaching and education. That must be why some keep asserting ideas regarding education and teaching without checking whether or not they are entitled to that opinion as a result of their specialty. School films seem to contribute to that. I discuss that we are miles away from solving the problems of public schooling in general as a system and individual schools in communities until we all realize that teaching is an expertise that can be mastered through education and experience and that teachers are not Mr. Chips.

The findings pointed out to a cyclic relationship between school films and the public's view of schools and teachers. I argue that the issue of accountability must be considered when one thinks about this relationship. What I aim to argue here is that school films are at core pieces of art. The artists that they make them have no absolute rules to follow except for their imagination. How realistic is it to blame filmmakers for distorted images of teachers we see in school films since we cannot hold them accountable for depicting an image of teachers that educators would like to see on screen? In addition, is not doing so an insidious form of censorship, which is the worst enemy of cinema in particular and art in general? Besides, filmmakers depict distorted images of other professions too such as police officers, doctors, lawyers, etc.

Almost all of the school films I mentioned in the study, except for *The Class*, are Hollywood films. Bordwell writes:

The classical Hollywood film presents psychologically defined individuals who struggle to solve a clear-cut problem or to attain specific goals. In the course of this struggle, the characters enter into conflict with others or with external circumstances. The story ends with a decisive victory or defeat, a resolution of the problem and a clear achievement or nonachievement of the goals. The principal causal agency is thus the character, a distinctive individual endowed with an evident, consistent batch of traits, qualities, and behaviors. Although the cinema inherits many conventions of portrayal from theater and literature, the character types of melodrama and popular fiction get fleshed out by the addition of unique motifs, habits, or behavioral tics. In parallel fashion, the star system has one its functions the creation of a rough character prototype which is then adjusted to the particular needs of the role. The most “specified” character is usually the protagonist, who becomes the principal causal agent, the target of any narrational restriction, and the chief object of audience identification... the classical one conforms most closely to the “canonic story” which story-comprehension researchers posit as normal for our culture. In fabula terms, the reliance upon character cause and effect and the definition of the action as the attempt to achieve a goal are salient features of the canonic format. (1986, pp. 18-19).

As Bordwell succinctly summarizes, Hollywood (classical narrative cinema) is a cause-and-effect cinema with well-defined characters who are challenged by the absence of something or opposition of someone in his or her quest to a happy ending. I realize that the classical narrative cinema of Hollywood that Bordwell describes ended in the 1960s, however, my point here is that the school films I discuss in this study are either from that era in that they were produced before the 1960s or they were influenced by this effective mode of filmmaking. In other words, the school films that were made after the 1960s that I mention in this study—after when the studio system of Hollywood ended—still resemble the characteristics of classical narrative cinema. Therefore, borrowing Bordwell’s framework, I argue here that the structure of classical Hollywood cinema (introduction-climax-resolution) applies to school films too. In that regard, the protagonist teacher in school films has to be a charismatic hero who saves everyone while

being challenged by families or authorities. Those films need drama or comedic elements to tell a story to make money. Said another way, all elements in those films are cinematic tools. Thus, I conclude this point by arguing that it is not realistic to expect filmmakers to reconsider their depiction of teachers and schools for the better or to expect the public not to be influenced by those depictions. What is realistic is that we, educators, keep studying school films to challenge the distorted depictions in school films so that we can inform the public that they are distorted. Is not being the best teacher that one can be a satisfactory—yet challenging at the same time—way of proving to filmmakers and the public that cliché portrayals of education in school films often do not tell the truth about schools, teachers and students?

In our quest to do that, luckily, we have good examples too. One such is *The Class*. Although the previous studies have approached the film for its role in Francophone school films (Michael, 2013; Tarr, 2012) or for its political discourses (Hussein, 2011; Warehime, 2011) or more specifically for its general educational messages with emphasis to French language (Strand, 2009; Williams, 2011; Lykidis, 2012) or for its narrative structure and Mr. Marin as the teacher in the film (Assoulin, 2017; Christou, 2016) or for its racial representations (Futaruma, 2017; Gueye, 2009) or for taking it as an educational tool (Vanderschelden, 2010; Leahy, 2008; Zéro de conduit, 2009; Mennesson, 2008; Corre & Devillers, 2009); the present study approached it as a curricular tool that preservice teachers can engage with to analyze it for its erudition. The main difference between the efforts in France for using *The Class* as an educational tool and the present study is that those studies (Vanderschelden, 2010; Leahy, 2008; Zéro de conduit, 2009; Mennesson, 2008; Corre & Devillers, 2009) have taken *The Class* as a single case to benefit from it in terms of various aspects such as language teaching or formal film analysis whereas the

study at hand aimed at studying the integration of it into the curriculum of a preservice teacher class exclusively for teacher preparation.

In terms of *The Class*' ability to depict realistic schools and characters, the findings suggest that preservice teachers of the study think that the classroom in the film that they studied closely resembles their educational experiences and what they have observed in their field placement. As a result of the resemblance, it might be concluded that participants' emphasis on the accurate depiction of the film is congruent with the reaction to the film in France especially by educators (Meirieu, n.d.; Laurenti, 2008; Soulé, 2008; Madouas, 2008; Bongard, 2008).

The findings indicate that *The Class* offers a fresh and different perspective to teaching than mainstream school films do in that it does not depict teaching as a miraculous act of saving students' lives, and thus, it does not idealize teaching. Hence, it can be said that it is an accurate and realist depiction of daily school life that teachers encounter regularly. That quality is what other school films lack (Hill, 1995; Burbach & Figgins, 1993; Reed, 1989).

The findings also reveal that Mr. Marin's teaching is not lively, i.e., it is boring for students (see Cooper, 2014 for a discussion of lively teaching; Assoulin, 2017). Students detest being bored in a class, which significantly affect the quality of teaching in it negatively. In other words, by contrast with Mr. Marin's teaching in the film, good teaching is never boring (Murphy, Delli & Edwards, 2004; Martinez-Sierra, 2014; Walls, Nardi, von Minden & Hoffman, 2002). Besides, this study also discusses that Mr. Marin's teaching is not interactive (active learning) in that it relies too heavily on lecturing. Interactive instruction gives students chances to get actively involved in the instruction rather than passively listening. As such, it is considered to be one of the essential qualities of good teaching (Mullock, 2003; Crews & Wilkinson, 2015). Furthermore, congruent with the last issue, Mr. Marin's teaching is not diversified in that it does

not employ a variety of instructional methods. Diversity of instructional methods and activities is a crucial ingredient for good teaching in that they ensure teaching can reach majority of the students (Schmeichel, 2012; Martinez-Sierra, 2014; Nicoll & Harrison, 2003; Brown, Morehead & Smith, 2008; Goodwin & Stevens, 1993; Devine, Fahie, & McGillicuddy, 2013). What is more, Mr. Marin failed to clarify his actions and his content to the students, which deteriorated the quality of his teaching. Good teaching requires the ability on the part of the teachers to clarify their material to their students (Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992) but also some of their actions. Moreover, Mr. Marin's impudent remarks did not help him to provide good teaching to his students for it is obvious that a hostile learning environment hinders student achievement (Walls, Nardi, von Minden & Hoffman, 2002). As a further matter, Mr. Marin did not employ enough assessment, especially formative assessment to identify problems that the students were having during the semester. Had he done so, formative assessment might have helped him to improve his teaching by giving him points to look for in students' performance (Brown, 2011; Crews & Wilkinson, 2015; Stronge, Ward & Grant, 2011). Besides, Mr. Marin as a teacher did not reflect on his teaching, i.e., he did not practice reflective teaching (Rinaldo et al., 2009). In addition to these problems with Mr. Marin's teaching, this study also reports that Mr. Marin might have a timing problem to interfere with the behavioral problems that students have in his class, that he gets off track easily, and that his students do not respect his authority as a teacher. All in all, the present study argues that although Mr. Marin appears to have some good qualities as a teacher, the said problems significantly hinder his success.

There is a need to approach the teaching in *The Class* from another perspective—Mr. Marin's curriculum. The findings attest that his selection of *The Diary of Anne Frank* as a reading for the class in parallel with assigning students to write an autobiography seems to be the

strongest parts of his curriculum and teaching. Not disregarding all the negative aspects of Mr. Marin's teaching as an individual teacher that I have discussed, the findings also suggest that hierarchical structure of the educational system in the film is the leviathan that creates the problems we see in the film. This finding should be interpreted in the context that I put forth in the conceptual framework of the study. In that regard, the film is an indication that early thinking in the field that *one best method* for curriculum development as exemplified in Bobbitt (1918), Tyler (1949), Taba (1962) among others that would yield a teacher-proof (Eisner, 1994) and the context-proof educational program simply does not work. The findings suggest that students questioned Mr. Marin's curriculum repeatedly, that he could not convince his students in the validity of his curriculum, and that by way of their opposition to him they kept sending him messages that they want to be part of his teaching. Yet, Mr. Marin could not cooperate with his students since he was given a centrally-crafted curriculum that was most likely created by a linear curriculum development approach (see Tyler, 1949 for example). He had to deliver it. In this milieu, the film is also an indication for the need of deliberative curriculum making (see Schwab, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1983; Walker, 1971; Reid, 1979) that calls attention to what Schwab names commonplaces that are the teacher, students, the subject matter, the milieu and the curriculum specialist. The study makes the point that Mr. Marin's could have included students' families to a greater extent in the formation of his class, that students could have been treated as an equal part of the classroom environment, and that there should have been more elasticity in terms of curricular matters. The film enables us to imagine the possibilities of a deliberative curriculum formation process for these students. No one on their right mind would be too naïve to claim that the deliberative approach would prevent all the teaching problems that happened in the film, but I do assert that it would have been significantly better than the hierarchical one we

see in the film by including students' input, parents' concerns and details of the subject field in the class. Eisner's emphasis on the care for the context (1994) combined with the idea of deliberation is a healthier alternative for reaching these racially and culturally diverse students we see in the film. In its current state, the teaching in the film gives the impression that someone ordered Cantet, the director, to adopt Jackson's *Life in Classrooms* (1968) to a film for it is an artful combination of *crowds, praise* and *power*.

The themes that participants referred to in their analysis of the film in the findings provide another aspect to the discussion here regarding the ideal teaching, the teaching in the film and the study's analysis of it. There is a vast array of research that discusses the importance and necessity of good teacher-student relationship for student achievement (see Steins & Behravan, 2017 for a literature review; Peguero & Bondy, 2011). In addition, as Libbey (2004) explains, teacher support is necessary for school connectedness that improves student achievement, i.e., the more students feel connected to their school, the better their achievement is. Students need to feel connected to their teacher to be connected to their school. Moreover, Graham, West & Schaller (1992) argue that "teaching involves a process of relational development and requires effective interpersonal communication skills to achieve satisfying outcomes." (p. 11; also cited in Frymier & Houser, 2000, p. 207). Along those lines, student outcomes partly depend on student-teacher interaction (Englehart, 2009). What is more, Tinto states that "the more central one's membership is to the mainstream of institutional life, the more likely, other things being equal, is one to persist" (1987, p. 123). His emphasis to membership is along the lines of perceiving a classroom as a community (Rovai, Wighting & Lucking, 2004), which is considered to be a characteristic of quality classes (Splitter & Sharp, 1995). Furthermore, as I already discussed in relation to Mr. Marin's teaching, reflection is one of the

qualities that improve the quality of teaching in a class (Rinaldo et al., 2009). In addition, numerous studies on classroom management in the field of educational sciences attest that it is a part of discussions that relate to teaching (Emmer & Stough, 2001). All these aspects of good teaching are themes that the study's findings include. Therefore, I assert that the fact that preservice teachers came up with these themes indicate that their involvement with film as a curricular tool has given them an opportunity to combine their prior knowledge on teaching to a framework on good teaching.

In a similar manner, the solutions that the participants generated to the key scenes in the film where they explained how they would manage a given situation that Mr. Marin encountered in the film indicate that the film can provide key (simulation-ary) situations that they can engage with both emotionally and intellectually to put their theoretical teaching knowledge into practice. This so-called "intellectual role-play" activity might be functional in advancing future teachers' classroom management strategies. Häikiöniemi and Leppäaho (2012) analyzes prospective mathematics teachers' reaction to a hypothetical situation; they conclude that their respondents had difficulties in guiding the students. Unlike their conclusion, this study discusses that preservice teachers in the study were able to adopt best practices that the previous scholarship advocates. For instance, the findings of the present study include that preservice teachers would try to turn a presentation where students utter hostile and damaging comments to one another into an inclusive discussion. Wingert and Molitor (2009) suggest using a controversy/structure debate (Johnson & Johnson, 1997 as cited in Wingert & Molitor, 2009, p. 7) for challenging behavior during a heated discussion. Similarly, to deal with Souleymane's hostile behavior, preservice teachers argued that they would leave the discussion of it to after class where they would explain the situation better to the all of the students while also clarifying the role they

played in that situation. To deal with hostile behavior in class, Wingert and Molitor (2009) recommend that teachers should “listen carefully and respectfully. Then state your position, calmly presenting the issue to the entire class, and encourage responses.” (p. 6). In another study, Ası, Aydın and Karabay (2018) devised hypothetical situations to collect reactions of teachers to those situations in terms of emotional maltreatment that might take place between students and teachers. These authors constructed hypothetical situations in their study themselves by looking at the literature. This study, however, maintains that *The Class* provides ready-to-use teaching situations that can be utilized in teacher education.

Another way that *The Class* can be used in teacher education is to prepare prospective teachers to deal with diversity in their future classrooms. The findings reveal that preservice teachers report that they would (1) represent different cultures in their curricula to cherish diversity of students via materials from those cultures (Gay, 2002), (2) let students present their cultures to others in classroom, (3) have students work together so that they can inform each other (Tompson & Tompson, 1996), and (4) try to be knowledgeable about different cultures as much as possible (Tompson & Tompson, 1996). In relation to crafting culturally responsive curricula (in law education), Hartley and Petrucci (2004) advocate for integrating diversity in the curriculum since it is a sure way to improve cultural competencies. On the other hand, Gay (2002) mentions five essential elements of culturally responsive teaching that he defines as “using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching” (p. 106): “developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum, demonstrating caring and building learning communities, communicating with ethnically diverse students, and responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction.” (p. 106). All in all, the idea of handling diversity in

teaching relates to creating a culturally responsive classroom climate so that students can make the best of the instruction that educators provide to them. It requires creating an environment where students can interact with each other (Hurtado, 2001) that I refer to as culturally interactive learning. Similarly, Tompson and Tompson (1996) suggest that it is necessary to create culturally representative small groups during instruction so that students from different cultural backgrounds can interact with one another. Based on the findings of the study that relates to dealing with diversity in the classroom, it appears that prospective teachers show a readiness to manage diversity in their future classrooms through engaging with *The Class* since the strategies they reported to handle diversity are in accordance with the existing literature on these matters.

The basic premise of this study to employ *The Class* as a curricular tool in the education of preservice teachers is that the process of doing so would be instrumental for teacher preparation. The findings reveal that this has been the case from the perspective of the participants of the study. The film presented a teaching universe on the screen that participants, through the process of *spectator identification* (Metz, 2009), experienced. This universe is similar to their observations during their field placement up to this point. The film has given an opportunity to preservice teachers to evaluate the film in relation to other school films that they were initiated before, to critique the curriculum that is portrayed in the film, to assess the teacher and his teaching based on their previous experiences and their current ideas about teaching, to come up with themes that represented their evaluation, and to provide solutions to certain teaching situations in the film as well as strategies to deal with diversity in classrooms. Thus, it can be argued that the experience of employing *The Class* as a curricular tool has been a beneficial activity for these prospective teachers. To my knowledge, although the study at hand

is the first study to employ this film in teacher education in the way it did, thus, there is no previous literature to contextualize the functionality of it; the points of scholars who employed other school films for the benefit of teacher education appear to be in line with the discussion here. Specifically, the previous scholarship on teacher education argues that student-teachers acquire plenty of their views about their profession long before they decide to enter the profession. Brunner (1991, pp. 6-7) comments that “many of the ideas prospective teachers have about their roles as teachers and about schooling, in general, are developed long before they enter teacher education programs. To examine new approaches to curriculum and not take into account students’ ‘personal knowledge’ (Folanyi) has traditionally been a blind spot in teacher reform movement.” School films construct future teachers’ perception of themselves and their profession—unfortunately, I suspect—in the form of myths and unreal expectations. In this lieu, Brunner (1991), citing Rosenblatt, asserts that films create a fictional world in which student-teachers can try out what they have not experienced yet. In his formulation, it is better to study school films with student-teachers to work out negative representations that they get used to as a result of their earlier exposure to school films. Regarding the functionality issue, I conclude that the present study did exactly that—studying a school film to challenge those negative representations as well as improving the abilities of teachers by having them analyze *The Class*. Other studies in the literature have arrived at similar conclusions by studying other school films (Trier, 2001a; Trier, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007; Christou, 2016).

The present discussion would not be complete without noting some of the limitations of the study. First of all, the study at hand is a qualitative one where I have focused on understanding the intricate details of using a school film in only one teacher education class through my interpretation. In that sense, the study is atomistic. Therefore, my findings should not

be taken for granted to be generalized to other sites. Yet, to some degree, transferability of the discussion might be the case depending on the unique context of each case. Second of all, I examined one school film in the curriculum of a teaching class. The conclusions I make regarding this film might not hold significant for other school films. Third of all, I chose the stop points for the film screening myself based on my reading of the film that I presented in Chapter 3. Some other researcher might be able to find different stop points for himself or herself that might differ than mine, which has the potential to change the evaluation of the film. Last of all, I devised the actual method of screening. Some might argue that another design might be more appropriate to the context of teacher education. Only more empirical data can tell us whose is better.

Based on the discussion here, I suggest that future scholarship that focuses on the use of cinema films in teacher education:

- Design research with more than one school film. Crafting an entire teaching class curriculum that consists only of school films might illuminate better our understanding of the use of cinema films with prospective teachers.
- Design research with other school films to see if the results of doing so yield similar or not-so-similar findings.
- Conduct statistical analyses to get a better understanding of whether the finding of the study that school films influence the public and teachers holds true or not in larger settings.
- Carry out more studies to examine the functionality of school films in teacher education. One of the rationales for devising this research has been that there is a

lack of empirical studies on this phenomenon. The present study is a small step to fill that hole, yet, it is also cognizant that there is a need for more.

Postlude to the Chapter

This chapter has provided a discussion of the findings of the study. In it, I argued that preservice teachers regard cinema films additional material to the main readings of a class. They also claim that films should be used to initiate discussion in class and have more in-depth analyses of concepts in classrooms since films have the advantage of being visual and gathering attention. Yet, they noted the care should be given to ensure that students do not take films as off day materials. In addition, I suggested a model for watching films in teacher education classes. Besides, I maintained that participants found Mr. Marin's teaching lacking essential qualities of the idea of good teaching despite his good intentions. Finally, I concluded that the process of incorporating *The Class* in the curriculum of these prospective teachers was a functional process for them as they reported that it was. I shall conclude the study in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

In the course of this study, I have reflected numerous times on Esmeralda's and Souleymane's situation in the film. In terms of Souleymane, what would happen to him after he was dismissed from school if he were a student in real life? The way that *The Class* portrays the school in it indicates that the education system is devised to create individuals who would be devoted citizens of the state since it provides a system of *free, obligatory and secular schools*. Yet, the film brutally shows that Souleymane could not be less interested in that agenda of the school. Furthermore, expulsing him from the school is the antithesis of the *raison d'être* of the system since the state lost one of its children by doing so. In terms of Esmeralda, it is true that she stayed in school, but that does not change the fact that she is still cynical of it. For her, reading *The Republic* by herself at home is better than being in a room where the teacher calls her, or her behaviors, skank. The film must be interpreted in that context—the disharmony between the system and the students.

The Class portrays the hardships of integration of immigrants. The postcolonial context is its central theme that it depicts a *us vs. them* mentality. From one perspective, *us* is the dominant culture that provides shelter, opportunity and a new lifestyle to people who come to the dominant culture willingly (*them*), and, hence, are expected to abide by its rules. From another, *us* is a group of individuals who were attracted to the dominant culture of *them* due to their (*them's*) previous colonial ambitions in that *them* has only one agenda: assimilation *us* to be like *them*. At first, it might appear that Cantet, the director, represents this dualism between *us vs. them* for the sake of social criticism. However, I do not find that true for criticism necessitates either adhering to one side in duality so that the critique would encounter the faults of the other or situating itself in distance from both of the sides and criticize them. That is not the case in *The Class*. I argue

that its enthralling power as a piece of art stems from the fact that the film does not take any sides; it does not answer any questions that it raises. It presents the problems that are embedded in contemporary France by taking a school as its site without worrying about giving spectators a lesson in ethics or about making them feel good about themselves at the end or feeding them answers on the questions that it deals. In short, it simply says “these racially and culturally diverse students are somehow in France, their teacher does this and that; it is not my place to argue whether what he does is right or wrong, but here is also what happens in the end.”

The significance of *The Class* for educational circles comes into the picture exactly here. As a group of artists, the makers of the film prepared us a meal; they are not telling us how to eat it. It is us, educators, who has to digest it, make it a part of us. To put it blatantly, the film raises crucial issues that curriculum scholars, teacher educators as well as teachers themselves as the practitioners of the act of teaching should immerse themselves in. Based on the discussion of the study, I interpret the film as a call for deliberative curriculum theory and deliberative curriculum making. According to deliberative approach, as Englund (2015) writes, “curriculum is a public good to which all citizens can contribute, provided they are willing to think clearly about the types of problems that curriculum poses.” (p. 51). Curriculum problems are best dealt with when as many groups as possible are involved in the process (Null, 2011 also cited in Englund, 2015; Livingston, 2007, p. 3). In addition, the deliberative conception of curriculum ensures that all citizens are involved in designing education for the public good (Englund, 2015). It appears obvious to me that due to its benefits that I just mentioned, the deliberative curricular approach would serve the system better as I claim that the film might be said to suggest by eliminating the *us vs. them* duality. Besides, Hannay (1989) argues: “A major focus of the deliberative process is to solve and take action on the practical problems that arise in the real world. A curriculum is

developed, not to meet theoretical requirements, but rather as a response to practical problems.” (p. 188). Since the deliberative process refers to a practical problem, it is context-bound (Hannay, 1989). Thus, I argue that deliberative curriculum is an option to deal with the specific day-to-day problems that Mr. Marin encountered throughout the film since through the act of problem-solving that we call deliberation, it treats teachers as professionals who should “be given a crucial decisive role in choosing content and how to teach it.” (Englund, 2015, p. 53). This way, teachers are taken to be intellectuals who can manage their classroom in every aspect rather than technicians who are supposed to deliver a predefined set of content to students.

Throughout the film, diverse students exhibit signs that they are not happy with Mr. Marin’s teaching, that they wish things would change in terms of the content and of his delivery of it, and that they would like to be a part of the change process. However, Mr. Marin seems to neglect those signs. It is true that his heart was in the right place in that he cared about his students, and he wanted to provide the best he could to them. Yet, in the end, his efforts failed to create a lively teaching environment in which most of his students would achieve to the best of their ability. I maintain that his toolbox as a teacher did not encompass enough knowledge and experience to produce such a lively classroom environment. This point is significant for teacher educators since they are responsible for equipping future teachers with a robust teaching toolbox. It is equally significant for teachers for they have a responsibility to adapt their teaching to the needs of their students, which require that they emphasize their professional development as intellectual teachers (not technicians) to enrich their toolbox. It is one of the conclusions of the study at hand that *The Class* has the potential to aid both teacher educators and teachers to do that.

My experience in the teaching class that I engaged for a semester gives me a ground upon which I can argue that the majority of preservice teachers have found the activity of engaging with this film for the purposes of learning fruitful for their self-cultivation as future teachers. I must note that the issue is not whether these future teachers like the film or not; rather, it is that the process of analyzing this film as a curricular tool gives students a framework for teaching either as an example to be studied or as a counterexample to be cognizant of.

Although I focused specifically on *The Class* in a teaching class for preservice teachers, the study at hand has implications for the general use of cinema films in different levels of education. Our age has been an age of technological advancement in that it transforms almost all aspects of our lives. In terms of educational discourses, such advancements challenge traditional modes of learning and inquiry that we have been used for long. Cinema has been one of such advancements. In one way or another, I believe that the cinema's influence will keep increasing. The question is then whether we, educators, are ready for it or not. In the context of education, there are two directions that the films' influence can take. It can either be a setback to the advancement of classroom environments if we utilize them to fill time in class when we have nothing else planned for students. Or, it can be an actual improvement if we carefully plan well-thought curricular activities to our students that fit well into our aims by paying attention to the advantages and disadvantages of employment of films in instruction. Films are usually made for artistic and for entertainment purposes; it is our responsibility to transform them into curricular materials that can teach. Doing so requires teaching teachers how to engage with films.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.), in Fall 2018, in the U.S., about 56.6 million students attend elementary and secondary schools. Similarly, public school systems, during the same period, employ 3.2 million full-time

teachers. For the 2018-2019 school year, per pupil expenditure is \$12.910 while the total expenditure for the public-school system is estimated to be \$654 billion. As these data attest, we spend substantial money and human sources on public education to make upcoming generations more equipped with knowledge and skills than the previous ones. Therefore, we must ensure that the public education system is effective. Otherwise, we are wasting an absurd amount of money and human sources.

The success of public education, seen as a system, is primarily dependent upon parents, students and teachers (including administrators). It is vital that parents are included in this system; yet, their impact in the process of teaching is apparently up to a point. Students, on the other hand, are what is given to this system. The system is there for them. Thus, I assert that the only variable that we can have a significant effect on for the betterment of schooling is obviously teachers. The better they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, the higher the chances that they will touch upon the lives of their students. Therefore, the quality of teacher education is of incalculable value to the survival of the system. I hope that the pages of the study have convinced the reader that *Entre Les Murs* in teacher education is a humble way of contributing to the insurance of that survival.

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APPENDIX A: THE SEGMENTATION DOCUMENT

Segmentation of <i>The Class</i>	
{Opening Title and Credits}	
I.	NEW SEMESTER BEGINS AT THE SCHOOL (Scene 1-8). A. Administration and teachers meet and introduce themselves to each other. B. Mr. Marin meets his class for this semester.
II.	MR. MARIN AIMS TO ENSURE HIS AUTHORITY AS A TEACHER (9-16). A. Students question the value of imperfect subjunctive. B. Students fail to conjugate verbs. Mr. Marin criticizes them, which they do not welcome. C. It turns out that students didn't read the parts of a book that Mr. Marin assigned them. Khoumba resists Mr. Marin. D. Teacher are having a meeting where a new penalty system is the major topic
III.	PARENT-TEACHER MEETING (17).
IV.	STUDENTS STUDY THEIR SELF-PORTRAIT & PRESENT THEM (18-25). A. Students are in the computer lab to write their self-portraits. B. Then, they are in the classroom presenting them. C. Oral presentation leads to chaos that stems from racial differences. D. Soulaymane disrespects his classmates and Mr. Marin takes him to principal's office.
V.	SOULAYMANE'S INCIDENT AND ITS AFTERMATH (26-39). A. Teachers meet once again to discuss students' progress. Mr. Marin defends Souleymane to other teachers but he also says that his abilities are "limited." B. Student representatives, Esmeralda and Lousie, who was at the meeting, tell Souleymane that Mr. Marin called him limited. Mr. Marin tells reps that they acted like "pétasses" in the meeting. Souleymane is furious, leaves the classroom unexcused accidentally hitting Khoumba in the head. C. Mr. Marin writes an incident report. The year supervisor lets him know that students made a complaint about him to the administration. He tries to confront reps for doing that.
VI.	SOULEYMANE'S DISCIPLINARY MEETING (40-46). Disciplinary meeting takes place. The verdict is that Souleymane is expelled.
VII.	THE LAST OF EVERYTHING (47-49). A. The last class of the semester. Students tell what they have learned during the semester. Esmeralda tells she did not learn anything from the school, mentions a book she read at home. B. The last day of school. Students and teachers play soccer against each other. C. The last scene. The classroom is empty; the seats are spread all over the place. The cheerful noise of teachers and students playing soccer outside fill the classroom.
{End Credits}	

APPENDIX B: A SAMPLE PAGE OF THE ANALYSIS SHEET

Scene #	Action	Setting	Duration (Time) Approximately	Characters	Camera Distance/ Angle	Camera Movement	Transition	Speech	Sound	Comments
--	Credits	--	44 sc (00.44)	--	--	--	--	--	Near the end of credits, we hear sounds coming from a café.	--
1	Mr. Marin is in a coffee shop having a drink and listening to people in the shop. He then walks to school; at the entrance, he greets fellow teachers.	Coffee Shop, Street, Entrance of the school	48 sc. (01.32)	Mr. Marin, Two other teachers	-- Extreme Close Up (ECU)/ Eye Level (EL) -- Medium Shot (MS) / EL	None (N)	Cut (C)	People talking, Mr. Marin and other teachers greeting	Café and street background sounds. Diegetic (D).	This is the only scene that takes place outside of the school.
2	Mr. Marin walks to staff room. He passes through workers who repair the school and possibly make it ready for the starting semester.	Corridors and stairwells of the school.	24 sc (01.56)	Mr. Marin, Workers/Janitors	MS/ High Angle (HA)	N	C	Mr. Marin greeting workers. Workers asking direction from janitors	Background noise of repair and preparation. D.	

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE PILOT STUDY

1. What are the major themes that came to your attention most in the film?
2. In terms of educational situations that are depicted in the film, what do you think of Mr. Marin's curriculum:
 - a. What are its strengths?
 - b. What parts of it can be improved in the direction of clues that the film presents?
3. As a teacher candidate, what do you think Mr. Marin?
 - a. On what perspectives would you agree with the ways that he acted in the film?
 - b. What are the certain things that you would act differently than Mr. Marin if you were on his shoes?
4. What do you think of Mr. Marin's students in the film?
5. What do you think about racially and culturally diverse educational environment that is depicted in the film. If you were a teacher in such a setting, how would you react to it and what would you do specifically to teach your students?
6. The film depicts a culturally and racially diverse classroom setting in France. To what extent and in what sense do you think that *The Class* might present the educational settings in USA?
7. In general, what do you think about impact of *The Class* as a curriculum in your education?

APPENDIX D: CONTACT SUMMARY SHEET*

Date:	_____	Researcher:	_____
Approx Time:	_____	Accompanied	_____
Location:	_____	by	_____
Event:	_____	Genre:	_____

Executive Summary

What people, events or situations were involved?

What were main themes or issues in the contact?

Which research questions and which variables in the initial framework did the contact bear on most centrally?

What new hypotheses, speculations, or hunches about the field situations were suggested by the contact?

Where should the field-worker place most energy during the next contact, and what kinds of information should be sought?

Anything to add?

* Adapted from a course offered by Dr. Liora Bresler of UIUC: CI509, Curriculum Research: Qualitative Methods Research, during Fall 2015 semester, and (questions are taken from) Miles & Huberman (1994, p.51).

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE FIRST SET OF INTERVIEWS OF THE DISSERTATION STUDY

1. Could you please tell me about yourself and why you have chosen to become a teacher?
Specifically:
 - a. What are your inspirations to become a teacher?
 - b. Could you please describe a teacher you had before that inspires you the most?
 - c. At this point in your education, what type of a teacher you want to be?
2. Have you ever had experiences before in your educational life where you watched a cinema film in a learning activity?
If yes:
 - a. How do you assess that experience?
 - b. What were the major problems you had in that experience?
 - c. What could have been done better?
3. In what ways and to what extent are you involved with cinema films in your daily life?
What type of films do you prefer to watch? And for what purposes?
4. What do you think about using cinema films for teaching students?
 - a. What advantages, in your opinion, do cinema films present to teaching?
 - b. What disadvantages, in your opinion, do cinema films present to teaching?
5. Can you name any cinema film that includes educational themes or environments (i.e. school films), e.g. a school or a class?
 - a. What do you expect to see in such a film? Themes? Characters? Situations?
 - b. How do you assess the impact of such films on public's opinion about education in terms of:
 - i. Teachers' portrayal,
 - ii. Students' portrayal,
 - iii. Act of teaching?
 - c. If you were to make a school film, what type characteristics does your film include?

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE SECOND SET OF INTERVIEWS OF THE DISSERTATION STUDY

1. What is your analysis of this film as a general spectator? (What do you think about this film generally?)
2. As a preservice teacher, what do you think about this film? If some other people asked you of your professional opinion of this film, what would you say?
 - a. Comparison to French 103, how would you convince those students?
3. What are the three major educational themes that came to your attention after watching this film? And how would you elaborate them?
4. In terms of educational situations that are depicted in the film, what do you think of Mr. Marin's curriculum:
 - a. What are its strengths?
 - b. What parts of it can be improved in the direction of clues that the film presents?
5. Let's assume for your field placement, you are going to observe Mr. Marin and he asks you to give him some feedback about his teaching.
 - a. What are his strengths as a teacher?
 - b. What could he have done better?
6. What do you think of Mr. Marin's students in general? Let's say if you were a substitute for Mr. Marin and you were to teach them for a while, what would be a couple of first things that would come to your mind?
 - a. How would you align your teaching in that classroom to best reflect racially and culturally diverse characteristics of these students?
7. Let's try to see how you would react as a teacher in some key scenes in the film. How would you react in these situations? (What would you do):
 - a. When your students oppose the validity of your teaching in terms of content (imperfect subjunctive),
 - b. When your students blame you for ignoring their/other cultures (Bill deguste un succulent cheeseburger),
 - c. When students push the limits of democratic discussion (During presentations of autobiographies, over the feud on which national team support),
 - d. When students tell students invite trouble (Representatives tell other students what happened in the meeting where they shouldn't, which ended up with Souleymane's storming out),
 - e. When students tell you that they learned nothing throughout the whole year (The end of film).
8. In your opinion, who are the most important three student characters in the film? (A, B, C)
 - a. How would align your relationship with A to make sure that s/he does the best in your class?
 - b. How would align your relationship with B to make sure that s/he does the best in your class?
 - c. How would align your relationship with C to make sure that s/he does the best in your class?

9. How do you evaluate this film in relation to school film genre? How do you compare it to other school films?
10. How do you evaluate the instructive impact of this film? What were the things that could have done better?
11. How do you evaluate me as a discussion facilitator? What were things that I could have done better?



APPENDIX G: VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF FINDINGS FROM ATLAS.TI

The supplementary file “Visual Representation of Codes and Themes.pdf” contains screenshots of output screens in ATLAS.ti where I did the analysis of the data. These relational visuals served as the blueprints of Chapters 4, 5 and 6 (findings chapters). Each visual shows the codes and themes I created from the data.



APPENDIX H: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM



Office for the Protection
of Research Subjects

IORG0000014 • FWA #00008584

Notice of Approval: New Submission

January 24, 2018

Principal Investigator	Mark Dressman
CC	M. Emir Ruzgar
Protocol Title	<i>ENTRE LES MURS (THE CLASS) AS CURRICULUM: WHAT PRESERVICE TEACHERS THINK ABOUT AND LEARN FROM ENGAGING WITH THE CLASS</i>
Protocol Number	18488
Funding Source	Unfunded
Review Type	Expedited
Review Category	Expedited 6 & 7
Status	Active
Risk Determination	no more than minimal risk
Approval Date	January 24, 2018
Expiration Date	January 23, 2021

This letter authorizes the use of human subjects in the above protocol. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved the research study as described.

The Principal Investigator of this study is responsible for:

- Conducting research in a manner consistent with the requirements of the University and federal regulations found at 45 CFR 46.
- Requesting approval from the IRB prior to implementing modifications.
- Notifying OPRS of any problems involving human subjects, including unanticipated events, participant complaints, or protocol deviations.
- Notifying OPRS of the completion of the study.

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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APPENDIX I: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AMENDMENT



Office for the Protection
of Research Subjects

IORG0000014 • FWA #00008584

Notice of Approval: Amendment #1

April 24, 2018

Principal Investigator	Mark Dressman
CC	M. Emir Ruzgar
Protocol Title	<i>ENTRE LES MURS (THE CLASS) AS CURRICULUM: WHAT PRESERVICE TEACHERS THINK ABOUT AND LEARN FROM ENGAGING WITH THE CLASS</i>
Protocol Number	18488
Funding Source	Unfunded
Review Type	Expedited 6 & 7
Amendment Requested	Updating research procedures to add students enrolled in French 103
Status	Active
Risk Determination	no more than minimal risk
Approval Date	April 24, 2018
Expiration Date	January 23, 2021

This letter authorizes the use of human subjects in the above protocol. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved the research study as described.

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