

Perspectives and Experiences of Canadian Social Studies Teachers in British Columbia Offshore Schools

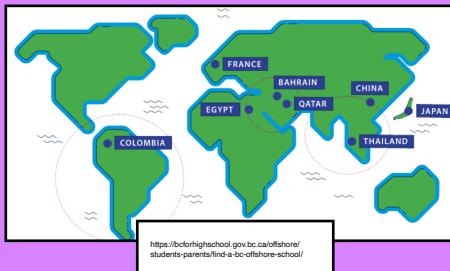
Ian Alexander - PhD Student - Email: ianalex@student.ubc.ca

Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy - Supervisor: Dr. Penney Clark

Context and Conceptual Framework:

British Columbia (BC) has authorized its public curriculum to be taught by BC-certified teachers offshore in 45 schools in eight countries. (Government of BC, 2022; Schuetze, 2008; Wang, 2017) BC offshore schools abide by the content and competencies of the public curriculum; yet teachers must navigate content and concepts for students who often have different worldviews, historical consciousness, and levels of English.

The new BC curriculum implemented in late-2010s increased historical thinking concepts, Indigenous ways of knowing, and teaching of historical injustices in Canada.



Research Questions:

How do Canadian-certified teachers in BC offshore schools express how they conceptualize, design, and teach Social Studies courses and classes?

How have these teachers adjusted to the new BC curriculum, particularly how do they teach and assess historical thinking and adopt Indigenous perspectives, knowledges, and principles of learning?

How do teachers approach meaningful and relevant instruction about democracy, human rights, and historical injustices while teaching in schools located in undemocratic countries?

Participants: BC Social Studies 10/11 teachers or similar electives in grade 12.

They have taught a minimum of one year in a BC offshore school (either old or new curriculum) between 1995 and 2022. BC-certified teachers.

Broad Group:

Taught Social Studies in addition to their main subject. From any country with degree from any university.

Narrow Group:

Consider Social Studies as their main subject. Trained as Social Studies or History teachers in Bachelor of Education programs in Canada.

Potential Project Extensions:

Portraits of professional practice for participants willing to reveal their identities and promote their practice. Participatory action research in a professional development collective.

Methodologies:

Narrative Inquiry: (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) aims to reveal perspectives and experiences of current and former BCOS Social Studies teachers through retrospective oral histories.

Critical Discourse Analysis: (Fairclough, 2013; Scollon, 2008) of BC offshore education documents: government websites, inspection reports, curriculum, rubrics, teacher job postings.

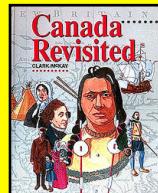


Data Sources:

Survey of teachers: open-ended questions about pedagogies and content.

Interviews: unstructured with open-ended conversational questions and prompts for teachers to share stories. May bring artefacts or resources from classes.

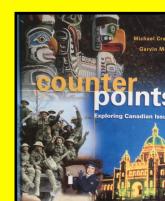
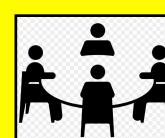
Group interviews: open-ended discussion with various teachers.



Critical discourse analysis of documents including

Public: BC offshore school inspection reports, Ministry of Education websites, and offshore school websites.

School/Class: textbooks, handouts, learning management systems, syllabi, tests.



Researcher Positionality: I have been an international teacher for most of my career before shifting into academia upon repatriation. I taught from 2011 to 2017 at two distinct BC offshore schools in China.

Ethical Considerations:

Levels of confidentiality. Individual/group interviews. Anonymous surveys will lead to application to be interview participant (solo or group). Once this data is generated, option to shift into portraits of professional practice and possibly form a participatory action research collective. I will represent findings that ensure continued success of BC offshore schools.

References: Connelly, F. M. & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher* 19(4), 2-14. Fairclough, N. (2013) *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Routledge. Government of B.C. (2022). B.C. offshore schools. Retrieved from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/international-education/offshore-schools/offshore-schools> Scollon, R. (2008). *Analyzing public discourse: Discourse analysis in the making of public policy*. Routledge. Schuetze, H. (2008). *Canadian offshore schools in China*. Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada. Wang, F. (2017). Canadian offshore schools in China: a comparative policy analysis. *Journal of Education Policy*, 32(5), 523-541.