

Teaching and parenting during the COVID-19 pandemic

by

Ana Lucia Rossi Mendonca

B.S., Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz, 1997
M.S., Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 2001

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2022

Abstract

The closure of school buildings not only meant interrupting a student's learning process and daily schedule, but it also represented significant changes in our family's routine and its access to books, instructional materials, educational technology (in classrooms and libraries), and one of the most crucial areas: food.

This autoethnography study offers invaluable insights for educators and school leaders as it provides real-time context for how changes in schooling affect families during a crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic. This study was conducted through the lens of critical pedagogy addressing specific aspects of the diffusion of innovations framework. Freire's critical pedagogy (1970) starts from the premise that a critical education must lead to the development of citizens who are able to reflect on their social, historical, and cultural realities, enabling to transform them. The critical reflection process leads students and teacher to greater autonomy and emancipation. Diffusion is the process by which innovations spread to members of a social system. It is a very social process that involves interpersonal communication relationships (Rogers, 1971, 1995).

Through this auto-ethnographic study, I explored, as a parent, educator, member of the USD 383 community, and academic researcher, how these changes were applied at a micro-level in the community and how the real-life implications of implementing the Continuous Learning process in my home were impacted. The communication process was key to determine the success of the process, but as the research, showed the process must be well organized including the players. As for the introduction of innovations, educational technology was not considered a key factor for elementary school children, as its use was mostly optional. The findings from this study inform the education community and school leaders of future challenges and circumstances we may face.

Teaching and parenting during the COVID-19 pandemic

by

Ana Lucia Rossi Mendonca

B.S., Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz, 1997
M.S., Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 2001

A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2022

Approved by:

Major Professor
Dr. Kay Ann Taylor

Copyright

© Ana Lucia Mendonca-Zarling 2022.

Abstract

The closure of school buildings not only meant interrupting a student's learning process and daily schedule, but it also represented significant changes in our family's routine and its access to books, instructional materials, educational technology (in classrooms and libraries), and one of the most crucial areas: food.

This autoethnography study offers invaluable insights for educators and school leaders as it provides real-time context for how changes in schooling affect families during a crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic. This study was conducted through the lens of critical pedagogy addressing specific aspects of the diffusion of innovations framework. Freire's critical pedagogy (1970) starts from the premise that a critical education must lead to the development of citizens who are able to reflect on their social, historical, and cultural realities, enabling to transform them. The critical reflection process leads students and teacher to greater autonomy and emancipation. Diffusion is the process by which innovations spread to members of a social system. It is a very social process that involves interpersonal communication relationships (Rogers, 1971, 1995).

Through this auto-ethnographic study, I explored, as a parent, educator, member of the USD 383 community, and academic researcher, how these changes were applied at a micro-level in the community and how the real-life implications of implementing the Continuous Learning process in my home were impacted. The communication process was key to determine the success of the process, but as the research showed, the process must be well organized, including the players. As for the introduction of innovations, educational technology was not considered a key factor for elementary school children, as its use was mostly optional. The findings from this study inform the education community and school leaders of future challenges and circumstances we may face.

Table of Contents

List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
Acknowledgements	xi
Dedication	xii
Chapter 1 - Introduction	1
Background	1
Statement of the Problem	11
Purpose of the Study	13
Guiding Research Questions	14
Methodology	14
Definition of Terms	15
Limitations and Delimitations	16
Statement of the Significance of the Study	17
Researcher Positionality	21
Organization of the Study	23
Chapter 2 - Literature Review	24
Introduction	24
Background	26
Theory and Research Literature	28
Conceptualizing Social Change and Its Elements	28
The Study of Diffusion of Innovation	30
The Four Main Elements of Diffusion	30
Changes in 2019-20	33
Change Process for Innovation or Innovation for a Change Process	36
A Critical View of Educational Technology and Food Access	38
Instructional Planning	40
Review of Literature Summary	43
Contribution of the Study	43
Summary of Chapter 2	44

Chapter 3 - Methodology	45
The Path to Autoethnography	45
Purpose of the Study	48
Guiding Research Questions	49
Telling the Story	49
Critical Autoethnography as a Method	54
Research Design and Methods.....	58
Data Collection and Procedures	62
Data Analysis	63
Researching with Validity, Rich-Rigor, Credibility, and Ethics	64
Summary of Chapter 3.....	67
Chapter 4 - Change to a New Reality	69
The Road Through the Forest	72
The Journey to the Great Oz	75
The Discovery of Oz, The Terrible.....	82
The Queen, the Guardian of the Gate, the Monkeys,	85
and Glinda: The Good Witch.....	85
Summary of Chapter 4.....	90
Chapter 5 - Lessons Learned.....	91
Home Again	91
Summary of Chapter 5.....	95
Chapter 6 - Findings, Discussion, and Conclusion	96
Introduction to Findings.....	96
Autoethnography	97
Cultures and Belonging.....	98
Outsider and Insider	98
Seeds of Diffusion	99
The Communication Aspect.....	99
Communication Channels	101
The Change Agent	103
Innovations.....	105

Teaching and Learning	108
Critical Pedagogy	109
Freire's Influence	112
Implications	115
Recommendations for Practice and Further Research	117
Conclusions.....	117
References.....	119

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. <i>State-by-State Map of 2019-2020 school building closure</i> (Education Week, 2020)	19
Figure 1.2. <i>Riley County numbers for Food Insecure People</i> (Feeding America, 2020)	20
Figure 4.1. Cover of learning packet 2, Grade 2	72
Figure 4.2. Handwritten lesson plan for Daniel and Hannah, 5 th grade	78
Figure 4.3. Suggested schedule for 5 th grade, Day 16 to Day 19	79
Figure 4.4. 5 th Grade Lessons: ELA	79
Figure 4.5. Suggested special activities for 5 th grade	80

List of Tables

Table 1. <i>The four elements of Diffusion by Rogers (2003)</i>	32
---	----

Acknowledgements

I want to start by thanking my outstanding advisor, Dr. Kay Ann Taylor, for her encouragement, support, and guidance through this journey.

I also want to especially thank my friend and editor Patrice Scott for her help and talent in editing my Brazilian thoughts into the beautiful English language.

To my beautiful children, Daniel, Hannah, and Paulo, an essential part of this study. To the father of my children, Reginaldo, who allowed this journey to happen by letting our children come to the United States with me.

Last, but not least, I want to thank my husband, Todd, for his support, cheer, and encouragement every step of the way.

Dedication

To my Dad, Paulo, who inspired and encouraged me to have "wheels on my feet" and to be a "globetrotter," as he affectionately referred to me.

To my Mom, Marlene, who encouraged and supported my children and me every minute of our journey in Manhattan, Kansas.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Without change, there is no innovation, creativity, or incentive for improvement. Those who initiate change will have a better opportunity to manage the change that is inevitable.

– William G. Pollard

Background

It was 1987, and I was a 15-year-old student at my high school in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil, where I met my first exchange student from the United States. I was introduced to Cindy, a tall, blonde student with short curly hair from California. I never forgot that encounter! Cindy was very polite and smiled all the time. She looked as if she had been plucked from an American T.V. sitcom and deposited on our campus. Clutching a dictionary, Cindy spoke broken Portuguese and told us about life in the United States, which I knew very little about, and was absolutely fascinated with her stories. I had an A in English and couldn't wait to visit with her. We chatted; however, my English wasn't terribly better than her Portuguese and the conversation floundered. In November 1985, just a couple of years before I met Cindy, Brazil's citizens elected a president—ending a 20-year dictatorship—and glorious change rippled across our country. Brazil opened up to the rest of the world, and I desperately wanted to experience it! My father was a salesman and traveled across South America, and we shared a passion for other cultures and languages. I am eternally indebted to him for planting in me the seeds of curiosity—and confidence—to go out into the world.

In her inspiring book about rediscovering her community—*Belonging: A Culture of Place*—author bell hooks (2009) address the struggles and difficulties of wanting to live in a familiar, unchanging world. People, hooks posits, instinctively resist change and prefer to remain in the comforts of the known. There is, however, a high societal cost when our species clings to

the familiar; it's even more costly long term when individuals or communities eschew or outright reject the unfamiliar because exposure—to people, cultures, values, mores, ideas, subjects, and the arts—is the root of all learning. Without exposure, there's no opportunity to challenge long-held assumptions or beliefs and parsing through the associated internal struggles are actually the hallmarks of personal growth and self-actualization.

The discomfort and fear that accompany change are necessary for self-actualization. As I read this passage, I understood that the fears and struggles hooks identified were actually motivators for me. “Home” meant two totally different things to us: hooks grew up in the segregated South so “home” was a place she was never wanted. I, on the other hand, had a fabulous and strong foundation to draw upon that gave me the courage to go out into the world with my mind and arms wide open to the experiences. hooks had to return home to “find home” and I had to leave my home to find where I truly belonged.

To find “home”, ironically, I had to leave home. I came to the Midwest as an exchange student in August 1990 and fell in love with the American Heartland. My host family lived in Gladstone, Missouri, a suburb about 10 miles outside of Kansas City, where I attended Oak Park High School during my senior year. It was an exciting time, and I wanted to make friends, experience America and share what life was like in my home country. Everyone was curious about where I was from and seemed surprised when I said Brazil. Somehow, my physical appearance did not fit the perceived notion of what Americans thought Brazilians looked like. I am white; however, my broken English and strong Brazilian-Portuguese accent sabotaged my ability to connect with other students. It's as if my classmates thought I sounded “brown” and should be brown, but I wasn't, and that created a disconcerting form of cognitive dissonance. That, coupled with my broken English, made it difficult to make friends, and the gulf between me

and my classmates dwarfed the 4,300 miles between my hometown and Gladstone, Missouri. Being rejected hurt, especially as I had arrived with such enthusiasm. I learned firsthand. Besemeres and Wierzbicka (2007) were correct that “the key to cross-cultural understanding is language” (p. xiv). One positive—and unexpected—result of the disconnect with my classmates was the deep connection that formed with my host family and our neighbors. While they were not bilingual, my host mother and I, just as I recalled Cindy doing at my high school in Brazil, grasped our dictionaries as we discussed the day’s events.

After living in America for a year, I returned to Brazil in August 1991 and taught English at a private school for languages for two years. While I did not know the best methods to teach a foreign language, through self-reflection, I concluded context was critical for me. My study abroad experience broadened me as a person and more importantly, as a future educator, and I vowed to never subject my students to rote memorization, meaningless lists or the stilted, programmed role play that I had endured learning English. I taught my class the way I learned best: through experience. So, when my lesson plan addressed food, I cooked an American dish and brought it to school. Class moved outdoors when we learned about weather. Before I left the states, I recorded songs from the radio on cassette tapes and recorded TV shows on VHS tapes, which became invaluable teaching resources as they made the English language come to life in the context of American culture.

In 1993, my country's political and economic turmoil were excellent incentives for me to seek out another international adventure. This time I chose to work as a nanny in Germany. I was very familiar with the German culture because the Germans had colonized my hometown. The school I attended in Sao Leopoldo was a private German school, and yes, my great grandfather was German! In Germany, I felt privileged to live with a first-grade teacher and her

two sons, which helped me understand the German education system and its principles. Because public universities in Germany are free, I decided to pursue my undergraduate degree there, which later, through a scholarship, allowed me to return to America and spend a semester at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIUC).

The United States—and more specifically, the Midwest—was always a place that I felt at home. In 1999, I returned to Southern Illinois University (SIUC) as a graduate student in the curriculum and instruction master's program. During my two years at SIUC, I taught an introductory course in German as part of my teaching assistantship, and my relationship with language and culture evolved and ultimately shaped the relationships with the people around me. My academic career had always embraced diversity, but now as an educator, I understood that to truly live the American Dream, you had to adapt—and adopt—this country's culture. A senseless act of violence shook America to its core and simultaneously changed the trajectory of my career. The terrorist attack in New York City on September 11, 2001 paralyzed the United States as it did much of the world, and I decided to go “home” and teach in Brazil.

In 2016, I decided to leave my country permanently, but this time, I was not alone. In August 2017, I arrived in The Little Apple, Manhattan, Kansas, (another town in my beloved American Midwest) with my 9-year-old twins Daniel and Hannah and their little brother, Paulo, who had just turned 6-years-old. I was beginning my Ph.D. program in curriculum and instruction at Kansas State University. This was my fourth time living in this country. As my understanding of the world grew and my beliefs morphed, American society presented me with new opportunities to grow and assimilate as my children and I did a deep dive deep into American culture. They transitioned from their Brazilian private elementary school to a public school in Manhattan, Kansas. There, they learned English and started using educational

technology devices. The dependence on technology intensified during the pandemic and altered the course of my dissertation that I started writing in March 2020, ultimately inspiring this autoethnographic study.

On December 31, 2019, as people worldwide prepared to celebrate the New Year, news reports told of a frightening new and highly infectious virus killing people in China at an alarming rate. It was the first-time many Americans had ever heard of Wuhan, China, and its old-world market filled with live and butchered animals sandwiched into close proximity to one another. As we collectively flipped calendars to January 2020, the World Health Organization published reports that included the categories of actions, information, science, leadership, advice, response, and resources to inform the world what we were facing (WHO, 2020). Those reports were intended to provide nations with vital information needed to protect their citizens by enacting public health and safety protocols and preparing for the all-encompassing societal, academic, and financial challenges that would dictate Americans' lives. Perhaps no profession—other than those in the medical field—would feel the full force and impact of the pandemic as educators. Parents, however, may strongly disagree with this assertion.

What felt like a nightly news story in a remote part of the world, finally landed on our coasts. Still, the virus seemed far away. That was true until March 17, 2020, when the Coronavirus became a reality for Kansans. The virus had traveled 7,211 from Wuhan, China, and was now threatening Kansans' lives—especially people working or socializing in crowded buildings such as schools. Educators and students were at an unacceptably high risk of contracting the disease through community spread, so Kansas Governor Laura Kelly made history when she announced Kansas would be the first state in the nation to close school

buildings. Districts officially transitioned to online learning for the remainder of the school year. (Blad, 2020)

It was the week of spring break (March 8-13, 2020), and we had just arrived home from spending three icy and rainy days in a cabin at Cheney Lake near Wichita. The kids were happy to be home because our spring break excursion was far from fun. Around noon on Friday, March 13, 2020, I received an email from the Riley County Health Department stating that the Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 school district would close for the next 14 days to prevent a potential spread of COVID-19 and we should practice social distancing to keep our families safe. The goal was to “flatten the curve”, our collective effort to reduce the spread of the potentially deadly respiratory disease. Okay: two weeks are manageable, I thought to myself, but was concerned about what they were going to do for two weeks and was concerned how I was going to focus on my graduate classes.

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, I received an email from my children’s school principal notifying parents that as of 8:35 a.m. on Monday, daily assemblies would be conducted through Facebook. This marked the beginning of an unknown new routine and the reliance on educational technology and social media to communicate and connect students as never before.

The principal outlined how the week would progress. In the meantime, I started receiving emails from my children’s teachers with links to educational websites in which I could either download worksheets or log in the kids to work online on a variety of assignments.

On Wednesday, March 18th, 2020, I received an email from the Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 Board of Education informing parents about the plans for the following weeks. Educators were sad, concerned, and worried about everything happening at that point as they had far more questions than answers. A representative from the Kansas State Department of Education

(KSDE) announced that a 40-member Continuous Learning Task Force, composed of many of the state's top educators including the Kansas Teachers of the Year, were working diligently to develop a Continuous Learning (CL) plan. Dr. Marvin Wade, Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 superintendent, also shared in his communication that the Child Nutrition Department and several teachers and administrators provided meals for 521 children on Monday and 962 on Tuesday. Based on need, they were identifying additional central locations to deliver school lunches. At this point, although anxious, I was very confident that the education department, school district, and my children's local school were doing everything they could to educate and feed the children and keep the parents informed.

Jay Scott (2020) offered a detailed timeline of what occurred in Kansas schools:

The Governor's announcement to close school buildings for the rest of the school year came in the middle of the week Kansas schools were initially closed due to COVID-19. The previous week (March 9 - 13), the Governor had announced that Kansas schools would close temporarily the following week (March 16 - 20), which happened to coincide with approximately 60% of Kansas schools' Spring Break week. Over the weekend of March 14th and 15th, leading the Governor, Dr. Watson, and other top officials to gather that weekend and make the decision to close school buildings for the rest of the school year. Governor Kelly made her announcement on Tuesday, March 17th, and KSDE, due to the incredible, tireless effort of the CL task force, was able to release the CL Guidance on Thursday, March 19th, to allow schools as much time as possible to plan for "school," albeit with all buildings closed, starting the following week. (pp. 1-2)

In all of ten days, the Continuous Learning Task Force Guidance (KSDE, 2020a) was created and distributed to all education professionals at the school and district levels. The guide

had five major components that also described Kansas Department of Education's expectations. It included: Essential Questions for Administrators, Essential Questions for Teachers, Professional Learning Guide to Prepare for the Continuous Learning Opportunities, Continuous Learning Framework 2020, and Family Partnerships and Support (KSDE, 2020a). In addition to the main factors outlined in the CL guidance, three themes emerged: (1) The concept of "less is more" in regard to the standards being learned during this time; (2) Extend grace to all parties, including yourself; and (3) Focus on teacher-student relationships first and foremost (Scott, 2020). The committee also designed a short version of the guide called The Kansas Family Guide to Continuous Learning. (KSDE, 2020b). The document offered guidance for parents on how to talk about COVID-19 with their children, how learning at home would proceed, and additionally, delineated how administrative and communication issues among parents, schools, and the community would be handled. These resources provided the path forward for schools and families and guidance for their new routine.

As a parent, I understood that I would become a teacher in a few days, and I would be solely responsible for my children's education. There are hardly words to describe how overwhelmed I felt knowing I would not only be teaching my children but navigating their emotions. My overwhelmed feeling was compounded by the fact that I was a single mother, an educator (i.e., I knew exactly what teaching my kids meant!), was a full-time doctoral student, and working as a graduate teaching assistant.

The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines the noun change as "the act, process, or result of changing such as alteration, transformation, or substitution" (Merriam-Webster, 2020). The discussion of change *per se* becomes shallow when we fail to discuss or define the nature of that change. Research has demonstrated that program changes and change management are most

likely to fail when the intentions and an organizational model are not specified (Nikalant & Ramnrayan, 2009; Zaltman & Duncan, 1977). Therefore, there are two ways to describe the change explored in this research: systemic change; and social change. Reigeluth and Garfinkle (1994) describe systemic change as a "paradigm shift, which entails replacing the whole thing," as well as a comprehensive process (p. 3). Zaltman and Duncan (1977) characterized social change "as the adjustment of one or more components of a social system to a change in another component of that system" (p. 7). Both definitions are intrinsically connected to changes in the learning process, which make continuous learning successful in the community.

Innovation requires leaders to change an entire process: the procedures, stakeholders, and participants' involvement; the definition of clear goals; a detailed plan of communication (goals and methods for all involved in the new process); and a well-structured support net. Before implementing any innovation in the school setting that will reach public schools statewide, stakeholders need to understand fully the objective, the implementation plan, and their role in the process. According to Subramony (2012), "fostering transformative learning and mindset change in stakeholders, thus constitutes the next step in the participant's journey towards realizing positive innovation within their schools" (p. 17). A plan to foster organizational learning is composed of several actions, and in the case of Kansas, the statewide continuous learning plan was drafted by the Kansas State Department of Education. In the case of my children's schools, not only was the school district involved, but every teacher and staff member were as well, which addressed all stakeholders.

With the implementation of any process or innovation—whether it involves a new curriculum, learning resources, food distribution, or educational technology—change invites both discomfort and inquiry. Joseph and Reigeluth (2010) identified six elements necessary for

any systemic change process to succeed: (1) stakeholder ownership; (2) learning organization; (3) the systemic change process; (4) education mindset; (5) systems view of knowledge; and (6) systems design. These six elements are examined thoroughly in the literature review that follows in Chapter Two. *These elements—if not well planned and executed with precision—can easily become impediments to change. Special attention must be given to communication as it is critical all stakeholders receive the same message at the same time not only to prevent misinformation from taking root but also to demonstrate equity. Again, these elements reflect the importance of clear goals, adept management, and strong communication plans to successfully usher significant change from paper to practice.*

The success of an innovation depends largely on how well messaging will be shared and communicated. Successful practice and theory applied to innovations can be related to the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003). Rogers (2002) explains,

Diffusion is a particular type of communication concerned with the spread of messages perceived as dealing with new ideas and necessarily represent a certain degree of uncertainty to an individual or organization. The four main elements in the diffusion of new ideas are (1) innovation, (2) communication channels, (3) time, and (4) the social system. (p. 990)

To start the process of advocating for a particular innovation, first, it has to be well described so users can understand its benefits, constraints, advantages, whether or not it is easy to use, and who will be giving support during the process. The second element concerns the channels used to communicate this innovation, and the third is the timing for each communication action. The fourth element addresses how participants relate to each other, what they have in common, and whether a support network must be created to encourage use of the innovation.

Based on my interactions with fellow educators at KSU and three teachers from my children's elementary school who called me in the last week of March 2020 to check on my family resources, it became clear to me that the adoption of the new will only happen if everyone involved understands what prompted the need for change, who the change agents were who drafted the new process, and how they arrived at the plan's conclusions for its creation, planning, and implementation.

Statement of the Problem

Prior to spring break in March 2020, the Riley County Health Department emailed members of the Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 community encouraging students and staff members who were traveling to take all the necessary precautions to avoid exposure to the coronavirus. Little did we realize the email would serve as a harbinger of what was to come. When Kansas Governor Laura Kelly announced the 14-day school closure to help "flatten the curve", it alerted me that more changes were likely in the near future. Indeed, just 12 days after the initial email from the Riley County Health Department, Governor Kelly declared all public schools were shuttering their doors for the remainder of the school year and pivoting to online instruction.

School buildings have closed before in the United States and most examples are regional. For example, schools in states affected by the Swine Flu in 2009 closed temporarily as did schools in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and fires have caused school closures in California in 2017 (Ash & Davis, 2009; Hill, 2020; Kennedy, 2017). These events are among the most contemporary and illustrate how school districts, school staff, and teachers dealt with the changes they made to accommodate students' learning process. Partridge, Rush & Wheeler (2016) discussed the importance of rapid development and implementation when an emergency

online school plan was not previously developed for a crisis protocol. Their research described several actions at the macro level concerning planning that must be considered to create a learning solution. Actions include emergency stations with internet and power sources, communication plans for families so they have access to health care, meals, clean water, and free online resources to use during instruction.

Borup et al. (2020), on the other hand, focused their research on one aspect during remote teaching and learning: the support system for students. The authors researched two ways of supporting student engagement: community with schools (the support network includes teachers, administrators, peers, and counselors) and students' community (parents, siblings, and friends). As the authors noted, the focus has some implications, regarding the students' environment when planning to provide support. During this pandemic, the entanglement was primarily related to a routine in which parents and close members of the community had to assume different roles in order to provide the support children needed to continue the schooling at home.

Research tends to concentrate on one aspect or another of a crisis, mostly related to planning/implementation and resources/infra-structure. However, little is known about how these changes are introduced, adopted, and experienced within the family context. The closure of school buildings not only meant interrupting a student's learning process and daily schedule, but it also represented significant changes in the family's routine and its access to books, instructional materials, educational technology (in classrooms and libraries), and one of the most crucial areas: food. I believe this autoethnography offers invaluable insights for educators and school leaders as it provides real-time context for how changes in schooling affect families during a crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to provide a highly personalized account of how my children, and I experienced the pivot to CL that occurred in their schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Everett and Shoemaker (1971) explained, change can also represent “diffusion, adoption, modernization, acculturation, learning, or socialization” (p. 10). As Brazilians living in the United States of America, adopting and adapting to this culture are key skill sets—truly, it has become our *modus operandi* as new situations and social engagements are textbook examples of how we acculturate. The central issues to investigate and understand include the equitable path to instruction, educational technology, and food security in the second semester of the 2019-2020 school year.

According to Tuchman (1994), “[W]e all live history, and not merely in the grand sense of wars, recessions, and political transformation. Rather, we live out the assumptions of our *époque* in the most mundane aspects of our daily lives” (p. 313). As an educator and single parent managing life in the middle of the pandemic, not only am I interested in understanding and discussing how the change process took place, but I am also engaged in learning and sharing experiences that might serve as lessons learned. I also share Chang’s (2008) views as an educator, in which he feels “compelled to prepare students to become cross-culturally sensitive and effective teachers for students of diverse cultural backgrounds” (p. 52). Through this auto-ethnographic study, I intend—as a parent, educator, member of the USD 383 community, and academic researcher—to explore how these changes were applied at a micro-level in the community and to explore the real-life implications of implementing the CL process in my home. My goal is for this study to be embraced by the education community and used to inform school leaders for a future challenge and circumstance we may face. This study will be

conducted with the lens of critical pedagogy addressing specific aspects of the diffusion of innovations framework.

Guiding Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

- (1) How did Covid-19 impact my family's education routine in the second semester of the 2020 schoolyear, more precisely during the period from March to May 2020?
 - (a) How did my personal experience as an international student and nanny prepare me to be a change agent within my family?
 - (b) How did my preparation as an educator, graduate degree in education, privilege and standing as an active and involved parent in our school community help me respond to the innate challenges within the CL process?
- (2) How could my life experiences and lessons learned benefit the larger educational community?
 - (a) How did school administrators, staff and teachers facilitate the pivot to virtual learning?
And, more specifically, how did they manage the change process in relation to the curriculum, technology, and school meals?
 - (b) How did educational technology affect the innovation process?

Methodology

As an auto-ethnographer, I am both the author and focus of the story, who tells and the one who experiences, the observer and the observed . . . I am the person at the intersection of the personal and the cultural, thinking, and observing as an ethnographer and writing and describing as a storyteller. (Ellis, 2009, p. 13)

As an autoethnographer, I am both the researcher and the subject of the research. This dissertation spans three decades of my life—from teenager, to teacher, to mother/Ph.D. candidate. It is astounding to think that my twins are just a few years younger than I was when I met my first exchange student, Cindy, and yet that experience was of such consequence; I am writing about it 30 years later. I chose this methodology because it is, as Chang (2008) says, “powerful” (p. 51). I am bringing multicultural knowledge, settings, and perspectives, but I am also exploring fundamental components necessary for educational research and its applicability. The focus is on my story and my lived experiences. I am the insider and the outsider sharing and describing a “first-hand experience” (Wolcott, 2003, p. 109).

Ethnography, *per se*, is cross-cultural (Chang 2008; Wolcott, 2003), which is the best way to study others as well as ourselves. The resulting studies are both culturally enriching and hold great promise and significance for teachers, educators, and researchers thanks to the diversity of our community, state, and country. Diversity is the cultural schema in the context we live, but it is composed of different views, opinions, and examples.

Definition of Terms

Diffusion: Diffusion is the process by which innovations spread to members of a social system. It is a very social process that involves interpersonal communication relationships (Rogers, 1971, 1995).

Education Technology: Educational Technology involves the disciplined application of knowledge to improve learning, instruction, and/or performance (Spector, 2016). Educational technology is a complex and integrated process involving people, procedures, ideas, devices, and organization for analyzing problems and devising, implementing, evaluating, and managing solutions to those problems, involved in all aspects of human learning (AECT 1977).

Food Secure: Able to consistently access or afford adequate food (Merriam Webster, 2020).

Innovation: Innovation is an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption (Rogers, 1995).

Instructional design: The theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning (Reiser & Depsey, 2002).

Instructional technology: Instructional technology is the theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning (AECT, 1994).

Social change: Social change is a process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of a social system (Rogers, 1971).

Systemic change: Systemic change is a process in which there is a paradigm shift, which entails replacing the whole thing (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 2010).

Limitations and Delimitations

There is some criticism related to qualitative inquiry that may limit this study's scope and limit the application of its results. Denzin (2014) points out that autoethnographic studies have been criticized for lacking generalization, having too little fieldwork, having small sample sizes, using biased data, and possibly being too self-absorbed, which may skew the analytic insights. On the other hand, Bailey (2007) provides a set of procedures that enhance the credibility of qualitative studies and minimizes areas of concern that, in the past, have been criticized for limiting the research scope. Bailey's methods and strategies include engagement in the field, thick descriptions, reflexivity, and data triangulation. I am acutely aware of the criticism and pitfalls associated with autoethnographic research studies and have taken numerous steps to

anticipate and mitigate them. I will rely upon best practices to write an accurate, ethical, and resourceful analysis. As Wolcott (1994) and Chang (2008) observed, there is a vital difference between data analysis and data interpretation of which the autoethnographer has to be aware. In their view, data analysis means working with the data closely in a systematic manner to find the interrelationships, as data interpretation focuses on “finding the cultural meaning beyond the data” (Chang, 2008, p. 127).

Nevertheless, this study is limited by my experiences and views, but I do not believe my life experiences would be considered limited by most conventional metrics. I’ve lived in three countries in as many continents, am trilingual, have attended and taught in both public and private schools, my children have attended elementary schools in both Brazil and the U.S., and I have attended universities in the United States of America both as an undergraduate student and now as a doctoral student. Additionally, I, like so many parents in 2020, became a teacher-on-demand for my three children. Undoubtedly, my values, prejudices, and beliefs will influence this inquiry. Likewise, delimitations include: (1) Observations were limited to my children, which restricts the investigation to members of one ethnicity and socio-economic status; and (2) The continuous learning process was limited to an eight-week period during the 2019-2020 school year.

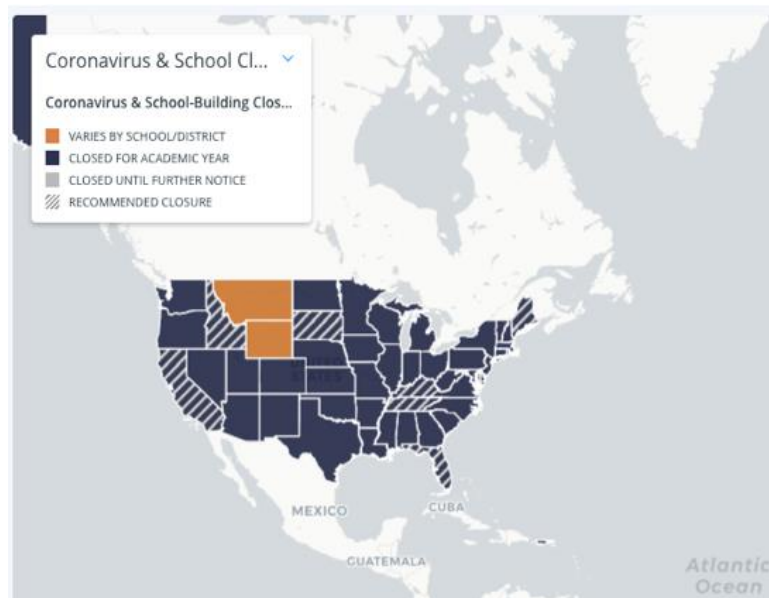
Statement of the Significance of the Study

*Mom, are we done yet? Asked just like that . . . and not “mãe, já estamos prontos?” Yes, we did it, son! It was May 15, 2020. The school year was over! ‘Let’s get ice cream,’ I told the kids. Never in a million years if I were in Brazil, would I reward my child for accomplishing something considered an obligation. But, when I reflect on the changes experienced and how they manifested, it is clear how **important they are** and how they affected my family.*

Ash and Davis (2009) reported several school districts throughout the United States closed their doors, leaving more than 300,000 students without class by April 30, 2009 because of the risk of contamination of the Swine flu. Texas schools were prepared and provided laptops for their students to continue their school-work from home. On the contrary, Robelen (2009) reported that a U.S. Government of Accountability Office 2008 study found 95% of the U.S. schools had emergency or crisis plans, "but they might not include contingencies for continuing education when schools are closed for an extended period" (p. 12). The Swine Flu pandemic of 2009-2010 claimed the lives of nearly 12,500 Americans. So far, the Covid-19 pandemic has swept across the country, infected millions, claimed the lives of nearly 300,000 fellow citizens, and revealed the strengths and weaknesses related to the public education system. As a comparison, in 2020, in the State of Kansas alone, 500 thousand students had to continue their education from home because the schools had to close their doors due to COVID-19.

According to *Education Week* (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has easily impacted more lives than the Swine Flu in 2009, "the closures affected at least 55.1 million students in 124,000 public and private schools in the United States." Figure 1 indicates nearly every state recommended or closed its schools during the 2019-2020 school year. The closure affected several families in two crucial areas: learning and food security.

Figure 1.1. State-by-State Map of 2019-2020 school building closure (Education Week, 2020)



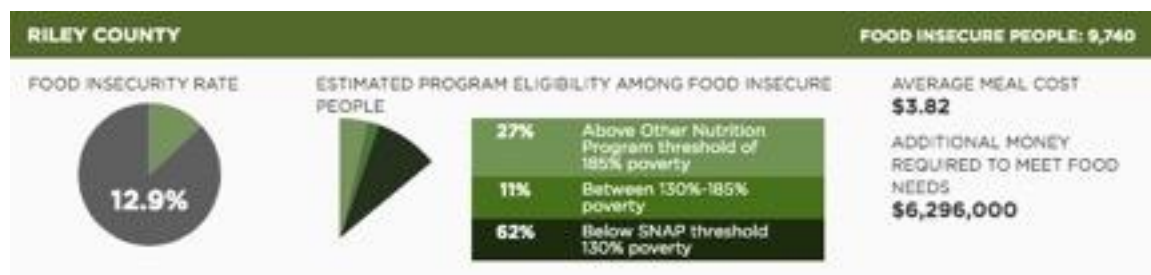
There is little doubt research about how schools and communities dealt with COVID-19 will reveal the need for additional planning and detailed contingencies. This research, however, will pave a path of lessons learned that may be applicable in future crises regarding equitable access to instruction and educational technology, and ensure food security.

According to an article written by Rafael Garcia (2020) in *The Manhattan Mercury*, Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 rented 1,500 mobile data hotspots and purchased three months of insurance for its iPads for a total of nearly \$400,000 as part of its emergency efforts to implement its CL plan. The school district sent a survey to all parents to assess individual households' needs. *When I received the hard copies and booklet necessary for the CL process, I was shocked. The survey led me to believe as it did for many other parents that the move to virtual learning would have been virtual. But it wasn't. The survey was only a means to gauge each student's digital access. During a subsequent discussion with a teacher, I learned so many children in the district did not have adequate technology at home. Students in middle and high*

school were prioritized to receive the district's available technology devices to continue their schooling online. For elementary students, online learning really just meant remote; they used paper-based learning packages and online activities were optional (if there were electronic devices at home, they could use them).

The pandemic has also revealed the level of food insecurity in this country and more specifically, opened eyes in local communities. Manhattan, Kansas, is a middle/upper middle class college town located in the nation's Heartland, and education is revered in this community with a population of almost 55,000 (United States Census Bureau, 2020) A staggering number of students—in the United States, including our little hamlet of Manhattan—are dependent on school meals. My children and I are beneficiaries of the school lunch program. According to Feeding America (2020): one in five children struggles with hunger in the State of Kansas; 41.4% of the households in the state receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; and 12.9% of the Riley County population—9,740 community members—fall into one of three food-insecure categories as Figure 2 shows.

Figure 1.2. Riley County numbers for Food Insecure People (Feeding America, 2020)



Moore and Ellsworth (2014) believe "any societal benefit from educational endeavors is purposeful, resulting from intentional objectives that drive their design and align them toward that outcome, from the system level down to specific projects and programs" (p. 120). By describing my perceptions and my cultural context, this study can contribute to answering crucial

questions related to systems and models of change and innovation, the importance of communication between schools and parents, inquiries related to how resources can be effectively implemented to maintain an equitable path for community members by describing the context and perceptions of a specific group of educational professionals and parents.

Researcher Positionality

Since August 2017, I have been interacting with U.S. American teachers, observing and learning through my children's own experiences, which methodology they use to teach, how they communicate with parents, and what resources they use and how. In the past two years, I have been observing how the elementary school setting provides instruction and assists its students in making decisions regarding my children's learning process. As Bourke (2014) points out, "The concept of self as a research instrument reflects the likelihood that the researcher's subjectivity will come to bear on the research project and any subsequent reporting of findings" (p. 2). My subjectivity is coming into greater focus with my immersion in this school environment.

As Bhattacharya (2017) states: "In qualitative research, it is important to discuss assumptions, beliefs, and values that inform the way you make meaning of your research topic" (p. 35). As I reflected on my subjectivity, I became aware of the assumptions I had made based on the questions on my children's school survey, which was that the school would provide everything needed to ensure a quality and equitable education for all students. Communication is another area rife with potential pitfalls as the identical message sent to parents can be interpreted differently by every person. I believe these assumptions will be given voice in my analysis. I have been working hard to become an education expert. Still, I may say that my studies, traveling, and professional experiences allow me to define myself as a specialist now. Being that said, my reflection on my positionality tells me that I position myself as a conscientious

educator, professional, parent, and teacher of my three children, and I value and consider each cultural context I am in.

I am a middle class, white Brazilian woman pursuing a Ph.D. at a U.S. public university, and my experience as an educator was an invaluable asset at home as it placed me in the fortunate position of being able to take control of my children's virtual education and orient them to their unorthodox elementary school experience. This most likely was a tremendous advantage over many other parents. By using positionality, these attributes not only define me, they are part of my identity. I have my own lived experiences, spiritual beliefs, and social and cultural contexts that also factor into my positionality.

I understand that without reviewing broader concepts and human attributes permeating our lives in society, I cannot immerse myself in this process of reflexivity. To start, it is clear to me that my culture and experiences in other countries such as my socioeconomic status, race, and language shaped my understanding of truth, choice, and freedom. According to McIntosh (1988), race does affect how a person sees him/herself and the others as she points out: "As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that put others at a disadvantage but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege which puts me at an advantage" (p. 1). Unlike McIntosh, I have always known that I was privileged for being white and people with different skin colors were at a disadvantage. But what put me at a disadvantage in some situations was my accent, which revealed my diversity, my non-American heritage. While my skin provided "cover", there was no hiding from my accent, which identified me as a foreigner.

When I left my Brazilian bubble, I began to observe what the world had to offer—and

how I was perceived in my new surroundings. In the matter of an international flight that took me to live in a new culture, I went from “ordinary” to “different”. Nevertheless, I was determined to learn and be a sponge in every way possible. Author bell hooks (1994) did something that fascinated me: She invited students and scholars to view pedagogy as the practice of freedom. hooks said: "When education is the practice of freedom, students are not only ones who are asked to share to confess. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow and are empowered by the process" (p. 21). She demonstrates how liberating knowledge and education can be not only for students but also for teachers. As having both on the same level, equality can be brought to the surface. In my view, I am responsible for making education the essential subject to bring liberation and a change of status in our society, but that will only happen through a conscious process in which students and teachers are active players in the context of learning and teaching.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 of this study contains the following sections: introduction, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, guiding research questions, the definition of terms, methodology, limitations and delimitations, statement of the significance of the study, researcher positionality, and the organization of the study. A review of the literature comprises Chapter 2. Chapter 3 is about Methodology and contains the sections: the path to autoethnography, telling the story, critical autoethnography as a method, research design and methods, and researching ethically in which I write about validity, credibility, rigor, and verisimilitude.

All narratives and events are a genuine part of my life story. I have kept the real names of my children, but individuals' names were either changed to their titles or pseudonyms to protect the identity of those included in the study.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Systemic change is comprehensive. It recognizes that a fundamental change in one aspect of a system requires fundamental changes in other aspects for it to be successful. – Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994

Introduction

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, I received an email from my children's principal informing me that beginning on Monday, she would conduct a daily assembly at 8:30 a.m. on Facebook, and at 1 p.m., the school would hold a virtual story time with an assigned teacher. She invited students to participate in a kindness challenge, announced birthdays, and explained that she and the faculty would do everything possible to maintain a sense of normalcy. She was clear about how our school community would proceed remotely over the next 14 days and said teachers would be emailing parents shortly to offer ideas on activities that would support assignments. She also outlined how the school would handle breakfast and lunch and provided crucial nutritional information. The kids were very excited, spring break enthusiasm level, about not having to attend school.

The principal shared in this assembly what would happen for the entire week.

On Tuesday, March 17, parents received two important emails. The first one was a flyer with all the information about common table community meals, where families in need could get ready-made meals along with details about several community organizations that provided critical free services such as health care assistance and transportation. The second email we received that afternoon was Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly's announcement informing us that all school facilities would be closed for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. The school closure came as a shock and quickly turned into a tremendous hardship on families. This

information directly impacted me. It took me about two days to process this and figure out how to handle my children's education and coursework along with my dissertation plans. At first, my emotions were raw. I cried a lot and did my best to conceal the fear and sense of being overwhelmed I was flooded with from the kids. I confided my concerns with my friend and boyfriend.

The following day, parents in Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 received an email with a letter from the board of education informing us that 25 of the top educators in the district would be developing plans for continuous learning under the supervision of Superintendent Dr. Marvin and several staff members. On the 19th, parents answered a survey about technology, specifically internet connectivity and electronic devices available in the home. Communication from the district was a staple of the continuous learning process.

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the research literature germane to this study and how it will shape and inform my research. As a parent and educator with broad experience in three diverse cultures, I will employ autoethnography's qualitative research method. The elements of autoethnography (inserts from my journal and my interpretation of documents and communications I received during that period) are infused within the chapters of this dissertation to better understand my life and how I handled the changes in my children's education during the pandemic.

This chapter consists of a brief description and background literature concerning the COVID-19 pandemic that recently impacted education. Next is a detailed review of the theory and literature related to the research questions for this study, followed by a summary that includes my understanding of how the research can contribute to the academy. It concludes with a brief review and transition statement to Chapter 3.

Background

Was 2019-20 the first pandemic? No. In 1918, the world was ravaged by the Spanish Flu, which actually began at Fort Riley, Kansas. (The pandemic got its name because Spanish journalists reported on it. Like the U.S., other countries would not provide data because of World War I.) The next pandemic hit the East and West coasts; the Midwest was largely spared. Were we better prepared today? Had we taken the lessons of the past seriously?

In the study about non-pharmaceutical interventions in the U.S. during the Spanish flu, Markel et al. (2007) showed that closing American schools earlier for a more extended period reduced the numbers of infections by the Spanish flu virus in 1918. Closing schools and banning public gatherings is a form of non-pharmaceutical intervention (NPI). The authors also point out that in 1918 most of the families had a stay-at-home mom, eliminating the need for childcare, and there was not such a high dependency on school meals. The societal and financial situations for most families are dramatically different today than they were 100 years ago.

The closing of hundreds of schools in the past two decades due to pandemics and other challenges, led administrators to develop immediate plans for continuing their students' education, using technology and keeping open channels of communication. In May 2009, the U.S. reached its peak of 726 schools closed because of the Swine Flu. It is believed that schools were better prepared to handle crises due to the events of the 1999 shooting at Columbine High School in Columbine, Colorado, and the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Since that time, administrators have invested in technology as part of the solution to deliver education (Ash & Davis, 2009; Education Week, May 8, 2009).

Christensen and Alexander (2020) described a pilot project developed by a school in 2006 in which the leadership designed a Distance Learning Day (DLD) to prepare stakeholders.

The DLD was a day of instruction at home that used several instructional and technology resources. As a result, teachers reported several benefits of DLD, including student autonomy, problem-solving skills, and increase in technology use. Teachers also indicated, regarding preparation, that 47% of students were well prepared and 47% were somewhat prepared. Students responded to how the DLD compared with regular school days regarding the time they spent on activities. In the students' answers, 46% spent less time with DLD, 20% same time, and 32% spent more time in DLD. Students also commented in open-ended responses that would have appreciated more explicit instructions, more fun activities, and less work. To complete the survey, the authors reported 111 responses from parents about the level of usefulness of the DLD. They reported 38% of the parents felt the pilot project was useful for the future, 36% felt the exercise was useful for possible school closure, and 26% responded it was not useful.

Pryor, Wilson, Chapman, and Bates (2020) researched elementary teachers' experience during the Covid-19 school closure. The researchers conducted qualitative research with 18 educators employed in public schools in Western Tennessee and Western Kentucky, serving rural and non-metropolitan students. The analysis revealed inconsistent access to Internet and technology devices, which some schools provided for students; teachers and students underwent significant changes in their routines and adaptations. Teachers had to develop more online activities or more paper-based instructional materials, and students experienced a sense of overwhelm because of that. One especially noteworthy statistic from the study: All teachers indicated "initial hesitation and dubiousness of success in distance learning, but most (15 of 18) indicated they benefited from the experience and planned to carryover of distance education elements into future teaching" (p. 6). Nearly 25% of teachers, who set clear expectations and procedures, 4 of 18, improved their perception of distance learning and reported better outcomes.

Crises, such as a pandemic, are great motivators for changes and innovation. As research shows, several elements contribute to a successful change; they may include technology, instructional resources, preparedness, and improved communication among teachers, staff, parents and students.

Theory and Research Literature

πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει

Everything changes and nothing stands still. – Heraclitus, c.535 BCE – c.475 BCE

Conceptualizing Social Change and Its Elements

“Social change is the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of a social system” (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971, p. 7). Lippid (1973) does not use the modifier “social” in his definition of change, but “social” is where systemic change occurs: “any planned or unplanned alteration in the status quo in an organism, situation, or process” (p. 37). Zaltman & Duncan (1977) analyzed the definition of eleven authors and defined change as “the relearning on the part of an individual or group (1) in response to newly perceived requirements of a given situation requiring action and (2) which results in a change in the structure and /or functioning of a social system” (p. 10). Zaltman, Kotler, and Kaufman (1972) identified two dimensions to categorize social change: the dimension of time and society’s level (pp. 2-3). The dimension of time is divided into short and long terms.

Interestingly, Rogers and Schoemaker (1971) and Rogers (2003) also describe the importance of time in innovation and, consequently, change. The authors refer to the time dimension in the following stages: (1) when the process the individual faces pass from having the first knowledge to adopting or rejecting the innovation, (2) when the behavior of the individual leads him to an early or later adoption of innovation about other members of the

system, (3) the innovation's rate in a social system measured by the number of members adopting the innovation in a given time. Regarding the dimension of the level of society, Zaltman, Kotler, and Kaufman (1972) describe three levels: (1) micro (individual), which in the short term leads to attitude and behavior change, and in the long term leads to life-cycle change; (2) intermediate (group) which in the short term leads to normative and administrative change, and in the long term, organizational change; and (3) macro (society) which in the short term leads to invention-innovation and revolution, and in the long term takes to a higher level of sociocultural evolution (pp. 2-3).

As I transition from the concept of change and social change to change in an educational setting, I cite the definition of 21st century researchers Fullan, Cuttress, and Kilcher (2005). They point out that “the presence of change knowledge does not guarantee success, but its absence ensures failure” (p. 54). Throughout their 20-year journey of working with an innovative process, they created eight drivers to develop effective and lasting change: (1) engagement of people's moral purposes, (2) building capacity, (3) understanding the changing process, (4) development of cultures for learning, (5) development of cultures for evaluation, (6) focus on leadership for change, (7) foster of coherence (creation of coherence), (8) cultivation of a tri-level development: what has to happen at the school and community level, what has to happen at the district level, and what has to happen at the state level (pp. 54-58).

Nikalant and Ramnarayam (2006) emphasize the human aspect and consider the leader's role as a system architect. The authors point out that changes contain three actions: “(a) creation of cross-functional linkages in the organization, (b) alignment of policies, procedures and the removal of structural impediments to performance and change, and (c) creation of new routines for continuous improvement” (p. 212). Zaltan and Duncan (1977) describe the person in charge

of changes as the change agent who has the role to “develop a climate for planned change by overcoming resistances and rallying forces for positive growth” (p. 46).

The Study of Diffusion of Innovation

The study of diffusion of innovation began in the 20th century and was based on several anthropological studies. It is also referred to as “early sociology” and was based on the contributions of Gabriel Tarde (1903), whose insight took “into the process by which the behavior of opinion leaders is imitated by other individuals” (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971, p. 52). The research tradition expanded to the fields of rural sociology, education, medical sociology, communication marketing, agricultural economics, geography, and psychology (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971, pp. 53-58).

Diffusion and innovation are two processes and Rogers & Shoemaker (1971) clarify the difference between them. Diffusion happens among units or areas in a social system, whereas innovation relates to the decision process within the mind of an individual (p. 99). “Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system (Rogers, 2003, p. 5). Rogers (2003) also described as “a kind of social change defined as the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of the social system” (p.6).

The Four Main Elements of Diffusion

It is essential to mention that decisions and events before the adoption of an innovation strongly affects the diffusion process: “The main elements in the diffusion of new ideas include: (1) an innovation, (2) that is communicated through certain channels, (3) over time, (4) among the members of a social system” (Rogers, 2003, p. 36). The four elements are described below and shown in Table 1.

Rogers (2003) describes five attributes of an innovation: (1) relative advantage: the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it replaces; (2) compatibility: the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with existing values, past experiences and needs of potential adopters; (3) complexity: the degree to which an innovation is perceived as challenging to understand and use; (4) trialability: the degree to which individuals can experience innovation on a limited basis; and (5) observability: the degree to which the results of innovation is visible to others (pp. 15-17). Communication channels are a crucial part of this process. To a certain degree, the channels are more or less effective according to the innovation behavior imitated by individuals in the system they habituate.

The Diffusion of Innovation process encompasses decisions, activities, and impacts needs or problems (Rogers, 2003). In this process, decisionmakers strive to acquire knowledge about innovation to have an understanding of it. When observing the preconditions that affect the decision-making process of innovation, Rogers (2003) presents four types of needs for the account, which include the set of existing practices, perceived needs and problems, innovativeness – which is the degree to which an individual or group is relatively nascent in adopting new ideas from other members of a system – and the norms of social systems. The process has five attributes. (1) Knowledge happens when the decision-making stage is exposed to an existing innovation and understands how it works. This includes the characteristics of the decision-making process concerning socioeconomic aspects, personality variables, and behavior communication. (2) Persuasion happens when the decision-making stage has a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards innovation. (3) The decision occurs when the decision-making stage makes efforts in activities that lead to the choice between the adoption and the rejection of the innovation. (4) Implementation takes place when a decision-making stage puts a new idea to use.

Finally, (5) confirmation occurs when an individual seeks reinforcement for an innovative decision already made (Rogers, 2003).

Finally, there is the social system and its attributes. The “the social system is a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem-solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers, 2003, p. 37). The system has a structure with the purpose to give “stability and regularity to individual behavior in a system” (Rogers, 2003, p. 37). Within the system, there are norms to be followed by the system’s members. The opinion leadership has the responsibility to influence other individuals informally, and the change agents are in charge of affecting individuals and organizations in the innovation-decision process.

Table 1. *The four elements of Diffusion by Rogers (2003)*

The innovation	Technological innovations ● Hardware ● Software ● Technology clusters Characteristics of innovation ● Relative advantage ● Compatibility ● Trialability ● Observability ● Re-invention
2. Communication Channels	Mass Media Communication Interpersonal Communication ● Homophily (occurs between who share similar interests, beliefs, education, and social groups – more effective) ● Heterophily (opposite of homophily – more obstacles)
3. Time	Innovation-Decision Process ● Knowledge ● Persuasion ● Decision ● Implementation ● Confirmation Adopter Categories ● Innovator

	• Early adopter • Early majority • Late majority • Laggards
4. Social System	Diffusion Social structure & diffusion Communication structure System norms Opinion leaders Change agents

Changes in 2019-20

*What is happening at present is that changes are occurring so rapidly
that the rearview mirror does not work anymore – at jets speeds, rearview
mirrors are not very useful. – Bruce R. Powers, 1989*

Veletsianos (2020) brings awareness that educational technologies will not alone be a solution to educational systems or crises in education. Just a couple of weeks before educational institutions had to make several changes in March 2020 to accommodate remote learning, he and his colleague authored the following statement:

In this increasingly unstable world, crises potentially impact our education systems. This will be true whether the crisis is caused by the circulation of a new pathogen or something else entirely: hurricanes, flooding, or wildfire, now more common due to climate change. We have before us a stark reminder that we should approach the promises of technological solutions with caution. Flexible and resilient educational systems required more than tools. They demand collaboration, care, preparation, expertise, resources, and learning lessons from the past. (Houlden & Veletsianos, 2020, p. 55)

Any change involving more than two components and a diverse group of members collaborating to modify a system can be called a systemic change. Researchers in systemic change in education have written extensively about the need for systemic change (Chow, 2008; Reigeluth & Duffy, 2008; Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994). Theories of systemic change are of incredible help to understand that any change, innovation, or reform does not happen in one way (Reigeluth & Duffy, 2008; Squire & Reigeluth, 2000).

Diverse scholars have written studies and articles concerning changes and technology integration in the school setting. Most researchers have great experience in higher education; however, they lack classroom exposure. A way of understanding best practices and researching them is to ask those implementing them. Using Twitter, Facebook, and group texts, Carl Hooker (2020) posted six questions to learn how schools were prepared for long-term building closure. His inquiry received responses from educators all around the world, many of which showed a great deal of creativity, systematic processes, and preparedness to assist students' needs in a more personalized manner. In addition to sharing a summary of the answers, Hooker added a brief summary that included possible ideas and solutions. The first question was about how teachers delivered instruction. It was clear from the responses that several children lacked access to the Internet. Therefore, learning had to be delivered through different LMS platforms and hard copy learning packets. The second question was about the online access at home, which led to schools providing hotspots and activities such as writing journals for English Language Arts, as well as reading books from local libraries. The third question was about how prepared teachers and staff were. The idea was to have a plan of deliverables regardless of the global pandemic, from a step-by-step guide for technology use and integration to more advanced tools and activities such as creating a Paddle. Questions four through six revolved around staff and

paraprofessionals' norms and roles, which focused on communication improvements between home and school and definition and communication of responsibilities.

Elgart (2021) described four insights gleaned from three surveys completed by the education nonprofit Cognia (2021) between late April and June 2020. There were 74,000 participants in the survey, which included the voices of students, parents, and teachers. Of the total respondents, 79% were from a geographically and socioeconomically diverse set of 335 schools in 35 states in the United States and Puerto Rico (p. 48). The focus of the research was to identify specific instructional challenges the respondents faced during the school closure. The survey highlighted “the need for K-12 educators to focus on four key challenges, having to do with rigor, routines, relationships, and resources” (p.49).

As school administrators assisted students with hotspots, technology devices, and learning packets, they realized that children and families required learning and food. “At the national level, we project 54 million food-insecure Americans in 2020, approximately 17 million higher than in 2018. For children, the food insecurity rates are projected to increase to 18 million, up nearly 7 million from 2018” (Gundersen, Hake, Dewey, & Engelhard, 2021, p. 157).

The 2019-20 pandemic has demonstrated that school administrators had to adapt and make learning changes and feed their students. According to Palmer, Carey, Valette, and Sanderson (2020), “a food system is complex and not easy to address” (p. 518). The researchers addressed the need considering the following aspects: (1) preparedness: more planning including local and regional food systems; (2) system thinking: adoption of a systematic approach to integrate food systems; (3) strengthen social safety nets to ensure viability: making firm commitments among small/family farmers and medium organizations along the food chain (p. 518); (4) centrality of knowledge sharing: valuing good practices and building solidarity; (5)

enable scale of appropriate action: allowing the decision-making process to be scaled at a community level; (6) enable fact-based decision-making: a gathering of information and evidence for what works; (7) recognize the right to food having all levels of government fulfill its responsibility to guarantee individuals the right to food (p. 519). The changes in 2019-20 encompassed several needs at different levels that had to be accommodated systematically and systemic by diverse professionals from the school districts and the community.

Change Process for Innovation or Innovation for a Change Process

The pattern of technical progress is fixed, moving along one and the same track in all societies. Although political, cultural, and other factors may influence the pace of change, they cannot alter the general line of development that reflects the autonomous logic of discovery. – Andrew Feenberg, 2002

Before becoming a scholar, I had the opportunity to work at a Brazilian university as an instructional designer. This experience was back in 2002. My first project was to provide instructional development assistance to faculty who received a large grant to implement their course materials in an LMS, WebCT. Faculty were selected based on their history of innovation. However, after meeting them, I realized that the grant funds were a greater lure than their academic curiosity. The second project under my coordination named “Pioneiros II” included more support from key players within the university.

According to Mendonca, Maia, and Goes (2004), the implementation of a learning management system to mediate face-to-face courses within the business administration faculty showed varying results due to the increased support of instructional designers and stakeholders from the project “Pioneiros I” to “Pioneiros II.” In statistical terms, 61% of the faculty completed the redesign and added new technology in their courses in *Pioneiros I*, whereas 93%

did in the second project, *Pioneiros II*. This led to the conclusion that more instructional support and personal assistance would improve implementation results. The results improved in “*Pioneiros II*” due to more assistance of instructional designers acting as facilitators, innovative teaching and learning methodologies for the integration of educational technology, better infrastructure, and user friendlier LMS (Blackboard) (pp. 6-8). The first project was primarily based on innovation and the second project incorporated more elements of change, including the role of the change agent, methodology of teaching, and project implementation.

Ellul (1964) analyzed the importance of the dominant technological shifts, but Bowers (2000) believes that each person has the ability to control the amount of technology in their lives. He posits that the “global spread of technological development, while perhaps irreversible, can be limited” (p. 144). In his book *The Technological Society*, Ellul (1964) wrote a reflection on the sociological aspects involving large groups of people and the ways technology was affecting their lives. The author did not disregard the “existence of the individual action” but considers it difficult to bring the analysis to the most general level. (p. xxviii)

My intentions in this study are to answer the following questions regarding change and innovation: how did Covid-19 impact my family’s education routine in the second semester of the 2020 school year, more precisely during the period from March to May 2020?; how did my personal experience as an international student and nanny prepare me to be a change agent within my family?; and how could my life experiences and lessons learned benefit the larger educational community? My approach is to consider individual decisions and actions since most of the literature explores the topic on a macro-level, groups in society and communities instead of an individual perspective in opposition to Ellul’s (1964) study.

To conclude this section, Savoy and Carr-Chellman (2014) elaborate on the role of a change agent, who has the responsibility to “navigate through activities that bring into play the organization’s social network, which allows for more distributed leadership for implementing change” (p. 624). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) defined seven roles the change agent performs, which includes (1) being responsible for developing need for change; (2) establishing a change relationship; (3) diagnosing the problem; (4) creating intent to change in the client; (5) translating intent into action; (6) stabilizing changes and preventing discontinuances; and (7) achieving a terminal relationship (pp. 230-231). All those roles have been in a certain manner performed by me and several parents or family members during the CL process.

A Critical View of Educational Technology and Food Access

Technology integration and inclusion are two recurring topics in education. In rethinking technology, Bowers (2000) points out how the cycles of innovation are becoming shorter and shorter, leading to obsolescence and how we are becoming obsessed with innovations (p. 177). The author makes us reflect on the current trend of using the computer all the time for the preparation of a curriculum, which marginalizes the teacher’s role and responsibility to benefit software developers (p. 165). His views on teachers’ social responsibility are the following:

Teachers also need to avoid being taken in by the myth that computers are simply a complex tool that ensures social progress. Indeed, the complexity of understanding the amplification and reduction characteristics of computers make the teacher’s task even more complicated. (Bowers, 2000, p. 167).

Unequal access to technology has become a problem for schools (Bessette, 2020, Kitchen & Berk, 2016, Subramony, 2014) and were laid bare by the pandemic. The issue is not new for several scholars who have addressed the topic and brought awareness for the commitment

necessary to generate equity in education. Bessette (2020) elaborated that not only students but also faculty suffered from a lack of appropriate access to the internet and technology devices during the pandemic and that the advice of “just go to the library or Starbucks” was no longer possible (p. 8).

Inequality was also present in the access to food and food distribution. According to Gundersen, Hake, Dewey & Engelhard (2020), 15% to 19% of residents in Riley County are food insecure, which is at least two points lower than the state of Kansas. Families had to worry about teaching their children at home and about how to put food on the table when more than half of children in the country depended on school meals. In contrast, the Kansas State Department of Education developed a guide – Equity Guidance for Continuous Learning (2020) to inform staff and teachers about several topics regarding equity, such as food and technology access, as well as highlighted the possible barriers for non-English speaking families in which the issue was addressed: “As districts and schools decide if, when and where to serve meals to children within their communities, consider whether there are barriers to accessing sites for vulnerable populations” (p. 3).

In this study, first, I will bring my own experience as a parent and an educator with knowledge in educational technology to respond to the question of how did my preparation as an educator, graduate degree in education, privilege, and standing as an active and involved parent in our school community help me respond to the innate challenges within the CL process? Second, based on the literature studied and the data collected, I intend to answer the following questions under the critical lenses of the use and integration of educational technology and theories related to innovation and change management: How did school administrators, staff, and teachers facilitate the pivot to virtual learning? More specifically, how did they manage the

change process concerning the curriculum, technology, and school meals? And, how did educational technology affect the innovation process?

Instructional Planning

It was on a Saturday afternoon at the end of April 2020, when I called Susan to ask if we could meet at Tuttle Creek Park for the children to play outdoors and social distance. Susan is Daniel's best friend's mom. At this point, my kids hadn't seen their friends for about 50 days. She agreed, and we sat on our chairs on the lawn and started talking about parenting and teaching. At first, I listened because I didn't want to influence her opinion. I was very unhappy with the learning packages and wanted to hear her views about it. Within five minutes into our conversation, she vented. "I am so frustrated with the lesson plans. It is a mess, it is hard to find the key answers and my son keeps telling me – Mom, I already learned this at school, mom, why do I have to do this all over again." Her frustration was similar to mine. I am an instructional designer who worked for more than ten years in the field, and I was absolutely shocked at the lack of organization in the material, all the extra resources at the end of the package without a link to the content, no learning objectives or any introduction to proper guidance in how to apply the lesson. Every day, I prepared a sheet for my kids with the lesson plan for the day to make it easy on me and on them. My thoughts were constantly on parents who had no experience in the education field. My perception (and it became the truth) is that the packages were made to fit one size only. The packages were not designed school by school, they had been created by a group of teachers per grade, which did not necessarily include your child's teacher.

A discussion about instructional planning and design is vital to address how school administrators, staff, and teachers facilitate the pivot to virtual learning, more specifically, how they managed the change process concerning the curriculum, technology, and school meals.

Hoffman (2014) points out that in the 1970s and 1980s, instructional planning and action did not follow a rational or systematic planning model by teachers, “Much planning occurred mentally rather than on paper” (p. 897). Besides, objectives were mainly part of the student needs and activities instead of the focus of the planning. Most of the curriculum materials were used to consult new ideas and as a base for resource availability and district mandates (p. 897). Earle (1998) conducted his research in the 1990s and observed a shift into instructional design (ID) theories and practices for schools. He reported the use of ID was used by some teachers mainly because the existing models were not ideal for them: “to bridge the gap between the theory of instructional design and the practice of teaching, developing practical models and principles to reach our common goal of enhancing teaching and learning” (p. 43). The author concluded that most teachers apply ID principles but did not follow the classic ID models; teacher mental models differ from the traditional ID models, and there is a need for a less technical language of instruction, and finally, that ID can be taught successfully to preservice teachers, with the note that one course would not be enough. Still, it would enhance the perceptions and importance of teaching planning.

Elgard (2021), the CEO and President of Cognia, a non-profit organization of global educators, described the research findings conducted by Cognia researchers. One of the findings says that “staff reported that teachers tended to water down their academic expectations, assigning relatively easy work that students could complete independently, rather than spending significant time on instructional design and thinking through new ways of using technology or scheduling” (p. 47) The survey data also revealed that:

Most teachers were consumed with immediate challenges related to preparing instructional activities and assignments for their online classes. Most teachers

(70%) reported that this work — preparing online assignments and activities, many of them less than rigorous — took significantly more time than they had spent preparing activities in their face-to-face classrooms. (p. 47)

Elgard (2021) suggested from the results of the research that the “Four ‘R’s” challenged the educational community: rigor, routines, relationships, and resources. As for rigor, he cited that teachers were more concerned with keeping students busy than teaching them rigorous material. There was a lack of interesting work including independent projects, group inquiry, and project-based learning. Another key issue was the need for more professional development and opportunities for collaboration, which would certainly have helped teachers transition from face-to-face to online learning. Regular routines were essential for keeping consistency. Teachers were encouraged to reach out to the parents for help on this task. Relationships, once deemed a challenge, was the category that saw the most dramatic shift in the research as 92% of parents appreciated the teachers’ expertise; 88% of teachers checked their students daily, 57% several times during the week; 96% of parents agreed that teachers showed genuine care for their child(ren); and 95% of students said that teachers cared for them (pp. 49-51).

Instructional planning also was an issue that came up by one of eighteen participants from Pryor, Wilson, Chapman, & Bates (2020) on their qualitative research in teaching during the pandemic. On the topic of meeting students’ needs in adapting materials, which takes time and planning, participant Z stated, “I was struggling with how to make that (lesson) into a technology that we could use. So, we went on a virtual field trip to the Seattle Aquarium” (p. 5). The research also reports that not all participants had

access to the internet for their students, which shows the privilege of this teacher who could integrate the virtual visit into his/her lesson.

Review of Literature Summary

Change occurs at different levels, i.e., the individual, the group, and societally. Changes are social because they involve humans. The human aspect is responsible for fostering the relationship among the people, things, decisions, processes, and the communication that permeates this complex issue.

Change and innovation have different attributes. Fullan, Cuttress, and Kilcher (2005) emphasized engagement, understanding of the process, and coherence. Rogers (2003) describes four elements: innovation per se and communication through specific channels, time, and social system members. The Diffusion of Innovation (Rogers, 2003) has been conducted under the premise that individuals were adopters of innovations.

Research has shown that any change in education affects students, teachers, staff members, and families. The process of change and innovation during the second semester of the 2019-20 school year revealed a multitude of complex elements such as the access to the Internet and electronic devices to continue students' learning process, educational technology, instructional design and planning, communication channels (Eldgard, 2021; Pryor, Wilson, Chapman, & Bates, 2020) and food access (Gundersen, Hake, Dewey & Engelhard 2020).

Contribution of the Study

This autoethnography study aims to bring changes in the lives of millions of families and educators under the perspective of one individual who played both roles. It is known that researchers tend to design and implement their studies, placing themselves in an academic “bubble” and therefore consider mostly the “big picture” of the issue in the study. I intend to

explore essential theories for the process of change and innovation, bringing to life a story about a mom and her three children and their experience with those changes.

Summary of Chapter 2

Overall, the theories of system change, diffusion of innovation, and contributions from the field all serve to support any process of change or innovation. Although researchers implement the ideas appropriately, the focus of most studies is usually to capture robust quantitative results or generic qualitative input from small and large groups. Few studies explore the qualitative aspects of how an individual feels and behaves in relation to that change and/or innovation.

There is undoubtedly a gap in research on the description of the relationship of the individual with the changes and challenges the Covid-19 pandemic presented to the continuation of the learning process for millions of students. This autoethnography study has the purpose of filling this gap by analyzing the guidelines developed by the Kansas Department of Education and the implementation of the CL process, the communication and educational materials from my children's principal, teachers, staff members, and my own routines to teach and parent during this semester.

The following chapter, Chapter 3, discusses the research methodology autoethnography, design and methods.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Our stories are instrumental in constructing our identities, and they help inform our interpersonal relationships. – Bochner (2012)

The Path to Autoethnography

Our lives inform our questions, our methods, our populations of study, and colors our interpretation. There is no such thing as objective research. As long as humans are involved at any stage, there is no such thing as objectivity. If we go deep enough, we will find a connection to ourselves in all research. – Tamara Bertrand Jones (2015)

Autoethnography was not my research method of choice. Due to COVID-19 and the impossibility of flying to Brazil, where I had planned to work on a case study, my topic and methodology morphed out of necessity. Given the insurmountable challenges and my inability to move forward as previously planned, in March 2020, I entertained the notion of expanding my field of research to include a voice I had never considered: my own. After much reflection, I realized there were many possibilities and learning opportunities embedded within my life experience, particularly in: the context of being an exchange student; my identity as a person formed by three cultures; my international academic journey and how these realities shaped my views; and how my privilege opened doors.

Many scholars have identified a richness inherent in writing about personal experiences (Chang, 2008, Denzin 2014, Ellis, 2009). One definition of autoethnography that resonated with me was Denzin's (2014): "autoethnographies and biographies are conventionalized, narrative expressions of life experience" (p. 7). As I dove into autoethnography literature, it became clear that this methodology allowed me to contribute to academia in both a deep and authentic fashion. What otherwise could have been viewed as a dry research topic, came to life by describing my

home as my children and I navigated the CL plan. Through autoethnography, I am free to describe how this disruptive event touched my family in a transformational way and can best account for the process and its effects when considering myself and others.

Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang (2010) describe autoethnography as “a qualitative research method that utilizes data about self and its context to gain an understanding of the connectivity between self and others within the same context” (p. 2). As for the process of autoethnography, according to Ellis, Adams, & Bochner (2011), “the method combines the characteristics of an autobiography and an ethnography” (p. 3). Both descriptions underscore the importance of an interpretative framework to the qualitative research field, which I find both fascinating and challenging, and gladly contribute to through this inquiry.

By exploring these two methods, autobiography and ethnography, it is imperative to define their identifying characteristic. Autobiography includes specific and selected passages and experiences from the past, is based on interviews, recordings, journals, and may consist of artifacts such as photographs and particular quotes (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Smith (1994) describes biography as life writing with many labels, including autobiographies, journals, life stories, memoirs, portraits, profiles, etc. As for attributes, Smith points out "most social scientists argue that biography should move beyond narration and storytelling of the particular into more abstract conceptualizations, interpretations, and explanations" (p. 295).

Ethnography shares several key elements with (auto)biographies, autoethnographies, life stories, and personal narratives. Ethnography is the study of others and includes a set of required attributes. According to Wolcott (2003): the first attribute is holistic – finding a balance between being focused and at the same time giving enough attention to context; the second is cross-cultural in a way that "culture refers to the various ways different groups go about their lives to the belief systems associated with that behavior" (Wolcott, 1999, p. 25). The third vital attribute is comparative

because "everything we do is based on comparisons," including cross-cultural comparisons (Wolcott, 2003, p. 112). Wolcott (2003) also includes nine other needed attributes to be considered in an ethnographic study: (1) reports on the first-hand experience; (2) it is conducted in natural settings; (3) it requires intimate, long-term acquaintance; (4) it is non-evaluative; (5) descriptive; (6) specific or particular; (7) flexible and adaptive; (8) corroborative; and (9) idiosyncratic and individualistic (p. 120). Wolcott (2003) used the analogy of baking bread and the selection of its ingredients when considering ethnography attributes. He affirms that although none of the features seem to be indispensable, the baker needs to have a feel for each ingredient considering the "intended purpose, expectations, and limits" (p. 121). By choosing autoethnography as a method, I am exercising and engaging in the praxis of writing about a personal event, in which I explore my life experiences and the others around me, in the framework of a cultural context and my interpersonal social customs and habits, which were informed by three distinct cultures, including the entanglement of relationships, emotions, and finances. Cooking is an apt analogy in that I select the primary and necessary ingredients, enriching the flavor and texture through the just-right blend of national and international seasonings.

Another reason for choosing autoethnography as a method is based on Ellis's (2004) definition of autoethnography: "research, writing, story, and method that connects the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political" (p. xix). As an academic and productive and engaged member of society, I am morally responsible for contributing to my community, whether that's through sharing my experiences, teaching, or mentoring. Politics aside, as important and contributing members of the community, my voice and my children's voices deserve to be heard and considered within the inevitable discourse that ensues when changes occur in schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to provide a highly personalized account of how my children, and I experienced the pivot to CL that occurred in their schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Everett and Shoemaker (1971) explained, change can also represent “diffusion, adoption, modernization, acculturation, learning, or socialization” (p. 10). As Brazilians living in the United States of America, adopting and adapting to this culture are key skill sets—truly, it has become our *modus operandi* as new situations and social engagements are textbook examples of how we acculturate. The central issues to investigate and understand include the equitable path to instruction, educational technology, and food security in the second semester of the 2019-2020 school year.

According to Tuchman (1994), “[W]e all live history, and not merely in the grand sense of wars, recessions, and political transformation. Rather, we live out the assumptions of our *époque* in the most mundane aspects of our daily lives” (p. 313). As an educator and single parent managing life in the middle of the pandemic, not only am I interested in understanding and discussing how the change process took place, but I am also engaged in learning and sharing experiences that might serve as lessons learned. I also share Chang’s (2008) views as an educator, in which he feels “compelled to prepare students to become cross-culturally sensitive and effective teachers for students of diverse cultural backgrounds” (p. 52). Through this auto-ethnographic study, I intend—as a parent, educator, member of the USD 383 community, and academic researcher—to explore how these changes were applied at a micro-level in the community and to explore the real-life implications of implementing the CL process in my home. My goal is for this study to be embraced by the education community and used to inform school leaders for a future challenge and circumstance we may face. This study will be

conducted with the lens of critical pedagogy addressing specific aspects of the diffusion of innovations framework.

Guiding Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

- (1) How did Covid-19 impact my family's education routine in the second semester of the 2020 schoolyear, more precisely during the period from March to May 2020?
 - (a) How did my personal experience as an international student and nanny prepare me to be a change agent within my family?
 - (b) How did my preparation as an educator, graduate degree in education, privilege and standing as an active and involved parent in our school community help me respond to the innate challenges within the CL process?
- (2) How could my life experiences and lessons learned benefit the larger educational community?
 - (a) How did school administrators, staff and teachers facilitate the pivot to virtual learning? And, more specifically, how did they manage the change process in relation to the curriculum, technology, and school meals?
 - (b) How did educational technology affect the innovation process?

Telling the Story

In July 1991, when my return flight landed at Brazil's Salgado Filho International Airport in Porto Alegre after my year as an exchange student at Oak Park High School in Kansas City, Missouri, several family members and friends greeted me. It was a cold winter day in mid-July. Not only had I brought home a year's worth of memorable cultural experiences, I also gained 40 pounds, thanks to American cuisine and turning to food for self-soothing as I

coped with the anxiety of being away from home and lack of acceptance. I joined the exchange student program as a volunteer, as I was expected to do, and worked with Brazilian families interested in hosting foreign exchange students. As I began advising and preparing Brazilian students for their year abroad, I realized that my success in engaging families and students on this intercultural experience depended on me telling my story.

Ellis (2004) views an autoethnography as a social project. The author writes about the importance of stories focusing on interpersonal and family relationships with a greater purpose, moving people to critical engagement, social action, and social change (p. 229). On her journey home to Kentucky, hooks (2009), visited with fellow Kentuckian intellectual Wendell Berry, whose work influenced her academic journey. hooks described Berry as a poet, essayist, cultural critic, and farmer. They shared tea and pound cake during their first visit and emotional healing:

BH: The way that love guides to stand for justice, to stand in solidarity is one aspect you share in the memoir portion of *The Hidden Wound* that I find incredibly moving. In these last five years, much of my work on race has focused on the transformative power of love as a force leading us to social change. I am always moved by the particular moment in your book where you are having the birthday party, and Nick cannot come into the house because Black and White can't socialize together. You choose to leave the place to be with him. That's just such a perfect metaphor for what it means to give up unearned white privilege.

WB: Well, it's complicated. I was using my manners, and it was manners my white elders had taught me.

BH: Yet you used those manners to intervene in a situation that was charged with the hidden violence of racism. And whether you were aware of it or not, you showed what white people can do to challenge and change that violence. (p. 189)

As I read the conversation between hooks and Berry, I was flooded with memories. I understand my unearned privilege of being white, which at my suburban Oak Park High School did not help me much because my accent defined me as an outsider. Back at home, safe within a loving circle of friends and family eating traditional Brazilian home-made food and desserts, I told everyone how difficult it was to be accepted at school and how, instead, I turned to my host family and neighbors for companionship. This brought back a conversation I'd had with a white friend who had been an exchange student in California two years earlier. He asked about my relationship with Black students and if they had welcomed me because the Black students had welcomed him in California. That's when I shared the story about my week with a white family from the inner-city of Kansas City, Kansas, who wanted to host an exchange student. Their teenage son was a freshman who barely spoke to me, and for my week there, we rode the bus to Sumner Academy, a predominantly Black/Latino magnet high school in the inner city. That was "the" school experience for me! It was among the Black and brown students that I felt accepted. I made "instant friends" and sat with them at lunchtime as they quizzed me about my culture and good naturedly poked fun at me because of my accent and broken English. Many Latinx students also had accents, and we would compare similar words in Portuguese and Spanish. Fast forward to my dissertation, where I came to understand the power in the perception connected to language. In one school, located in a predominantly white suburb, my accent signaled my "otherness". However, in an inner city, multicultural school, my accent signaled my "sameness"!

Stories provide togetherness, understanding, and a sense of belonging. They also allow readers, and this point is so powerful, the space to imagine themselves in a like situation. As Ellis (2009) points out, “good autoethnography works toward a *communitas*, where we might speak together of our experiences, find the commonality of spirit, companionship in our sorrow, balm for our wounds, and solace in reaching out to those in need as well” (pp. 229-230). As part of a social project, autoethnography in a “constructive approach, change structures to improve the settings we live in” (Ellis, 2000). In telling personal stories, Ellis (1998) wrote about an encounter with a clerk at a jewelry store in which, during their first encounter, he said: “I hate my voice.” That experience inspired her to write about “minor bodily stigmas,” and she shared hers: a lisp. Without autoethnography, stories and observations attributed to “minor bodily stigmas” may not have been told, and if they had, would likely have been viewed solely through a scientific lens and lacked any connection to feeling or trauma. Giving voice to an issue such as body stigma helps bring the topic to a common place, because all people have traits, they don’t like about themselves, and these stories facilitate growth and offer a different perspective to examine a painful issue. Personally, I think they become educational.

Personal narratives and stories enable researchers and readers to question and undergo deeper reflection on how human life experiences are laced with meaning, ethical, and moral choices. At the same time, we live in an uncertain and changing world (Bochner 2012, Ellis & Bochner, 2000). *I have always been very conscious of my accent, and that while speaking, I frequently mispronounce words. I often struggle, searching for the right word or correct pronunciation, then ask the person I am speaking with for help. It never really bothered me to ask for help. Being corrected is a completely different matter.*

In late March 2020 after we transitioned to the continuous learning process at home, Daniel, Hannah, Paulo and I sat around the kitchen table and the kids listened as I read aloud the instructions for their assignments. But, every three words, I was interrupted: “Mom, this is not this way you say that word! It is this way.....” Mom, repeat after me...” Paulo, the youngest was the one who most consistently corrected me. My imperfect English clearly annoyed him. One day, he came to me and said: ‘I don’t understand. You came to the USA so long ago, how old were you again? Me: I was eighteen years old. Paulo: Wow! Like, you’ve spoken English for thirty years, and I’ve spoken it for only two and a half years, and you still can’t say the words correctly? Patiently, I explained to him that he arrived here at the age of five years old, he was younger, his brain was more elastic, like a sponge, and for that reason, he was able to pick up on the language and its nuances that I simply couldn’t because those neural pathways in my adult brain had closed.

On a couple of occasions, he corrected me in front of our neighbors and friends before social distancing went into full effect. I asked him not to do that because it was not polite, and it felt disrespectful. Then, one day, I realized that every time he corrected, it felt painful. Sometime in May, toward the end of the CL program, he corrected me one more time, and then I looked into his eyes and said: Yes, I speak differently than you, your siblings, your teacher, and I am proud of it. I am proud of my accent! It means that I came from another country, speak more than one language, that I am in a very different country from where I was born, and that I live a remarkable life. That is me, and I am proud of who I am! I ended the conversation by asking Paulo how he would feel if the situation was reversed. His answer was, I am proud of being Brazilian! That was the last day he corrected me.

One feeling most people describe as weakness has been a companion in my journey, and it's better described as vulnerability. I have felt vulnerable many times while parenting, while talking to others about my career plans, while writing, and during my talk to Paulo about my accent. Vulnerability is unnerving. It requires you to summon the courage to address an issue with the added layer of not knowing how the other person will accept your point of view.

In autoethnographies, the researcher is the subject, and by way of personal experience, invites readers to shift perspectives, just as I did by confronting my son with something so personal. Ultimately, researchers using the autoethnography method must be comfortable with opening themselves up to academic scrutiny then posting their research findings into the world. It is the academic equivalent of a leap of faith. Brown (2012) points out there is no assurance of acceptance or appreciation when one puts art, writing, or ideas into the world. The author defines vulnerability as “uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure” (p. 34). This describes very well how autoethnographers have to undress themselves for their research, writing, and findings.

In conclusion on this topic, I will turn to the wisdom of Eva Sallis (2007) and her essay: Acquiring a language that bridges polarized cultures is transforming, self-redeeming. It can give good, as opposed to destructive, power. It can heal many things in self and others. And yet such learning was and is in many ways inscribed with pain (p. 151). A different linguistic self is a different thinking, social being, who has different expressions, a different mode. (p. 152)

Critical Autoethnography as a Method

For me, doing critical autoethnography is something like capturing a picture of yourself in a glass borderless frame; a picture in which an image of you is represented and there are sightless borders of containment; containments called race, sex, gender, culture, and occasions of human

social experience fixed in time and space, floating in a fixed liquidity of memory, giving shape to experience, structuring vision and engagement with the intent for other to see and know you differently as you story the meaningfulness of personal experience in a cultural context. – Bryant

Alexander (2014)

As a Brazilian citizen living in the US who is a white, female, middle-aged, single mom, from a privileged socio-cultural-economic class, I can identify with all those attributes in Boylorn's personal experience (Boylorn & Orbe, 2014): "the distinctions between how and why she viewed the world through her lens and what made it different from others" (p. 13). Critical ethnography is cultural by nature and has three crucial components: "interpersonal experience of everyday interactions with others, intersectional components of identity, and the critical treatment of autoethnography as a method (Boylorn & Orbe, 2014, p. 15). The method also "understands the lived experiences of real people in context, examines social condition and uncovers oppressive power arrangements, and fuses theory and action to challenge processes of domination" (Boylorn & Orbe, 2014, p. 20). It requires researchers to acknowledge subjectivities through reflexivity, to recognize privileges and injustices within a lived domain, and to address processes of unfairness as an ethical responsibility (Boylorn & Orbe. 2014).

In contrast, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) focus critical autoethnography in moments such as "epiphanies in a person's life that defines a crisis, a turning point that connects a personal trouble, a personal biography, with larger social, public issues" (p. 22). Both authors' account of the self as a participant in confronting personal experiences and thoughts related to an event with multifaceted elements. Nevertheless, Denzin and Lincoln bring social and public issues to the definition of critical autoethnography, which leads me to explore another influence in critical qualitative research — critical pedagogy.

The focus of this research study is my personal experience with the changes that occurred in schooling during the pandemic and the elements of critical pedagogy intrinsically related to the process of change in teaching and learning at home, as well as how communication, educational technological, and food resources played a role during the CL. Telling my story, with the perspective and lens of critical pedagogy, allows me to reflect on my own privilege, which includes a conscious understanding of my education and role as an educator while parenting three children. Tilley-Lubbs (2018) words and views resonate with my own views:

In combining autoethnography and critical pedagogy, I also examine intersectionalities, but rather than positioning myself as a member of a marginalized or vulnerable community, I acknowledge the insidious, pervasive power and privilege I possess because of my race, socioeconomic status, religion, education, and countless other cultural perspectives that have shaped me, regardless of the marginalization I sometimes experience because of gender and age. (pp. 14-15)

In contrast to Tilley-Lubbs, the marginalization I experienced was predominantly related to my accent and therefore the place I was from. Both of us are fully aware of the privilege we enjoy due to our education and socioeconomic status.

McLaren and Kincheloe (1994) describe “critical research as best understood in the context of the empowerment of the individual” (p. 140). These authors also state that critical researchers become partisans to fight for a better world and are not afraid to have a relationship with an “emancipatory consciousness” (p.140). Paulo Freire (2000), who was an inspiration to me, explained the necessary role of critical consciousness in education so students understand its value and can advocate for knowledge and champion schools as a place for equality. Freire was responsible for analyzing the relationship between teachers and students, insinuating that the

acquisition of knowledge is merely a transaction: teachers impart knowledge to students who simply accept the educational deposit. My research will examine and analyze three points within his educational vision: (1) the role of the social, cultural, and political in shaping human identity; (2) how teachers and students might relate to knowledge (I expanded this to include curriculum, instructional material and technology); and (3) the relationship between community and schooling. In this context, as a parent and educator, a critical examination will allow me to understand the structures of this cultural and educational setting through my own experiences, which can someday be used to inform improvement for the innovation process. Finally, as a researcher, I believe it is my social responsibility to share my experience and knowledge because it will magnify the number of lives, I will impact as an educator. Kincheloe (2008) aptly describes what I hope to achieve by researching the process of change and innovation during the pandemic:

Understanding at the theoretical level, both how the diverse influences insidiously shape what we perceive and don't perceive about the world and how we can better cultivate the intellect, is a central dimension of critical pedagogy and must always be connected to the reality of human suffering and the effort to eradicate it. (p. 12)

Considering diverse influences, a critical lens will allow me to look into the intersectionality, which consists of my privilege, my cultural background, and my knowledge and access to educational technologies. Moreover, what I was able to contribute to this change process. *It was mid-April, and we were in our second week of homeschooling. Hannah's teacher had established a routine with several optional online sessions to help students complete their assignments. Paulo had "lunch bunch" scheduled on Fridays from noon to 1 p.m. with his teacher and classmates. He was so excited to participate in the optional Zoom meeting so he*

could interact with his friends! Daniel's teacher had not proactively encouraged contact with the students in any fashion and that irritated me. I wanted to provide equal opportunities for my children. I didn't want one of them missing out on something important and social interaction certainly qualified. We were living through a time in which life as we knew it suddenly disappeared. We could not socialize or have get-togethers with friends and classmates. Nor could we meet with teachers in person. This was doubly troubling as teachers play a vital role in helping the students at home with their social skills. The connection between student and teacher via Zoom is a good exercise to listen while the classmate talks. That's when I decided to send Daniel's teacher a message through Remind, the communication app we were using at the time, and first suggested she might consider reaching out to her students. It took three weeks to happen, but when the meeting took place, Daniel was so happy and confident! He enthusiastically shared with his classmates, and in the end, he had the same positive experience as his siblings.

From March 17th to the 30th, 2020, parents filled out two surveys about what educational technology they had at home and their preferred learning (paper copies/assignments versus electronic) method for their children. It is critical to analyze how technology was implemented as an innovation (or not) in this change process. To explore this topic, I will use the critical lenses to examine two issues: (1) the availability of electronic devices within the school community, and (2) how teachers used the resources once a family's preference was determined.

Research Design and Methods

Language is a constitutive force, creating a particular view of reality and of the Self. – Laurel

Richardson (2000b)

My cultural experiences and being trilingual shaped my identity. My self-confidence flourished when words came with ease and I could articulate my colorful world, first with a pen then a keyboard. This experience is either part of the research method I chose or the method itself. According to Richardson (2000b), “writing as a method of inquiry, provides a research practice through which we can investigate how we construct the world, ourselves, and others, and how standard objectifying practices of social science unnecessarily limit us and social science” (p. 924). By using a personal narrative, Ellis and Bochner (2000) elaborate on the importance of an “interactive relationship” (p. 744) because at the same time the researcher draws upon a personal experience, it is a personal experience in relation to others within the community experiencing the same set of circumstances, making it simultaneously a collaborative venture. The research process is related to the moral and ethical choices we face in our lives and that affect the way we understand the world. My goal as a writer and my responsibility as a researcher are to bring a definite understanding to facilitate changes and to break down some of the limitations imposed on social scientists.

Throughout this dissertation, I have introduced short narratives about my life with the goal of transporting the reader into moments that shed light on how my cultural background and experiences affected my action and reactions during the CL process. This technique is called “layered account,” and according to Ronai (1997), “it is an experimental, postmodern, ethnographic reporting format that enables researchers to use varied resources, such as social theory, lived experience, and emotions” (p. 417). By choosing the layered format, I can bring a sense of lived experience: a credible account of my social-cultural individual and collective participation in the communities I have lived. Secondly, I am forced, in a positive manner, to exercise a truthful process of reflexivity in which I am aware of my subjectivity as a participant

and author of this research. Finally, I am conscious of my responsibilities in sharing these experiences embedded in a social context.

In an effort to defend the autoethnographic method as a sound scientific inquiry method, which has been contested and criticized by some academicians, it is crucial to define standards. Anderson (2006) has been critical of the “evocative and emotionally engaging approach” practiced by Ellis and Bochner (2006), Ellis (1998) and described by Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang (2010). Anderson thinks ethnographies should have analytical, theoretical, and objective characteristics. Denzin (2009) on the other hand points out that Anderson (2006) wants to go back “uncritically to the past” (p. 209) referring to the first generation of Chicago School ethnographers. By sharing this view, Denzin (2009) joins with Bochner (2006), Ellis (1998), Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang (2010):

Ethnography is not an innocent practice. Our research practices are performative, pedagogical, and political. Through our writing and our talk, we enact the worlds we study. These performances are messy and pedagogical. They instruct our readers about this world and how we see it. The pedagogical is always moral and political; by enacting a way of seeing and being, it challenges, contests, or endorses the official, hegemonic ways of seeing and representing the other. (p. 209)

Richardson (2000b) developed a set of criteria that support the non-traditional qualitative forms of writing practices. In her view, there is a class of ethnographies that is “humanly situated, always filtered through human eyes and human perceptions, bearing both the limitations and the strengths of human feelings” (p. 937). She calls this class CAP, an acronym for creative analytic practice ethnography (p. 929): “CAP ethnographies are not alternative or experimental; they are, in and of themselves, valid and desirable representations of the social” (p. 930).

Furthermore, CAP can be both creative and analytic and present a writing process and a writing product that have the privilege to be interlaced. (p. 930) The standard criteria described by Richardson (2000b, p. 937) are:

- (1) *Substantive contribution*: Does this piece contribute to our *understanding* of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded (if embedded) social scientific perspective? How has this perspective informed the construction of the text?
- (2) *Aesthetic merit*: Rather than reducing standards, CAP ethnography adds another standard. Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does this use of creative analytical practices open up the text and invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped satisfying, complex, and not boring?
- (3) *Reflexivity*: Is the author cognizant of the epistemology of postmodernism? How did the author come to write this text? How was the information gathered? How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgements about the point of view? Does the author hold him- or herself accountable to the standards of knowing and telling of the people he or she has studied?
- (4) *Impact*: Does this affect me? Emotionally? Intellectually? Does it generate new questions? Move me to write? Move me to try new research practices? Move me to action?
- (5) *Expression of reality*: Does this text embody a fleshed out, embodied sense of lived experience? Does it seem "true" – a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the "real"? (p. 937)

Redcorn (2017) also describes in his research the important role standards have and how researchers demonstrate how the five criteria can be used as a guide and also to review and evaluate any ethnographic writings.

Data Collection and Procedures

While visiting with my sister about my dissertation over the holidays, our conversation delved into the finer points of autoethnography and she asked detailed questions concerning context, research, and framework. My sister was both fascinated and curious about this field of research because it was completely new to her. In her professional life as a veterinarian, she was intimately familiar with quantitative research. She grew uncomfortably quiet as I explained data collection. My inner teacher quickly offered: “I am the data collection instrument”, which palliated her inner scientist.

According to Bourke (2014), the researcher is the key player in the process of data collection:

The nature of qualitative research establishes the researcher as the data collection instrument. It is reasonable to expect that the researcher’s belief, political stance, cultural background (gender, race, socioeconomic status, educational background) are important variables that may affect the research process. (Bourke, 2014, p. 2)

Besides my own experiences during the CL process, which have been detailed in a personal journal since the first day of school moving online in March 2020, I have captured and analyzed every piece of information related to the process including email messages from teachers, principals, and the superintendent. They are organized by date in my journal. I have also collected articles from local news websites, the guidelines outlined by the Kansas Department of Education and applicable information from the Manhattan-Ogden USD 383

school district. Additionally, the material (learning packets) used to teach my children at home have been secured in a pen drive and on the Microsoft cloud from Kansas State University.

As part of this autoethnographic study, I have preserved the relevant data and am evaluating its implications. A detailed chronicle of events was carefully transformed into a personal timeline replete with contexts. My cultural experiences, living and studying on three continents with diverse cultural backgrounds and languages, are a fundamental part of my life, and therefore, data for this research. Chang (2008) points out, "The strategy illuminates the evolution of your personal life and sequential regularity in your life" (p. 72). This strategy, combined with mind mapping and diagrams, will map, organize, and manage the data for further connections and triangulation.

Data Analysis

The analysis as the data itself has the same characteristics. Still, it depends on the researcher's knowledge and wisdom to select the most relevant pieces, fill the gaps, and enrich the analysis with details. As Denzin & Lincoln (1994) point out, "the processes of analysis, evaluation, and interpretation are neither terminal nor mechanical. They are always emergent, unpredictable, and unfinished" (p. 479).

According to Chang (2008), there is one key element in this type of research: cultural understanding. The author states, "what makes autoethnography ethnographic is its intention of gaining a cultural understanding" (p.125). Wolcott (1999) denotes the critical role of culture, which as a concept serves to preserve and enhance the data to a "familiar and palatable form" (p. 255), but at the same time turns it into a critical task for the researcher (p. 255). The researcher at this stage of analysis has to recognize patterns and trends and capture the uniqueness of each context embedded in the cultural issue studied.

Another interesting perspective in this process is how Morrison (2012) describes the researcher's analysis. The author characterizes it as a "magnifying lens or a house of mirrors to enlarge, amplify, and refigure the small details and the taken for granted" (p. 36). Combining a **thick** description, facts, circumstances with the framework theory will be among the critical elements I use to bring revelatory and trustworthy analysis to my research.

Researching with Validity, Rich-Rigor, Credibility, and Ethics

As a graduate student, one of my greatest worries of pursuing autoethnography as a method was regarding the quality of my research. During my studies, after reading several articles and books about qualitative research methods, it became clear to me that the term “quality” entails hundreds of attributes and it is the one that causes the most dissonance among scholars.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) discussed that evaluating and interpreting qualitative research may be problematic, possibly a legitimization crisis, in which “it involves a serious rethinking of such terms as validity, generalizability, and reliability” (p. 17). Janesick (2000) elaborated on the verb “rethinking” from Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and suggested finding qualitative referents which she relied on her own experience from the literature. Because the term validity in qualitative research has “a set of technical micro-definitions,” she characterizes “validity in qualitative research as something to do with description and explanation, and whether or not the explanation fits the description, in other words: is the explanation credible?” (p. 393).

Tracy (2010) developed eight criteria for excellent qualitative research based on her studies of several renowned authors. Two of Richardson’s (2000b) criteria, “significant contribution” and “impact”, which Tracy called “resonance,” have been addressed in this chapter

(p. 844). There are three additional attributes or criteria that resonate with my values and principles that I detail next.

Rich-rigor is a criterion related to the care and practice of data collection and analysis procedures. A rigorous researcher goes beyond convenience and will use data that will provide for and substantiate meaningful and significant claims. Another key factor in rich-rigor is the due diligence in working and organizing the research related to time, effort, care, and thoroughness (Tracy, 2000, p. 841). Patton (2015) goes beyond data and analysis. The author sees rigor in a holistic manner: “Methods do not ensure rigor. A research design does not ensure rigor. Analytical techniques and procedures do not ensure rigor. Rigor resides in, depends on, and is manifest in rigorous thinking – about everything, including methods and analysis” (p. 703).

Credibility for some researchers is very close to validity or to internal validity, meaning it must align with reality and be credible (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Tracy (2010) refers to credibility as the “trustworthiness, verisimilitude, and plausibility of the research findings” (p. 842). Richardson (2000a) adds to this concept by arguing that good ethnography expresses a reality that seems true by providing “a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the ‘real’” (p. 254).

In order to achieve credibility in qualitative research, scholars need to apply the practice of triangulation or crystallization, and thick description. Triangulation is the gathering of two or more sources of data, different types of data, theoretical frameworks, converged to the same conclusion, making the findings more credible (Denzin, 1978). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) conclude triangulation is one strategy that ensures credibility for the research, but it has a limitation, it focuses on one point or one object of the research. On the other hand, is the strategy of crystallization. By crystallizing, the researcher can assume that “there are more than three

sides from which to approach the world. . . . What we see depends upon our angle of repose” (Richardson, 2000b, p. 934). Crystallization “encourages researchers to gather multiple types of data and employ various methods, multiple researchers, and numerous frameworks (Tracy, 2000, p. 844). As for thick description, besides an in-depth level of detail, the researcher needs the capability of retrieving and accessing tacit knowledge and the hidden assumptions which transcend the “immediate surface of speech, texts, or discursive materials” (Tracy, 2000, p. 843).

Ethics is another criterion that has several attributes and sides. Tracy (2000) cites four areas: (1) procedural ethics, which refers to ethical actions dictated as universally necessary by larger organizations, institutions, or governing bodies; (2) situational ethics, which refers to ethical practices that emerge from a reasoned consideration of a context’s specific circumstances; (3) relational ethics, which refers to ethical self-consciousness in which researchers are mindful of their character, actions, and consequences on others; and (4) existing ethics, which are considerations beyond the data collection phase to how researchers leave the scene and share results (p. 847). González (2003) resonates with and is most applicable for me. Her four ethics for postcolonial ethnography, which will shape this autoethnographic study include:

- (1) Accountability: “the ethics of accountability is not only the telling of ethnographic tales. It is the telling of our story, of how we got to know the ethnographic tale. What is the story of the story?” (pp. 83-84).
- (2) Context: “the ethics of context is about the ability to describe the environment within which one’s tale is told. What were the political, social, environmental, physical, and emotional soundings of one’s tale?” (p. 84).

- (3) Truthfulness: this one is about seeing what is on the surface, which is not visible – “see not only what is in one’s social and environmental context, to see not only what one has actually done or said, but also to see what is on surface not visible” (p. 84).
- (4) Community: “the ethic of community implies that once we step forward with an ethnographic tale, we can no longer feign separation from those with whom we shared the story” (p. 85).

As auto ethnographers, it is imperative that we keep ourselves truthful in telling our stories, when considering all of the nuances encapsulating a community. By putting into practice our talents and sharing personal stories with authenticity, credibility and emotion, we will accomplish our goals ethically.

Summary of Chapter 3

The choice for autoethnography, which in Greek means writing about oneself (auto: self, ethnos: nation/ people [culture], graphic: writing), was first by necessity, but after immersing myself in the literature, it was for admiration. I realized that the life I lived in three cultures and my way of coping with changes connected to the educational challenges my family faced during the pandemic would be not only something to remember but also to be considered as "lessons learned." Lessons that I, as a researcher and scholar, would like to share with the academic community.

Simultaneously, I use my experience as part of the data, which is highly embodied, reflective, and emotional—qualities that are often criticized or ignored in qualitative research and therefore become transgressive, critical, social, political, and even undisciplined! In conclusion, it is vital to retain the link between the individual dimension and the social issues (how my children and I related with the context, the teachers, and learning resources). From the

interaction of these individuals, me, and the setting, I may be closer to capture the meaning of the social representations and individual strategies in my research to allow a more precise degree of integrity and analysis.

In Chapter 4, I will describe the outcomes of my study having as framework critical pedagogy and the process of change and innovation. I intend to explain how my international contexts and experiences helped me embrace the changes and apply them in my family setting to finish the academic year with social-emotional and academic success using the analogy of the character Dorothy, from the Wonderful Wizzard of Oz (L. Frank Baum, 1900).

Chapter 4 - Change to a New Reality

Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore. – LeRoy & Fleming, 1939

*During specific periods in my life, mostly when I moved to a different country or even to another city in my own country, I had to assess the culture and find my way inside it quickly. New relationships could promptly turn south based on a simple misunderstanding, and nowhere was that more possible than humor and sarcasm. All of this bubbling undercurrent swirled behind my smile as I craved acceptance and friendships while I pursue my goals. The feeling and the reality of not being a member of a particular culture have been a constant companion in my life. During my critical introduction to becoming my children's teacher, I found myself relating to Dorothy in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, written by L. Frank Baum in 1900. The narrative of a little girl longing for home has been crystallized and idealized in the hearts of Americans and non-Americans, mainly through the film *The Wizard of Oz* (LeRoy & Fleming, 1939).*

What follows next are the findings of Research Question 1, how did Covid-19 impact my family's education routine in the second semester of the 2020 schoolyear, more precisely during the period from March to May 2020? I will reference passages from the book throughout this chapter instead of the movie. To recapitulate, who is Dorothy? What happened to her and her little dog, Toto? What is she looking for? Dorothy is the cheerful, carefree little orphan girl who lives with Aunt Em and Uncle Henry. She and her dog were taken in the swirl of a cyclone from her house on the Kansas prairie to a far and far away land called the Land of Oz, where she meets a good and evil witch, Munchkins, and a wizard. She even makes three new friends, who bear a striking resemblance to the farmhands on her aunt and uncle's farm and become her traveling companions. Dorothy and her friends are looking to the magical Wizard of Oz to help them all get something they need. Baum (1900) describes Dorothy's impression of what is happening to her:

At first, she had wondered if she would be dashed to pieces when the house fell again; but as the hours passed and nothing terrible happened, she stopped worrying and resolved to wait calmly and see what the future would bring. (p. 5)

There I was, calm, very calm at first when I learned my children would be home for two weeks. But by March 13, 2020, I became agitated, jittery, and cried just thinking about what the future might bring. Just like the Council of Munchkins who celebrated Dorothy when her house landed on the Wicked Witch of the East, friends and my kids' teachers provided me with incredible support. From Monday, March 16 to Thursday, March 20, 2020, I expressed in Portuguese and now translated into English: it rained emails! Every day something changed! I read each email as if they contained a magic word or button that would illuminate our path forward, as had happened for Dorothy.

On Monday, March 16, after watching the morning assembly on the school's Facebook page, we received an email from the art teacher describing several activities and suggestions for parents to conduct with their children at home. The principal also issued a challenge for each grade that parents could engage with our children. On this particular day, the kids were motivated, and I could conduct the activities.

The next day, we received two crucial communications through email. The first one was a flyer with all the information about Manhattan's common table and where families in need could get food. In addition, it included information about ready-made meals and Harvesters and an array of community services such as access to healthcare, transportation, and complimentary services. The second email arrived in the afternoon just after the announcement from Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly informing us that all school facilities would be closed through the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, which was a tremendous hardship on families. This information hit me hard, and to be honest, it took me about two days to digest it and figure out what to do regarding my children's education and dissertation.

On March 26, 2020, parents received an email from the Kansas State Department of Education, introducing all leaders responsible for creating this change, including stakeholders

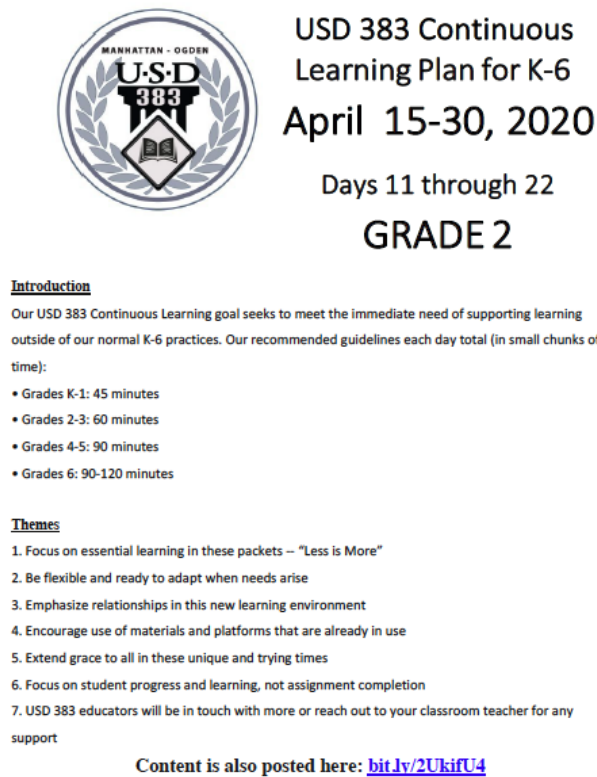
and Board of Education members accountable for developing the continuous learning plan. The contents of this communication included communicating with family caregivers about the school's educational expectations such as the minimum attendance requirements, programs for students in special education, and how to talk to your child about COVID-19, and other considerations that included school meals and options for families in need of childcare.

According to Rogers and Shoemaker (1971), "analyses of social change must ultimately center primary attention upon communication processes." ... "The learning process, the diffusion process, the change process, and so on all involved the communication of new ideas." (p. 11)

The immediate impact of COVID-19 on my family's education routine could first be heard as innocent dings, doubling as email notifications. Then, very quickly began to feel assaulted, overwhelmed, and nearly triggered by the chimes. As my family's primary agent of change, I had to change my behavior to facilitate the innovations. Breakfast changed. Lunch changed. Completing learning activities changed. I had to embrace the "less is more" concept heralded by the Kansas State Education Department in its Continuous Learning Task Force Guidance. (p. 1)

On March 30, the children and I were at a local park. It was a perfect afternoon, sunny, around 75 degrees, and the children were happy as it felt like a "normal day." Suddenly, my phone rang, and to my surprise, Paulo's teacher called to check on the family and remind me that the learning packets would be available for pick up the next day. She assured me that everything would be fine, I had what it took to teach my kids, and finally, she said Paulo would require 60 minutes of instruction a day and the twins 90 minutes. I thought I had misunderstood her. How could an eight-hour school day be reduced to that? But the next day, the cover of the learning packet confirmed what she'd said! Although I consider myself a critical educator, I believe in the importance of "constructing rigorous and transformative education" (Joe L. Kincheloe, 2008, p.36). The idea of such a complex matter going to a reductionism process upset me. As figure 3 shows, the time slot for each grade is followed by the recommending themes.

Figure 4.1. Cover of learning packet 2, Grade 2



Dorothy began to sob at this, for she felt lonely among these strange people. Her tears seemed to grieve the kind-hearted Munchkins, for they immediately took out their handkerchiefs and began to weep also. (Baum, 1900, p. 8)

The Road Through the Forest

*“The road to the City of Emeralds is paved with yellow brick,” said the Witch,
“so you cannot miss it. When you get to Oz, do not be afraid of him but tell
your story and ask him to help you. Good-bye, my dear.” – Baum, 1900*

This section answers the Research Question 1a, how did my personal experience as an international student and nanny prepare me to be a change agent within my family? As a young

person raised in a traditional, very white, very conservative small-town Brazilian-German society, I became very unconventional. My path, which was not lined with yellow brick, had already been carved out for me. You finish high school, go to college, choose a career then get married. However, after finishing Brazilian high school, I came to the United States to experience senior year in an American high school; then, upon my return, I took a few college classes while working for two semesters as an English teacher. I was very critical of how the new president was running the country, especially the economy, in 1992-93. My first international experience was so intense that I felt I did not belong to my own culture anymore. So I decided to quit college and spend my 21st year working as an Au-pair in Germany.

Dorothy ate a hearty supper and was waited upon by the rich Munchkin himself, whose name was Boq. Then she sat upon a settee and watched the people dance. When Boq saw her silver shoes, he said, "You must be a great sorceress."

"Why?" asked the girl.

"Because you wear silver shoes and have killed the Wicked Witch. Besides, you have white in your frock, and only witches and sorceresses wear white."

"My dress is blue and white checked," said Dorothy, smoothing out the wrinkles in it.

"It is kind of you to wear that," said Boq. "Blue is the color of the Munchkins, and white is the witch color. So, we know you are a friendly witch." (Baum, 1900, p. 11)

When I arrived in Germany, I spoke English fluently, and I had a solid understanding of intermediate German. People often mistook me for an Italian because of my brown hair and white skin. Like Dorothy, who looked like she belonged to the Munchkin's land, I looked like I belonged in the European culture, as an Italian. I was not viewed as the "expected brown" Brazilian Au-pair. While waiting for the bus and train to take me to my German classes after work, I always engaged in small conversations with the people around me, and they were always surprised to learn I was Brazilian. The comments were always the same: "your skin is so white"; and "you have an unusual accent" (My fluency in English mixed with my Brazilian accent made it difficult for people to guess where I

was from.) My accent only hinted that I was not from Germany. My appearance and ability to absorb the culture gave me the strength and tools to fit in.

After my year as an Au-Pair, with the support of my host family, I decided that if I were going to college, it would be in Germany. My host Inge was an elementary teacher, and she was the one who encouraged me to enroll at university in South Germany. Her argument was straightforward as she asked me an important question one day: "Why should you go back to Brazil and pay for your private university if you can stay here and study in an excellent university for free?" She was a genuine change agent for me. With her help, I sped through the German bureaucracy and started my degree in Applied Linguistics a year later while I kept my job as a nanny at her house.

Rogers (2003) describes the different occupations that fit the definition of change agents, teachers, consultants, public-health workers, etc. These change agents "provide a communication link between a resource system with some expertise and a client system." (p. 368). Change agents must disperse innovations due to social and technical chiasms between the change agency and the client system. (Rogers, 2003, p. 368) *Like Inge helped me and was vital to provide me with guidance, I became the source of enlightenment for my children. Not only that, but I was responsible for creating a new routine.* As Nilakant and Ramnarayan (2006) point out, "a key human aspect is the articulation of a clear sense of purpose that gets people to move from preoccupation with 'problems of yesterday' to focusing on 'plans for tomorrow.' (p. 212) Transforming old routines into new ones would be extraordinarily difficult if the human element of a change agent wasn't present. *Indeed, my personal experience led me to plan for meals, learning activities, entertainment, work routines, and studies.*

My budget was always a concern in all my endeavors. I always had to be cautious about supporting myself. As a "student-migrant," I was aware of resources or programs to help students in the same condition as me. In Germany, for instance, I was able to work during the summer or winter breaks and what I made was enough to support me during a whole year. As a

graduate teaching assistant with three kids, I had to have a plan. I depended on my savings and resources in the Manhattan and K-State communities.

When Dorothy was left alone, she began to feel hungry. So, she went to the cupboard and cut herself some bread, which she spread with butter. ... Toto ran over to the trees and began to bark at the birds sitting there. Dorothy went to get him and saw such delicious fruit hanging from the branches that she gathered some of it, finding it just what she wanted to help out her breakfast. (Braum, 1900, p. 9)

During the CL process, having the children home for prolonged periods meant a higher demand for food. So, like Dorothy, I also went to the cupboard, but a different one. K-State has the Cat's Cupboard, a food pantry that provides students, employees, and faculty members with food access and personal hygiene items at no cost, which I utilized twice a month. Besides that, I learned from the email sent by the school principal on March 17, 2020, that I was eligible to get food from the Harvesters Mobile Food Pantry and several common tables spread throughout the community. Indeed, having access to school breakfast and lunch (the pickup was the children's school) and those extra resources greatly relieved the burden to provide for my children during the quarantine.

The Journey to the Great Oz

Life is not what you alone make it. Life is the input of everyone who touched your life and every experience that entered it. We are all part of one another. — Yuri Kochiyama

The following findings answer Research Question 1b, how did my preparation as an educator, graduate degree in education, privilege and standing as an active and involved parent in our school community help me respond to the innate challenges within the CL process? *I was not alone. I started my journey with three children. On the other hand, Dorothy began her journey alone but befriended a Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Lion on her road to the Emerald City. They were all searching for something missing in their lives. Dorothy was looking for her way home to*

Kansas; the Scarecrow wanted to be smart but needed a brain; the Tin Man wanted a heart, and the Lion searched for courage. In the second week of the CL, I realized that Hannah needed more learning structure, Paulo needed a "real" teacher, and Daniel missed the interaction with his teacher and classmates, which was something his sister and brother got through Zoom meetings.

Meanwhile, I tried to provide my children with the best learning experiences possible and keep myself sane writing the first chapter of my dissertation while on lockdown. I used my skills as an instructional designer to prepare a simple learning plan for every day. My first plan of attack was to review the learning packages and make them more friendly for my children. So, the first thing I did was create a lesson plan. This need came because the first package did not have a suggested schedule.

April 1, 2021 - My first impression of the packet was positive in terms of content. The packet was divided into four sections: English language arts with suggested daily activities, followed by math, science, and social studies. After each session of that particular content, there were the key answers. I must be honest; it took me a while to figure out how I would work with that since everything was copied back-to-back to save paper. Handling the material to teach the kids was sometimes overwhelming because I would have to interrupt them to look for the key answers and then give them back to the children for them to complete the following task. As an instructional designer, I think the material failed on a better structure that would be easier for parents to follow and teach their children. I believe that a better instructional design on that material would facilitate the teaching process from the parents' side and the children's learning process. I understand that the school had only two weeks to prepare this material, but I still think that the structure was neither intuitive nor complete to help the parents. After finishing the first ten days, I went back to the material, and then I realized that there were at the end of the packet two pages with special activities for Art, Music, P.E., and S.T.E.M., that I could have done with my children. Still, it was not included in the orientation. Basically, the content was very

segmented. I considered myself very well prepared to teach since that is something I have done and intend to do, but honestly, I had difficulties grasping the whole plan for each day.

On April 15, 2020, I went to the school to pick up the second packet, which in my opinion, was much better. There was a cover letter from each teacher, and the materials were more organized. Hannah's teacher, Miss K., invited her students to write her letters.

As for the second and third packages, there was a suggested schedule and for each mandatory subject a list of lessons for each day, but I still want to make it easier for the children to see what they had to accomplish (instead of turning pages and looking for their lessons and activities). As figure 4 shows, here is my lesson plan for the day. Figure 5 suggested a schedule for the 5th grade for math, science, language arts, and social studies. Figure 6 shows the specific English language arts for days 11-22. Figure 7 shows the special activities for art, music, P.E., and S.T.E.M., which were not mandatory.

Figure 4.2. Handwritten lesson plan for Daniel and Hannah, 5th grade

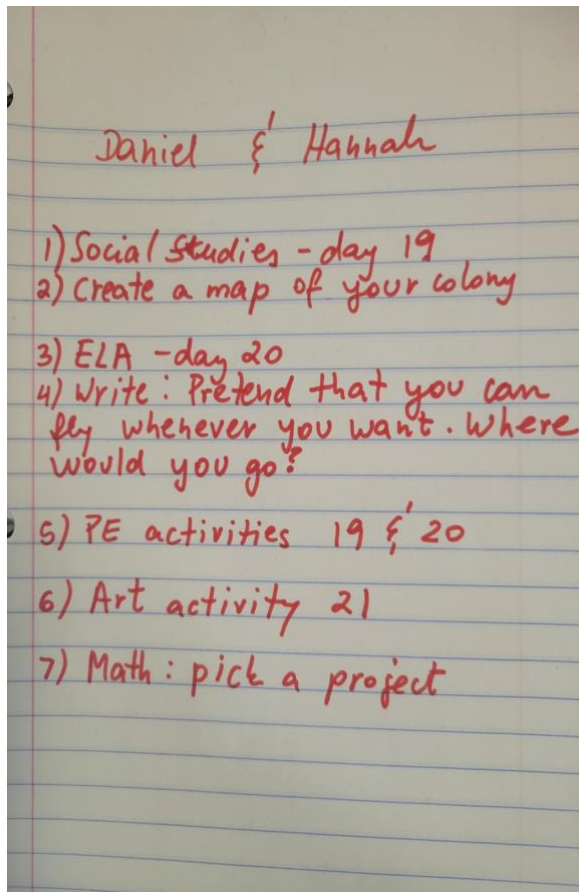


Figure 4.3. Suggested schedule for 5th grade, Day 16 to Day 19

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE CONTINUED 5th Grade, Packet #2				
	Math	Science	Language Arts	Social Studies
Day 16	Observe, identify, and categorize trapezoids and parallelograms.	Complete "Sensory Graph" (math extension)	Read the Newsela article ("Money, Manufacturing & Trade") and take the quiz. Writing journal prompt.	X
Day 17	Observe, identify, and categorize rectangles, squares, and rhombuses.	X	Complete the skill worksheet: "Spelling: Words from Mythology."	Read the passage "Life in the Colonies" and Complete an activity from the Thirteen Colonies Learning Menu
Day 18	Classify two-dimensional figures based on their properties using true/false statements	X	Complete the skill worksheet: "Genre/Text Study: Conserving the Wild." Writing journal prompt.	Read the passage "The Life of Colonial Children" and Complete an activity from the Thirteen Colonies Learning Menu
Day 19	Pick a project! Select 1 or 2 of the Pick-a-Project Activities to complete over the next 4 days	X	Complete the skill worksheet: "Spelling: Number Prefixes-uni, bi, tri, cent."	Create Your Own Colony Activity

Figure 4.4. 5th Grade Lessons: ELA

5 TH GRADE LESSONS: ELA USD 383 Instructional Packet #2: Days 11-22	
DAY 11 ☐ Skill: Context Clues	DAY 19 ☐ Skill: Number Prefixes
DAY 12 ☐ Newsela article & Quiz ☐ Journaling	DAY 20 ☐ Newsela article & Quiz ☐ Journaling
DAY 13 ☐ Newsela article & Quiz	DAY 21 ☐ Newsela article & Quiz
DAY 14 ☐ Skill: Words from Mythology ☐ Journaling	DAY 22 ☐ Newsela article & Quiz ☐ Journaling

Figure 4.5. Suggested special activities for 5th grade

5 th Grade Specials Activities			
Art	Music	P.E.	S.T.E.M.
Activity 11: Found object color wheel - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet.	Activity 11: Choose a song from your music room, and compare and contrast it with your favorite song. Is the music room song shorter than your favorite song? How many instruments do you hear in your favorite song? How many verses for each?	Activity 11: Cardio Day- 5 minute Morning Dance Party Evening Running Competition. How many laps can each family member run around the house or the yard?	Activity 11: (Science) Take a nature walk and observe using all 5 senses, record your observations. Which sense did you use the most? Which sense did you use the least?
Activity 12: Wacky Packaging- Pick an empty food box and use whatever materials (markers, magazines, scissors glue etc) you have available to transform the box into a new product. For example, goldfish crackers could become moldfish crackers.	Activity 12: Sing one of your favorite songs. Next, try singing it in different genres (rock, country, ballad, 50s, classical, etc). What did you have to change to make your song change styles? For extension, make a video of this and email it to your music teacher!	Activity 12: Do each activity 30-60 seconds 1. (Core) Sit on the floor with hands holding you up in a sitting position. Lift legs off the floor. Bend legs and bring both knees to chest and back out (keep legs off floor whole time) 2. (Arms) Get in a pushup position. Lower yourself, one arm at a time to your elbows. Then raise back up, one arm at a time, to the pushup position. 3. (Legs) Wall-Sit: Stand with your back against a wall. Slide down until your bottom is even with your knees and hold it there.	Activity 12: (Technology) Find examples of simple machines in your house. - lever - inclined plane - wheel and axle - wedge - pulley - screw
Activity 13: Write your name in block or bubble letters. Add patterns.	Activity 13: Make a puppet show for your family. In your show, have one of the characters sing a song, whistle or hum a tune, or speak in a cool rhythm to reflect on the action of the story. You could use hand or finger puppets, or any other fun characters you can imagine. What happens in your story? What part of the story inspires the musical piece?	Activity 13: FITNESS ROULETTE Equipment Needed: Dice or Cards This activity requires at least two players. Each player draws a card or rolls their die. Whoever draws the highest number card or rolls the highest number on their die, gets to choose a fitness activity for the losing player to complete. Repeat as much as wanted! Face cards and Aces=10	Activity 13: (Engineering) Find something in your house to build with (blocks, cups, cards etc...) and build a tower with them. Once you are finished find a way to measure it and then challenge yourself to build a new tower that is even taller.
Activity 14: Junk mail/magazine collage- cut or tear colors and pictures out to create a new picture. Glue if available.	Activity 14: Find a family member or try to play as a whole family. Sing well-known song several times. Without making it too obvious, change something in the tune or lyrics. The first person to discover and correct the mistake wins a point.	Activity 14: Do as many burpees as you can in 3 minutes. OR Go for a walk with your family!	Activity 14: (Math) Pick some objects around your home to measure, try to pick a variety of sizes. Using your thumb, hand and/or arm, take measurements of the different items. Before you measure, make a prediction about your measurements.

My children had the privilege of attending a private school in Brazil, and I wanted to continue giving the best possible education. As previously mentioned, I struggle with the concept of "less is more." In my view, a 90-minute lesson for my 5th-grade children and 60 minutes for my 2nd grader was not enough to cover the mandatory subjects and the extra activities. As a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the College of Education of Kansas State University, I had the advantage of having a good relationship with the academic advisors. They suggested that I contact specific students they believed would be excellent tutors. To meet my family's needs, I also reached out to the pre-service teachers at the College of Education. I hired two undergraduate students majoring in elementary education. Pedro and Maria (fictitious name to keep their privacy) both happened to be of Hispanic heritage, bringing a sense of home. We shared cultural traditions with them and made comparisons between Portuguese and Spanish. Pedro tutored the children for four weeks and Maria for two weeks. They came to our house for three hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and helped the children complete their assignments using my lesson plans. The kids' favorite lessons were P.E. and science projects

with Pedro. Maria excelled at explaining math concepts and English. I spearheaded lessons on Tuesdays and Fridays when we completed 20 minutes of reading and about one hour of lessons from their packets. The tutoring sessions gave Hannah the structure she needed, and it satisfied Paulo's need for a "real teacher," especially one who spoke English correctly without messing up a word's pronunciation! The journey was very bumpy initially, and we hit some serious potholes, but as we continued, the journey became more manageable. We were settling into a "new normal."

They found the forest very thick on this side, and it looked dark and gloomy. After the Lion had rested, they started along the road of yellow brick, silently wondering, each in his mind, if ever they would come to the end of the woods and reach the bright sunshine again. To add to their discomfort, they soon heard noises in the depths of the forest, and the Lion whispered to them that it was in this part of the country the Kalidahs lived.

(Baum, 1900, p. 23-24)

On Friday, April 10, 2020, Miss K. sent an email informing us that she would be conducting Zoom meetings with her students to socialize and address content issues. In addition, she sent a letter to Hannah and invited her to write back. She also mentioned that the school district was making available the website IXL that would have online resources for the children as complementary to the content sent through the packets. This week, Ms. K. also started calling Hannah to check on her every week and did so until the end of the CL.

Also, on April 10, Paulo had his first Lunch Bunch, a Zoom meeting with Mrs. P. and his classmates. Unfortunately, the start time was delayed 30 minutes due to issues with the meeting address, but after it started, it was fun. She asked each student how they were doing, and each one was able to share something about their daily routine.

Daniel was frustrated! According to him, his teacher was not "as nice as Hannah's teacher." His sister was getting calls from her teacher and meeting with her through Zoom and Paulo. Conversely, Daniel had had zero contact with his teacher. On April 12, 2020 I contacted Daniel's teacher. I told her about the activities that Miss K. was doing with her students, such as

the Zoom meetings and the letter-writing campaign. Daniel was interested in increased contact and some class participation. She immediately sent me her address so Daniel could send her a letter and informed me that she would look into a Zoom meeting for the class. (I must admit that I was surprised by her lack of initiative in using technology since she was the designated teacher by the school district at my children's school for the use of educational technologies). Unfortunately, by April 20, I had still not heard from her.

The Discovery of Oz, The Terrible

Technology is best when it brings people together. – Matt Mullenweg

The soldier had the news carried straight to Oz that Dorothy and the other travelers had come back again after destroying the Wicked Witch, but Oz made no reply. They thought the Great Wizard would send for them at once, but he did not. (Baum, 1900, p. 54)

In the following section, I respond Research Question 2b, how did educational technology affect the innovation process? *On March 18, 2020, I received an email requesting parents and guardians to answer a Manhattan-Ogden USD383 school district survey about the type of technology and access we had at home. The request was to answer the survey per child.*

While the kids were keeping up with their core subjects, I realized they were missing out on the arts and reached out to Mrs. M., our school's art teacher. So, on Wednesday, April 8, 2020, the kids held a Zoom meeting with her and completed an online "clay" class. It was a great experience. Mrs. M. didn't have clay at home, so she made the dough using flour, salt, and water to show my children what to do. Hannah decided to make a piggy bank (she sent a YouTube video for Hannah to watch before the class), Paulo opted to make a dagger, and Daniel made a cup. She patiently showed how they would work with the clay, step-by-step. So, while Paulo was

doing something, she was instructing Hannah. When Hannah was working on her clay piece, she gave Daniel instructions.

I was surprised to see how well she was doing, and as a matter of fact, I complimented her on her mastery of online teaching. She told me that that was the first time she had taught art online! She mentioned she had created an online website with weekly art challenges, but she was advised not to advertise because not every child had access to computers.

We also had the opportunity to talk a bit about the elementary students' online classes. I mentioned that I had completed the district's survey but had not received any follow-up information. She informed me that the school district would not have hotspots and computers for all the students. Instead, the district opted to provide middle and high school students with resources. That explained why there were no instructions for online classes in our newest packets. She respectfully responded to my request but asked me to be very discreet and not mention anything related to my children having online classes due to equity and equitable access to online classes. So, it became evident that she was doing that online class because I had requested it. That's when I realized there was a lack of leadership at the district concerning technology and communication. It revealed why teachers had to act independently instead of depending on a uniform guideline.

According to Tapscott (1998), "in the United States, there is a direct relationship between family income and access to computers and the Net. This correlation also exists between higher- and lower-income schools." (p. 11). The data from The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2021) informs that in 2020 47,05% of the schools received free or reduced lunch in Kansas. As for my children's school, 51.9% are in the same condition (Schooldigger.com, 2021). The data also clearly shows a correlation between access to technology and the internet and families' income,

bringing them into a digital divide. "The digital divide is the gap that exists between individuals advantaged by the Internet and those individuals relatively disadvantaged by the Internet."

(Rogers, 2003 p.468)

Rogers (2003) points out that "the diffusion of innovations usually decreases the degree of equality in a social system. But this tendency toward gap-widening need not occur if special strategies are followed to narrow gaps." (p. 457). In the case of the CL, we were faced not only with the lack of resources (hot spots and computers for elementary students), but perhaps the most frustrating was the ongoing lack of communication about the expectations for parents and students. Moreover, there was a lack of uniformity in guiding the teachers' use of technology. The innovation process was affected by the lack of simple strategies that could have narrowed the gap. For example, the principal and each teacher could have sent tailored messages concerning using online resources described in the packets. In addition, teachers could have discussed how they would reach out to their students so that in a household with more than two students, there would have been equity.

"I am Oz, the Great and Terrible," said the little man in a trembling voice. But don't strike me – please don't – and I'll do anything you want me to."

Our friends looked at him in surprise and dismay.

"I thought Oz was a great Head," said Dorothy.

"And I thought Oz was a lovely Lady," said the Scarecrow.

"And I thought Oz was a terrible Beast," said the Tin Woodman.

"And I thought Oz was a Ball of Fire," exclaimed the Lion.

"No, you are all wrong," said the little man meekly. "I have been making belief."

"Making believe!" cried Dorothy. "Are you not a Great Wizard?"

“Hush, my dear,” he said. “Don’t speak so loud, or you will be overheard – and I should be ruined. I’m supposed to be a Great Wizard.”

“And aren’t you?” she asked.

“Not a bit of it, my dear; I’m just a common man.”

“You’re more than that,” said the Scarecrow, in a grieved tone; “you’re a humbug.”

“Exactly so!” declared the little man, rubbing his hands together as if it pleased him. “I am a humbug.” (Baum, 1900, p. 55)

The Queen, the Guardian of the Gate, the Monkeys, and Glinda: The Good Witch

*Relationships matter: the currency for systemic change was trust,
and trust comes through forming healthy working relationships.*

People, not programs, change people. – Bruce D. Perry

The Queen turned to the mice that attended her and told them to go at once and get all her people. As soon as they heard orders, they could run away in every direction as fast as possible. ... Then the mice were unharnessed from the truck and scampered away through the grass to their homes. The Queen of the Mice was the last to leave. "If ever you need us again," she said, "come out into the field and call, and we shall hear you and come to your assistance. Good-bye!" (Baum, 1900, p. 30-31)

"So he is," said the green man, "and he rules the Emerald City wisely and well. But to those who are not honest or who approach him from curiosity, he is most terrible, and few have ever dared ask to see his face. I am the Guardian of the Gates, and since you demand to see the Great Oz, I must take you to his Palace. But first, you must put on the spectacles. ... The Guardian of the Gates put on his glasses and told them he was ready

to show them to the Palace. Taking a big golden key from a peg on the wall, he opened another gate, and they all followed him through the portal into the streets of the Emerald City. (Baum, 1900, p. 34-35)

Dorothy found herself riding easily between two of the biggest Monkeys, one of them the King himself. They had made a chair of their hands and were careful not to hurt her. ... As the Monkey King finished his story Dorothy looked down and saw the green, shining walls of the Emerald City before them. She wondered if the rapid flight of the Monkeys but was glad the journey was over. The strange creatures set the travelers down carefully before the gate of the City; the King bowed low to Dorothy and then flew swiftly away, followed by all his band. (Baum, 1900, p. 52-53)

Dorothy told the Witch all her story: how the cyclone had brought her to the Land of Oz, how she found her companions, and of the extraordinary adventures they had met with. "My greatest wish now," she added, "is to get back to Kansas, for Aunt Em will surely think something dreadful has happened to me, and that will make her put on mourning; and unless the crops are better this year than were last, I am sure Uncle Henry cannot afford it." ... "Bless your dear heart," she said, "I am sure I can tell you of a way to get back to Kansas." ... Glinda, the Good Witch, stepped down from her ruby throne to give the little girl a good-bye kiss, and Dorothy thanked her for all the kindness she had shown to her friends and herself. (Baum, 1900, p. 74-75)

In Dorothy's journey, several characters acted as change agents facilitating the adversities she encountered during her travel through the Land of Oz. She was helped and guided by a monkey, a witch, a guardian, and a queen. Dorothy and her cohort were also aided by the yellow brick road, the marked path that led her from her current location to Oz. On the

other hand, I had many routes to take – some paved, some dirt, some gravel – and they all did not end up where we expected.

Following are the findings for Research Question 2a: How did school administrators, staff and teachers facilitate the pivot to virtual learning? And, more specifically, how did they manage the change process in relation to the curriculum, technology, and school meals?

On my journey in the CL, I was not alone. I had the help of school administrators, staff, teachers, the principal, and our two tutors. The school principal began communicating with parents and students nearly every day to improve communication. The daily assembly through Facebook was a way to keep the normalcy for the children. While I was the primary change agent in my home, school leaders were the initial change, and over time, we formed a team.

According to Zaltman and Duncan, "selecting change agents and agent leaders in the case of change teams is a crucial element in the process of organizing change. The capabilities and performances of the team leader have often been the critical factors in the success and failure of many programs of planned change." (1977, p. 190) The authors describe individual and group qualifications needed for changes that encompass technical, administrative, interpersonal abilities, job orientation, and leadership. The qualifications include technical competence, planning capability and teamwork, empathy, motivation and drive, and executive abilities. (Zaltman & Duncan, 1977, p. 190-197)

On March 18, 2020, all parents received a letter via email from the Manhattan-Ogden USD 383 board of education informing them about the plans for the following weeks. At that point, they didn't have concrete answers. They would work with 25 top educators who would be working on the plans for continuous learning under the supervision of Dr. Marvin Wade and several members of the staff. They also informed us that the Child Nutrition Department and several teachers and administration fed 521 children on Monday and 962 on Tuesday. In

addition, they were working on adding more locations to deliver school lunches. The teachers made sure parents got the email by resending the same information through Remind, a communication app.

On March 30, 2020, intending to coordinate the meals pick up at each school assigned, parents received the following message:

Beginning on Thursday, April 2, we will be allowing parents or guardians to **pick up a meal permit for their children's meals**. This **meal permit** will allow a parent to pick up the number of meals on your permit without your children needing to be in the car. Beginning April 2, 2020, the number given on the permit will be based on the number of children in the vehicle when the permit is issued. This means for all children in your household to receive a meal, and you must bring all of them on the day you pick up your permit. Once you receive your permit, you will need to have the permit hanging on your rearview mirror to receive meals. You are still welcome to bring your children with you as we enjoy seeing them.

On April 8, another essential email regarding food distribution was shared with all parents:

Beginning on Monday, April 13, we will change how you pick up meals for your children. **We will only have meal pickups on Mondays and Wednesdays.** We have reduced our serving days from 5 to 2 to increase our social distancing. This change is to help protect the families and our staff from COVID-19.

Monday, we will have a hot lunch to pick up with a cold breakfast, but in addition, you will also pick up a cold lunch for Tuesday with one additional breakfast.

As for the communication, the main topic was feeding students. There was a legitimate concern in making sure all parents were aware of all the initiatives provided by the community and the school district, which makes sense considering that an average of 50% of schoolchildren qualify for either free or reduced lunch.

During the eight weeks that encompass the CL period, starting on March 17, 2020, when I was first informed that schools would be closed for two weeks, followed by the decision that the schools would remain closed through the end of the school year in May 2020, I received 76 emails, with 22% directly related to food distribution and community resources. As for messages related to the curriculum, they mostly informed parents about the logistics concerning the pickup procedures for the learning packets. In addition, the music and art teachers each sent two emails informing parents of special projects children could participate in. Neither were mandatory.

As mentioned, the *Remind* app (2021) was the tool parents and teachers used to communicate. Hannah's teacher was an avid user of it (and email) to inform dates for the optional class Zoom meetings, which she offered on three different days, two days for academic (online class to discuss content-related subject), and one day socialize. We also interacted about the logistics for the packet pickup, Hannah's wellbeing, and meal pick up. There was a total of 65 interactions. Hannah's teacher also talked to Hannah and me once a week on a scheduled talk about Hannah's wellbeing and socialization. Paulo's teacher and I interacted 32 times, and the interactions were about packet pickup, Zoom link for the lunch bunch, Paulo's S.T.E.M. project, and my request for her address for Paulo to write a letter to her. Daniel's teacher and I had fewer interactions, 22, and they were about a missing cover letter on Daniel's packet, one wellness check, and my request for Daniel to write her a letter.

The change process was managed based on communication. Sometimes the emails were not practical due to the duplicity. I used to receive repeated information, which at times overwhelmed me. Another characteristic of how teachers communicated and acted was a lack of consistency. Each teacher did, in my view, what they thought was more appropriate. The lack of

a general guideline made it challenging to assist each child's individual needs. For example, Daniel felt very much not having his sister's online classes or his brother's socialization through Zoom lunch bunch. Per my request, Daniel's teacher did two Zoom meetings with the whole classroom in the last week of April and the last week of the CL process.

Summary of Chapter 4

Communication was the focus of this chapter. Throughout the eight weeks of CL, everything that parents had to know about the learning activities, use of technology, social assistance, and food access were informed either through email or the Remind app. The principal, the children's teachers, and I acted as change agents and used their communication skills back and forth to turn what, for some, was a crisis into a "new normal." Unfortunately, communication was not always practical, mainly when it was repeated by the system to a parent with more than one child at school and also when notably the teacher had no initiative in the learning process, which visibly was the case of one of my children's teachers.

Regardless of missteps, the difference made in this diffusion process happened in parental involvement checking with teachers, requesting specific activities, acting upon the directions to access assistance and food when needed. The main change agents in this process are the parents who effectively served upon securing that their children's needs were assisted.

In the following chapter, I intend to answer the research question of how my life experiences and lessons learned could benefit the larger educational community.

Chapter 5 - Lessons Learned

Home Again

All innovations imply change, but not all changes involve innovations, since not everything an individual or formal or informal group adopts is perceived as new. – Gerald Zaltman & Robert Duncan

This chapter is about the lessons I learned during the CL process and the following narrative will answer the Research Question 2, how could my life experiences and lessons learned benefit the larger educational community?

On April 17, Ms. K email all parents to inform that the third package would either be mail or download electronically and parents needed to inform their choice. I preferred to receive by mail. On this day I realized that we were half way done with our home schooling and after a reflecting about the past six weeks, I felt satisfied with what I was providing to my children. On April 27 the third and final packet for the CL days 23 through 31 arrived (lessons plans for May 1-13). As I went inside my home, I called the children and we celebrated with yeays and uhus! Only two more weeks of classes and Summer break would be at the door! On this day I went back to reread two documents, the Kansas Family Guide to Continuous Learning (2020) and the Continuous Learning Task Force Guide (2020), as I wanted to be sure I was doing what it was expected from me as a parent-teacher, although those documents were mostly guidance for school then parents. From the Kansas Family Guide (2020), I was assured my children were receiving what was expected from school: regularly communication, instructions for meals pickup, special care such as Individualized Education Program (IEP) in case needed. As for the Continuous Learning Guide (2020) I concentrated my attention to the main themes, focusing on

the essential leaning in the packets “less is more” and flexibility and readiness to adapt when needed.

From my experience, “less can be more” when there is a structure and a plan. I recall the time that I taught German 101 and I created activities for my students in which there was a sequence and a plan. I started with activities to learn the basic of language communication, I fostered the building of their own experiences in the foreign language by listening to music, reading a text, and in general creating situations and simulations in which listening carefully, writing and talking was necessary. Although I was very critical of the concept of less is more as I explained in Chapter Four, it worked for us with some adjustments. First, I added some learning time, instead of the proposed 60 minutes for Paulo (second grader) and 90 minutes Hannah and Daniel (fifth graders), they all had 180 minutes for three days during the week when I had the tutor coming to our home. The other two days they had their proposed time with me. Finally, I added twice a week trips to the Cico Park Playground (fortunately open until the end of May 2020) for recreation time. I observed that the children would be more willing to do the schoolwork after playing outdoors.

From the time I lived with my parents I remembered two things that were a priority in our family. First, our education. Both my sister and I went to public school until the fourth grade and after that my parents decided to invest on us and pay the tuition for a private school. Secondly our health, they made sure we had a health check-up and a dentist visit once a year. All this was payed privately as at that time health insurance wasn't something common in my country. That being said, I remembered that we never had a new car, we bought clothes and shoes when it was only necessary, and vacation trips were rare. Because the public education system in Brazil deteriorated, when it was time for me to enroll my children at school, I followed

my parents' example. My children also went to private school in Brazil. I considered myself very privileged for getting the best education my parents were able to provide and for being able to replicate that for my children in Brazil and in the United States. My knowledge about the educational setting, my own involvement in my children's school, my decision to use my savings to hire the tutors, were key to provide Daniel, Hannah, and Paulo with the best possible leaning and life experience during the eight weeks of the CL.

On April 30, 2020, Maria the new tutor came to our house. She was a Junior in the teaching program at KSU. In comparison to Pedro, she was more introvert, but soon she opened up to the kids. Hannah really enjoyed having her Math class with her. Paulo, as always very talkative, complained to her about all the assignment's he had to do, and Daniel benefited of her help to writing his daily essay. The kids were doubled excited, to have a new tutor and because they would start with her the third and last learning packet.

In the week May 4 to May 8, 2020 I heard from Daniel's teacher about the Zoom Meeting she would facilitate on the following Friday. Daniel was thrilled. Hannah had her last Zoom sessions and Paulo would also have his last Lunch Bunch on Friday. Slowly we were approaching the end of the CL. The last week was a short one, only three days of class. I made sure to add some extra P.E. and Art activities to make it fun for the children. Finally, May 13th arrived, and we celebrated the end of the CL with ice cream! I used this event to talk to the children about how much we learned and how in a certain way we were special due to our achievements, that our success was based on each one's effort to learn the content to finish the school year. Each of us worked hard and became the author of its own accomplishment.

The Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman and the Lion now thanked the Good Witch earnestly for her kindness; and Dorothy exclaimed:

“You are certainly as good as you are beautiful! But you have not yet told me how to get back to Kansas.”

“Your Silver Shoes will carry you over the desert,” replied Glinda. “If you had known their power you could have gone back to your Aunt Em the very first day you came to this country.”

“But then I should not have had my wonderful brains!” cried the Scarecrow. “I might have passed my whole life in the farmer’s cornfield.”

“And I should not have had my lovely heart,” said the Tin Woodman. “I might have stood and rusted in the forest till the end of the world.”

“And I should have lived a coward forever,” declared the Lion, “and no beast in all the forest would have had a good word to say to me.”

“This is all true,” said Dorothy, “and I am glad I was of use to these good friends. But now that each of them has had what he most desired, and each is happy in having a kingdom to rule besides, I think I should like to go back to Kansas.” (Braun, p.75)

As a simple comparison, each of my children and myself, like the characters of the Wizard of the Oz embraced a journey of changes. In this journey we went through various stages, first denial, not believing the school year at school was over from one day to another. Then we went into accepting the changes and looking into finding and managing what it was most important for each one of us. The Scarecrow wanted a brain, Daniel wanted to socialize with his classmates; the Tinman wanted a heart, Paulo wanted a real “teacher” (not his mom teaching him); the Lion wanted courage, Hannah wanted structure to learn. I wanted to provide the best learning experience to my children, that was my Kansas!

I believe that the last stage of a change or changes is growth. We all had the opportunity to grow in our journeys. We closed some doors and opened others that enable us to become not only stronger, but authors of the changes we were going through. As for the educational community, I believed that we need to start by defining what is the priority and from there built upon it. There will be things that we used to do and will not do it anymore, there will be things that we will have to let it go and it will be things that we will go for it. Above all there will be the commitment needed to acknowledge the new situation, and phases that will need communication, development of new solutions, the implementation of it and finally an overall evaluation of what went well and what not.

Summary of Chapter 5

My life experience and lessons learned may benefit the larger educational community in two aspects: one is considering truthfully education or better, the act of teaching and learning a priority, and secondly that in order to learn we need to be open for changes. During this period, it was clear to me that my children needed clear learning goals and activities wrapped in a motivating environment. Also, their learning experiences had to be assessed by their completion.

Having the capacity to change is a gift. Changes can bring the most vulnerable feelings out of someone and be haunting at times. The CL process taught us that the set of skills, knowledge and behaviors we once had may no longer work and that it is ok, because we are capable of changing and learning new ones.

In the next chapter, Chapter 6, I will discuss the findings and their relevance for further research in the topic and describe how it can be implemented through the lens of critical pedagogy and diffusions of innovations.

Chapter 6 - Findings, Discussion, and Conclusion

Introduction to Findings

“Whaaat? No more school”??? Paulo screamed as I read the email sent by the school district while at the same time, I quickly Googled “Kansas Governor decision + Covid-19.” YES, I answered. School buildings are closed for the next eight weeks, and we will learn from home. “How,” Hannah asked! “Why” Daniel inquired! Eight weeks is simply two months or 60 days. In most situations, it is a relatively short time to wait, for instance, if you are expecting a baby or building a house. It is, however, a long time to plan a trip or a lesson plan and a reasonable amount of time to accomplish something such as writing a chapter of a dissertation. Time is relative! When my world shut down because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the first day was a blur: waiting for answers; planning for the unknown; and trying to maintain a sense of normalcy in our daily lives. In summation, we had to learn on the fly. The disruption was experienced on every level including turning me into the primary educator for my three children!

This study began with the following research questions:

- (1) How did Covid-19 impact my family's education routine in the second semester of the 2020 schoolyear, and more precisely, during the period from March to May 2020?
 - (a) How did my personal experience as an international student and nanny prepare me to be a change agent within my family?
 - (b) How did my preparation as an educator, graduate degree in education, privilege, and standing as an active and involved parent in our school community help me respond to the innate challenges within the CL process?
- (2) How could my life experiences and lessons benefit the larger educational community?

(a) How did school administrators, staff, and teachers facilitate the pivot to virtual learning?

And more specifically, how did they manage the change process concerning the curriculum, technology, and school meals?

(b) How did educational technology affect the innovation process?

Chapter six synthesizes everything my family learned during the eight weeks that changed our lives forever. The narrative is about the Continuous Learning process established by the Kansas State Department of Education and local school districts' plan for parents and caregivers to teach children at home. I explore essential theories about the process of change and innovation, bringing to life a story about a mom and her three children and their experiences within the context of those changes. I also share some lessons learned and reflections from this research experience. Finally, I offer further research recommendations for the educational community.

Autoethnography

This was my story! This was the story of a middle-aged graduate student, mother of three children embedded in the American Heartland who, overnight, had to become her children's teacher and figure out how to access school support programs that were instrumental to the young students' success. This was the story of one family's journey and its routine that during the Covid-19 school shutdowns had to reinvent the best way of teaching my kids at home. Homeschooling for many is a choice; not for the Mendoncas. I now have an intimate understanding axiom that necessity is the mother of invention.

Autoethnography allowed me to report my observations as academic research data, focusing on social and cultural aspects and my reactions (Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

Autoethnography offered the potential to expand scholarship about the human experience (Ellis,

2009, p. 16). This approach was ideal for my study because it was flexible, reflexive, and reflective of life as lived. It is emotional and meaningful without rigid rule-based procedures (Ellis, 2009).

Cultures and Belonging

The idea of place, i.e., where we belong, is a constant subject for many (hooks, 2009, p. 1). This is a powerful concept for me as I battled with my own sense of belonging. The cultural blending promoted by the three cultures I lived in made my interpersonal experience of everyday interactions constant. My accent, not truly Brazilian as pointed out many times by others, also made people guess whether it was Russian or German. Never once did someone ask if it was Spanish or Portuguese, as expected for a Latina like me. My sense of belonging, more to the American Midwest culture, which I chose to be my home sweet home, fights back with the uncomfortable feeling I had while I lived in Brazil for almost forty years. As a privileged person with my individual experiences and former socioeconomic status, I was able to bring a different approach to teaching my children during the CL process.

Outsider and Insider

I am the insider and the outsider, sharing and describing a "first-hand experience" (Wolcott, 2003, p. 109). Merriam and Tisdell pointed out that the second characteristic of all forms of qualitative research is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (2016, p.16). The extension of this notion of insider/outsider status is related to my positionality in this research – my race, nationality, social status, and background, which were fundamental for me to get access not only to my own children but to the community in which I was inserted. Both statuses gave me certain advantages while researching, mostly acceptance. I was well-accepted at home as the mother (researcher) and, in the community, the international

student caring/teaching for her children. On the other hand, there was a conflict between the mother and the teacher.

Seeds of Diffusion

In 2018, when taking a class for my doctorate program, I learned about the process of Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers, 2003). Little did I know that back in 2002 while implementing the Pioneiros II project (Mendonca, Maia, & Goes, 2004), I was using the diffusion technique to empower stakeholders and myself as the instructional designer to reach out to faculty members. The goal was to develop their classes in a learning management system (LMS), and establish it as the beginning of the LMS implemented for three schools of Fundacao Getulio Vargas in Sao Paulo.

In this study, I concentrated on the communication channels, the change agent, and the innovation itself.

The Communication Aspect

“Why are you on your phone all the time?” Hannah asked me. Yes, children can be quite critical of their parents. “I am checking for email messages from your school,” I answered. The school district’s primary mode of communication with parents was with email, and during the CL period, parents received more than seventy email messages. Besides that, parents also spoke with their children’s teacher via Remind. As a parent, I have always tried to communicate educational choices and situations with my children in a way they could understand and appreciate. Dialogue and conversations were (and still are) central in my family, which according to Nikalant and Ramnarayan, “constitute the medium of change” (2006, p. 29).

Lee Wiggam (1994), a team facilitator at Gosport Elementary in Gosport, Indiana, wrote that he noticed there was no community understanding and support upon his arrival at the school.

To plan, develop and implement changes to improve education, the team included the following interventions and actions: development of two-way communication approaches; inclusion of representatives from the local community in their meetings; development of reports distributed to all members; implementation of community suggestions; and expanded communication among teachers and parents.

The communications between parents and teachers have created a new cycle. This cycle begins with information being shared. The information has brought program changes for the students. These program changes have created the need for more information to be shared and more program changes to be made. This cycle has developed into meaningful dialogue and increased trust between parents and teachers. (Wiggam, 1994, p. 160)

The first learning packet was not user friendlier. There was a significant difference between the second-grade packet and the fifth-grade packet. The second-grade packet had a suggested lesson plan for the day, including all the subjects, reading, math, social studies, and science, while the fifth-grade packet had a proposed plan only for ELA. There was no index, which made it difficult to find what was in the packet, including the answer key for the exercises located near the back of the packet. All of the pages were copied back-to-back, making it difficult for the parent and the student to work together in the dynamic of the parent and teacher. Every time the child had finished an assignment, a search ensued for the answer key. After three days of search parties, I emailed the principal and made a formal complaint about the organization of the content. I mentioned the need for an instructional designer to work with the teachers to develop future packets. Fortunately, the communication channel was open and constructive. I got an email back informing me that other parents had complained, and the district team was already addressing critical updates for the new packets. Nevertheless, as I illustrated in Chapter

4, I still found the need to redesign and adapt the lesson plans according to our schedule and tutors for my children.

Communication Channels

Rogers (2003) characterized diffusion as a type of communication about exchanging a new idea. One of the Diffusions of Innovations elements is the communication channel, also described by Rogers (2003, p. 18) as "the means by which messages get from one individual to another." The channels can be interpersonal, which are more effective in persuading an individual. Or mass media, which is the most rapid and efficient way to inform large audiences (Rogers, 2003). While the interpersonal channel's role is to persuade individuals to change their attitude, the mass media channel's role is primarily to create knowledge and spread information rapidly. For example, most of the emails received during the CL were sent by the school and district. In comparison, teachers sent fewer e-mails on a two-way exchange of information or interaction. Although the emails and Facebook messages have many characteristics of mass media, from my point of view, according to the importance of the CL for the community, it contributed to "change held attitudes," as Rogers (2003, p. 205) describes as one of its possibilities.

Human communication has an underlying principle: the transfer of ideas between two individuals. When individuals are similar, it is called homophillous (similar attributes, such as beliefs, education, socioeconomic status, etc.), and when they are different, it is called heterophyllous (Rogers, 2003). For ten weeks (including two weeks before the beginning of the CL), the school district, principal, and teachers communicated with parents and students using three media: email, Remind app, and Facebook. The 76 emails I received informed parents en masse from the district level or school about general concerns and information regarding the

education packets and food distribution. A total of 119 messages were sent through Remind from my children's teachers. Most were simply a copy of the email message sent by the school or district, except for Hannah's teacher, who sent more personal messages inquiring about Hannah's progress and learning activities. Hannah's teacher was the only teacher to ask for pictures of her completing assignments.

During every official school day, we gathered on Facebook for the morning assembly. The morning assembly was primarily conducted by the school principal and teachers participated at various times to read a story or perform an activity with the children. This type of communication provided a sense of school community through a shared activity and to bring the school environment to each student's home. Educators made announcements about birthdays, the school lunch menu, and any challenge the principal had prepared for the week. The principal also used these opportunities to address social-emotional issues and introduced activities designed to inspire students to make better choices at home, exercise, play outside, read, and be grateful for each other.

“One of the most distinctive problems in the diffusion of innovations is that the participants are usually quite heterophyllous” (Rogers, 2003 p. 19). I had regular contact with two mothers, Susan and Julieta (fictitious names), whose children were in my kids’ classes at school. We talked on the phone and met a couple of times to let the children to play. We exchanged information about the CL and how we were doing at home with our children. This was my personal experience and not a significant sample. But it’s very interesting to realize its findings and compare them to Rogers’ (2003) literature. *Susan and I have the same socioeconomic background, race, and educational background (college graduates). As for Julieta, our only commonality is that we are not American. She is Puerto Rican, and I am*

Brazilian. Susan and I discussed the number of emails, the material design, and how we were conducting our home learning activities. We both sent emails to the school criticizing the first learning packet. Her son skipped a couple of lessons before the CL but completed the three learning packets on time. Julieta was mainly concerned about feeding her children. I went to Harvesters several times to and picked up food for her. She lost the first learning packet but agreed that it was not well designed. Julieta's daughter was Daniel's classmate, and Hannah's best friend at the time. Her daughter did not finish the learning packets by the last day of school and was required spend the first few weeks of summer break completing her assignments. Daniel's teacher was not very forthcoming or actively engaged with her classroom, which may have affected Julieta's and her daughter's performance at home.

According to Rogers (2003), the nature of diffusion demands that there is at least some degree of heterophily between two or more participants in a communication process. Otherwise, there would be no new information to exchange. Besides that, participants would have to be homophilous on their attributes, even though they are heterophyllous regarding the innovation. For example, Susan and I we were very similar in our attitudes. Conversely, Julieta and I primarily worried about our ability to feed our children, and our conversations did not bleed into our values concerning their education, which may have compromised the understanding of all email messages in Remind and morning assembly in Facebook.

The Change Agent

Throughout my life, I have been open to change. Every time I visited or moved to a different country than my own or had to go back to my own after an extended stay abroad, I had to be receptive to change. A vital trait of successful change agents, Zaltman and Duncan (1977) posit, is empathy, which is a person's ability to identify with others and share their perspectives

and feelings (p. 193). During the CL, my children and I had to deal with uncertainties, managed by mutual trust and my own ability to plan. As for empathy, fortunately, the relationship was between a mother and three young children, and I was capable of putting myself in my children's shoes, which can be difficult, as Rogers (2003) points out when a change agent is highly different from their clients. The ability to plan is an important skill a change agent or team leader must have (Zaltman & Duncan, 1977). My planning involved picking up breakfast and lunches every other day at the children's school, visiting the Cats Cupboard and Harvesters food distribution once a week, and creating daily lessons plans for two fifth graders and a second grader.

Change leaders are catalyzers and facilitators; they have the mission to influence and persuade people to reflect on changing their mental models (Nilakant & Ramnarayam, 2006). Concerning the innovation-decision process, the change agents need to concentrate their efforts on first creating "awareness-knowledge" (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971, p. 108), which answers the question "what is the innovation?" (Rogers, 2003, p. 172). Secondly, "how-to" knowledge which consists of information necessary to use an innovation properly (Everet & Shoemaker, 1971, p. 106,), answers the question "how does it work?" (Rogers, 2003, p. 172). Finally, the question "why does it work?" is based on the principle's knowledge, which is explained by the underlying principles of how an innovation works (Rogers 2003, pp.172-173). For example, throughout the CL, I acted as the conductor of a symphony constantly learning new pieces of music. I was responsible for teaching the notes, ensuring the sounds my orchestra would produce, and for concerns about how my musicians would play. My daily responsibilities were mainly related to the how-to, but I kept the principles-knowledge squarely on the writings of my observations of this process.

Rogers (2003) summarizes the three types of knowledge about an innovation, saying that most change agents create awareness-knowledge. However, this could be reached quickly and more efficiently by mass media channels, as in the case for my children. I was the means to achieve the "what." Next, Rogers states knowledge is the most essential in the clients' trial and performance of innovation in the innovation-decision process. Last, it is about the creation of principles-knowledge, which most change agents consider outside of their responsibilities, but fundamental for change agents in the long run.

Innovations

When I learned there was a group of professionals from the Kansas State Department of Education and local educators from our district working on the CL, I immediately assumed technology would be available to all students, learning activities would be conducted primarily online with teachers facilitating the interactions and learning process. I had great expectations for the remaining eight weeks of the schoolyear because I had answered the Wellness Check and Technology Survey and was aware of the devices the school had. (I was a PTO member). In my mind, based on my knowledge of online learning and the school's resources, a learning process with the integration of educational technology just made sense. But it didn't happen.

“An innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (Roberts, 2003, p. 12). Rogers (2003) noted that when diffusion happens, the words "innovation" and "technology" are used as synonyms. The shift to remote learning placed a primary emphasis on technology. Therefore, the need for laptops, computers, and internet hotspots was high. According to Garcia (2000), Manhattan-Ogden USD383 rented 1,500 mobile data hotspots and invested \$400,000 in the issuance of electronic devices for students. His article also pointed out that elementary schools would initially work on a “package

approach.” Later, the district's long-term plans would start online learning methods once assured there was equitable access to materials and resources. *Unfortunately, the long-term plan did not come to fruition for the elementary school. I learned from Mrs. M., the art teacher, on the day we did a Zoom art session for my children that the district survey revealed that too many families in the district did not have adequate internet connections or devices at home. Therefore, they could not develop a curriculum that was dependent on technology. The district ultimately opted to provide the needed technology only to middle and high school students.*

Averaged across school levels, ten percent of students reported having “some” or “no” access to needed technology, which is clearly unacceptable – a structural inequity if even one student in a classroom does not have equal access to equitable educational opportunities. (Cognia, 2021, p. 5)

It was clear after talking to Mrs. M. that over the ensuing eight weeks my children would receive paper packets or access them online. The introduction to online activities, which were optional, arrived in the second and third packets. One page was dedicated to instructions on accessing the IXL website (www.ixl.com) and working randomly for 15 to 20 minutes daily on the activities related to math, language arts, social studies, and science. This initiative for change by introducing a technology component was not related directly to the activities in the lesson plan. As a matter of fact, they were not even mentioned in the program (which made complete sense as the district acted with equity).

According to Morgan (1994), “successful innovations inevitably involved instructional systems and technology professionals in working and leadership roles, and the new instructional programs were always learner-centered” (p. 45). The author discusses the term “learner-centered” by answering the following questions: “What does it mean in instructional system

language? What does it look like in the classroom? How is it developed? What difference does it make in the student achievement?" (p. 46). *It was April 15, day 11 of CL, and we started the second packet with the online learning activity. We had an iPad and Chrome Book to use. As we attempted to access the IXL website, we got our first surprise! The password supplied in the instructions did not work. I messaged teachers through Remind and was told they were experiencing issues with the password. They asked me to be patient. Two days later, we were finally able to successfully login. Daniel and Hannah took turns using the computer, and Paulo used the iPad. They completed online activities for three days. Paulo routinely complained it was boring, Daniel said it was challenging to change levels, and Hannah said she didn't learn the math activity at school. On the sixth day, I sat with them and tried to align the lessons in the packet with those online. Not an easy task. Then, I realized that those learning activities by themselves were very content centered. The answer to the question of what difference those online exercises were doing regarding my children's achievement was "nothing." As a newly empowered parent-teacher on day 18 of the CL, I discontinued the online activities because they were not integrated into the proposed curriculum and lesson plan.*

The Zoom calls were also optional for students in terms of technological innovation. They didn't require a dedicated internet hot spot or specific tablets or computers. Instead, parents could use their cell phones. Those calls, although not frequent, partially addressed the social-emotional component of schooling, allowing the children to express their moment at home, feelings, and perceptions.

With the introduction of any innovation, such as a new curriculum, learning resources, or application of educational technology, may cause discomfort by the people involved. Joseph Reigeluth (2010) identifies six elements that are important for any systemic change process to

succeed: broad stakeholder ownership, learning organization, understanding the systemic change process, evolving mindsets about education, systems view of knowledge, and systems design. Impediments and roadblocks to the implementation of change must be removed for success and communication must flow freely across all instances, as such programs aimed to bridge social gaps. Again, these elements reflect the importance of clear goals, management, and communications plan that will guide a new innovating project or a significant change in an existing project.

Teaching and Learning

My understanding of teaching and learning are directly tied to who I am and my life experience, which has spanned three countries on two continents. Furthermore, the languages that have influenced me – my native, Brazilian Portuguese, English, and German – contributed to my growth as a person, parent, teacher, and scholar. As for teaching-learning methodology, I believe in a paradigm where the learner is placed squarely in the center of the teaching and learning process. To grow, learners must actively work to build and construct knowledge, which is why I am convinced of the value of conscious learning. Furthermore, it fosters rich interactions and equitable relationships when all participants are heard and respected.

I believe an authentic and successful learning experience for my students includes an environment of respect and understanding. In this environment, learners are welcome to share and discuss ideas. Engagement is not only encouraged but required. Ideally, learning occurs where a solid theoretical foundation associated with the learners' own experiences meets best practices. A second critical feature of my position is the development of critical thinking skills. This, I believe, is imperative! Critical thinking is fostered through context analysis, carefully considering the nuances and perspectives of others involved and placing the conversation in the

proper historical light. The consciousness of bias regarding privilege, gender, race, diversity, and social-economic status frames discussions and helps students understand and appreciate differences.

Critical Pedagogy

Critical social theories also include the essential sub-theory of pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is a theory of praxis that describes one of the fundamental tasks of educators: to teach in a way that creates a more socially just world. According to Bradshaw, "Critical pedagogues view learning and educational work as inseparable from the rest of life. Education happens in broader social contexts and, thus, must be considered in light of, and like expressions, consequences, and replicators of issues and dynamics in the broader society" (2017, p. 9). As educators introduce these practices in the classroom, students from different backgrounds, cultures, genders, and race have the chance to feel more integrated. Moreover, as Berry (2000) wisely states, "critical pedagogy is continuously borrowing and developing discourses that question and challenge dominant powers" (p. 95).

Critical pedagogues and educators will not solve all issues in the educational field through critical theory. Still, they can examine critically by questioning what, who, how we got to a particular conclusion or result. They can also explore the historical, political, economic, and intellectual conditions that created the problem/issue.

In my view, critical pedagogy is fundamental for society in general because it is rooted in a social and educational vision of justice and equality. The instructional idea demands a purposeful rethinking and reconceptualization that includes: what people are capable of achieving; the role of social, cultural, and political influences that shape human identity; the relationship between community and schools; the way power operates to create structures that

not always goes to the best interest of the students; how teachers and students relate to information; the way the school affects the lives of students from marginalized groups; and the organization of the school and its relationship between teachers and learners (Kincheloe, 2008).

While preparing each lesson plan for my children, I realized how far the CL curriculum was from blending it with reality. One expects the tripod of teachers and students relating to the new knowledge and applying it to daily life. Most lessons were content based. Each subject stood alone to be consumed without applying critical thinking skills. Even the second-grade reading activity had no relation to the spelling activity. It was as if each lesson was prepared independently and the teacher had simply checked off necessary boxes. If I was struggling, with a graduate-level education and blessed with white privilege, how did the CL affect those in lower socio-economic classes and/or those with learning disabilities?

Advocates of critical pedagogy are also concerned with individuals in marginalized groups who are disproportionately affected by discrimination and poverty. It is believed within the theory of critical pedagogy that such suffering is man-made, meaning if human actions created it, humans could correct it (Kincheloe, 2008).

As Kincheloe (2008) pointed out, during the CL, I constantly thought about all of the "Julietas" across the district who, amid their daily battle to put food on the table and equipped with far less privileged compared to me, had to teach one, two, or even three children.

As educators introduce these practices in the classroom, students from different backgrounds, cultures, genders, and races have the chance to feel more included and represented. Although the teachings and examples of Paulo Freire (2013) constitute a major focus of pedagogical teaching methods in Brazil, classroom practices are mostly teacher-centered, maintaining the teachers' authority and command of the classroom. Berry (2007) wisely states,

“critical pedagogy is continuously borrowing and developing discourses that question and challenge dominant powers” (p. 94). There are many layers to the dominant powers in education, from the education departments to the teacher in the classroom who dispenses knowledge.

In light of this approach, teachers and administrators missed opportunities to rethink curricula when implementing educational technologies or other new praxis considering the many challenges. Instead of devoting time and resources to equity and digital inclusion, they failed to address gaps within their schools and communities while teaching at a distance during the CL.

Regardless of the equity issue (the use of educational technology was not mandatory since the district could not provide devices and data access to all), the CL for students in the elementary grades suffered from missed opportunities to integrate the educational technologies even if they were optional. None of the activities offered online in the district's platform were linked to the content in the packets. In my home, my second grader didn't want to access the online activities because they were repetitive, they lacked purpose and quickly became another "task".

Changes in education demand a purposeful rethinking and reconceptualization that include: what people are capable of achieving; the role of social, cultural, and political in shaping human identity; the relationship between community and schools; the way power operates that is not always in the best interest of the students; how teachers and students relate to the curriculum; the way the school affects the lives of students from marginalized groups; and the way the schools are organized and the relationship between teachers and learners (Kincheloe, 2008).

Analyzing the CL under the lenses of critical pedagogy allows understanding which groups of individuals were marginalized and affected by discrimination and poverty due to the quality and type of education they received. There is an engagement to change the practice of

"one size fits all" through a critical look into what we are developing is fundamental. Bradshaw (2018) views the implementation of a critical praxis through this quotation,

Engaging in praxis in the context of our field requires critical self-examination and making a place for deep consideration of social justice issues in both personal dealings and professional work and developing a practice of intentionally identifying and reflectively addressing them in the education and professional work of instructional design and technology. (p. 343)

More than urgent is thinking and looking into solutions with a more holistic and integrative approach.

Freire's Influence

Paulo Freire (2003), a Brazilian critical scholar, views the imprisonment of less privileged people regarding education as leading to difficulties in achieving a decent socioeconomic status. He sees education through consciousness thinking, transforming the oppressive structures to create a more equitable society. There are two players, the oppressor and the oppressed, and as long as the oppressed are not able to think freely about their context, they will be forever caught in this situation:

The oppressed, having internalized the oppressor's image and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift.... Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man, nor is it an idea that becomes a myth. It is instead an indispensable condition for the quest for human completion. (Freire, 2003, p. 47)

The experience of freedom is directly related to the players, confirming that as long as society keeps this structure, the least fortunate, the majority of the population, the low-middle class, etc.,

will be held as a hostage from socioeconomic opportunities that include equal chances in education.

My privilege sometimes puts me in the position of the oppressor concerning my children. I had the knowledge, and I ran the show and made all the decisions. Just before realizing that I had to start planning more inclusive and less content-centered lessons, I was reviewing how I was taught in school. My children had to consume, without questioning, everything that was in the packet. During this process, I learned how to listen to my children when they said, *“we already learned this”* or *“this online activity is just a repetition of what we learned from the packet, and it is boring!”*

The key players in education are politicians, policymakers, and economists, whereas teachers, students, and educational administrators come in second place. Written in dialogue style, Paulo Freire and Ira Shor (1997) pointed out that "the school system was created by political forces whose center of power is at a distance from the classroom" (p. 33). As long as we keep teachers and students encapsulated and further away from core principles of a critical view of education and how education can be used to enable individuals to climb in their academic lives, the existence of social status imbalance and inequalities will perpetuate in society, and the same hierarchical classes will keep dominating (Freire & Shor, 1997).

The fundamental thesis of Paulo Freire is that he elaborates on the pedagogical concepts considering the educator the main character in the process of educating. The educator is responsible for transforming the social context bringing consciousness to the dominated environment. In this process of problematizing education, the teacher learns as s/he teaches through the dialogue of her/his students, stimulating the cognitive act of both, turning the exchange as a result of critical reflection.

I must confess that the first five days of the CL were the most challenging of my life as an educator and parent. Somehow, instead of applying everything I knew about student-centered learning and conscious learning, I focused on myself and the content. Soon, I realized that my methods were not attending to the needs of each my children, and my privilege allowed me to search for a new approach. The introduction of two Hispanic tutors, Pedro and Maria, and the lesson plan in which I reorganized each activity to blend with the learning objectives, made the following seven weeks much smoother and enriching for the children. Paulo got his real teacher; Hannah, responded positively to her much-needed structure; and Daniel socialized while learning!

To go further into this discussion, it is imperative to consider what bell hooks (1994) shared about her experience: she noticed an unwillingness from educators to include in their teachings the awareness of race, class, and sex. These three topics and realities are often related to uncontrollable classrooms. hooks admired the teachings of Paulo Freire, mainly the issues regarded to conscious education and the concept of critical consciousness, which is the only means to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, to liberate the oppressed from their oppressor (Freire, 2003). As a black scholar in a white higher education setting, hooks (1994) believed that "to educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn" (p. 13). Her teaching methods were highly influenced by Freire, who defined education as a practice of freedom, which was opposed to the concept of education as a practice of domination. To achieve the practice of freedom, Freire (2003) suggests the problem-posing method, in which the players develop their power by perceiving the way they exist in the world in which they live. The world sees reality in process and not a static reality. Problem-posing education invites educators to a more human and liberating praxis, leading to the emancipation

of students and teachers in the process of learning. There is the idea that to challenge education, teachers, and students need to undergo self-consciousness, which will change their roles in the process of teaching and learning.

Last, Freire (2003) also describes human activity. In his view, the movement in the education setting is viewed as a pedagogical action, enabling the oppressed to evolve in social opportunities.

Implications

In examining the underlying principles of systemic educational change and diffusion theories, it is clear that the primary goal is to meet learners' and clients' needs. This study revealed that change efforts and the diffusion of the new (the innovation or idea) have not ensured that disadvantaged and privileged individuals have all their needs met. Considering my efforts to provide the best educational experience for my children, I still could have done it differently with a more consistent teacher engagement. Throughout the eight weeks of CL, it was clear that teachers were not on the same page, considering the different levels (quality and quantity) of their communication with my children and me. It was clear through my observations that the Kansas State Department of Education guidelines were very general and ultimately superficial. Also, it was apparent that school staff and teachers working within the school change guidelines could not meet all my children's needs, and I, as a change agent, had to step in constantly. As Reigeluth (2008) and Rogers (2003) pointed out, change models encourage all stakeholders to create a mindset of change.

The communication focused on providing a means to feed the families more than providing a student-centered learning approach. I have pointed out throughout my research my privilege in being able to provide a more effective learning experience for my children.

Therefore, I did not depend on a more efficient teacher engagement (although I wish I had) that, through my observations, didn't happen equally among the three teachers I mostly had contact with.

The principal's use of email and Facebook assembly sessions promoted positive communication for the students. However, the principal's and teachers' communication lacked specifics about the curriculum. Anything specific to the learning packets was only accomplished through parental initiative. My role as a change agent and privileged educator contributed to the redesign and planning of the daily activities. By following instructional design system theory to implement technology-based instructional media into the classroom (which was not the case in CL, given the lack of a proper instructional design for the learning packets), practitioners must consider the types of learning and possible strategies the target audience will need to achieve learning objectives and outcomes defined at the beginning of the instructional process. The CL plan lacked critical thinking about how the activities were to be executed in a home environment and lacked clear learning objectives and daily lesson plans.

Technology integration in education aims to enhance teaching, learning, and performance. Technology should work as an instrument of inclusion. Before the CL started, I had serious expectations about integrating educational technology, or better said, its proper use, since my children already used it regularly. So, two weeks before the CL began, parents received several emails to answer a survey about educational technology. Unfortunately, none of the communication pieces informed parents that the CL would not integrate technology into the new curriculum. I learned that it would not be used to mediate learning through our art teacher and an online news article. Most parents knew that if we had devices at home and an internet connection, our children could either participate in specific activities provided by their teacher or

enrich learning materials through online content, but not officially through the communication channels.

Recommendations for Practice and Further Research

The topic of teaching and parenting during Covid-19 is complex and offers many possibilities for future research. The school shut down from March 2020 was not the first-time school buildings were shuttered and parents had to step in. Therefore, I want to look into further autoethnographically and ethnographical research in this area of education.

The use of narratives could provide readers with examples they could relate to and offer possible solutions when parents need to teach their children. Districts and schools must be prepared for this kind of challenge again. More voices need to be heard, voices that bring a more qualitative look into what happens within families when formal learning occurs. As for the quantitative aspect of research and practice, I recommend a study of the impact of the lockdown on children's lives according to their socioeconomic status. This study provided some examples, but it would be beneficial for educators to learn from a more robust dataset.

Finally, understanding the holistic picture with more parents', teachers', and learners' perspectives on the process of teaching and learning changes will provide valuable input for the diffusion of any educational innovation.

Conclusions

At school, we begin to shape one's personality and life with views about the other and one's place and responsibility within a community. Students begin their circles of friendships and learn to distinguish what we consider socially correct and what will be condemned and acquire the concepts and knowledge that will be the cornerstones of their future life—a life with

opportunities. There is, indeed, a challenge to bridge theories into practice in education. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) point out that,

As a nation, we can reasonably expect our schools to serve as the great equalizer, a meeting place for democratic values to emerge. This remains, I believe, a viable goal for education. An active learning community will not set restrictions on the source of learning. Instead, it will continually challenge what and how it learns, even though it may be on the cutting edge of change. (p.359)

By having these three elements working together: teachers rethinking their practices; communities assisting the educational setting; and school districts helping schools with complex issues (which include social and educational needs), society will be able to provide a more democratic learning environment for our students, even though it is strongly regulated by the government.

During the CL process, we brought the school home. Lastly, parents' responsibility was to bridge the individual, the learner, and the child with their learning and survival needs. Each parent became a relentless change agent and had to use the communication channels used by the district, school, and teachers to learn with their children what would happen for eight weeks. The CL showed that technology per se is not an innovation. Innovation is an idea spread out differently. The innovators in this process were each parent, principal, and teacher trying to do their best to accommodate the student's needs.

This research provided a highly personalized account of how my children and I experienced the pivot to CL that occurred in their schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this auto-ethnographic study, I sought to inform the education community about future challenges regarding communication and alternatives to teaching and learning.

References

- Alexander, B. (2014). Critical autoethnography as intersectional praxis: A performative pedagogical interplay on bleeding borders of identity. In: *Critical Autoethnography*. (110-122). Left Coast Press.
- Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic Autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 373-395.
- Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (1977). *The Definition of Educational Technology*. AECT.
- Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (1972). The field of educational technology: A statement of definition. *Audiovisual Instruction*, 17, 36- 43.
- Ash, K., & Davis, M. (2009, May 12). E-Learning's potential scrutinized in flu crisis. *Education Week*. Retrieved from: <https://www-edweek-org.er.lib.k-state.edu/ew/articles/2009/05/13/31swinotech-2.h28.html>
- Bailey, C. (2007). *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*. Pine Forge Press.
- Baum, L. F (2015). *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Createspace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Blad, E. (2020, March 17). Kansas first state to close schools for rest of school year due to Coronavirus. *Education Week*. Retrieved from: <http://blogs.edweek.org.er.lib.k-state.edu/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/03/kansas-schools-coronavirus.html>
- Berry, K. (2007). Locations (or Not) of Critical Pedagogy in Les Petites Et Les Grandes Histoires. In *Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now?*, Counterpoints: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education. New York, NY: Peter Lang. p. 79-95.
- Besemeres, M., & Wierzbicka, A. (2007). *Translating lives living with two languages and cultures*. University of Queensland Press.

- Bessette, L. (2020). Digital Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *The National Teaching & Learning Forum*, 29(4), 7-9.
- Bhattacharya, K. (2017). *Fundamentals of qualitative research: A practical guide*. Routledge.
- Bochner, A. (2012). On first-person narrative scholarship. *Narrative Inquiry: NI*, 22(1), 155-164.
- Borup, J., Jensen, M., Archambault, L., Short, C. R., & Graham, C. R. (2020). Supporting students during COVID-19: Developing and leveraging academic communities of engagement in a time of crisis. *Journal of Technology & Teacher Education*, 28(2), 161–169.
- Bourke, B. (2014). Positionality: Reflecting on the research process. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(33), 1-9. Retrieved from <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol19/iss33/3>
- Bowers, C. (2000). *Let them eat data*. The University of Georgia Press.
- Boylorn, R., & Orbe, M. (2014). *Critical autoethnography: Intersecting cultural identities in everyday life*. Left Coast Press.
- Bradshaw, A. C. (2017). Critical Pedagogy and Educational Technology. In *Culture, Learning, and Technology – Research and Practice* (pp. 08-27). New York: Routledge.
- Bradshaw, A. (2018). Reconsidering the Instructional Design and Technology Timeline Through a Lens of Social Justice. *TechTrends*, 62(4), (pp. 336-344).
- Brown, B. (2012). *Daring greatly: How the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead*. Gotham Books.
- Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as method*. Left Coast Press.
- Change, (2020). In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/change>

- Chow, A. (2008). Systems Thinking and 21st Century Education: A case study of an American model for high school educational reform. Verlag.
- Christensen, R., & Alexander, C. (2020). Preparing K-12 Schools for a Pandemic Before It Occurs. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 28(2), 261.
- Cognia (2021, April 28). Retrieve from: https://www.cognia.org/press_releases/cognia-surveys-reveal-insights-on-remote-learning/
- Denzin, N. (1978). The research act: a theoretical introduction to sociological methods. Second Edition. McGraw Hill.
- Denzin, N. (2009). Qualitative inquiry under fire toward a new paradigm dialogue. Walnut Creek, Calif.: Left Coast Press.
- Denzin, N. (2014). *Interpretive Autoethnography*. Sage.
- Denzin N., & Lincoln, Y. (2000). The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Second Edition. (1-28). Sage.
- Education Week. (2020, September 20). Map: Coronavirus and school closures in 2019-2020. Retrieved from: <https://www-edweek-org.er.lib.k-state.edu/ew/section/multimedia/map-coronavirus-and-school-closures.html>
- Earle, R. (1998). Instructional design and teacher planning: Reflections and perspectives. In R. Branch & Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Educational Media and Technology Yearbook* (Vol. 23, pp. 36-45). Libraries Unlimited Inc.
- Elgart, M. (2021). Learning upended: How Americans experienced the shift to remote instruction. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 102(5), 48-51.
- Ellis, C. (1998). "I Hate my Voice": Coming to terms with minor bodily stigmas. *Sociological Quarterly*, 39(4), 517-537.

- Ellis, C. (2000). Creating Criteria: An ethnographic short story. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6(2), 273-277.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. AltaMira Press.
- Ellis, C. (2009). *Revision: Autoethnographic reflections on work and life* (Writing Lives: Ethnographic Narratives. Routledge.
- Ellis, C., Adams, T., & Bochner, A. (2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1).
- Ellis C., & Bochner A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: researcher as subject. In N. K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 733–768). Sage.
- Ellul, J., & Wilkinson, J. (1964). *The technological society*. Knopf.
- Feeding America. (2020). Riley County numbers for food insecurity. Retrieved from: <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2016/overall/kansas/county/riley>
- Feenberg, A. (2002). *Transforming technology, a critical theory revisited* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Fullan, M., Cuttress, C. & Kilcher, A. (2005). Eight Forces for Leaders of Change: Presence of the Core Concepts Does Not Guarantee Success, but Their Absence Ensures Failure. *The Journal of Staff Development*, 26(4), 54.
- Garcia, R. (2020, March 26). USD 383 to rent 1,500 mobile data hotspots for online learning. *The Manhattan Mercury*. Retrieved from: <https://themercury.com/news/usd-383-to-rent->

[1-500-mobile-data-hotspots-for-online-learning/article_865706cc-3c7b-5275-be01-1ca6c1d46575.html](https://doi.org/10.1500-mobile-data-hotspots-for-online-learning/article_865706cc-3c7b-5275-be01-1ca6c1d46575.html)

González, M. (2003). An ethics for postcolonial autoethnography. In R. P. Clair, R. P. (Ed). *Expressions of Ethnography*. State University of New York Press.

Gundersen, C., Hake, M., Dewey, A., & Engelhard, E. (2021). Food Insecurity during COVID-19. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43(1), 153-161.

Heraclitus, (c.535 BCE – c.475 BCE). Wikiquote. (2021, April 28). Retrieve from: <https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Heraclitus>

Hill, P. April 20, 2020). What post-Katrina New Orleans can teach schools about addressing COVID learning losses. *Center on Reinventing Public Education*. Retrieved from: <https://www.crpe.org/thelens/what-post-katrina-new-orleans-can-teach-schools-about-addressing-covid-learning-losses>

Hoffman, E. (2014). Prospects for Instructional Design and Teacher Education. In: J.M. Spector et al. (Eds). *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology*. Springer + Business Media.

Hooker, C. (2020). IS YOUR SCHOOL IS READY FOR A LONG-TERM PANDEMIC? 6 QUESTIONS TO ASK. *Technology & Learning*, 40(8), 26-28.

hooks, b. (2009). *Belonging: A culture of place*. Routledge.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. Routledge.

Houlden, S., & Veletsianos, G. (2020, March 13). COVID-19 pushes universities to switch to online classes—but are they ready? *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/covid-19-pushesuniversities-to-switch-to-online-classes-but-are-they-ready-132728>

- Janesick, V. (2000). The choreography of qualitative research design: minuets, improvisations, and crystallization. In N. K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 379-433). Sage.
- Jones, T (2015). Me-search in research: my socialization as an academic. In: *Intersectionality in Qualitative Research*, (252-260). Stylus Publishing.
- Joseph, R., & Reigeluth, C. (2010). The systemic change process in education: A conceptual framework. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 1(2), 97-117.
- Kansas State Department of Education (2020a). *Continuous Learning Task Force Guidance*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Fiscal-and-Administrative-Services/Communications-and-Recognition-Programs/Publications>
- Kansas State Department of Education (2020b). *Kansas Family Guide to Continuous Learning*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Fiscal-and-Administrative-Services/Communications-and-Recognition-Programs/Publications>
- Kansas State Department of Education (2020c). *Equity Guidance to Continuous Learning 2020*. Retrieved from: <https://continuouslearning.ksde.org/Educator-Resources/Equity-Guidance>
- Kennedy, M. (Dec 06, 2017). Hundreds Southern California schools closed because of wild fires. *American School & University*. Retrieved from: <https://www.asumag.com/safety-security/fire-life-safety/article/20855931/hundreds-of-southern-california-schools-closed-because-of-wildfires>
- Kincheloe, J. (2008). *Critical Pedagogy*. Peter Lang Publishing.
- Kitchen, R., & Berk, S.. (2016). Educational Technology: An Equity Challenge to the Common Core. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 47(1), 3-16.

Kochiyama, Y. (n.d). *Azquotes.com*. (November, 20, 2021). Retrieve from:

https://www.azquotes.com/author/20898-Yuri_Kochiyama

Lippitt, G. (1973). *Visualizing Change: Model Building and the Change Process*. NTL Learning Resources Corp.

Markel, H., Lipman, H., Navarro, A, Sloan, A., Michalson, J., Stern, A., & Cetron, M. (2007). Non-pharmaceutical Interventions Implemented by US Cities During the 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic. *JAMA : The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 298(6), 644-654.

McLaren, P., & Kincheloe J. (1994). *Critical Pedagogy: where are we now*. Peter Lang Publishing.

McLuhan, M., & Powers, B. (1989). *The global village: Transformations in world life and media in the 21st century*. Oxford University Press.

McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. Retrieved from http://k-state.instructure.com/courses/45789/discussion_topics/240480

Mendonca A., Maia, M., Góes, P. (2004). Estudo de uma Metodologia de Capacitação de Professores no Uso de Tecnologias Educacionais. In: XI CONGRESSO INTERNACIONAL DE EDUCAÇÃO A DISTÂNCIA – ABED – ASSOCIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE EDUCAÇÃO A DISTÂNCIA. Salvador, Brazil.

Merriam, S., & Tisdell, E. (2016). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. Fourth Edition. Jossey-Bass.

Moore, S., & Ellsworth, J. (2014). Ethics of educational technology. In *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology*: Fourth Edition (113-127). Springer.

- Morgan, R. (1994). Educational Reform: Top-Down or Bottom-Up? In Reigeluth, C. & Garfinkle, R. (Eds). *Systemic Change in Education*. (1st ed., pp. 43– 50). Educational Technology Publications.
- Mullenweg, M. (n.d). *Criteriaforsuccess.com*. (November 22, 2021). Retrieve from: <https://criteriaforsuccess.com/18-awesome-technology-quotes-to-inspire-motivate/>
- Ngunjiri, F., Hernandez, K., & Chang, H. (2010). Living Autoethnography: Connecting life and research. *Journal of Research Practice*, 6(1), E1. (1-17).
- Nilakant, V., & Ramnarayan, S. (2006). *Change management: Altering mindsets in a global context*. Sage Publications.
- Palmer, B., Carey A., Valette, R., & Sanderson, M. (2020). Post COVID 19 and food pathways to sustainable transformation. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 37(3), 1-519.
- Patton, M. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Sage.
- Perry, B., & Szalavitz, M. (2017). *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog: And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist's Notebook--What Traumatized Children Can Teach Us About Loss, Love, and Healing*, Hachette.
- Pollard, W. (n.d.). *BrainyQuote.com*. (November 30, 2020) Retrieved from: https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/william_pollard_163245
- Pryor, Jessica. "Elementary Educators' Experiences Teaching during COVID-19 School Closures: Understanding Resources in Impromptu Distance Education." *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* 23.4 (2020): 1-12. Web.
- Pryor, J., Wilson, R., Chapman, M., Bates, F. (2020). Elementary Educators' Experiences Teaching during COVID-19 School Closures: Understanding Resources in Impromptu

- Distance Education Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, v23 n4, Winter 2020. 1-7.
- RedCorn, S. (2017). Set the Prairie on Fire: An Autoethnographic Confrontation of Colonial Entanglements.
- Reigeluth, C., & Duffy, F. M. (2008). The AECT Future Minds Initiative: Transforming America's School. *Systems. Educational Technology*, 48 (3), 45-49.
- Reigeluth, C. & Garfinkle, R. (1994). *Systemic Change in Education*. Educational Technology Publications.
- Reiser, R., & Dempsey, J. (2002). *Trends and issues in instructional design and technology*. Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Remind.com (2021). Retrieve from: <https://www.remind.com/>
- Richardson, L. (2000a). Evaluating Ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6(2), 253-255.
- Richardson, L. (2000b) A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 923–948). Sage.
- Robelen, E. (2009, May 8). Swine flu disruption has school officials looking for lessons. *Education Week*. Retrieved from: <https://www.edweek-org.er.lib.k-state.edu/ew/articles/2009/05/13/31swineadmin.h28.html>
- Rogers, C., & Freiberg, H. (1994). *Freedom to learn* (3rd ed.). New York: Toronto: New York: Merrill; Maxwell Macmillan Canada; Maxwell Macmillan International.
- Rogers, E. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). Free Press.
- Rogers, E. (2002). Diffusion of preventive innovations. *Addictive Behaviors*, 27(6), 989-993.
- Rogers, E. (1971). Social structure and social change: What is social change? Social structure and diffusion bottom-up change summary notes references. *The American Behavioral*

- Scientist*, 14(5), 767. Retrieved from <https://er.lib.k-state.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.er.lib.k-state.edu/docview/194663807?accountid=11789>
- Rogers, E., & Shoemaker, F. (1971). *Communication of innovations; a cross-cultural approach* (2d ed.). Free Press.
- Ronai, C. R. (1997). On loving and hating my mentally retarded mother. *Mental Retardation (Washington)*, 35(6), 417-432.
- Rush, S., Partridge, A., & Wheeler, J. (2016) Implementing Emergency Online Schools on the Fly as a Means of Responding to School Closures After Disaster Strikes. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 45(2), 188-201.
- Sallis, E. (2007). Foster Mother Tongue. In: *Translating lives living with two languages and cultures*. (150-159). University of Queensland Press.
- Savoy, M. & Carr-Chellman, A. (2014). Change Agency in Learning, Instruction, and Performance. In J. M. Spector et al. (Eds). *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology*. Springer Science + Business Media, 617-626.
- SchoolDigger.com (2021). Retrieve from:
<https://www.schooldigger.com/go/KS/schools/0918000846/school.aspx>
- Shor, I., and Freire, P. (1997). *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education*. Bergin & Garvey Publishers. Massachusetts.
- Subramony, D. (2014). Revisiting the Digital Divide in the Context of a 'Flattening World' *Educational Technology*. V. 54, N. 2. 1-9.
- Scott, J. (2020). Redesign resiliency during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Educational Considerations*, 46(2), page numbers?. <https://doi.org/10.4148/Osi146-9282.2229>

- Smith, L. (1994). Biographical Method. In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. First Edition. (285-305). Sage.
- Spector, J. M. (2016). *Foundations of Educational Technology*. Routledge.
- Squire, K., & Reigeluth, C. (2000). The many faces of systemic change. *Educational Horizons*, 78 (3), 143-152.
- Subramony, D. P. (2012). Implementing technological solutions within K-12 contexts: A comprehensive route guide. *Educational Technology*, 52(5), 14-19.
- Subramony, D. (2014). Revisiting the Digital Divide in the Context of a ‘Flattening World’ *Educational Technology*. 54(2), 1-9.
- Tarde, G. (1903). The laws of imitation. Henry Holt & Company.
- Tapscott, D. (1998). *Growing Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation*. McGraw-Hill.
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2021). Retrieved from:
<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/1277-free-and-reduced-lunch#detailed/2/any/false/574,1729,871,870,573,869,36,868,867,133/any/2761>
- Tilley-Lubbs, G. (2018). Freire in a Changing World. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 11(1), 11-21.
- Tracy, S. (2010). Qualitative Quality: Eight “Big-Tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837-851.
- Tuchman, G. (1994). Historical social science: Methodologies, methods, and meanings. In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 306-323. Sage.
- United States Census Bureau (2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/search-results.html?q=manhattan%2C+ks&page=1&stateGeo=none&searchtype=web&cssp=SE& charset =UTF-8>

- Veletsianos, G. (2020). How should we respond to the life-altering crises that education is facing? *Distance Education*, 41(4), 604-607.
- World Health Organization (2020). Timeline: WHO's Covid Response. Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/interactive-timeline>
- Wolcott, H. (1999). *Ethnography – a way of seeing*. AltaMira Press.
- Wolcott, H. F. (2003). In search for the essence of ethnography. *Investigación Y Educación En Enfermería*, 21(2), 106-121.
- Wiggam, L (1994). Expanding the Sphere: The Importance of Effective Communications in Change. In Reigeluth, C. & Garfinkle, R. (Eds). *Systemic Change in Education*. (1st ed., pp. 155– 161). Educational Technology Publications.
- Zaltman, G., & Duncan, R. (1977). *Strategies for planned change*. Wiley.
- Zaltman, G., Kottler P., Kaufman, I. (1972). *Creating Educational Change*. The Free Press.