

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE
OF ONE NEW ZEALAND COMMUNITY
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

A thesis completed in
fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in Second Language Teaching
at Massey University
Palmerston North

Patricia Pishief

1999

ABSTRACT

This study investigates one New Zealand community as an English language learning environment for NESB immigrants. Formal and informal sources of English are identified, and the degree to which the immigrants are able to access them. Immigrant perceptions of ideal language learning situations are investigated, as are perceived links between English language acquisition and success in gaining employment.

The relative importance of different sources of English, and critical events impacting on the development of English language skills, is investigated by means of individual interviews followed by discussion sessions. Immigrants are also asked to indicate barriers which they have encountered in their efforts to become part of an English-speaking community, and their responses to such barriers.

Results indicate that there is a considerable gap between immigrant perception of the community before arrival, and actual experience after arrival. There is a strong belief among immigrants that interaction with native speakers is the most effective means of acquiring both English and a knowledge of local ways. There is also a belief that lack of relevant information, coupled with unhelpful government policies, are major factors contributing to language and employment difficulties. Other barriers indicated by the immigrants include the high cost of formal English and other courses, the lack of bridges to help professionals re-enter their fields of expertise, and the difficulty of interacting with native speakers on a more than superficial level. The difficulties of maintaining a

balance between second language acquisition and first language maintenance are also investigated.

The thesis concludes with a tentative model of what are seen to be *vital* and *important* factors in successful language acquisition. A number of avenues for further research are suggested, including investigation into the barriers which prevent “outsiders” from becoming accepted as “insiders” within a community. The study highlights the importance of defining and implementing fair government and organizational policies, and stresses the need to research and set in place measures to prevent the unnecessary sacrifice of first-generation immigrants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr Cynthia White and Dr Margaret Franken for their encouragement and advice, both when the topic for this thesis was under discussion, and during the course of the research. I would especially like to thank Dr White for her guidance, hospitality, and unfailing support.

I am also very grateful to Gillian Skyrme for giving me the benefit of her expertise, and for helping me to meet many of the immigrants who became part of this study. I owe a great debt of thanks to these immigrants. They were willing to share their experiences and beliefs with me in the hope that, by increasing understanding of their situation, they might help others facing similar challenges.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, and especially my husband, for their interest and support. Through my husband I have gained some understanding of the world of a refugee, and knowledge of many of the facets of an immigrant's life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES:	VIII
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2 THE RESEARCH TOPIC.....	2
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.2 IMMIGRATION.....	5
2.2.1 European Immigration.....	6
2.2.2 Asia.....	9
2.2.3 Asian Realities.....	11
2.3 SOURCES OF ENGLISH IN THE COMMUNITY.....	13
2.3.1 Official Sources.....	13
2.3.2 Unofficial Sources.....	16
2.4 INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES.....	17
2.4.1 Social Identity.....	19
2.5 STRESS.....	21
2.6 SOCIAL NETWORKS AND L1 MAINTENANCE.....	25
2.6.1 L1 Maintenance.....	26
2.6.2 Language Problems.....	28
2.7 EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS.....	30
2.7.1 Role Expectations.....	31
2.7.2 Community Perceptions and Beliefs.....	32
2.7.3 Before and After Arrival.....	34
2.8 FACTORS FOR SUCCESS.....	36
2.9 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT.....	38
2.9.1 Lange on... The Immigration Explosion.....	39
2.10 CONCLUSION.....	41

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1	SUBJECTS FOR THE STUDY.....	43
3.1.1	Selection of the Subjects.....	44
3.2	DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES.....	45
3.3	PILOT INTERVIEWS.....	45
3.3.1	Results of the Pilot Interviews.....	46
3.3.2	The Interviewing Period.....	46
3.3.3	Development and Format of the Interviews.....	46
3.4	ADMINISTERING THE MAIN INTERVIEWS.....	47
3.5	ELABORATION OF FINDINGS.....	49
3.5.1	Checklist.....	50
3.6	ESOL TUTORS MEET.....	51
3.7	THE IMMIGRANTS.....	52
3.7.1	Background Information.....	52

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	54
4.2	OFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH.....	54
4.2.1	Information.....	55
4.2.2	Access.....	57
4.3	UNOFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH.....	61
4.3.1	Access to Unofficial Sources of English.....	62
4.3.2	Employment and Language Learning.....	66
4.3.3	Summary.....	69
4.4	CRITICAL PERIODS AND CIRCUMSTANCES IN ACQUIRING ENGLISH.....	69
4.5	L1 MAINTENANCE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.....	73
4.6	INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES.....	78
4.6.1	Age.....	78
4.6.2	Social Identity, Role Expectations, and Perceptions.....	81
4.6.3	Perceptions of Ideal Conditions.....	86

4.7 ANXIETY AND STRESS.....	88
4.8 ELABORATION OF FINDINGS.....	90
4.8.1 Community Attitudes.....	91
4.8.2 English Acquisition and Employment Opportunities.....	96
4.8.3 What Advice Would Migrants Give Their Friends?.....	97
4.9 CONCLUSION.....	99
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	100
5.2 SOURCES OF ENGLISH.....	101
5.2.1 Official Sources of English.....	101
5.2.2 Unofficial Sources of English.....	104
5.2.3 Cost.....	106
5.3 EMPLOYMENT.....	107
5.4 CRITICAL PERIODS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.....	109
5.5 L1 MAINTENANCE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.....	111
5.5.1 Changing Roles.....	111
5.5.2 L1 Maintenance.....	113
5.6 INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES.....	114
5.6.1 Educational Background.....	115
5.6.2 Age.....	116
5.6.3 Personality.....	118
5.7 COMMUNITY ATTITUDES.....	119
5.8 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT.....	121
5.9 AN IDEAL SCENARIO?.....	123
5.9.1 Vital Factors.....	123
5.9.2 Important Factors.....	124
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION	
6.1 THE PRESENT DAY.....	126

APPENDIX 1: 1996 CENSUS: PEOPLE BORN OVERSEAS.....	130
APPENDIX 2: WHANGAREI ESOL HOME TUTOR STATISTICS 1998.....	132
APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW FORMAT.....	134
APPENDIX 4: CHANGES TO STUDENT ALLOWANCES.....	138
APPENDIX 5: THE SITUATION IN TAIWAN.....	140
BIBLIOGRAPHY	142

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 3.1: PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEES.....	53
TABLE 4.1: RANGE AND FREQUENCY OF USE OF OFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION.....	55
TABLE 4.2: RANGE AND FREQUENCY OF USE OF UNOFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION.....	62
TABLE 4.3: PREVIOUS AND PRESENT OCCUPATIONS.....	68
TABLE 4.4: RANGE AND FREQUENCY OF STATED CRITICAL PERIODS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.....	70
MODEL (Figure 5.1): FACTORS IN SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION.....	125

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

On May 1, 1951, the United Nations Refugee Ship, the *Goya*, docked at the Port of Wellington and disgorged almost 1,000 weary and apprehensive immigrants. The four-year-old Bulgarian boy who tripped and rolled down the gangplank was eventually to become my husband. However, before we met, he and his family were to spend almost two decades “assimilating” in a country which has always had ambivalent feelings towards its new citizens. I believe that any study of present day immigrants, especially one which examines the integration of NESB (Non-English Speaking Background) immigrants into working and social communities, needs to be set against the background of New Zealand and its immigration policies. I have chosen 1951 as the starting date for this, which means a background of over 40 years for the immigrants chosen for this research topic, most of whom arrived in New Zealand in the 1990s. They are the inheritors of our beliefs and policies, and their success or failure in achieving adequate English for a fulfilling life in their new country will be affected by the attitudes of the members of their communities.

Almost 50 years later, we are still made uneasy by the alien in our midst, and, as this study will show, we are still giving mixed messages to both the refugees we

have welcomed to our country and the immigrants we have wooed here. Immigrants are affected by the official institutions they come into contact with as well as by the community's unofficial systems and attitudes.

1.2 THE RESEARCH TOPIC

This research was undertaken to add to our understanding of factors contributing to either success or failure in acquiring an adequate grasp of English. In addition, the intention is to create a model which illustrates the interaction of both individual and societal factors in successful integration into a new society. In this study, the immigrants' backgrounds are examined in detail, beginning with their country of origin and their immigration category, and continuing with important factors in their lives in one New Zealand community. Gaps between expectations and realities of immigrant experience will also be explored. Such experience cannot be disassociated from immigrant perceptions. The mixture of these two elements plays a large part in how an immigrant evaluates his or her role in a new society.

The role of English is also examined, and its power to affect an immigrant's success in integrating into New Zealand society. Is English in fact the key to acceptance, or are there other barriers on the road an outsider travels in the quest to become an insider? Are immigrants aware of how our society works? Will some immigrants always be seen as aliens in comparison with mainstream norms?

Does an immigrant equate finding employment with success, or are there other factors? The immigrants in this study contend daily with a foreign language which must become their own. This is a focal point in their lives. To what extent can the degree of satisfaction or frustration they feel in living in this community be aligned with the progress they are making in acquiring their second language?

The current study was designed to answer the following questions:

- What are immigrant perceptions of opportunities to learn English in the New Zealand environment?
- What kinds of critical events impact on second language learning?
- What are the barriers perceived by immigrants, and their responses to these barriers?
- What are immigrant responses to the current language learning environment?

A broader aim of this thesis is to examine the societal and individual factors which impact on the degree to which NESB immigrants become successfully integrated into this local community, and ultimately into New Zealand society as a whole.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature relevant to this thesis lies in two main areas. The first concerns changes that have occurred in immigration from the 1950s to the 1990s: changes in government policies; changes in public attitudes; changes in the provenance of NESB immigrants. The second area concerns factors which affect immigrants' acquisition of English: societal factors; the interaction of individuals with society; and individual factors.

These two main areas can be further divided. Post World War II, there were major differences in official policies regarding prospective immigrants, and it is clear that the history of Asian immigration has been markedly different from European immigration, which in turn contrasts with the attitudes and conditions generally experienced by British immigrants. Immigrants settling into a New Zealand community will be affected by the personal and institutional attitudes existing in the community towards people of their ethnicity, and the literature reveals the range of the hurdles and challenges facing the immigrant.

As well as the more obvious individual factors such as nationality, age, gender, learning-style and occupation, immigrant expectations and perceptions also play a major role in an immigrant's ability to adapt successfully to a new life. Immigrants' perceptions of their own roles and of

the roles of significant members of their community influence their behaviour and beliefs. Other factors, such as familial and social networks, have also been found to have a critical effect and are becoming increasingly prevalent in the research literature.

2.2 IMMIGRATION

New Zealand in the years following the Second World War was a country experiencing many changes. Immigration policies reflected these: assisted migration schemes were set in place for displaced Europeans, and it was accepted that those who would help to boost the country's population would not necessarily be Northern or Western European. The *Goya* set the trend. Originally a German troop carrier, it had been given to Norway as part of German reparations after the war, and had been converted into a UN refugee ship. When it arrived in Wellington in 1951 it carried the first mixed group of Eastern Europeans, Slavs and Jews offered asylum by the New Zealand government.

It is obvious that in 1951 the immigrants had been assessed in terms of their perceived ability to assimilate with the Pakeha majority of New Zealand. Colour was a factor: a report from the 1950 selection team said that "those immigrants whose colouring 'would create too great a contrast' with [white] New Zealanders had been rejected" (Hubbard,1990:28). In an earlier memorandum to the New Zealand High Commissioner in London in 1948,

Prime Minister Peter Fraser had made the following statement with reference to the IRO instruction to select immigrants without discrimination on the grounds of race or religion: “It is likely, however, that as and when our selection team is formed, they will be confidentially instructed to omit Jewish and Slav types as being incapable of full assimilation” (Hubbard,1990:28).

1951 is also significant as the year in which the first general account of New Zealand immigration was published. This work: *From Europe to New Zealand*, by R.A.Lochore, is a product of that time; concern for the welfare of new immigrants was mainly directed towards helping them shed their own national identities in order to embrace the virtues inherent in the British character. “We are a very great people,” says Lochore. “We have a particularly high standard of social culture... A Central European has much to learn in this respect if he is to become one of us” (Lochore,1951: 87).

The attitudes of New Zealanders, as recorded through the literature of the time, show a need to maintain “ownership” of the inner circle of the insiders. As one group, for example the Dutch, became gradually more accepted into mainstream New Zealand life, another immigrant group or groups would take its place on the fringes.

2.2.1 EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION

For the first hundred years of its post-treaty history, New Zealand experienced

what can be termed *kin-migration* (McKinnon,1996:1). Immigrants, including government-assisted immigrants, were overwhelmingly British, and a sharp contrast existed between British and non-British until the 1970s. McKinnon (1996: 9) goes so far as to claim that as “English” meant both a subject of the British monarch as well as a marker of language or identity, with “French” in a similar category, so too did “New Zealander” equate for many years with a notion of both race and citizenship. Certainly New Zealand has not led the way as a country which celebrates differences, and accounts of immigrant settlement in this country, irrespective of whether the subjects chose to come here freely or were brought as refugees, are permeated with reports of the disadvantages of being different.

Merely feeling different is difficult enough. European immigrants had a background of interests, outlook and lifestyle which contrasted sharply with that of the New Zealanders with whom they came into contact. These cultural differences were often more marked because of socio-economic factors: many families began their lives in New Zealand in areas of cheaper housing and with neighbours from very different educational and social backgrounds (Beaglehole, 1990: 33). In these circumstances, life could be very difficult for all members of the family, and particularly difficult for children fitting into the school system, where peer pressure to conform was fierce and unremitting.

In this respect, the 1950s were probably the least flexible years of the post-war era and the harshest on those who did not fit the common mould, although

there was perhaps a lessening of the suspicion which had been directed towards new arrivals in the war years. However, being different and showing differences, even in the most trivial matters, could prompt strongly adverse reactions.

In her research into Jewish immigration into New Zealand before, during and after the Second World War, Beaglehole discusses the degree of teasing and hostility directed towards these refugees and looks closely at the situation experienced by many refugee children at school. As Beaglehole points out, any New Zealand child who was different could be bullied or teased mercilessly, and peer pressure to conform is still strong today. The difference, as Beaglehole sees it, is the extent to which the person's whole life is affected. "Being teased for being foreign or for having red hair amounts to the same thing provided a child is not teased or feels he might be teased for almost everything he or she does" (Beaglehole,1990:62). The children's stories elicited by Beaglehole show that almost anything could be a source of misery for immigrant children: differences in clothes, food, cultural interests, attitudes to work, academic success, parents' accents, or even not living in a "normal" house.

By the 1960s and 1970s, New Zealand was becoming a little more sophisticated, and the changes to the immigration policy in 1974, which removed distinctions between British and non-British, had positive implications for European immigrants. European immigrants, also, had always

had the advantage of not standing out, except in minor and usually rectifiable ways, from the Pakeha majority of New Zealanders. This was an advantage that other groups of new arrivals did not have, and the story of Asian immigration, for example, is very different.

2.2.2 ASIA

The “White New Zealand” policy was pervasive but not totally enforced. The years following the war saw a lessening of anti-Chinese feeling to the extent that permanent residence was offered to some groups: the women and children who had been given asylum in 1939, as well as children born to these women, and also Chinese who were here on a temporary basis but who had been in the country for over five years. Naturalisation rights, which had been withdrawn from Chinese residents in 1908, were restored in 1952 (Ip, 1990:21).

New Zealand had traditionally looked to Britain for immigrants to swell the population of a relatively empty country. After the Second World War, when the more desired immigrants were running short, the door was opened not only to more “foreign” Europeans, but to New Zealand’s neighbours in Asia. By far the greatest percentage of Asian immigrants in the 1950s were from China and India, and their numbers increased rapidly. Between 1945 and 1966, the number of Chinese immigrants doubled to 11,040 and New Zealand’s Indian population increased fivefold to a total of 7,275 (Vasil and Yoon, 1996: 2). Much of this increase, however, can be attributed to the fact that these

communities had a high percentage of family groups and an increasingly large number of New Zealand-born members, so that during the 1960s and 1970s around 55% of the Chinese community and 50% of the Indian community had been born in New Zealand (McKinnon,1996: 41).

Changes to immigration policy occurred in 1974, with controls placed on immigration from Britain and Ireland. However, although distinctions were drawn for the first time between “British” and “New Zealanders”, in practical terms there was no removal of the distinction between European and non-European. Major changes in this area did not occur until the 1987 Immigration Act. The White Paper of 1986, which preceded the Act, stated that “...the selection of new immigrants will be based on the criteria of personal merit without discrimination on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, sex or marital status, religion or ethical belief” (McKinnon,1996: 46).

There were still barriers to Asian migration, but with the removal of some of these in 1987, and others in 1991, the number of Asian immigrants rose rapidly, and these immigrants came from many countries in South, East and Southeast Asia. In 1995, of the 50,893 people who had their applications to migrate to New Zealand approved, 28,890 (56.7%) were from Asia (Vasil and Yoon,1996:8). The 1996 census, in the section “People born Overseas”, gives in *Figure 1* a graph comparing the numbers from the 1991 Census with those from 1996 (Appendix 1). The fastest growing group was from Northeast Asia where numbers of immigrants almost trebled, from about 20,000 to about

60,000. There was also a 29.2% increase in the number of New Zealand residents born in Southeast Asia (1996 Census: People born Overseas:13).

2.2.3 ASIAN REALITIES

Although at first glance the recent marked increase in the number of Asian immigrants may suggest that New Zealand policies have achieved equity in this area, considerable problems exist. These were created to some degree by a mismatch between immigration requirements and the actual situation in New Zealand. A recent study of Taiwanese immigrants in Auckland by Tania Boyer (1996) highlights the major concerns.

Foremost is the difficulty Taiwanese immigrants have found in obtaining employment; a difficulty directly linked to the gap between being able to gain points for education and qualifications, and having those qualifications recognized by professional bodies (Boyer, 1996: 60). The result of this is a high level of unemployment and underemployment among Taiwanese immigrants, and the creation of a class of immigrants given the title *semigrant* by Boyer and *astronaut* by others (Lidgard, Ho, Chen, Goodwin and Bedford, 1998).

In these semigrant families, many Taiwanese males have left their wives and children to return to work in Taiwan, and, whereas this decision may have been a voluntary one in the early 1990s, it seems to have become less voluntary over the years (Boyer, 1996:73), with consequent stresses on personal and family

life. Where once many Chinese felt themselves to be sojourners in New Zealand, and faced open discrimination, semigration is the result of more subtle policies and attitudes. Although the changes to immigration regulations in 1995 have helped to prevent a continuation of this situation, there are many families still suffering the consequences of the earlier policies.

Unemployment and underemployment are not restricted to Taiwanese immigrants, but are particularly visible in that community. The survey held in 1995 showed that the group in question were deriving only 17% of their primary income in New Zealand from work, compared with their previous figure of 96% in Taiwan. In contrast, 57% of primary income in New Zealand was derived from financial investment, as opposed to 2% in Taiwan (Boyer,1996:63). Underemployment was most noticeable among professional immigrants: of the 75% of migrants who had been involved in medicine, finance, and sales and domestic trade in Taiwan, none were practising medicine in New Zealand; 5% were in finance, and 5% were in sales and domestic trade (Boyer,1996: 66).

A recent discussion paper (Lidgard, Ho et al, 1998) confirms that for immigrants from Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, settling in New Zealand is more disruptive and difficult than could have been estimated, with unemployment and underemployment a common feature. A case study from this paper describes the situation of "John", an immigrant who, in spite of very careful preparation and a great deal of forethought, could not obtain work or

counteract what seemed to be employers' preferences for those locally born. John had travelled extensively and had taken great care in choosing Australasia, and ultimately New Zealand, as the best destination. He arrived well equipped with information on how to settle into a new country from his sister, who had lived in the USA for 30 years. However, in spite of all his preparation, and in spite of retraining courses in New Zealand, John had been unable to find work. At the time of the interview he had made about 100 job applications and had achieved only two interviews (Lidgard, Ho et al., 1998: 31-32).

2.3 SOURCES OF ENGLISH IN THE COMMUNITY

Accessible sources of English are perceived by NESB immigrants as a vital need, and closely linked to their ability to find employment. The availability and richness of sources of English vary, and the course of many immigrants' futures is affected by what they perceive to be the most useful sources of English for themselves, and how well they can access them.

2.3.1 OFFICIAL SOURCES

Immigrants arriving in a community and anxious to improve their English will not find a wide range of official sources available to them; and those that are available may not be accessible to the immigrants who need them most.

Appendix 1 of the Proceedings of the 1993 National Conference of the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc. gives a list of *Providers*, *Average Cost* and *Main Learners*. Although the costs have certainly changed, the list of *Providers* and *Main Learners* is still representative:

<u>Provider</u>	<u>Main Learners</u>
University	Academic needs or background
Polytechnic	Vocational goals
Private Language Schools	Wealthy, tourists
Community Education Classes	Beginner level or intermediate
Correspondence School	Rural, small towns, some cities
TOPS Programmes	Unemployed; very narrow entry criteria
ESOL Home Tutor Scheme	Women and unemployed, but all groups are represented

(N.Z. Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc., 1993: 117)

The main changes in the last six years are the disappearance of TOPS courses, and the introduction of degree papers and courses in many polytechnics. The Home Tutor Scheme has also developed during this time, and deserves recognition for the role it plays.

The ESOL Home Tutor Service began in the 1970s as a response to the growing number of new immigrants in the community whose lack of English was a barrier to their full integration. The arrival of the "boat people" from Vietnam helped to increase government involvement, although official support and financing was not

permanent. In 1991 individual groups united into the National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Schemes Incorporated, managed by a National Executive Committee. There is now a National Co-ordinator, a major part of whose job is to lobby for funds. The ESOL Home Tutor Service is directed towards those who are unable for various reasons to access more formal, mainstream sources of English. Its focus is on "...the sharing of the personal life experience of one New Zealander with another newer one to help him or her identify and take steps towards achieving the goals for an improved quality of life in the new community" (Skyrme, 1999: A Brief History of the Home Tutor Service).

In the Whangarei area, numbers of immigrants applying for a home tutor had increased steadily by about 20 to 30 per cent yearly until the current year, where numbers are similar to last year's. Tutor training is ongoing, and tutor support evenings are also held several times a year. Learners are now also invited to these evenings, and a Thursday afternoon programme has been initiated for higher level learners in response to the need for "deeper" conversational opportunities. For these learners there is often very little scope for conversation between the Kamo class (the official Whangarei ESOL class for permanent residents, held on Monday mornings), and the home tutor visit.

Of the 116 learners involved in the scheme in 1998, 43 were male and 83 female, with over half in the 31 – 50 age-group. The largest national group came from China (43), followed by Korea (10), Taiwan (9), and Russia (8). The remaining immigrants came from a total of 21 countries (Appendix 2).

2.3.2 UNOFFICIAL SOURCES

Although there is a wealth of literature on L2 acquisition, the orientation has been towards a classroom context, and out-of-classroom acquisition tends to be seen as an extension of what has preceded it. Where emphasis has been placed on the situations experienced by immigrants, orientation is often towards the balance between mother-tongue maintenance and L2 acquisition. However, there is a host of contexts in which acquisition of English takes place in the community, and many personal and social factors which come into play.

Availability and *accessibility* govern the extent of an immigrant's choice of utilising sources of English. In the sink or swim situation in which many immigrants find themselves, recognizing and accessing the sources of English relevant to their level of competence is a vital ability. The community offers beginners sources which range from signs and notices in shops and on the street, to basic interaction with neighbours, and in sports or social groups. Radio is reputedly the most difficult source to access, through the density of most of the language and the absence of the visual support provided by television. It is also a source which cannot be repeated, so the language provided through this medium is fleeting. For many immigrants, radio may not be an option. Newspapers can be a formidable hurdle through the compressed language of their headlines and the wealth of synonyms used in both general and more specialized contexts. Somehow, from the roar of noise around them, and from the sheets of incomprehensible words in front of them, immigrants learn to extract meaning.

2.4 INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES

The range of individual differences quoted in studies on language acquisition is wide, and would certainly include such variables as gender, age, educational background, motivation, learning style and personality. It is generally agreed that all of these can influence the facility with which a language is acquired, and the level of proficiency attained.

In his text *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (1994), Ellis presents the following Table (Ellis, 1994: 472):

Table 11.1: Factors listed as influencing individual learner differences in language learning in three surveys

Altman (1980)	Skehan (1989)	Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991)
1 Age	1 Language aptitude	1 Age
2 Sex	2 Motivation	2 Socio-psychological factors
3 Previous experience with language learning	3 Language learning strategies	a motivation
4 Proficiency in the native language	4 Cognitive and effective factors	b attitude
5 Personality factors	a extroversion/introversion	3 Personality
6 Language aptitude	b risk-taking	a self-esteem
7 Attitudes and motivation	c intelligence	b extroversion
8 General intelligence (IQ)	d field independence	c anxiety
9 Sense modality preference	e anxiety	d risk-taking
10 Sociological preference (e.g. learning with peers vs. learning with the teacher)		e sensitivity to rejection
11 Cognitive styles		f empathy
12 Learner strategies		g inhibition
		h tolerance of ambiguity
		4 Cognitive style
		a field independence/dependence
		b category width
		c reflexivity/impulsivity
		d aural/visual
		e analytic/gestalt
		5 Hemisphere specialization
		6 Learning strategies
		7 Other factors e.g. memory, sex

Ellis sees the above as an indication of the increasing importance attached to individual differences (IDs), and also as an example of the different ways in which they are classified. Although he sees problems in the vagueness of the classifications, and in the choice of terms used for labelling the different factors, there are “a number of dimensions of learner differences which are generally acknowledged (for example, age, aptitude, motivation, cognitive style, and learning strategies)” (Ellis, 1994:471).

Research has identified three main types of individual learner differences. Firstly, learners are shown to have strong beliefs about language learning. Secondly, they are also shown to be influenced by their affective states. Both of these factors can be altered as a result of positive or negative experiences. The third set of differences are general factors which can be ranged according to their degree of mutability, or according to the degree of control learners have over them. All three groups are shown to be interrelated, and identifying the nature of these interrelationships is one of the goals of ID research. Ellis proposes a framework for investigating individual learner differences, in which two other sets of variables are identified, and their interactions studied. The second set consists of learner strategies, and the third set concerns language learning outcomes. All three sets are shown to be interrelated (Ellis, 1994:472-473).

The importance of the affective state of a learner is further emphasized by Ehrman: “Every imaginable feeling accompanies learning, especially learning that can be as closely related to who we are as language learning is” (Ehrman, 1996:137). Ehrman’s research distinguishes three elements: *motivation*, *self-efficacy*, and *anxiety*. These are all elements relevant to an immigrant’s situation, where motivation, expectations of

self, and anxiety have the power to affect the degree of achievement attained. Ehrman distinguishes between *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* motivation, and separates anxiety into *trait* and *state* anxiety, with a further distinction between *debilitating* and *facilitating* anxiety (Ehrman, 1996:145-148).

2.4.1 SOCIAL IDENTITY

Peirce (1995:10-14) takes an interesting step further in the discussion on individual learner differences by questioning the assumptions that many SLA theorists have made by drawing what she terms *artificial* distinctions between language learners themselves and the social contexts in which they are able, or unable, to use their target language. It is too simplistic, in this context, to describe the individual “unidimensionally as introverted or extroverted, inhibited or uninhibited, field dependent or field independent” (1995:10).

The factor of self-confidence can be used to illustrate this. It can be seen as an intrinsic part of a learner’s personality, or as something which depends on positive feedback in a language learner’s experience. This may seem a trivial subject for argument, and yet this difference of views illustrates Peirce’s claim that artificial distinctions are drawn between the individual and the social, and that theorists have not been able to explain why it is “that a learner may sometimes be motivated, extroverted, and confident and sometimes unmotivated, introverted, and anxious...” (Peirce,1995:11). The effect of social distance, and the factors which can either enable a learner to speak, or

discourage speaking, also need to be examined as part of the relationship between a language learner and the social world.

A study of five recently-arrived immigrant women in Canada took into account Peirce's concept of *investment*, a term which she prefers to *motivation* as an explanation of learners' changeable and sometimes ambivalent attitudes towards learning the target language. These attitudes do not spring from individual characteristics in conjunction with situations chosen by language learners to interact with speakers of the target language. The key point here, in Peirce's view, is the power base that underlies social interactions, and the role that power relations play. Who determines the grounds on which the interaction proceeds? Who has the power to bring closure to the conversation? The learner's social identity needs to be understood "...with reference to larger, and frequently inequitable social structures which are reproduced in day-to-day social interaction" (Peirce,1995:13).

Peirce quotes Weedon (1987) in defining the characteristics of social identity, or *subjectivity*. The three crucial characteristics for understanding her view are: the multiple nature of the subject; subjectivity as a site of struggle; and subjectivity as changing over time (Peirce,1995:15). The first characteristic recognizes the individual as a diverse and contradictory entity, without a fixed, unchanging nature. The second – subjectivity as a site of struggle – takes into account the various power relations in which an individual can take up different, and sometimes contradictory, positions. The importance of seeing subjectivity as open to change is, according to Peirce, "... a

crucial point for second language educators in that it opens up possibilities for educational intervention” (Peirce,1995:16).

Although Peirce sees the value of her findings as a way to enhance classroom teaching, the data was provided by a study of immigrant women, who recorded their interactions with members of their communities, and reflections on these, in their diaries. These records provide valuable insights into the problems immigrants face as they attempt to acquire a competent level of English in their private and public lives.

2.5 STRESS

Immigrants are as likely to be affected by individual learner characteristics as classroom students, and they have the added disadvantage that, for the most part, their second language acquisition must be achieved without the help of anything resembling a planned curriculum, and without the aid of qualified ESOL teachers. In addition to this, there is the fact of stress; sometimes a very high level of stress indeed.

Theorists who study the processes involved in accelerated learning discuss the advantages to learning when the emotions are engaged (Rose,1985:18-19). Teachers would agree that the converse is true: learners suffering from high levels of stress or anxiety have in effect an emotional “blockage” which inhibits the ability and also the desire to learn. All immigrants suffer some degree of stress, and it is likely that mental and emotional

processes are subjected to strains that must affect both the ability to acquire another language and the motivation to do so.

Stresses suffered by new immigrants, and refugees in particular, are becoming more of a topic of interest, and recent publications are reaching further back into the past to try to discover what it must have been like to adapt to new ways in an alien land. It is apparent that the further back the research goes, the less interest was shown at the time in such issues, and in some cases, as for example with the Chinese, the scales were tipped against immigrants in a variety of ways. In times when total assimilation was the goal an immigrant was expected to pursue, Chinese were barred automatically by reasons of race. Gilbert Wong, a second-generation Chinese from Whangarei, expresses this dilemma as he sees it: "Even now, in the 1990s, if you are not European or Maori, you can't help feeling an outsider... You can be "New Zealander" in all your habits: you can have a barbecue, you can go to the beach, you can play rugby – like Dad, or cricket – you still feel an outsider. Look at the Dalmatian community, or the Dutch community. They assimilate much easier. Our identity is shaped by how others see us...and how we feel others see us. You always know that you look different!" (Ip,1996:28).

In her book *I have in my arms both ways*, Adrienne Jansen interviews ten immigrant women who came to New Zealand between 1965 and 1987, with the majority of them arriving in the 1980s. They came to a very different country from the one discovered by the Jewish and Eastern European migrants in the 1940s and 1950s, although Livia,

a refugee from Chile, points out the differences she sees between immigrants who have chosen to come here and those, like the majority of Chileans, who have come "...because they can no longer live in their own country, not because they have chosen to live in a new country" (Jansen,1990:65).

It is difficult to find in the literature how freely New Zealand was chosen as a destination. Often the first member of a family might have arrived as the result of some arbitrary decision; other members would come later as part of family reunification. In the case of the *Goya* in 1951, New Zealand had the power to choose who would fill its quota; the refugees either accepted an unknown destination or remained in very primitive and harsh conditions in refugee camps. An official view of choice in these situations is given by the United Nations Commission for refugees: "Although people have the right to seek asylum, they do not have the right to pick and choose where they do so. It is not the prerogative of asylum-seekers to decide how the burdens of providing refuge will be shared" (UNHCR,1993:46).

Some of the stresses experienced by new arrivals in New Zealand are as straightforward as having to cope with different weather, food and time zones. Others are more formidable, and include strains on marriages, difficulties finding suitable, or any, employment, and lack of moral and cultural support. In addition, for many who have arrived from war zones or have suffered political or racial oppression, the past is a burden that is difficult to lay down. Some may find relief in talking about their experiences; others may try to bury them. Ngan, a Vietnamese refugee, believes also

that New Zealanders are indifferent to the experiences many refugees have undergone: “People here don’t like to hear about disasters and wars, just like they don’t want to know about old age or death” (Jansen,1990:79).

It seems that the arrival of Asian refugees in the early 1980s was the first time contemporary attention was paid to the degree of trauma many refugees had suffered. There were signs of mental illness which teachers at the Mangere Centre, Auckland, observed and tried to mitigate, but without any process set in place for follow-up. In a report given in 1982 on the language and orientation programmes for Cambodian and Lao refugees, two case studies are presented. The first concerns a 34 year old Cambodian man, from an average “peasant” family, reunited with his wife and family, but suffering from a range of symptoms which manifested themselves not only in physical form, but in depression and “a type of madness brought on by contact with the flesh”. The Refugee Case Report had made no reference to any psychological problems, and medical examinations could find nothing wrong physically (Milmine,1983:62).

The second case study was of a 23 year old Cambodian woman, a student, with a range of physical and psychological problems, including almost daily fitting episodes. Once again, little could be done. The fits themselves seemed to be caused by tension, rather than epilepsy, and it was not possible to arrange for the sufferer to have a neurological examination during the time she was at Mangere (Milmine,1983:64).

Although the teachers at Mangere were well aware of these and similar instances, problems with communication as well as with ethnic attitudes towards mental problems made it difficult to arrive at effective courses of action. In addition, there was no official feed-back on particular cases once migrants had left Mangere, except for some follow-up on a personal basis or through friends (Milmine,1983:61).

2.6 SOCIAL NETWORKS AND FIRST LANGUAGE MAINTAINANCE

Social networking is discussed in recent literature as both the community networking practised among ethnic groups, and as a tool for researchers to use when studying first language maintenance and factors influencing second language acquisition. It can be used as a method for locating subjects for data collecting, through first, second, and even third order contacts, although there is a need for care in choosing subjects for such data collection, in that they must be key players, rather than secondary or peripheral to the group under scrutiny (Starks, 1997:47).

Networks can be distinguished through their form and their complexity. In form, they may be *dense* (with many contacts in the community) or *sparse* (having few contacts), *closed* (with individuals restricted to the same networks) or *open* (with individuals having significant outside contacts). With regard to complexity, individuals within *multiplex* networks interact with each other in a variety of ways, whereas individuals within *uniplex* networks are related in only one capacity (Starks, 1997:50).

2.6.1 FIRST LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE

First language maintenance and second language acquisition occupy the same continuum, but with what seems to be a myriad variations. The importance of trying to understand the effect one has on the other is recognized by researchers, some of whom are now using social networking as a means of clarifying which factors have a major influence in this area, and which conditions create these factors. Two recent surveys have been carried out in New Zealand; one looking at social networks as code choice determinants (Walker, 1996), and the other at the role of social networking in English language acquisition among the Lao community in the Wellington area (Smith, 1996). These two studies are now referred to in more detail.

Walker's research focused on the role of social networks in the case of four German-born immigrant children from two different families, and examined the connection between their social network structure and their linguistic behaviour (Walker, 1996:33). The figures Walker has included in her survey represent the main network ties for each subject. The network circles are presented in divisions of *intimate*, *regular* and *occasional* ties, and relationships are drawn as *uniplex*, *multiplex* and *interrelated*. By means of these figures, the children's social, family and peer relationships were set out, and it was possible to draw certain conclusions about their L1 maintenance and their integration into their target society. The fact that the children had dense friendship ties, suggests that they had integrated well into the target society, and this in turn suggests strong peer pressure to use their second language. However, strong family ties, and the

high level of intimacy in family relationships helped to maintain a balance where the L1 was used freely and naturally. The children made use of code switching, rather than feeling committed to the use of only one language. This balance of the two languages may alter of course as the children's lives and social networks change (Walker, 1996:45).

The Lao Community, which is a small and coherent group with dense multiple relationships (Starks,1997:50) , can be used as a source for research into some of the major difficulties facing refugee and immigrant groups in a new, culturally and ethnically different country. Smith (1996) chose the Lao community, the smallest of the three Indochinese groups of refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, to study social networking and English language acquisition among its members. The Lao community from the Wellington area, which consisted of about 90 families, had 35 families randomly chosen from an updated telephone list for interviewing purposes (Smith, 1996:206).

As refugees, the Lao community could be expected to suffer a more acute form of many of the difficulties faced by all immigrants, and to have specific problems caused by the nature of their past histories before arriving in New Zealand. Three main areas are identified by Smith(1996:203). The delayed effects of trauma, for example, can induce depression and other negative emotions that override initial feelings of relief and optimism. Loss of status is often keenly felt, but not obvious to an outsider. Smith gives the example of someone who may not be able to drive a car on arrival in New Zealand,

not because of lack of education or an impoverished background, but because the person had had a driver in Laos to do that work. More important, perhaps, than the previous situations, is the choice that many new arrivals in the Lao community felt obliged to make between finding work – any sort of work – or continuing English lessons. This is a dilemma not restricted to refugees, but felt most keenly by all immigrants who are strapped for cash. Smith suggests (1996:210) that rather than expand the short course of lessons currently given at Mangere, it would be preferable to give more English to refugees in their holding countries. This does not seem to be always practicable, and Smith herself states that camp authorities, who want the refugees to return home, discourage the teaching of English (Smith,1996:201).

Only refugees receive any Government-sponsored English lessons at all; immigrants must find them for themselves, and this has been made more difficult by the changes to the system of student loans and allowances. Smith quotes Waite's hierarchy, as set out in *Aotearoa* (1992), of language needs and priorities, where English as a L2 for adults follows revitalisation of Te Reo Maori, second-chance adult literacy, and L2 acquisition and L1 maintenance for children (Smith,1996:205).

2.6.2 LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

Two major problems can be discerned for such immigrants: problems with L2 acquisition, and problems with L1 maintenance. Liev (1995:125-132) suggests that for members of this group, and for other Indochinese refugees, assimilation was often

deliberately chosen as a way to achieve Westernization and membership of the mainstream group. This choice has been successful in that the children are undoubtedly *Kiwis*. However, there has been a price to pay. The children have lost feeling for a large part of their cultural background. They have also failed to perform well at school. In Liev's view, parents in this group now regret their initial enthusiasm, and their children have become marginalized. The children's attitudes to the worth of their L1 have been affected by their roles as interpreters for their parents, coupled with the obviously dominant position of English in society, and Liev claims that in general these children have suffered from subtractive bilingualism (Liev, 1995:129-130).

It is difficult for small or scattered ethnic communities to maintain their L1 against the "three generation loss". Liev names the mid-1980s as the time when refugee communities "began to be aware of the erosion of their ethnic languages and cultures" (Liev, 1995: 129). Although support was asked for publicly, and was given, it was difficult to maintain momentum after the initial enthusiasm, and the tendency was for classes to dwindle and often die. This circumstance is discussed by Hawley (1987:47-48), as a product of not only inadequate resources, but also the attitudes of ethnic minority children who "...see no credit or recognition for their efforts, should they choose to learn their mother tongue." Hawley gives a balanced model of desirable language support in schools for language needs in the New Zealand situation, and proposes a similar model for adult needs. He also emphasizes the need for a national languages policy in New Zealand, but in spite of the example of the *Lo Bianco Report* in Australia, and the publication of *Aotearoa* in New Zealand (Waite, 1992), this has still to be realized.

2.7 EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

When people from different linguistic and cultural groups communicate, misunderstandings may arise, or only partial understanding may be achieved. Gudykunst and Kim (1997) discuss this in terms of "...the degree of shared meaning in experiencing the reality..." and believe that, depending on the degree of differences between the cultures, this may be minimal.

When examining the causes of misunderstanding and incomplete understanding, Gudykunst and Kim refer to four types of pragmatic errors in order to define the problem area. These comprise *pragmalinguistic errors* (language-specific errors), *sociopragmatic errors* (culturally differing views of appropriate linguistic behaviour), *inchoactive errors* (arising from different values placed on talk and silence by different cultures), and *nonlinguistic errors* (errors in nonverbal communication) (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997: 220-221).

The cognitive processes of cultures can differ, with members of one society finding it difficult to understand the mindset of another. Gudykunst and Kim (1997:340) see outsiders' perceptions of the host culture in these circumstances as possibly simplistic, and containing gross stereotypes. A product of this is the uncertainty and accompanying anxiety which are "two of the most basic challenges that confront strangers". Linked to the need for outsiders to be able to interact on an appropriate cognitive level, is the equally important need to be able to participate affectively. Newcomers may often have to rely on their own ethnic communities to fulfill their emotional and aesthetic needs.

2.7.1 ROLE EXPECTATIONS

Most studies done on role expectations in the context of learning English as a second language have been concerned with the formal setting of the L2 classroom. However, parallels can be drawn between this and the range of situations in which immigrants experience and acquire another language, and their expectations of those who are the “gatekeepers”. McCargar (1993:193), in his definition of culture, includes as part of this “system of knowledge” the expectations that its members have for themselves and for others. These expected roles can also be viewed as sets of interrelated *schemata*, and culture can be seen “...as the sum of the individual schemata of reality held by its members” (McCargar,1993:193).

Whether immigrants are inside or outside a classroom, their schemata of reality will affect their perceptions and attitudes. Further, many of the anxieties and attitudes found in the language classroom will equally affect immigrants striving to master the language in the community. Anxieties found in the formal setting, such as embarrassment about giving a wrong answer, or having to acknowledge not knowing an answer, face an immigrant daily, and the immigrant is often standing outside any language support system, and lacks the reassurance that a teacher can give.

When it is a matter of immigrant perceptions and expectations concerning the acquisition of English, research carried out in the classroom setting can also be relevant. Immigrants are the products of the same variety of educational systems as EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, and although their circumstances are often far removed from each other, they may have very similar beliefs about the language learning process. Many

immigrants also receive some formal instruction in English in educational centres, and many are part of the ESOL Home Tutor scheme.

In recent research carried out on students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning, the subjects were given the BALLI (*The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory*) questionnaire, developed by Horwitz (Kern, 1995). Results indicated that there is a need for some students to have more realistic expectations in relation to their language development. Mismatches in beliefs between teachers and students were identified, and this occurrence is also important in out-of-class contexts. One perceived problem was the danger that some students' misconceptions "...may not always be easily changed and that some students' attitudes may become more negative as they continue their foreign language studies" (Kern, 1995:81). Some prevalent beliefs shown on the Table of results (Kern, 1995:85) included the opinions that it is easier for a child than an adult to learn a language; that some people are born with a special ability to learn languages; and that some languages are easier to learn than others. About one-third agreed that one hour a day is enough to become fluent in a language in one to two years, and about 40% felt self-conscious about speaking the target language in front of other people.

2.7.2 COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS AND BELIEFS

Community beliefs relating to immigrants in New Zealand have tended to be negative. In a *Reader's Digest* article, McCall and Barker (1998) set out to "debunk" five myths about immigration which they found prevalent. It is interesting that these beliefs concern Asian immigrants: the group most visible at present, and therefore the target of much of the hostility. The myths are listed as follows:

- Today's immigrants are less educated than in the past
- Immigrants take our jobs
- Immigrants are welfare bludgers
- Immigrants won't integrate
- New Zealand is being overrun by Asians

(McCall and Barker, 1998:18-22).

McCall and Barker demolish the "myths" with apparent ease, quoting from a variety of sources and experts in the field. In answer to the claim that immigrants are welfare bludgers, for example, they quote the 1996 Census figures: 26% of working-age people born overseas receive some form of government benefit, compared with 28% of working-age people born here. The 1996 Census also dispels the claim that we are being "overrun" by Asians: the total number of people born in Southeast, Northeast and Southern Asia living in New Zealand is 117,792, or 3.5% of the population.

Some of the "myths" are not so easily dismissed, however. In response to the claim that immigrants take jobs from "long-term" New Zealanders, McCall and Barker quote from a publication by economists from Victoria University (Poot, Nana and Philpott, 1988) who reach the conclusion that immigration tends to raise the proportion of the population in the labour force. This belief has been challenged by Ranginui Walker, for example, who claims that the beneficiaries of the BIP (Business Immigration Policy) scheme are the immigrants themselves and the immigration consultants (Walker, 1995:297). Walker challenges such advocates of the BIP scheme as Manying Ip, and Ip herself describes attitudes towards immigrants as polarised between

the Business Round Table on the one hand (pushing for more opening up of the country to Asia), and the “New Zealand Defence Movement” on the other (Ip, 1995:198).

In spite of strong opposition by some groups, current literature on immigrants would support McCall and Barker’s findings that these claims are founded not on fact but on fear. Immigrants in the community also have their own perceptions of New Zealand and New Zealanders.

2.7.3 BEFORE AND AFTER ARRIVAL

The highly educated immigrants who have come to New Zealand over the past few years have chosen this country as their new home. While it may not have been their first choice, they have decided that there are better prospects here for either themselves or their children than in their country of origin, and there is also the expectation that they will be able to continue to enjoy the advantages of their former lifestyle. However, the number of skilled immigrants who are either unemployed or underemployed is an indication that immigrant expectations regarding employment have not been realistic. This has given rise to the belief among many Asian migrants in particular that New Zealand is “a hypocritical host” (Lidgard et al., 1998:1).

A study carried out by Kitty Chang on five professional immigrants who were successful in finding employment in this country, found that all five expected that they would need to do some further study or retraining. They also expected that their qualifications would be recognized, but in this respect they were disappointed. The loss of self-esteem that all

suffered was attributed to some “lack” in themselves, either in their English ability, or in their ability to find work (Chang, 1997:7).

Another perception was that migrants’ educational levels and intelligence could be equated with their English skills, and one subject could see from the look in other people’s eyes “...they can’t understand my English... In the other people’s eyes I can understand it is not good enough” (Chang, 1997:10). English, not surprisingly, was perceived to be the most important factor in finding employment, although it was also necessary to understand the local systems of how things worked. Most saw their perceived lack of English ability linked with the difficulty of finding opportunities to communicate with fluent native speakers. It was also felt that having an accent was a handicap (Chang, 1997:17-19).

All perceptions are subjective. Our views of reality depend on a number of factors, and if we think in terms of first-order and second-order perspectives, as defined by Marton in his discussion of *phenomenography*, we must keep in mind that we do not all have the same view of reality, or even perhaps the same reality. “In growing up, people learn to conceptualize their own reality” (Marton, 1981:180). Immigrants arrive in a new country with views of the world shaped by their backgrounds and their experiences. Their expectations arise from these, and their perceptions also are influenced by them, especially in how they see themselves and others fulfilling their designated roles.

2.8 FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

If we look at *success* merely in terms of acquiring English, then most immigrants eventually succeed; and it seems, from the literature on the subject, that English is perceived to be the single most important factor in the degree of success an immigrant will experience. *Success* itself, however, has changed in emphasis over the years. For the immigrant arriving in the 1950s or 1960s, when work was readily available, assimilation or integration were the goals many immigrants strove to achieve. In the 1990s we see that finding suitable, or indeed any, employment is the major hurdle confronting a large proportion of recent NESB immigrants, and having “adequate” English is seen as the main means of overcoming this.

Kitty Chang’s Research Report (1997) looks at success in terms of finding employment, and discusses the importance of English competence and other factors which enabled five NESB immigrants to achieve this. The immigrants had all had tertiary education, and were neither refugees nor entrants to New Zealand under the Business Immigration Policy. Three of the subjects were female, and two male; three were from Asian countries, and two from European countries. Some details of the immigrants’ learning styles and personal characteristics are significant: all were independent learners with their own methods, for example, and all were determined to find employment, and to take whatever action was required to do this. There was a perceived connection between lack of English skills and unemployment, but this was balanced by the determination to succeed (Chang, 1997:8-10).

These immigrants were both flexible and positive. They were willing to take lower jobs initially, or to do voluntary work, with the view that these approaches were valuable as a means of using English in a real situation and of gaining local knowledge. Getting a New Zealand reference was seen as very important in the quest for work. Interestingly, these immigrants believed in luck, and that they had been lucky. They did not, however, believe in leaving things to chance, and an onlooker might well believe that they made their own luck. One participant had applied for over 100 jobs; had been interviewed five times, and had been offered work on the final three interviews. In the words of this participant: "I just think, I will do it." (Chang, 1997:11).

In a workshop at the 1998 CLESOL Conference, Christine Ball listed some of the learning techniques successful learners from former Yugoslavia had used. Many were what one might expect, including such characteristics as an outgoing and adventurous approach; the willingness to guess, try, and question; the ability to monitor themselves and others; choosing fluency before accuracy, and so on. However, there were some other practices which indicated that these learners took steps to maximize their progress: they were able to identify and exploit their preferred learning environments; they made opportunities to use the language; and they found ways to cope with emotional factors such as tension, anxiety and frustration (Ball, 1998, Workshop). These learners seemed to be able to grasp the language in a more holistic way, in that they were able, for example, to listen or read for gist, without needing to check every unknown word. They seemed, in fact, to have many of the characteristics of field-dependent learners, if these can be defined as people who are not distracted by the trees from seeing the whole wood. Certainly, these successful learners are a rewarding source of study.

2.9 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

What is the New Zealand Government's role regarding newly-arrived immigrants? There is no doubt that it is seen to have failed its new residents in major ways, with many immigrants believing that their present situation would have been far better if they had received the help they feel they are entitled to.

A survey of Taiwanese immigrants (Boyer, 1996), which examines the difficulties they have experienced trying to obtain employment, finds that although lack of adequate English is perceived to be the major problem, it is not the only barrier. Non-recognition of qualifications and lack of relevant business information have also played a large part in the unemployment and underemployment of this group. Boyer mentions the paradox described by others – that qualifications that have gained an immigrant entry have often not been officially recognized in New Zealand. Immigrants in this position believe that they were given false impressions of the New Zealand job market, and although changes to the Immigration Policy in 1995 were aimed at preventing this situation from continuing, they do not help the immigrants who are already here (Boyer, 1996:67-68).

Lack of information about local conditions in New Zealand can mean the difference between the success or failure of an enterprise, and the immigrants in Boyer's survey "were able to identify a large number of issues they wanted information on before establishing a business". In Taiwan, for example, a government-funded trade centre collects and supplies information, and Taiwanese immigrants in New Zealand can find it very difficult to discover how to obtain such information. Linked to this is the situation where an immigrant may wrongly assume (and not be informed to the contrary) that a

business viable in the country of origin can be successfully transferred to New Zealand (Boyer, 1996:68,69).

Participants in a survey of successful migrants (Chang, 1997) had come to realize the importance of getting used to the New Zealand way. As one put it: "I think the government should give some help like that, like let people go to company to do experiments...". Participants also complained of the difficulty of getting the right information from the right sources (Chang, 1997:19,20).

A survey conducted among immigrants from Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong echoed this belief that the government was not fulfilling its role, and that New Zealand "has a very poor record of providing support for immigrants once they have arrived in the country". The initiatives announced in October 1998, which aimed to provide a better deal for new residents, were viewed by the immigrants as "too little and too late" (Lidgard et al., 1998: 42).

2.9.1 LANGE ON...THE IMMIGRATION EXPLOSION

In May 1999, T.V. One's *Assignment* featured David Lange giving a summary of many of the refugee and immigrant issues discussed over the past few years. Lange challenged both the legacies of past policies and the implications of present policies, beginning with refugees, and continuing to those immigrants we have encouraged to settle here.

Lange contrasted the 510 hours of English language lessons given to refugees in Australia with the 60 or so hours refugees receive in this country. The time spent at the

Mangere Centre is barely an introduction, and there is little additional support. “It’s not what we give them that worries me,” says Lange, “but how much... Having done the right thing by taking them in, are we just going to dump them and condemn them to life on the dole?” This can be a recipe for depression, drug addiction and family violence, compounded in many cases by long delays in the process of family reunification. The system has anomalies, too. Take a Somali family, for instance, where the husband has several wives: the New Zealand government will allow entry to all the children, but just one of the wives, and decides that the first wife will be the one to come.

Seven hundred and fifty refugees are accepted each year, and when family reunification is taken into account, this number can swell to thousands. Tuariki John Delamere, the 1999 Minister of Immigration, admits that more could be done, especially with regard to the English language, although the major priority – that of providing a safe environment – is met. However, if little is done for refugees, even less is done for those immigrants we court, “the brightest and best” (Lange).

The results of the mismatch between government policy and the rules adopted by professional bodies is most evident in Auckland, where around 600 doctors and many other professionals are reduced to such menial jobs as delivering pamphlets. One of the pamphlet deliverers, Fatima, is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and holds other prestigious qualifications, none of which, however, can overcome her initial handicap of having gained her first qualification in Bangladesh. The new policy that doctors must gain registration before coming to New Zealand is ensuring that the flow of NESB medical professionals has practically stopped, but even when

qualifications are accepted, there are still “attitudinal” problems with prospective employers.

With regard to immigrants from Asia, Lange’s claim is that we are “setting them up to fail”, an echo of the conclusions reached by Boyer (1996), Chang (1997), and Lidgard et al. (1998). Business immigrants are encouraged to settle here, and are required to invest very large amounts of money, but are given no help in coming to terms with the different circumstances they must deal with in this country. Immigrants with professional qualifications face the dilemma of being fitted to a qualification rather than an occupation: “..we forget to tell them that getting points doesn’t equal getting jobs” (Lange). It would seem, from the information available, that the Government’s policies have been ad hoc and often reactive. The difficulty may be, that unlike Australia, which sees itself as part of a wider world, New Zealand holds the contradictory desires of wishing to increase its population of skilled and professional workers, but at the same time maintaining the outlook and culture of its present Pakeha majority. This Pakeha majority will become a minority in the future, and now is the time to talk about the destiny of our country, while we still have the chance to choose our way (Lange, 1999).

2.10 CONCLUSION

The literature shows that NESB immigrants have major hurdles to face, and that it has not been possible for them to anticipate many of these, in spite of forethought and planning. In addition to the individual differences which make each immigrant’s situation unique, immigrants have perceptions and expectations which may be far removed from the realities they meet. New Zealand attitudes, and the present and past economic situation,

decree how difficult it will be for a newcomer to acquire English, find employment, and become a part of the community. It can be argued that, if *luck* is discounted, those immigrants who succeed in their new lives share a certain combination of qualities and attitudes which enable them to adapt to, and benefit from, new situations. It is shown, however, that many first-generation immigrants have sacrificed a familiar and at least relatively fulfilling way of life without gaining another to take its place.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the subjects chosen for the research and the methods used for gathering the data. The primary data for the thesis was gained from interviews with immigrants living in Whangarei. The interview approach seemed the most appropriate for a group of people whose English language abilities varied considerably and for many of whom filling in a questionnaire would have been a formidable task. In an effort to minimize “observer effect” and in order to keep the setting as natural as possible (Bogdan and Biklen,1992: 43), interviews were held in the subjects’ homes. Many of the subjects felt very self-conscious about the quality of their spoken English, and this was the chief factor in deciding not to use either a tape-recorder or a video camera.

3.1 SUBJECTS FOR THE STUDY

One of Whangarei’s characteristics is that it has a shifting population, directly related to its high level of unemployment and the lack of even casual or part time work. Immigrants reflect this; of the dozens of Vietnamese refugees who arrived in the city a decade ago, for example, only one remains as a permanent resident of Whangarei. There is a long-established Dalmatian Society, a Dutch Society and a much more recent Korean Christian community. However, Whangarei does not

have an Ethnic Council or any locally-organized ethnic groups representing recent immigrants.

In order to find a group of immigrants who constituted a reasonable cross-section of Whangarei's recent NESB arrivals, it was necessary to use a variety of approaches. Social networks were one important source of names: in a contained community such as Whangarei, one immigrant family can introduce another who will continue the process. Several of the immigrants had studied English at Northland Polytechnic, usually shortly after their arrival in Whangarei, and usually also for a limited time. A third and major source of potential subjects for interviewing was the *Kamo Class* – the Monday morning programme available to all NESB immigrants in Whangarei. This class provides free English tuition at a variety of levels, with the English lessons based around the survival English and allied knowledge of New Zealand institutions most useful to recent arrivals. The Kamo Class is held at present in the suburb of Kamo, but will move to another suburb in the near future, after which it will probably be referred to as the (Whangarei) *ESOL Class*.

3.1.1 SELECTION OF THE SUBJECTS

From the sources mentioned above, 22 immigrants were selected and asked if they would be willing to take part in the research project by being interviewed. All

agreed, and gave permission for the data to be used in this thesis. Each immigrant has been assigned an appropriate pseudonym.

3.2 DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

The data gathering procedures for this research were as follows:

- a) An interview-based pilot study
- b) The administration of the four-part main interviews
- c) Elaboration of findings in a group discussion (Immigrants)
- d) A further discussion (ESOL tutors)

3.3 PILOT INTERVIEWS

Four subjects were chosen to be part of a pilot study in order to test the effectiveness of the interview techniques.

MARIA and IVAN are a Croatian couple who came to New Zealand in 1993 with their two small daughters. Ivan had a job waiting for him; Maria has failed to find work in Whangarei.

LILY is a single Vietnamese woman who arrived in New Zealand in 1992 as part of a group of Vietnamese refugees. She has not worked for most of her time in Whangarei.

ANDREW is a Czechoslovakian immigrant, married to a New Zealander, who has lived in both Canada and New Zealand since escaping from Czechoslovakia in 1969. He is self-employed.

These subjects were chosen mainly because they were not such new arrivals as the majority of the interviewees, and had had the chance to weigh up their New Zealand experience and compare it with their former lives.

3.3.1 RESULTS OF THE PILOT INTERVIEWS

Although the first four interviews were intended as a pilot study only, the subjects fitted the criteria of the study so well that they were asked to become a part of the main research.

3.3.2 THE INTERVIEWING PERIOD

Interviewing began in September 1998 and continued until January 1999. Almost all of the interviews were held in the interviewees' homes, at times which were most convenient to them.

3.3.3 DEVELOPMENT AND FORMAT OF THE INTERVIEWS

A sample of the questions used in the interviews is reproduced in Appendix 3. The format of the interviews was designed to be as non-threatening as possible, with interviewees being in control of parts of the interview process.

The first six questions, asking for background information, were presented on laminated squares of yellow cardboard and handed to the subjects, who could think about them and also decide in which order to answer. These questions were straightforward and not demanding, and were intended to help settle the interviewees, especially those who were worried that their English was not good enough for them to answer questions adequately.

The cards were followed by an A4 page listing official and unofficial sources of English available. The sources on this list represented what was available in Whangarei: the list had been compiled through brainstorming with tutors and others who work closely with immigrants. The interviewees were handed this together with a highlighter to use for marking the sources relevant in each case. Most of the subjects entered into the spirit of this, marking a whole word or only part of it, depending on how important that source was. This second stage was intended to help the interviewees to become fully “on task” without asking leading questions or influencing their replies.

The third stage was designed to obtain an understanding of critical events impacting on second language learning by means of a time line. Interviewees were given a sheet of A3 paper and a marker pen, and asked to draw a line between two points which represented their arrival date in New Zealand and the present time. The object here was for them to try to mark points of time or periods which they felt were critical in their acquisition of English.

The fourth, and usually longest stage of the interview, was centred round another A4 sheet asking more open questions. Interviewees were first asked to assess their level of English on arrival in New Zealand, and at the present time, on a scale of 1 to 5. They were then encouraged to share their experiences and perceptions of living in Whangarei (and New Zealand) and acquiring English. They had the choice of writing on the sheet if they wished or of confining themselves to speaking. Interviews varied in length from about one hour to over two hours. Only minor changes were made to the interview format after the 4 pilot interviews. *Church*, for example, was added to the list of unofficial sources of English.

3.4 ADMINISTERING THE MAIN INTERVIEWS

Similar procedures were used for administering the main interviews as for the pilot interviews: almost all interviews were held in the interviewees' homes, for example, and care was taken both to allow the immigrants to take the initiative where possible, and to avoid giving interviewees leading questions. In three cases, subjects were helped by a family member: Farideh needed her daughter to help translate; Ha-Young had her husband present to help translate when needed; Grace was helped once or twice by her teenage daughter.

Notes were taken throughout the whole interview and especially during the fourth stage, where there was often elaboration and digression. Many of the interviewees also used this phase of the process to ask questions on their own account and to

share their thoughts on a wider range of topics than those listed. Some wrote on the sheets during the interview and seven asked to keep this final page of questions for a few days to think more about it. All seven filled out their sheets and returned them.

As soon as possible after each interview, the rough notes were typed up into a formal summary so that data processing could begin.

3.5 ELABORATION OF FINDINGS

On May 1, 1999, seven immigrants from the interview phases met for the evening. The group had dinner together, and during and after the meal discussed a number of conclusions that had been drawn from processing the data from the interviews. It was an informal gathering, although the conclusions drawn, and questions arising from the conclusions, were written on large sheets of paper attached to an easel. This ensured that everyone understood the topics under discussion and could also see the group's comments written up beside them. The director of the *Kamo Class* had offered to be present as note-taker, which ensured a full coverage of the discussion. The immigrants present were some of the most articulate of the group:

KIM and HA-YOUNG (Korean)

TSU and YANG (Chinese)

JEAN and JOHN (Taiwanese)

TANIA (Siberian).

Two other members of the group, MARIA and IVAN (Croatian) had spent an evening at the house a week previously, but were unable to meet with the bigger group because they were in the process of moving to Adelaide. They were eager to share their thoughts on a variety of topics related to their experiences as immigrants.

3.5.1 CHECKLIST

The first questions aimed to clarify how those present felt about using their own language in public and at home (i.e. their feelings about L1 maintenance). These questions followed on from migrant perceptions of the community both as a place for them and their families to live in and as an environment for acquiring English. The questions also covered the degree to which they felt “foreign” in the community, and the degree of interest and/or ignorance they met amongst New Zealanders. Another group of questions covered their experience of the cost of learning English in New Zealand, and the work situation; in particular, the existence or lack of bridges to help immigrants practise their own or allied professions.

Finally, there was a discussion on what had been important or useful; what *would* have been useful; and what advice these immigrants would give friends who were planning to come to Whangarei to live.

3.6 ESOL TUTORS MEET

A final, more formal check of conclusions drawn from the data, and a discussion of some of the opinions expressed at the earlier meeting by the immigrants was held with the interviewer over lunch and during the afternoon of the 16th May, 1999. There were six tutors present, all with qualifications and experience in ESOL teaching. Their task was to try to clarify and classify some of the experiences and perceptions described by the immigrants. Their understanding of the immigrants' situation was enhanced by the fact that one of the tutors was herself an immigrant to New Zealand, and two of the others had lived for extended periods in non-English-speaking countries.

One of the major topics discussed in this meeting was immigrant perceptions of New Zealanders' attitudes and behaviour, and the possibility of cultural misunderstanding. Following that, the group looked at a range of pressures experienced by immigrant families and the effect of these on the members of the families concerned. The amount of help offered to refugees and immigrants in acquiring English in this country was compared with what is available in Australia, and the New Zealand character came under scrutiny.

This discussion was valuable in that it focused on responses to the main research questions, and helped to define the parameters of the research findings.

3.7 THE IMMIGRANTS

The 22 immigrants in this survey are representative of the major categories of people accepted for permanent residence in New Zealand.

- One is a refugee; a boat person from Vietnam who arrived in New Zealand in 1990 and was a member of a group of refugees resettled in Whangarei.
- One was originally a refugee from the Czech Republic, but came to New Zealand with his wife, who is a New Zealander.
- Four were accepted under family reunification; one from Iran, one from Siberia, and two from China.
- Three wives arrived with their husbands who had work permits; one from Japan, one from Pakistan, and one from Malaysia.
- Four came under the Business Immigration Policy; two from Korea, and two from Japan.
- The remaining nine migrants were accepted under the points system. Their countries of origin were Croatia (two), Taiwan (two), and China (five).

3.7.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Table 3.1 gives a summary of the profiles of the interviewees with regard to country of origin, gender, age, arrival date, and home language.

Table 3.1 Profile of Interviewees

NAME	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	GENDER	AGE GROUP	ARRIVAL DATE	HOME LANGUAGE
Maria	Croatia	F	40-49	Sept. 1993	Croatian & English
Ivan	Croatia	M	40-49	Sept. 1993	Croatian & English
Lily	Vietnam	F	30-39	1992	English & Vietnamese
Andrew	Czech Rep.	M	50-59	1987	English
Tania	Siberia	F	40-49	Oct. 1996	English
Tom	China	M	20-29	Apr. 1992	Chinese
Sophie	China	F	20-29	Apr. 1992	Chinese
Farideh	Iran	F	60+	1991	Persian
Deng	China	M	30-39	Jun. 1996	Chinese
Fatima	Pakistan	F	40-49	Nov. 1996	Urdu & English
Kim	Korea	M	30-39	Oct. 1997	Korean
Ha-Young	Korea	F	30-39	Oct. 1997	Korean
Emi	Japan	F	30-39	1997	Japanese
Grace	Malaysia	F	40-49	1990	Chinese
Dan	China	F	30-39	Oct. 1997	Chinese
Li	China	M	30-39	Oct. 1997	Chinese
Jean	Taiwan	F	30-39	Jan. 1998	Chinese
John	Taiwan	M	40-49	Jan. 1998	Chinese
Akiko	Japan	F	40-49	Jan. 1991	Japanese & English
Masaki	Japan	M	40-49	Jan. 1991	Japanese & English
Tsu	China	F	30-39	Oct. 1995	Chinese
Yang	China	M	30-39	Oct. 1995	Chinese

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the data gained from the interviews held with the immigrants in the survey. It covers a number of societal factors: sources of English available and accessible to the immigrants; employment opportunities; critical periods and circumstances in acquiring English; and problems balancing L1 maintenance with L2 acquisition. The chapter also presents data gained in the areas of individual learner differences, social identity and role expectations, perceptions of ideal conditions, and the realities of anxiety and stress. Data from a group discussion (Elaboration of Findings, referred to in Chapter Three, Section 3.5) is also presented at the end of this chapter, from Section 4.8. The results presented before section 4.8 are derived from the main interviews held with the subjects.

4.2 OFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH

Table 4.1 gives a breakdown of official sources of English which were available, and the extent to which these were accessed by the immigrants. The Home Tutor Scheme is a free service; the Kamo Class, as mentioned previously, is also free, but meets only one morning a week, and the Polytechnic courses are expensive, but subsidised for

immigrants. However, changes to student allowances have made these courses less accessible to many.

Table 4.1 Range and Frequency of Use of Official Sources of English Instruction

Sources	Major Use Number of participants	Minor or Minimal Use Number of participants
Home Tutors	14	3
Kamo Class	11	4
Polytechnic	9	1
Private Lessons	2	1
Private Schools	2	-
Secondary School	2	-
Correspondence School	1	-
Private Study	-	-
Tops Courses	-	-

Note: n = 22

4.2.1 INFORMATION

Participants were asked how they had gained information about sources of English available in Whangarei. For many, information had been supplied by family or friends already established in the Whangarei area. Sophie and Tom's family, for example, moved in initially with an uncle who had been long enough in Whangarei for his children to have lost Chinese, their first language, and Sophie attended a local high school with a cousin. Ivan had a job waiting for him in Whangarei, and was also helped by friends already living in Auckland. Tania had her New Zealand husband to help her, and Farideh arrived to join her daughter's family.

There was a problem for those who either had no family or friends already here, or whose connections did not have relevant knowledge or experience. Fatima, for example, keeps purdah, and has a very restricted life in New Zealand terms. She had already spent three years in England, without any English study, and 13 years in Saudi Arabia, without any English at all. The two years prior to arriving in Whangarei had been spent in Canada, where she and her husband (a doctor) had both felt isolated, and Kaitaia. It was in Kaitaia that Fatima made friends by chance with two or three women, and it was also by chance that she was visited in Whangarei by one of these women who happened to mention the Kamo Class.

Kim arrived in Whangarei with several of his in-laws already here. He feels this was a fortunate circumstance for him because he has no recollection of being given information by any official body about English classes or other resources relevant to his needs. Kim is prepared to admit that he may in fact have been given information: "Maybe someone gave me information and I didn't understand it then and I don't remember now". However, Kim's sister-in-law told him about the Kamo Class, and other Koreans there told him about English classes at the Polytechnic.

Grace's story was the saddest. Her husband had done the laundry for the New Zealand Army stationed in Malaysia, and when the unit returned to Auckland, Grace's husband was invited to come to New Zealand to continue that work. They arrived in Auckland in 1990, but were left stranded when the Army moved away. For several years they moved

from one small town to another, isolated, and with no opportunities for Grace to acquire English, until they settled in Whangarei in 1993. Somehow Grace heard about the Kamo Class, and in 1994 she was at last given some help with English.

This information about opportunities to learn English was reported as being obtained generally through social networks of family and friends. There was no official or reliable system in place which could ensure that newcomers to Whangarei would be given help in finding sources of English relevant to their needs. Many were thankful for whatever lucky chance had provided them with the information they needed.

4.2.2 ACCESS

Cost is a factor in accessing both official and unofficial sources of English, but more particularly official sources such as courses or lessons which may represent quite a financial commitment to an immigrant. Sometimes the cost itself is not an impossible barrier, but the problem is one of priorities as seen by the families involved. Cost affects more than just English itself, of course. Retraining or further study in a profession are seen by many of the immigrants as vital if they are to establish themselves satisfactorily in their new country, and they are not prepared for the difficulties they meet.

Cost was a major factor for Tania at the time of her interview. Unsure of her English level when applying for work, she would have liked to take the IELTS examination, but was prevented by the cost (over \$200.00). She was studying English for Tertiary Study

from the Correspondence School, and would have enjoyed the chance to do some voluntary work. Money was a little short at the time, and could not be spared for the costs involved with voluntary work, such as running the car. Tania is a highly-trained and highly intelligent woman who was feeling very frustrated.

In the case of Tom and Sophie, education per se is not as important as having the members of the family fulfill appropriate roles. Work certainly comes first. Tom had some formal English at the Polytechnic, but left his classes to run a take-away bar long before his English had reached a sufficient standard for any work needing competent communicative skills. Tom works long hours and runs his business well, coping with the demands it makes on his language. However, he is limited by his work situation, and cannot do much to improve his English, which remains at a BICS level, with pronunciation difficulties causing problems. Tom accepts his role in the family as that of being able to contribute to the family financially, rather than be dependent on it, now that he is of an age to earn.

Sophie spent over four years at high school in Whangarei, and has adequate English skills for a range of occupations. She would enjoy being a receptionist, as she is an outgoing person who enjoys contact with other people. Her role in the family is not seen to justify the expense of further training, and at the time of the interview Sophie was working part-time in the take-away bar, and helping her mother and two younger brothers (aged four and five). Sophie's mother speaks no English, and is unlikely to learn much. Sophie is expected to escort her mother to the doctor, or to her brothers' school and kindergarten

whenever there is a need for English. Sophie's role was to contribute what was appropriate to her age and stage, whereas her younger sister, who is not needed for such help at home, is a student at Otago University, studying economics. Her training will certainly also be of benefit to her family one day.

Kim, a BIP (Business Immigration Policy) immigrant from Korea, was upset about the very recent changes to the eligibility criteria for Student Allowances for those students with PR status (Appendix 4). "Why do they accept immigrants and then do this? Why not if they leave after two years, they have to pay it back?" In Kim's view, the first two years were vital ones, and it seemed very unfair to oblige migrants to have to wait for that length of time before being able to get to grips with their new circumstances. He could not understand the thinking, or perhaps lack of thinking, behind the new regulations.

Two of the immigrants, for whom cost was not a major factor, still mentioned that it was cheaper to learn English in their home countries. Masaki stated that in Japan there are English courses on Television, with accompanying cheap texts. Yang also claimed that it is cheaper to learn English in China than in New Zealand.

Cost and also the lack of professional bridging courses were the major problems for Deng, a former dentist in China who has found it impossible so far to re-enter his profession in New Zealand, or to take up work in the same line. Deng studied English for three months at Northland Polytechnic, and at the time of the interview was a full time student there, doing a one-year CBC (Certificate of Business Communication) course.

Deng has a dentist friend who went to the USA where he was able to take a one-year night course and then re-qualify as a dental technician. To do this in New Zealand, Deng would have to train for three years, and the cost is prohibitive. Deng would also like to prepare for his Dental Registration exam, but cannot find any material for it except in Auckland Central Library. In the USA, according to Deng, you can get practice papers for dentistry over the Net. New Zealand does not have any such system. Deng's conclusion is that there are no bridges in New Zealand for professionally-qualified immigrants in New Zealand. Deng is well aware of the need for further training or retraining, but sees the New Zealand government as indifferent to immigrants' needs.

Li and his wife Dan have both had some official English instruction; at the Polytechnic for Li, and at the Kamo Class for Dan. They both have a (different) home tutor. Now Li feels that the most cost-effective way to continue to learn English would be through work. Lily, who is unlikely to find work easily, is also in straitened circumstances. However, she would be willing to join an English class at the Polytechnic, if there were one suitable for her stage of language acquisition. Unfortunately, she has special needs for which there is no suitable class currently available. Lily's English has fossilized at a level which makes communication with New Zealanders very difficult, and it is also difficult for her to take part in language classes where the students have backgrounds so far removed from her own.

The circumstances of these immigrants shows that there is a difference between what is available as a source of English, and to what degree it can be accessed. Table 4.1 shows

what is available for immigrants in Whangarei, and also shows to what extent they make use of the sources. By examining what determines this use, it is possible to build up a picture of the language opportunities open to immigrants in the community, and to identify the personal or societal factors which affect their choices. These findings also provide answers to the main research question relating to immigrant perceptions of opportunities to learn English in the New Zealand environment, and to the question of barriers perceived by the immigrants.

4.3 UNOFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH

Table 4.2 gives a breakdown of unofficial sources of English accessed in the Whangarei area by the migrants in this study. A comparison of Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 shows that for the majority of the participants unofficial sources provided their major means of acquiring English. It should also be remembered that, with reference to the most heavily-used official sources, the Kamo Class is held only one morning a week, and a home tutor usually visits only once weekly. Unofficial sources therefore are of paramount importance.

As with the findings on official sources of English, information gathered on immigrants' access to unofficial sources also provided data for the research questions on immigrant perceptions of both opportunities to acquire English, and the barriers they faced when trying to achieve this aim.

Table 4.2 Range and Frequency of Use of Unofficial Sources of English Instruction

Sources	Major Use Number of Participants	Minor or Minimal Use Number of Participants
TV	16	6
Dictionary	15	3
Books	13	4
Shopping	12	8
Computer/Net	10	4
Newspapers/Magazines	9	7
Friends	9	6
Neighbours	8	7
Radio	8	6
Films/Video	8	5
Children's School	8	3
Library	8	2
Church	8	2
Work	7	1
Leisure/Sport	6	1
Teletext	5	6
Mainstream Tertiary	5	-
Family (and In-laws)	5	-
Social Networks	2	3
Mainstream School	1	-

Note: n = 22

4.3.1 ACCESS TO UNOFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH

Television was used to some extent by all of the immigrants interviewed; a situation which did not occur with any other source listed. For most of the immigrants, television was watched for news and for entertainment, and it provided a considerable link with the English-speaking

society, on the fringes of which many immigrants remained isolated. Those who had teletext found it more accessible than television, especially when their English was weak. Films and videos were also a relaxing way of trying to assimilate English, and parents such as Emi found that children's videos were especially helpful.

Radio was a more difficult source to access, often providing background noise rather than comprehensible input. If immigrants found television difficult to follow, as for example Farideh, Emi, Ha-Young and Grace, then radio was virtually impossible. However, those who had persisted in listening were rewarded. Tania had arrived in New Zealand in late 1996, and was initially both surprised and disappointed at how little spoken English she could understand. After half a year she began to get the gist of general conversation, and at the time of her interview (almost two years after her arrival) she was "beginning to understand the radio and TV". Her progress was helped greatly by having a New Zealand husband and step-children who spoke English to and around her in the home. For those immigrants with no such help, progress was much slower.

Fifteen of the immigrants made frequent use of a dictionary, and three used one at least occasionally. Those who did not feel the need to use one were Maria, Andrew, Tom and Sophie. These four felt that their English was adequate for their daily needs and there was no incentive for them to work actively to improve their levels. The dictionaries used were bilingual, for quick translation.

The 13 immigrants who read books regularly were divided into those who read books at their own level for either work or pleasure, and those who read books at a more elementary level. Lily, for example, read children's books she had been given, and Maria, Emi and Fatima found their children's school texts a very accessible source of English. There were no books to be seen in Tom and Sophie's house, but Sophie did say that she read a little English to and with her five-year-old brother who had recently started school. The majority of the nine interviewees who read newspapers or magazines regularly used either the local daily newspaper or the two free weekly newspapers as their sources. Andrew's reading consisted to a large extent of aeroplane magazines; a reflection of his interest in flying and in making model aeroplanes. Newspaper headlines with their compressed language, and newspaper vocabulary in general presented immigrants with problems. However, newspapers and magazines were generally much more accessible than television or radio, especially as a source of information about world and local events. For those immigrants trying to find work, the newspaper was particularly important. Of the eight immigrants who used the library regularly, two used it in relation to their fields of study, and four used it to a large extent as a source of reading for their children.

Three of the higher readings on Table 4.2 are slightly misleading in that interactions during shopping and with friends and neighbours were neither rich nor of great duration for many of the immigrants. They were often intermittent, and often conducted at a superficial level, involving brief transactions. They did not come into the category of social networks, which featured very low on the Table: as a major factor for only two of the immigrants, and as a minor factor for a further three.

Eight of the interviewees attended or had attended church regularly, for a variety of reasons. Akiko mentioned that she had gone to church the first two years “to meet people”, and Kim, although not a believer, was prepared to attend church meetings with his wife, who was. Lily, a devout Catholic, attended church regularly, but was too shy to stay after the service and speak to anyone, mainly because she realised that her pronunciation problems would lead to misunderstandings and embarrassment. Even in the interview situation, when the subject being discussed was clear, it was very difficult at times to understand exactly what Lily was saying. An example: she mentioned that when she was working at the sewing factory, people had sometimes been “cheating” her. It took some effort to discover that the word Lily was using was in fact “teasing”.

Leisure and sporting activities provided a means to interact with New Zealanders, even if once again on a superficial level. Furthermore, these activities added colour and interest to the lives of the third of the participants who undertook them. Five of the interviewees were also exposed to English by family and in-laws, and for the three who were married to New Zealanders, this provided a constant and rich environment for their second language acquisition.

For immigrants with school-age children, and for non-working mothers in particular, schools can provide useful opportunities for immigrants to interact with their children’s teachers as well as with the parents of their children’s friends. Emi, Maria, Kim, Ha-Young, and Akiko found school involvement especially helpful as a source of English and a means to build links with their communities.

4.3.2 EMPLOYMENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Employment has taken centre stage in these immigrants' lives, and it is impossible to separate it from English acquisition. There is a Catch-22 situation where immigrants believe that better English is the way to obtain more suitable, or any, employment, but also that it is only by working in some occupation that they will be able to raise their English to an adequate level. Both beliefs are a logical assessment of the employment situation the immigrants face, and Table 4.3 shows the major professional changes over half of the group have had to deal with when looking for work in this community. To indicate shifts in the professional status of immigrants, a number of details are given below.

- Ivan had been working in his own field since arriving in Whangarei, and, of all the immigrants, was the most contented with his position in New Zealand. In contrast, his wife Maria had been unable to find work in Whangarei and was very discontented with her situation. In terms of the immigrants in this study Maria is typical of the "young professionals" whereas Ivan is not. Ivan is also European, unlike the majority of the interviewees.
- Deng, who had been a dentist in China, was studying business at the Polytechnic, and had held a variety of casual jobs, including being a waiter, milk delivery person and cleaner.
- Tania, a tutor in mechanical engineering in Siberia, had failed to find work of any description in Whangarei.

- Li, qualified in electronic engineering and business administration, had not worked during his time in New Zealand.
- Jean, a clinical chemist, and her husband John, a chemistry teacher, were trying to find employment. Jean had also tried, without success at that stage, to find voluntary work.
- Tsu, an electrical engineer, had retrained at the Polytechnic, and was an accountant's assistant.
- Yang, a civil engineer who had also made jewellery, was studying and doing part-time deliveries.
- Masaki, a civil engineer who had owned a holiday lodge in Japan, was working as a draughtsman, and his wife Akiko, who had managed the lodge, was teaching the piano part-time.
- Grace, who had been a hairdresser in Malaysia, had worked in a laundry and in take-away bars in New Zealand, and was currently doing part-time cleaning in elderly people's homes.
- Lily, who was a midwife in Vietnam, worked in a sewing factory in Whangarei for eighteen months before it closed, but had been unable to find employment after that.
- Kim, who had worked in the textile industry in Korea, was trying his hand at farming in Whangarei. Although he enjoyed living in the area, especially for his children's sake, he was facing the possibility of moving to Auckland sometime in the future in order to find alternative employment.
- Farideh and Fatima were not looking for work. Farideh was married at fifteen, has five daughters actively involved in Baha'i, and has never been other than a wife and mother. Fatima keeps purdah, and will remain in her role within the home.
- Tom and Sophie have had no trouble working in Whangarei, in the take-away business; they were originally helped to establish themselves by an uncle already living here. Tom now owns his own establishment and Sophie works part-time for him.

Table 4.3 Previous and Present Occupations

Name	Former occupation	Previous work in New Zealand	Occupation at time of interview
Maria	Planning analyst	-----	-----
Ivan	Chemical engineer	Chemical engineer	Chemical engineer
Lily	Midwife	Sewing factory	-----
Andrew	Pilot (Fitter and turner in Canada)	Self-employed	Self-employed
Tania	Tutor in Mech. Engineering	-----	-----
Tom	Student (grew hot peppers)	Restaurant work	Owens a take-away bar
Sophie	Student (made sun hats)	Helped in a take-away bar	Works in a take-away bar
Farideh	Wife and mother	Wife and mother	Wife and mother
Deng	Dentist	Chef, waiter, milk deliverer, cleaner	Student at Polytechnic
Fatima	Wife and mother	Wife and mother	Wife and mother
Kim	Textile industry	Student at Polytechnic	Farmer
Ha-Young	Student	Wife and mother	Wife and mother
Emi	Office worker	Wife and mother	Wife and mother
Grace	Hairdresser	Laundry, take-aways	P.T. Cleaner
Dan	Accountancy	Wife and mother	Wife and mother
Li	Electronic engineer, Business admin.	-----	-----
Jean	Clinical Chemist	-----	-----
John	Chemistry teacher	-----	-----
Akiko	Managed a holiday lodge (also chef)	P.T. teaching piano	P.T. teaching piano
Masaki	Civil engineer, owned a lodge	Civil engineer and surveyor	Draughtsman
Tsu	Electrical engineer	Student	Accountant's assistant
Yang	Civil engineering and jewellery	Student	P.T. deliveries

4.3.3 SUMMARY

For those who are working, the additional bonus is English. Kim is an exception, as his work takes place on his own small property, where his visitors are usually his Korean in-laws. (His two brothers-in-law have set up avocado farms nearby). Grace also interacts minimally in English during her working hours. For the others, however, there is the opportunity to hear and speak English during the day, and to understand better how the Whangarei community is composed. Here Ivan has probably the richest input; working in his field with a group of well-disposed fellow professionals. Tsu, as an accountant's assistant, works in English and with English, and Tom and Sophie, who are very isolated socially, find work not only useful for their English, but enjoy the odd conversations they have with their customers (drunks excepted). In fact, their regular customers are in a sense their New Zealand friends.

4.4 CRITICAL PERIODS AND CIRCUMSTANCES IN ACQUIRING ENGLISH

The subjects in this study were asked to name critical times or circumstances in their acquisition of English. Most of them could name a time or a circumstance which they perceived to be very significant, and which they felt had impacted on their second language learning. Several of the interviewees felt unable to differentiate between two critical factors, so there is a degree of overlap. Of the five, for example, who named a mainstream tertiary course, four had already chosen the Polytechnic English course as an equally critical time. Maria also named two factors: her English course, and her children's school.

Table 4.4 Range and Frequency of Stated Critical Periods and Circumstances

Critical Periods/Circumstances Identified	Number of Participants
Polytechnic English Course	10
Mainstream Tertiary Courses	5
Kamo Class	4
Children's School	3
Secondary School	2
Work	1
Separation from L1 friends	1
Meeting N.Z. friends	1
Dealing with lawyers etc.	1

Note: n = 22

The Polytechnic English course was important in different ways to different immigrants. For Lily and Maria, the moral support their fellow students gave them was as crucial as the confidence they also gained from the classes to communicate in English. Language classes cannot be separated from the social contact they provide, and their value in giving students an insight into New Zealand life. Tom did not begin to study English at the Polytechnic until his second year in New Zealand, and this was the time he named as the beginning of his ability to communicate in English. The Polytechnic course clearly provided a solid basis for immigrants to build on later in various ways, and for some it was a vital introduction to New Zealand society and customs. Within the shelter of their English classes they felt free to ask questions and discuss options, and to meet others in similar situations.

The crucial value of the mainstream tertiary courses was that they put immigrants into contact with New Zealand students, who provided the authentic New Zealand cultural contact not so easily found in the English classrooms. All of the immigrants in mainstream courses valued

this contact, although they frequently found it difficult to understand what was being said and done around them. They were also buoyed by the hope that these mainstream courses would provide access into the workforce. Immigrants viewed mainstream courses in particular as providing much more than just education.

The Kamo Class played an important part for many of the immigrants, but was seen as a critical factor by Fatima, Ha-Young, Jean and Grace. These women were in an isolated position, and the Kamo Class marked the beginning of social contact for them, and an introduction to the Home Tutor scheme.

Contact with their children's school was seen as critical by Maria, Emi and Jean; three non-working mothers. Maria placed most importance on her interaction with her children's friends' mothers, but had also become involved in her younger daughter's homework. She would often read the work, then talk about it in Croatian, and finally get her daughter (who was in Standard 6) to recap the topic in English. Jean had become actively involved in finding tutors for her children through their schools, and at the time of the interview there were several private tutors visiting the house on a regular basis.

Emi had found that when her older daughter had begun school, she herself had begun to see the necessity of learning English. From 1990 until 1994 Emi and her husband had lived in Seattle, but during that time Emi had socialized with other Japanese wives in the large Japanese community there. The birth of their first daughter in 1992 had not altered the

situation, and in 1994 Emi and her husband returned to Japan. However, their arrival in New Zealand was followed by their daughter's fifth birthday, and Emi suddenly found herself involved with school teachers and other parents. She is now an active user of English.

Sophie's second year at secondary school in Whangarei was the turning point for her acquisition of English. Although she received some ESOL help, most of her classes were mainstream, and it was in this second year that she first began to feel able to communicate in her second language. Tania attended an ESOL class four times a week and a daily computing class at the high school nearest to where she lived, and this was the critical time for her.

Ivan found beginning full-time work in Whangarei the critical time for him. His work forced him to "be always aware" of his English, and stretched him. Both at the time of the interview and at the beginning he had been obliged to communicate and to make great efforts in using English. Work was the biggest single factor.

Andrew had worked in Canada before coming to New Zealand. His critical time occurred about one and a half years after arriving in Canada. At that time, Andrew made a conscious effort to separate from his Czech friends, and from then on his English progressed much more rapidly.

Fatima's critical time was meeting a few friendly New Zealand women in Kaitaia when she had already had one year in Canada without making any breakthrough into communicative

English. These women befriended her, and it was through one of them that she heard about the Kamo Class in Whangarei. This marked the beginning of her (restricted) social interaction.

John's critical time was occurring at the time of his interview. He was in contact with lawyers and real estate agents regarding moving a second house on to his property, for his mother and mother-in-law. He was also making enquiries about the location for a possible prawn farm, and for this was also dealing with real estate agents and government officials. John had not had any formal English lessons in New Zealand, but did spend a great deal of time on the Net.

The only immigrant who could not name any time as critical was Farideh. English was not an issue for her, although she attended the Kamo Class when in New Zealand. However, she spent a good proportion of her time with a daughter in Haifa, the world centre for Baha'i. As a result of this lifestyle, and also because Farideh had never thought of a career outside the home, her English remained fairly rudimentary.

4.5 L1 MAINTENANCE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Fifteen of the immigrants in this research were parents. For most of them L1 maintenance was an issue that affected their language use at home, and for some of them it was a problem that they had not been able to resolve satisfactorily. Those for whom it was not an issue were Andrew and Farideh. Andrew's children had lived in Canada and New Zealand, and were

English speakers who understood a little Czech when it was spoken around them. However, Andrew had not intended to bring the children up as bilingual, and was content with their language situation. Farideh, who was the oldest of the interviewees, had grown-up daughters who all spoke Persian fluently, and Farideh was not responsible for the grandchildren's language development.

Dan and Li were new parents, with a toddler. Chinese was spoken at home, and it would be some time before they had to make a conscious decision about the baby's language direction. Eleven of the immigrants were parents of school-age children, and these were the ones most exercised by how to balance L2 acquisition with L1 maintenance.

The problem of L1 maintenance was less straightforward when there were adolescent or teenage children in the family. At this stage of a child's development, there are many other pressures over and above language alone, and the families with older children at the time of the interviews were facing troubled times.

Maria and Ivan's two daughters were aged 16 and 12, and spoke an increasing amount of English at home. Maria had found that the younger girl still had correct structure when she spoke Croatian, but tended to mix English and Croatian vocabulary. The older girl, however, did not mix the two languages, but had difficulty with Croatian structure. A major factor here, and a problem for the family, was the older girl's determination to become a full New Zealander, and this included a reluctance to speak Croatian, or to be seen with her parents

(particularly her mother, whose English was faulty) in public. It was very painful for Ivan and Maria to accept this, and they did not have a strong Croatian network to support their first language, although both girls joined the local Dalmatian kolo dance group. This group performed Dalmatian dances at Dalmatian Society functions, but the practices and performances were carried out in English. There was some Croatian spoken on special occasions, and by some of the society's members, but many others were third generation Dalmatians who had lost most or all of the language. Maria and Ivan did have Croatian friends in Auckland, and for several years Maria's mother, who spoke almost no English, lived with them, but she did not succeed in convincing their older daughter that she had a heritage to be proud of.

At the time of her interview, Fatima and her family had little contact with other Urdu speakers. They lived in an English-speaking environment – television, school, the husband's work – and Fatima said that although she spoke to her children in Urdu, the older ones usually replied in English. This is a family with very strong traditions; the women keep purdah, and the older daughter, who was attending a girls high school, was expected to cover her head at all times and to wear her veil in classes taught by a male. It will be interesting to see if this custom is tenable for a family which is so isolated in its situation, without any community of similar believers for moral support.

Grace's husband had made a ruling that no English was to be spoken in the house. This will certainly ensure that the two children, who are teenagers, will retain Chinese. They seemed to

be a very isolated family socially, partly because they came alone from Malaysia, and partly because of the nomadic nature of their first few years in New Zealand. The children therefore will need constant Chinese at home, in order to maintain their levels. One unfortunate side-effect, of course, was that Grace had very little chance to practise speaking or listening to English, especially as she found the radio and television much too difficult to understand.

Akiko and Masaki are part of a growing group of Japanese immigrants in this area, and they had struck a balance of Japanese and English that worked for them with respect to first language maintenance. Their five children ranged in age from nine to seventeen at the time of the interview, and all spoke English fluently. Akiko was not happy with the state of her English, and felt very keenly that she was unable to express more than basic thoughts. She is in the position of many older immigrants in the process of acquiring a second language who are overtaken by their children.

For Kim and Ha-Young, the factors which hindered their progress in English were helpful in ensuring that their children retained their first language. They were surrounded by in-laws, with whom they did most of their socializing. There is now quite a large Korean community in Whangarei, and although Kim and Ha-Young are not part of the Korean Church group, there is no problem interacting with Korean speakers. They are anxious for the children to retain their Korean heritage (Kim stated that he would like his daughter to marry a Korean), and are teaching them to read and write Korean as well as speak it. At present, the children

are young. When they are older they may face peer pressure to conform to New Zealand ways, but this is not yet a problem.

Jean and John had an extended family situation - John's mother and nephew – and were expecting Jean's mother and possibly other family members to join them in the near future. They spoke Chinese at home, but did not spend much time with other Chinese speakers outside their immediate family circle. Their situation was similar to Tom's and Sophie's in that they lived with an older relation who spoke very little English. However, there was a generation's difference in that Tom's mother was young enough to have a four-year-old child, and yet it was obviously not part of the family plan for her to take English lessons, or aim at integration into her new community. Another interesting situation in Tom's family was that the Chinese language which some of his cousins had "lost" in New Zealand, had been regained, at least to some extent, following the arrival of his paternal grandparents. These had come to live with Tom's uncle, and did not speak any English. Therefore Chinese was suddenly spoken again in the house, and the cousin who had accompanied Sophie during her first months at school, and with whom she had not been able to communicate, was now speaking her first language again. It is difficult to estimate exactly how much Chinese language was "lost" and then "regained" by Sophie's cousins. At the very least there must have been a reluctance to communicate in Chinese which was later overcome either by the necessity of speaking to monolingual grandparents, or for some other reason.

4.6 INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES

It was not possible in a survey of this nature to investigate the whole range of individual learner differences, especially those which were related to formal or classroom learning styles. The differences which seemed most relevant to the immigrants' position were the ones concentrated on, and these included age, social identity, role expectations, attitudes to language learning, and anxiety. Ethnicity was also a factor, as was each immigrant's reason for coming to live in New Zealand. All of these factors had played a part in the ease or difficulty with which these immigrants were establishing a satisfying life in their new society.

4.6.1 AGE

The age of the members of this group ranged from 20 (Sophie) to 72 (Farideh), with most of the group falling into the 30-39 age group (10), and 40-49 age group (8). Age alone did not seem to be as much of a factor as the age of the immigrants on their arrival in New Zealand. Linked to this was the employment situation. For some of the group, finding suitable employment and establishing a new life for themselves and their families made their age an important factor, especially when the possible advantages of retraining or further education had to be set against the more immediate advantages of finding work. For others, factors beside age alone had already made that decision for them.

Lily fell into the 30-39 age group, and, at the higher end of this range, would not find employment easily in Whangarei. However, as someone who had trained professionally in Vietnam, she was prepared to be an on-going learner, and would have accepted the chance of any course which was suitable for her, and which she could afford. How age was seen as a factor by the immigrants themselves was linked to their educational and social backgrounds. Grace had been to school, and had qualified as a hairdresser. Now a woman in her forties, it was not part of her family's philosophy to see her as a potential student: she had attended the Kamo Class for the purely practical reasons of acquiring enough English to be able to function in society. The pleasure and support she found in the class were incidental.

Tom's attitude was similar, especially towards women's education. He had mentioned once that he did not think women "learned much after they were teenagers", and education was seen in very practical terms. Tom was old enough and had enough English to run a take-away business, and further education for him was not an issue. Sophie had dreams of working as a receptionist, but at her age, further education was not seen as necessary for her personally, although her younger sister had begun a university degree. The two younger boys, one just beginning school and one at kindergarten, would probably have a much wider range of choices when they were older.

Andrew, in his fifties, was fluent in spoken English, but had never mastered the written language. He had worked by himself for many years, in a job requiring heavy manual

labour which was becoming too much for him. At the time of the interview he was trying to find alternative ways of making a living. He did not consider upgrading his English language levels, although this might have widened his choices. It might also have been difficult to achieve, as Andrew's English had fossilized over the years; a fact which did not worry him.

Immigrants from professional backgrounds generally had a more relaxed view of age, and did not see age alone as a barrier to further learning of either English or other subjects. Professional background consistently appeared to be more important than age in terms of willingness to undertake further language courses, to retrain, or to begin new areas of study. In three cases, what separated the women from the men when English classes or retraining were being thought of, was the situation of having young children to take care of. Money was also a factor, as well as the general assumption that the husband – the major bread-winner – should have the first opportunity to study. The position was different when there were no children. Both Yang and Tsu had attended courses at the Polytechnic; Yang had studied English, and Tsu, a former electrical engineer, had done a business course. This change of direction had achieved results: at the time of the interview Tsu was working part-time for an accountant, whereas Yang was doing part-time deliveries.

Jean's children were school age, and she had been able to study English at the Polytechnic for several months. John, her husband, had a higher level of English, and was

spending his time trying to set up a business enterprise in the area. Akiko and Masaki had had a similar attitude to the value of ongoing education, and had both studied after their arrival in New Zealand; English in Akiko's case, and dairy farming in Masaki's. Masaki had realised that dairy farming was not a practical option for him, and had returned to working as a civil engineer and later as a draughtsman. Some of these immigrants admitted that they felt that study was easier for younger people, but none of those with professional backgrounds believed that age was a serious problem when trying to adapt to new conditions.

4.6.2 SOCIAL IDENTITY, ROLE EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

There were interesting contrasts between different immigrants in the area of role expectations and social identity. Tom might be said to represent those at the lower end of the social scale, and Deng those at the upper end. There was a degree of polarization also in role expectations, particularly expectations of what was "owed" to individuals. Tom saw his social standing as being part of a close and co-operative family unit, where each member had his or her own role. There seemed little need to hold any social position in the greater community, beyond what was provided by running a business. Tom hoped to marry, but not outside his own sphere. He had already made one trip back to China, to inspect several prospective brides, and was planning another excursion for the same purpose. As far as English was concerned, Tom was content to get by.

Deng had been a dentist in China, with a high professional status. This made his situation in New Zealand harder for him than for Tom, for example. On arrival in New Zealand, he had lost the social standing he had previously enjoyed, as well as a high degree of professional satisfaction in his career. He had worked hard to improve his level of English, which had been fairly high at the time of his arrival. At the time of the interview he was doing a CBC course at the Polytechnic, and was enjoying his first substantial contact with New Zealand students, believing that this contact would be beneficial to his progress in English, and in becoming part of New Zealand society. However, being in a class with native speakers had made Deng more aware of specific gaps in his English. He could not understand jokes made by his fellow students, and their slang was often beyond him. This had made him lose confidence in some way, and he was now anxious to find out exactly where his level was: "I am wondering how much English I should [I] learn and then I can work as a dentist". Deng was also the only one of the immigrants interviewed who expressed curiosity about the type of English spoken by the native speakers he came into contact with, and he gave the impression that he wanted to be able to distinguish between the educational or social levels of different speakers: "I can't tell what kind of English people speak". For the other immigrants, speaking to any New Zealander was a goal, and the quality of the English was not questioned. Deng also had expectations of what New Zealand society should provide for professional immigrants in the way of bridges to their fields of expertise. Tom, on the other hand, had not expected any help in getting established, beyond what his extended family had been able to provide.

For Tom, social identity was largely provided by his family, and the role he played in family life. The isolated position that many of the immigrants were in made belonging to a family or group an important factor in their sense of social identity, and in the roles they saw designated for themselves or for others. This sense of belonging was important even if, as in Kim's case, it was counter-productive to the acquisition of English. Farideh had the support of the local Baha'i community, which was multi-cultural and conducted for the most part in English. She admitted that she did not feel the need to go to every weekly meeting, but made sure that she attended a service at least once every nineteen days, in accordance with Baha'i tenets. This sense of belonging to a community was also possible to some extent for Ivan and Maria, who attended occasional functions held by the local Dalmatian Society. As mentioned earlier, this was not enough for their older daughter who wanted to be accepted as a "real" New Zealander by her fellow students at school and did not wish to be seen as Croatian.

For Lily, who came to Whangarei as part of a group of Vietnamese refugees, the gradual dissolution of the group as its members moved elsewhere in search of work had left her isolated socially from members of her own culture. She had not been able to find permanent employment in Whangarei, and she had not been able to integrate into the local community. Her expectations may have been high when she first arrived in New Zealand – they certainly included the chance to work – but they were not high at the time of the interview, and she relied heavily on the Kamo Class for support and

companionship. Immigrants in Lily's position have basic expectations of their new society, and being denied the right to work denies them the chance to play their part in the community. They are perceived, and perceive themselves, as outsiders.

Li certainly felt that his expectations of New Zealand had not been realised. He was another young professional who had expected to find suitable employment in New Zealand and who had been disappointed in this respect. He felt that there had not been enough information given by the government about the employment situation. He was prepared to do any kind of work in his field, in the belief that starting at the bottom would at least help his English, and be an introduction to local ways. His perception, however, of the employment situation was that there was nothing available, even at lower levels. Li believed that in the USA and Canada it was easier than in New Zealand to get work; not perhaps a suitable job at first, "but very helpful for improving English". In New Zealand, he felt, all job advertisements stated "good communication skills needed", but not all jobs needed that. Li had friends who "can do computers...better than Kiwis, but don't get the jobs". This, Li believed, was because of the unnecessary emphasis on communication skills, whereas it would be good for New Zealand too if he and his friends could work in the fields they were expert in.

Deng had similar perceptions to Li on the subject of the lack of employment opportunities in New Zealand compared with in the USA, and he was particularly concerned with the lack of bridges to help professional people get back into their own

fields: "In the last 5 – 6 years thousands of overseas qualified people came to NZ but there are no bridges for them to work or be trained to be qualified...". However, Deng found Whangarei much better than Auckland. "People here are more friendly and home tutor scheme, I think, is the best one".

Ivan and Maria also found the Whangarei community generally supportive, although Maria saw New Zealand men as "much more friendly and natural than New Zealand women". She felt that other mothers saw her as different, and judged her. Ivan had no such perceptions about the community, and both he and Maria felt that their friends in Auckland would agree with them that people are friendly, and although they may sometimes be a little impatient with an immigrant who is having language problems, this would happen in every country. Like Deng and Li, Ivan did feel that too much emphasis at work was placed on communication skills, and that presentation skills had more influence in this country than in Croatia, where the ability to do the job was what counted. Here, in Ivan's view, too much importance was given to CVs and how people presented themselves, and he felt that he had been held back at work because of this.

All of the immigrants perceived Whangarei as a relatively supportive and friendly community towards newcomers. There had been occasional instances of prejudice, especially against the immigrants who were visibly different from the Maori / Pakeha majority. Tom, for example, had found some customers abusive about charges in his take-away bar, and some, especially in his early days when his English was weak, had

tried to cheat him. Fatima's family had arrived home from Auckland one night, and neighbours had called the noise control security firm on the grounds that the children had talked too loudly getting out of the car and entering the house. Grace's neighbours, she told me when I went to interview her, did not speak to her at all, and Grace herself did not seem to have expectations of much help or guidance from any official body.

4.6.3 PERCEPTIONS OF IDEAL CONDITIONS

All of the immigrants felt that their circumstances could be improved. Kim appeared, on the surface at least, to be the most contented member of the group, having left a very busy city life in Korea with "no nature" for a peaceful life on the outskirts of Whangarei. Kim enjoyed the more leisurely pace of New Zealand life, he derived a great deal of pleasure from trying his hand at farming, and his children enjoyed school. Yet there were lacks in his life that he could not fill, and his perception was that these were a result of not having enough English to meet New Zealanders on an equal level. Kim had been very upset by the changes to the student allowances and loans regulations for immigrants, feeling that daily English classes would have been of great benefit to him, particularly as his social life was dominated by his Korean in-laws. There was a student in his business course at the Polytechnic who had begun the course with less English than Kim, but was now more fluent, mainly, in Kim's opinion, because he was living in a New Zealand homestay and was able to interact with his host family as much as he wished. Kim felt that under these circumstances he too would have been able to make faster progress in English.

The immigrants who had undertaken mainstream courses in Whangarei valued them as a way to meet native speakers, seeing this as vital for their progress in English, and seeing good English as vital to their chances of employment. Although Whangarei did not offer good employment prospects, it was seen by the immigrants as friendlier than a big city, and providing better chances of becoming part of a community. It also had the perceived advantage of having fewer immigrants, so that the children in particular would be able to integrate with native speakers at school.

All of the immigrants saw Whangarei as a friendly community, and those who had lived in Auckland preferred it to that city. The faults that were seen in the Whangarei community were generally blamed on the government; lack of an adequate English policy, for example. Professionals like Deng and Li felt that other countries, such as Canada and the USA, were more helpful than New Zealand in providing bridges for retraining, both in the facilities offered, and in the costs. Maria had heard from friends that Australia was a better place to find work, and she was thinking seriously about moving to Adelaide. Jack was nostalgic about the information and help given by the Taiwanese government to business entrepreneurs, compared with the abundant paperwork but meagre information he had received from local bodies in New Zealand.

Those who had children at Primary School believed that it was an attractive and friendly system, whereas Maria, whose older daughter was at High School, was distressed by the

degree of peer pressure put on her daughter to conform to the prevalent attitudes. She and Ivan were already upset by their daughter's rejection of things Croatian, and Maria was haunted by the fear of finding the girl drawn into the marijuana-smoking, anti-social circles that she felt were the norm in Whangarei . Her friends in Australia did not seem to be troubled by these pressures, and the idea of moving the family to Adelaide was becoming more and more attractive.

4.7 ANXIETY AND STRESS

Some degree of stress is a factor of all immigrants' lives, and the members of this group experienced and described many of the stress-causing factors one would expect, such as difficulties in finding employment; problems with English; lack of social interaction; the difficulty of balancing L1 maintenance with L2 acquisition; coping with indifference or prejudices towards their own cultures. However, there were some interesting variations.

Lily's interview revealed that she had a high degree of performance anxiety, related to her difficulties with English pronunciation. Lily had not studied English before arriving in New Zealand as a refugee, and she had not mastered some aspects of pronunciation, particularly final consonants and consonant clusters. There were also many problems with individual sounds. Lily knew that people found her difficult to understand, and was reluctant to cause annoyance. Her only employment had been 18 months at a sewing factory in Whangarei, and she had found nothing else since the closure of this factory.

However, she had not enjoyed her work, and this was because of her English. When she was at work, she “prayed every night” that her machine would not break down the next day, because she *might* not be able to explain the problem to whoever was detailed to fix it. Worse still, she had to write a report if her machine broke down. At one stage, her anxiety was so great that she wanted to leave work, but her supervisor was very supportive and convinced her that she would get all the help she needed.

Andrew also had anxieties related to work and his feelings about his accent. It did not worry him that he had never mastered written English, but he was fearful of not being understood when he spoke. When doing business, the first contact was made by his wife, as Andrew felt that a potential customer might be reluctant to do business with someone with a heavy accent. There was also the fear that they might not understand each other, or that Andrew might have difficulty in recording details accurately. Andrew admitted that he had not had any unpleasant incidents, but that he preferred to be cautious. In a largely monolingual society, Andrew saw an accent as a handicap.

A poignant description of her feelings by Akiko shows that stress can exist even when outwardly an immigrant seems to be settled and coping very well. Akiko’s level of English allowed her to explain her point of view clearly, and she had no hesitation in being thankful for the advantages her family enjoyed in their Whangarei lifestyle. But there was a barrier which she was not passing: “When I speak to my Japanese friends on the phone, I’m so relaxed and always make jokes and laugh, laugh...and I can go on

talking incessantly and have more imaginations. In English, I just talk what I need to speak". Akiko could understand the news very easily in Japanese, and read a whole book in a day: "These are impossible in English. I don't think I have been getting enough informations, knowledges or pleasure since I came to NZ. I need a good ability of English, because I'd like to enjoy and be satisfied with my NZ life". The fact that Akiko could articulate her problems as she saw them, did not mean that she could solve them, and her perception of the nature of her situation was that it would not be easily, if ever, remedied.

The findings resulting from the immigrants' perceptions and experiences of their language learning environment also provide information on what responses they were able to make, or wished to be able to make, to improve their situations. There was a high degree of frustration felt by many, because their power to respond was so limited, and this added to their stress.

4.8 ELABORATION OF FINDINGS

At the beginning of May 1999, immigrants were invited to participate in a group discussion to enlarge upon some of the issues they had previously discussed. The interview took the form of a dinner discussion during one evening, and the focus was on immigrants' perceptions of Whangarei community attitudes, their evaluation of their own

situations regarding second language acquisition and employment, and advice they would give to friends wishing to immigrate to New Zealand.

The immigrants present on this occasion were a representative sample of the whole group and comprised Tania, Kim and Ha-Young, Jean and John, and Tsu and Yang. Ivan and Maria were unable to be present, but had spent an evening near that time talking about their experiences and their plans for the future, focusing on the same topics of attitudes and opportunities.

4.8.1 COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

Discussion of community attitudes centred on how immigrants felt about speaking their own languages in public, and how welcoming they felt the community as a whole was to NESB newcomers. Were New Zealanders interested in immigrants and their cultures? Were people interested in immigrants' opinions?

All of the group felt quite relaxed speaking their own languages in public in Whangarei. However, if they were in a mixed group, they made an effort to speak English. Jean and John often used a sauna at the local swimming pool, for example, and would speak English to each other if there were others present "...because they might want to talk to us" (Jean). Tania felt there were no problems speaking Russian with her Russian friends, and the others agreed that they felt the same way with a group of their L1 friends.

At this point, some interesting contrasts appeared between views of a supportive community and views of an uninterested one. The group believed that Whangarei people were friendlier and more relaxed than Aucklanders, and that Whangarei was a better place in which to learn English. Whangarei people were "...quite friendly, very relaxed... better than Auckland...good for us to learn English here..." (Yang). Kim agreed that "Whangarei is good to learn English" because there are few Koreans here, and in Auckland children lose the chance to learn English. Also, the quality of life is better: "I can enjoy my life; for example, leisure, fishing, golf; whatever I want I can do" (Kim). Kim believed that Whangarei people were kinder: "Whangarei people is interested in the other people, but big city people don't want to know the other people".

Jean mentioned that when they had first arrived in New Zealand, their neighbour gave them vegetables, and was always ready to help. At the present time, for example, their neighbour was helping them to build a retaining wall. Tania also found people friendly and interested in where she came from and what she had done. Once she was waiting to cross the road, "...and a lady standing near, she just start to talk to me". Tsu agreed that people here were much friendlier than in Auckland, and on the subject of learning English, she felt that conditions in Whangarei were better. "In Auckland it is impossible to think you can get a home tutor. Even if you want to join language class in AIT... waiting list one half to one year".

There was a surprising discrepancy here between this view of a friendly community and subsequent comments on the subject of how much like outsiders the recent immigrants felt. There seemed to be a distinction made between some of the individuals with whom they came into contact in everyday situations, and “New Zealanders”. Kim expressed an opinion which the others shared when he said that most New Zealanders were not interested in what he thought. Kim felt that to some extent this was a product of inadequate English on his part – “I can’t express my whole thinking and all of my opinion completely...” – but he felt that New Zealanders were reluctant to put enough effort into trying to communicate: “New Zealanders doesn’t want to know foreigners’ opinion... Our speaking is hard to say our thoughts so they think boring”.

Kim was adamant that Koreans would be kinder to foreigners than New Zealanders are to them. Ha-Young agreed with this. Tsu gave a more qualified opinion about Chinese attitudes towards foreigners: “...most of them are quite kind and friendly”. When asked to compare them with New Zealanders, she found it difficult to say. Yang felt that the language barrier made it difficult to gauge whether the person you were speaking to was interested or not. The immigrants obviously found it hard to decide on the level of genuine interest felt or shown by New Zealanders. John summed up by advocating looking at it on a case by case basis. He felt that it depended on how many foreigners there were: “If very few, is interesting, like alien. This is normal to any race or country... In Taiwan foreign people were very unusual at one time – everyone looks and is interested”. However, when great numbers came, locals were no longer interested.

Tania felt “foreign” in only one respect: her lack of background knowledge. She knew all about Russia, but did not have the equivalent information about New Zealand society. When people spoke of events, or opinions, or sports, she was often lost. This, she felt, was her problem, and not the fault of the people she was with. In contrast to this, Maria had been constantly irked by being asked where she had come from. What had seemed a sign of interest to some of the group, had become a signal to her that she was regarded as a foreigner, and might never feel a fully accepted part of the community. Australia seemed to promise better conditions, and a few months after her first interview she left New Zealand with her two daughters for Adelaide. Ivan continued in Whangarei for another six months, until he was able to join his family.

Maria returned briefly a week before the dinner evening, and was very happy to talk about her impressions of Adelaide. She and the girls were living in an area which had a high Italian population (signs in the school her daughters went to were in Italian and English), and although Maria had not yet found work, for the first time since leaving Croatia she had lost the feeling of being obviously foreign. Her English, instead of being worse than everyone else’s, was much better than some she heard spoken around her; people accepted her without comment, and she was no longer endlessly asked where she had come from. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, her elder daughter had come to terms with herself. Maria had been overjoyed when a school-mate asked her daughter where she was from and her daughter replied, “I’ve come from New Zealand, but I’m actually Croatian”. It was the first time she had felt able to affirm her origins without a degree of defensiveness.

If we compare Maria's reactions with those of the other immigrants, it shows the difficulty of interpreting the significance of questions which appear as a sign of interest to some, but are seen as proof of not fitting in by others. Maria's family, as Europeans, had the potential to assimilate fully if they desired, and it was obvious that, for the elder daughter at least, assimilation was the passport to acceptance. She was at a sensitive age – many teenage children go through a period of rebuffing their parents – and she was not sure enough of herself to be able to accept her Croatian background with pride. High school students are probably the worst group for finding and exposing weaknesses; it seems strange that a system which prides itself on turning out "individuals", and people who can "think for themselves" should still produce adolescents (and adults) who are threatened by anyone who is different in any way.

Asian children remain ethnically distinct, and recognizable as such from New Zealand's Caucasian majority, and it may be that for them there is no obvious advantage in rejecting their families when that would still not give them entrée into the groups they would like to join. Might this be a factor in a greater degree of L1 retention among some immigrant children in Whangarei? The Croatian community, for example, shows many examples of three-generation language loss. It has also been affected by intermarriage. However, Croats form an integral part of Whangarei's business community, and have a status far removed from that of the early years following their arrival in the far north. They have kept many symbols of their culture, and retain a degree of the language. Their prominence as a group in Whangarei depends to some extent on their numbers; smaller groups of European NESB immigrants have become integrated or assimilated into the

community without visible traces. What will be the situation for the next generations of Asian immigrants?

4.8.2 ENGLISH ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Most of the immigrants in this study were eager – almost desperately so – for opportunities for “meaningful” or “deeper” English conversation. They equated a deeper level of interaction with New Zealanders as a gateway to successful English language acquisition, and to the local knowledge they needed to become fully integrated into the community. Those who were looking for employment believed that better English would increase their chances of finding it, and hoped that Whangarei, which did not provide much chance of work, could at least provide better opportunities for acquiring English than larger, more impersonal cities. The greater availability of home tutors in Whangarei was an important factor in this hope.

Whangarei reflects the national trends where NESB immigrant employment is concerned. The members of this group clearly show the signs of unemployment and underemployment so apparent in larger centres, and especially in Auckland. It is significant that the one professional member of the group who was employed at the same professional level as in his own country was Ivan; a European, and a male.

The young professionals have been the most affected by their move to New Zealand. If Ha-Young and Dan are discounted because of their present positions as wives and

mothers, there are seven professionally trained immigrants who have no work at all; one who is underemployed; and one who has retrained and is working part-time in a different profession. The unemployed comprise four women and three men: Maria (planning analyst), Lily (midwife), Jean (clinical chemist), Tania (tutor in mechanical engineering), Li (electronic engineer and business administrator), John (chemistry teacher) and Deng (dentist). Yang (civil engineering and jewellery) has part-time delivery work, and is definitely in the category of underemployed. Tsu, his wife, has retrained and is working part-time also, but in a more professional capacity as an accountant's assistant. Deng was studying at the time of his interview, but had been trying unsuccessfully to find work.

Of these immigrants, only Lily's English was likely to be a significant problem in carrying out work, not so much because of difficulties in listening, but because of pronunciation. And yet Lily had held her job at the sewing factory for eighteen months, in spite of her anxieties, until the closure of the factory ended her one experience of work in New Zealand.

4.8.3 WHAT ADVICE WOULD IMMIGRANTS GIVE THEIR FRIENDS?

Kim felt that there were profound differences between New Zealand and Korea. He had been prepared for these, but would advise other Koreans against coming unless they could "change their mind" (i.e. their way of thinking). It would not be possible to live in this country without adopting its life style.

Tania had expected major differences between New Zealand and Russia, and believed that her life in New Zealand was better. Her son was expecting to arrive in Whangarei to live, and she realised that life in such a quiet town would be difficult for him. Her advice to her son, and to other immigrants, would be to get a driver's licence; to study English; to send all of his qualifications to Wellington to NZQA; and to get a New Zealand qualification and then look for work. Tania herself was still trying to decide how best to find employment, and was taking a correspondence course at the time: English For Tertiary Study.

Tsu confessed that she had been disappointed on arrival to discover how quiet Auckland was, and how old so many of the cars were. The airport was run down and not very big. She had expected a larger, more modern city. However, New Zealand grew on her, and her advice to new arrivals would be to relax and become accustomed to the differences. She found that living here became better and better. "When you first arrive, you won't think much, but if you stay... very glad. Only problem is your language".

John's advice for people wanting to make a living in Whangarei was to bring more money. (If you did not need to make money, you could have a very good life here.) John felt that this area had high potential for development, and the ideal would be for several friends to combine their funds and do something in the export line. Whangarei itself was too small a market to be worthwhile for a restaurant business, for example, and the New Zealand economy itself was a "small dish". Importing was not the way to go: a friend who had imported a container load of expensive ladders had still not sold them. The

answer was an export business in agriculture or aquaculture, and John's choice would be tiger prawns.

Jean believed that immigrants should choose where to live to suit their particular personality: Auckland for those who love shopping; Whangarei for those who like the country. Newcomers should also ask the locals many questions, because there are "many rules we cannot understand". Jean, and the others, had had very few problems in their dealings with local people, and would have no hesitation in assuring newcomers that it was a friendly community.

4.9 CONCLUSION

The findings from this study showed that, although major factors presented in the literature regarding immigrants generally, were relevant to the situation of these immigrants in Whangarei, other factors influenced outcomes. Migrant perceptions and role expectations affected how realities were both seen and dealt with, and there were interesting anomalies.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the most rewarding features of meeting and interviewing the migrants in this study was their willingness to reveal many personal details about their lives and aspirations. Their stories were given in the trust that their confidence would not be abused, and in the hope that they could be used in some way for the benefit of present or future immigrants. It was a measure of the quality of the members of this group that they could transcend their own problems and consider the well-being of others in a similar situation. At no point was it possible to forget that this research was focused on the experiences of people who had taken the risk of leaving their own countries in the hope of making a better life for themselves and their families. Each immigrant had his or her own particular circumstances, but there were common problems and challenges which they met and coped with as best they could.

In this chapter I would like to discuss what I believe are the crucial factors in the immigrants' lives in Whangarei. The discussion will cover sources of English, employment opportunities and L2 acquisition, critical periods and circumstances, L1 maintenance and social networks, individual learner differences, and, finally, the question

of whether it is possible to construct an "ideal scenario" for an immigrant who has decided to make a new life in this country.

5.2 SOURCES OF ENGLISH

In looking at the range of sources of English available to immigrants in Whangarei, it was helpful to distinguish between the *official* and *unofficial* sources; the former comprising classes and courses designed primarily for the study of English, and the latter including any study or activity which helped in the acquisition of English as a second language. All but two of the immigrants in this study had received some official form of English teaching, and all of the group acquired English to some degree from unofficial sources.

5.2.1 OFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH

It became apparent from talking with the immigrants that English classes generally offered much more than the opportunity to acquire the language. Nine of the immigrants had studied English at the Polytechnic, some in classes containing overseas students, and some in classes designed solely for permanent residents. Classes designed especially for immigrants are the ideal, but are not always possible because of numbers. However, in both types of classes much more than English is taught, and all students are encouraged to learn as much as possible about the New Zealand way of life.

For some of the immigrants, for example Lily, Maria, Kim and Yang, the combination of supportive tutors and sympathetic fellow students gave them moral support and increased self-confidence not only in their language skills, but in their ability to survive in the new lives they had taken up. Lily, in particular, was a refugee who had been placed in Whangarei and was in great need of support, and her few months in her English class gave her some of the stability she sought.

The Kamo Class, used by 15 of the group in all, tries to accept permanent residents on their arrival, and is designed to provide information as well as English. For those who use its services, it also provides home tutors. It was surprising to see that many of the immigrants found out about the existence of this by chance, especially those who did not arrive to join a group. For those like Tania, who had a husband to show her the yellow pages, there was access to the information she needed, but for newcomers like Grace and Fatima, there was no sure source of information, and chance played too important a part in how long they remained isolated.

The Kamo Class is unique in this area as a meeting place for NESB immigrants from any country. The Korean Church, with its affiliated Emmanuel Language School, caters for many Korean visitors and immigrants, but there is no branch of the Ethnic Council in Whangarei, or of the China Friendship Society, or of any similar ethnic organization to help newly arrived immigrants. It is difficult to see how immigrants like Lily would survive without the continuing support of the Kamo Class, and those immigrants who spent some time there before moving on were all appreciative of its role in their lives.

Kim's comment summed it up: "This Monday, very good...Gillian told us about new licence rules; we don't know. We don't know all of hospital, education, daylight savings, etc. Fortunately I attend Kamo Class, so how do they (others) know?"

Of the three most frequently used official sources of English – Polytechnic, Kamo Class and home tutors – the home tutors provide the link to the community that immigrants want so badly. They provide English at a level suitable to the immigrant, and they are often the first New Zealanders that immigrants get to know. If the match between tutor and immigrant is a good one, the immigrant has a regular visitor who is a mixture of teacher and friend. For Maria, unable to find work in Whangarei, and feeling like an outsider, it was very important to know that once a week there would be a knock on the door, and it would be someone coming to see her.

It is interesting to note a recent drop in the demand for home tutors in Whangarei. Over the past few years, the demand had been increasing at a rate of 20% to 30% annually. However, numbers have suddenly levelled out. It is too soon to say whether this is due to the current drop in Asian immigrants, but that seems the most likely reason. Changes in immigration policy have occurred, such as the need to be registered in some professions before coming to New Zealand. This, coupled with the return to Korea and Taiwan, for example, of disillusioned immigrants, is having a noticeable effect on immigration numbers. Whangarei is a relatively small community, but it reflects the trends in larger cities.

5.2.2 UNOFFICIAL SOURCES OF ENGLISH

One common feature occurred throughout all the assessment of the numerous unofficial sources of English in the Whangarei community: this was the importance placed by the immigrants on any source of English which led to interaction with New Zealanders. For this reason, mainstream courses were especially highly regarded as a means of meeting and becoming acquainted with native speakers who could provide authentic spoken English as well as an introduction to local society. One of the advantages of mainstream courses over English classes is their authenticity. In English classes, where the level is adjusted to the students' needs, and where the tutors expend a great deal of effort in making the lessons comprehensible, it is difficult for students, especially those who are not in a position to sit an external test such as IELTS, to know exactly what level their English skills have reached. Mainstream courses can be brutally effective in revealing both strengths and weaknesses in language competence, and the immigrants who had studied subjects other than English had valued both the contacts with New Zealanders and the knowledge of their own English level which they had gained from them.

However, even mainstream courses did not provide immigrants with the quantity of English interaction they desired. It was especially disappointing for those who had so far failed to find employment, to fail also to make meaningful contacts with native speakers. This situation was very similar to the one described by Peirce (1995) with reference to immigrants in Canada who found that being in a position to converse with a native

speaker is not as important as the power base and the roles of the speakers. It becomes apparent that, in many cases, the immigrant is not the one with the power to determine the grounds on which the interaction proceeds, or to bring closure to the conversation. In many of the examples of the unofficial sources of English accessed by the immigrants, the nature of the exchanges remained at a superficial level.

When immigrants do have the opportunity to learn more about the community and its ways, not all of the knowledge is welcome. Tania, who became an adult student at a local high school, was shocked by the behaviour and attitude of many of the students there. She also found the level of mathematics very low, and was sorry to watch her stepson (14) do mathematics without understanding the reason why things work as they do. However, all knowledge gained, whether good or bad, helps the immigrant to become aware of the community and to become a more informed part of it.

Those immigrants who took part in sporting or social activities enjoyed the occasions where interaction with locals was possible, even if contact was limited. Akiko had attended church for two years, in an effort to meet people, and Kim accompanied his wife to church for much the same reason. In spite of all their efforts, however, most of the group felt that they were still on the fringe of society, and had not discovered a way to interact on an equal basis, and in a meaningful way, with native English speakers.

5.2.3 COST

The limitation of the Kamo Class is that it is held only once a week, on a Monday morning. Home tutors usually visit once weekly also. These services are free. However, for immigrants wanting regular English classes or lessons, there is the factor of cost. Changes to the Student Allowances regulations had upset many of the immigrants, both on principle or because they were directly affected. Several - notably John, Kim, Masaki and Yang - claimed that it was cheaper to learn English in their home countries. Although it was difficult to compare services and prices with what is available in New Zealand, Masaki's description of what was available on television in Japan shows that we could be much more helpful in this country than we are. Considering the number of NESB immigrants who have made their homes in New Zealand over the past decade or so, why is it not possible to provide a television course with accompanying text(s)? The texts would need to be at a reasonable price, of course. All of the immigrants in this survey had access to television, although for many the programmes were too difficult to follow. However, the medium was there in every home, and a series of English lessons, especially if given at several levels, would be of great value to immigrants trying to acquire both the language and an understanding of the way of life. Help like this could make life easier for mothers and those without work who currently spend much of their time at home. It would also be seen as a sign that the government cared about the well being of those it had invited to live here, and had then, seemingly, abandoned.

5.3 EMPLOYMENT

Why do professional immigrants have so much difficulty in finding employment? There were 22 immigrants in this survey, 17 of whom intended to work. Of these 17, however, only six had found relatively satisfactory work, and three of these were the least skilled workers in the group. Seven professionals had found no work at all. There were some obvious difficulties, such as non-recognition of qualifications (Deng, the dentist), and the unemployment situation in Whangarei. Li, an electronics engineer, felt that an unnecessary emphasis on communication skills in job advertisements, and a tendency for employers to choose New Zealand workers first, also tipped the balance against immigrants.

The question here is whether the professionally qualified immigrants have tried wholeheartedly to find any work, or whether they have decided, in the absence of “suitable” work, to concentrate on improving their English in the hope of finding more congenial employment at a later date. This would partially explain the existing situation where the less qualified immigrants are working, and have been employed continuously. Tom and Sophie are examples of immigrants who have always found some way to support themselves; even as students they earned money to help their family, and any work was acceptable.

Immigrants with professional qualifications have invested a great deal of time and money in education, and are used to a certain status. They do not necessarily demand social

recognition, but they are accustomed to being seen as educated and intelligent people whose opinions carry weight in their circles. It would seem that losing this standing is a circumstance they had not anticipated, and for several of the immigrants in this group it was humiliating to be treated as a not very competent dependent in society. The desire expressed by Kim and Deng and others for meaningful conversation was partly the desire to be recognised as an equal in intelligence by the people around them.

In these circumstances it would be understandable for professional immigrants to be less enthusiastic about pursuing menial work if the work constituted another barrier to being accepted as equals by members of their community. Some of this group have been prepared to try anything available: Yang does part-time deliveries, Lily worked in a sewing factory, and Jean was looking for voluntary work in the community. This does not alter the fact that the professionals who are still unemployed have to some extent accepted the fact that Whangarei is a place to acquire English, rather than a job, and is a far more comfortable place than Auckland to live in when a family depends on the unemployment benefit.

The link between employment and English competency becomes closer, naturally, as the professional level of the employment increases. There is no mystery, therefore, as to why an expert in a field will find it difficult to transfer to the same field but in a second language. The question in New Zealand is why it is so difficult to find any work allied to an immigrant's area of expertise. The answer seems to be that even when external qualifications are recognized, the immigrant is still hampered by the fact that many

aspects of immigration and migrant employment have never been thought through consistently by any government. Added to this, an immigrant is also reliant on the attitudes of professional bodies and individual employers, many of whom have their own agenda, or are influenced by their prejudices. New Zealand has not cared enough so far to commit itself to a responsible language policy, or to a comprehensive immigration policy which would take some degree of responsibility for the well being of the people it had offered to accept. As with so many issues, change from the top is necessary to guarantee improvement for those at the bottom.

5.4 CRITICAL PERIODS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

For two thirds of the immigrants, the critical circumstance in their acquisition of English was beginning to learn English or another subject formally. For half of the group, this took place at the local Polytechnic, and, in the majority of cases, towards the beginning of their time in New Zealand. If, because of changes to the student allowance regulations, immigrants are not eligible for government help until they have been in the country for two years, this will be a serious disadvantage to them with regard to acquiring English, and to finding employment.

For most of the group, the critical period occurred soon after their arrival, helping to anchor them in their new lives, and raise their self-confidence. The formal classes, as mentioned earlier, gave far more than just English, and to be obliged to wait two years before beginning tertiary courses in particular can do nothing but harm to immigrants

who need to upgrade their English or undertake retraining before having any chance of finding reasonable employment.

Only one of the group – Ivan – named beginning work as a critical circumstance; he was the only one fortunate enough to find and begin work in his own field with colleagues who were native speakers of English. Although he found listening difficult at first, and at the time of the interview still occasionally had to ask his co-workers to slow down, he knew that his English had benefitted greatly from daily exposure to authentic and idiomatic speech, as had his understanding of New Zealand attitudes and customs.

Any avenue which led to interaction with members of the community was valuable, and for three of the non-working mothers this avenue was school. They found becoming involved in their children's schools provided the impetus they needed to begin to learn English seriously. For most other activities in which they were involved, it was possible to get by with minimal English. For their children's sakes, however, they saw the need to have enough English to speak with teachers and with other parents. Emi in particular, who had spent four years in Canada without learning English, was finding satisfaction in her ability to meet with and talk to other adults, and to become part of the community.

For all but one of the immigrants, critical periods in acquiring English coincided with periods when there was interaction with other New Zealanders, whether these were teachers, or fellow-students, or other people involved in the same activities. The

overwhelming feeling among the immigrants was the value of communication with members of the local community, and the difficulty of obtaining enough of this.

5.5 L1 MAINTENANCE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

The issue of L1 maintenance versus L2 acquisition is shown by the literature to be a complex one, and the experience of the immigrants in this study was very similar to what has been recorded by Beaglehole (1988,1990), Walker (1996), and other researchers on the subject. Two areas which are of special interest are those of changing roles within the family, and the importance of L1 support.

5.5.1 CHANGING ROLES

The families in this research were generally very traditional in the sense that the father and mother (often in that order) were seen as the rule makers and the authorities in the family circle. These roles were sometimes threatened when children, who had learned English quickly through immersion in the language at school, found themselves in the position of understanding more than their parents, and often having to help them. In this area at least, there was a role reversal, and often a loss of face for the parents. It was a situation which was sometimes unsettling for the children, who were unsure how to wield this new form of power. For children who were feeling resentful about the changes in their lives, there was a chance to gain some satisfaction at the parents' expense. A

Russian mother in Whangarei, not in the survey, felt at a loss when her sons deliberately spoke English too fast for her to follow. A Croatian mother was certain that her children were enjoying swearing in English in front of her, but she knew too little of the language to be able to tackle them with authority.

It may be that part of the role reversal occurs because parents and children are seen to be in competition to acquire the second language, and the children are winning. There is therefore the possibility of feeling a certain amount of contempt for the losers. This will not occur in every family, of course; perhaps in only a few. Nevertheless, when it occurs it is very distressing for the parents, who are also struggling to establish themselves in a new life, and who carry the responsibility for the decision to immigrate. Migrant parents are already faced with their new country's indifference or even hostility towards their culture, and they are very vulnerable when it comes under attack from within the family circle.

There was a contrast between this situation, as exemplified by Maria's position with her daughter, and the very strong L1 situation in Tom's home. The parents speak almost no English, and Tom's mother seems unlikely to learn much at all unless major changes take place in the family's way of life. Yet there is no apparent conflict with roles within the family circle, and it is accepted as perfectly natural that Lisa, and the others, are at their parents' disposal whenever interpreters are needed. In a sense, there is no competition between children and parents, because the parents have not entered the race. Another factor is the strong position held by the L1 within a large extended family consisting of

three generations. Finally, the family members are part of a large and traditional group who have been brought up to put the needs of the family first, and this conditioning has so far survived the very different attitudes prevalent in the Whangarei community.

5.5.2 L1 MAINTENANCE

There is often a loss of status for the first language, which can be seen as powerless or valueless in the new society. Closely linked with the power to outdo parents in speaking English, is the power to refuse to speak in the first language – another behaviour guaranteed to upset many parents. This was not always a conscious act; children speaking English all day at school may find it difficult to switch back at home. However, for immigrant parents anxious for their children to maintain their first language, there needs to be a strong use of the language in the home circle, and, optimally, the kind of social support networks discussed by Walker (1996).

Where the family is isolated from other members of its ethnic group, there is more pressure for parents to use a L1 within the home circle, but, conversely, less outside support for a language which children may not see as having value in the new setting. Fatima's children, for example, were already speaking English at home, and although Fatima always spoke to them in Urdu, they replied in English. It is seldom that the children can speak Urdu to anyone other than their parents, and this situation is bound to affect their retention of their first language. Grace's family was socially isolated, but her husband had decreed that only Chinese was to be spoken in the home.

The situation was easier for Kim, whose children were surrounded by aunts and uncles and cousins who provided a rich and supportive L1 environment. It was also easier in that the children were younger than Grace's, and accepted Korean as the natural home language. Grace's children were teenagers who had been at school long enough to fall into English naturally, and it was for this reason that their father had made speaking Chinese at home compulsory. The immigrants in the group whose children were very young had not really begun to worry about the future of their L1. Those whose children were older, however, were beginning to realise that the situation would be very different once the children left home, and their choice of marriage partner would be of paramount importance. The Asian tendency to marry within their own ethnic groups has helped to ensure the survival of their languages so far, in contrast to the high rate of loss among European immigrants whose families have merged into the Pakeha majority.

5.6 INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES

There were many individual differences among this group, but three which stood out as having special significance were educational background, age, and personality. Immigrants' educational backgrounds largely determined the extent of their ambitions, as well as their expectations of appropriate action from public or private individuals. Age had some very interesting strings attached; and personality is a vital factor in any discussion involving successful or less successful ventures.

5.6.1 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Some of the problems of the more highly educated immigrants have been noted already: the difficulties they were experiencing in trying to find employment; the lack of bridges to help them to function in the fields in which they had originally qualified; their loss of social standing; their inability to function in a satisfying way in the community. In many cases, these higher expectations led to a greater degree of disappointment and frustration, as immigrants struggled to retain their professional standing in the face of a pressing need to support themselves and their dependents adequately. Many New Zealanders have become aware of the dilemma facing professionally qualified immigrants through publicity on the position of the unemployed and underemployed doctors in Auckland. It may be that the problem will slowly fade away with time, but that is no comfort to the families involved, and no excuse for lack of action now.

Educational background was an important factor in an immigrant's attitude to further study or retraining. The young professionals in this survey were accustomed to study, and did not see age as a hindrance to further learning or to retraining. The major constraints were the cost of study, and the need to support themselves and their dependents. Young married couples without children were the best situated in this respect: Tsu and Yang, for example, were able to study and work part-time freely, as was Deng. Deng's wife was working in Auckland while Deng studied at the Polytechnic, and although this was not ideal, it provided them with the means to carry on with their programme for retraining.

These immigrants were also efficient users of texts, dictionaries, and other sources of English for private study. They did not leave acquisition of the language to chance, but were aware of their weaknesses, and took steps to overcome them. In a sense, their frustrations were greater because their ambitions were higher, but they were focused on their future.

5.6.2 AGE

If age is looked at as one of the factors affecting an immigrant's ability to settle successfully, an element of luck, or chance, can often be seen. The clearest example of this was shown by Tom's family, where the age of each member on arrival in New Zealand had a direct bearing on the future that was mapped out for them. Tom and his older brother had left school when they immigrated, and they went into the take-away business. Sophie, who was about 13 at the time of arrival, went to high school in New Zealand. She had a slow start learning English, and took the subjects which had the least demanding language content. She was a competent English speaker when she left school, and became a part-time worker in Tom's take-away bar and the family interpreter. Sophie's younger sister was a primary school student when she arrived, and has become a university student, studying economics. There are now two young sons in the family, and they will have their entire schooling in New Zealand, and most probably a free choice of their future paths. Tom's mother speaks no English, and will stay at home and look after the household. Tom's father works part-time in a take-away bar, but would like to return to making wooden furniture. His English is minimal.

In this family, which does not have a background of private or tertiary study, it can be seen that the age of each member, when he or she arrived in New Zealand, determined that member's future career. From the point of view of the family as a whole, it is an efficient arrangement, with each member following the obvious path. From the point of view of individual members, only an accident of time has decreed that Sophie should stay an unskilled worker while her younger sister has a professional career.

One of the most difficult times to arrive in a new country – perhaps the most difficult time – is as a teenager. Immigrants' children in their teens have to cope with many things at a very sensitive age. It is an age when children hate to be different from their peers, and it was not surprising to find some of these children feeling resentful towards their parents for causing them to feel outsiders. Although adult New Zealanders have become less xenophobic since the 1950s, immigrants' children still suffer at the hands of their peers. The children of the members of this group, as well as children of other immigrants in Whangarei, had experienced various degrees of teasing or rejection, ranging from subtle to crude (Ching-chong-Chinaman). Intermediate School children were generally the most outspokenly hostile.

Another disadvantage of arriving at high school age is that the time spent learning English may be at the expense of subject content, whereas younger children avoid this problem, and adult immigrants have already achieved their qualifications. It would be interesting to compare the attitudes of immigrants who arrived in New Zealand at this

vulnerable age, and discover what differences, if any, exist between the children of refugees, and the children of parents who chose voluntarily to leave their own homeland, language, and way of life, for New Zealand.

5.6.3 PERSONALITY

Although the immigrants in this research had not all yet reached their goals, especially with regard to employment, those who were most optimistic about their future shared many of the characteristics of the subjects of Chang's study (1997). These were adventurous individuals with good self-esteem and a very positive outlook. If they had not yet gained all their objectives, they nevertheless appreciated many of the things that they had. Kim was very happy with his children's primary schooling, feeling that he and Ha-Young had been justified in wanting to avoid some of the negative aspects of Korean education. As an escapee from a busy city life, Kim enjoyed the slower pace of life in Whangarei, although he accepted the fact that he might one day be obliged to move to a larger city to find work. In the meantime, he made the most of a country life-style on the edge of town.

Resilience was another quality shared by the most happily settled immigrants. They were able to cope with the unexpected without being thrown off course. Tania had arrived in New Zealand to find that her level of English was far lower than she had estimated, and that she could not follow what people were saying. She enrolled in an ESOL class at a local high school, and followed this with other study, as well as joining a local walking

group. When her sister arrived in New Zealand and felt the same disappointment over her English skills, Tania was able to reassure her by her own example.

Tsu and Yang were flexible, and prepared to try anything as a stepping stone to achieve their goals. Tsu had retrained, and Yang was working part-time in a job far below the level of his qualifications, while also studying to improve his English. The value of a positive outlook was that it encouraged persistence in the face of difficulties, as well as enabling an immigrant to focus on well-defined, although perhaps very distant, goals.

5.7 COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

The conflict between immigrants' views of New Zealanders as simultaneously friendly and indifferent can be explained in several ways. It may be that we possess a degree of surface friendliness only, keeping most communication on the "hi" level. Or we may be described, as the husband of one tutor put it, as "very nice but not very friendly". We may be insular, ignorant of many world issues, and largely indifferent to them. We are certainly a monolingual society, where many people have no conception of what is involved in learning a second language. For some, it is something that they feel an intelligent person should be able to cope with in an unrealistically short time. Tania was told by a tutor at the local Polytechnic that she should make an effort "to think in English!" Tania would be very happy to do so, if she could.

For others, learning another language seems like an immense and possibly perilous task, where increasing knowledge of a second language may damage one's command of the first, or prevent the learners from mastering skills in other subjects. The suggestion that all school children should learn a second language is usually met with opposition from many teachers, the majority of whom are themselves monolingual. In many ways we are a self-satisfied culture. We are also a teasing culture, and many of the comments which immigrants find upsetting may have been made in a thoughtless rather than a hostile manner. Certainly, many of the things said at high school are not intended to damage a person's self-esteem, although they may do precisely that. If you are feeling alone, uncertain, and anxious, it is so much easier to dwell on the negative.

On a more positive note, it may be that, in many instances, what is seen by an immigrant as indifference, may in fact be diffidence. Maria resented being asked continually where she had come from, and a New Zealander may very well hesitate to ask personal questions through a fear of seeming to be prying. When it is known that an immigrant has had traumatic experiences, or is having a very difficult time in the present, people may feel that it is kinder not to raise the subject, and there is also the very natural fear of becoming involved in problems to which there seems to be no solution. Immigrants also are divided into those who can get relief from talking something through, and those who would prefer to avoid the topic, and misunderstandings can arise, no matter how well meaning the participants in an interaction may be.

5.8 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Government has a responsibility towards those it has accepted as immigrants. The changes to the immigration policy in 1995 were designed to clear misunderstandings about the points system and employment opportunities, and these changes have reduced the number of immigrant doctors, in particular. The Government did acknowledge, in 1998, that it had made mistakes in aspects of its immigration policy, and it is currently speaking of measures to help the registration of doctors who arrived in New Zealand before the policy changes of October 1995. Whether these measures are effective or not, the situation will not have improved for the majority of immigrants who are currently having difficulty retraining, or finding employment.

New Zealand needs an official language policy which makes provision for all those with language needs. This would need to include ways of raising public awareness about language, and the value of learning at least one other language. There would also need to be real commitment to the training of language teachers. Nothing is more counter-productive than enforcing, for example, the learning of a second language, without providing high quality teaching, and some assurance that less common languages will not be begun and then discontinued because of the loss of the only person available in an area to teach a particular one.

Immigrants, especially refugees, need the support of members of their own ethnic group wherever possible. Smith (1996) mentions the government policy of “pepper-potting”:

scattering refugees around. There has been a belief since the 1950s that separating immigrants from their own people will force them to assimilate more quickly, and the damage this separation can do is often not recognised by the policy makers. Communication is easier now, but the need for support remains as great as ever. Linked

to this need for support is the need for adequate and easily accessible information about New Zealand customs and institutions, especially in the early stages of an immigrant's life here.

Kim had experienced the situation of having his small daughter fall through a window and cut herself on the glass. At that stage, Kim did not have enough English to use the telephone, or to speak to his neighbour to ask for advice. Kim's suggestion – and this would not be an expensive task for the government or any community to undertake – was that every NESB immigrant would be given a telephone link-up with someone with the same language for the first three to six months after arrival. The other person would not need to be living in the same area, necessarily, but would be available to be called up whenever there was need, providing information and also a sense of security.

Australia has shown New Zealand that it is prepared to invest in English lessons for immigrants, and New Zealand could learn a great deal from its neighbour. The immigrants living in Whangarei have little reason to believe that they are a valuable addition to this country, no matter what was said to them before they were accepted here. Deeds, as always, speak loudest.

5.9 AN IDEAL SCENARIO?

The results of the research done in Whangarei pointed to a combination of factors that could be seen as an “ideal” scenario for an immigrant. Figure 5.1 illustrates this model. It highlights the factors which were revealed by the immigrants’ experience in Whangarei and New Zealand to be the most influential in determining the course of their progress as new and hopeful residents of New Zealand.

This is a tentative model only, which has some features in common with Spolsky’s model of conditions for second language learning (Spolsky,1989:28). However, Spolsky has arranged his factors in the form of a flow chart, where social context leads to attitudes and then to motivation, which in turn combines with various individual characteristics. All of these determine the use a learner makes of formal and informal learning opportunities, which in turn are dependent on the social context. I have preferred to divide the factors into three domains (*societal*; *societal and individual*; and *individual*), and have listed the factors themselves as either *vital* or *important*, according to the findings of this research.

5.9.1 VITAL FACTORS

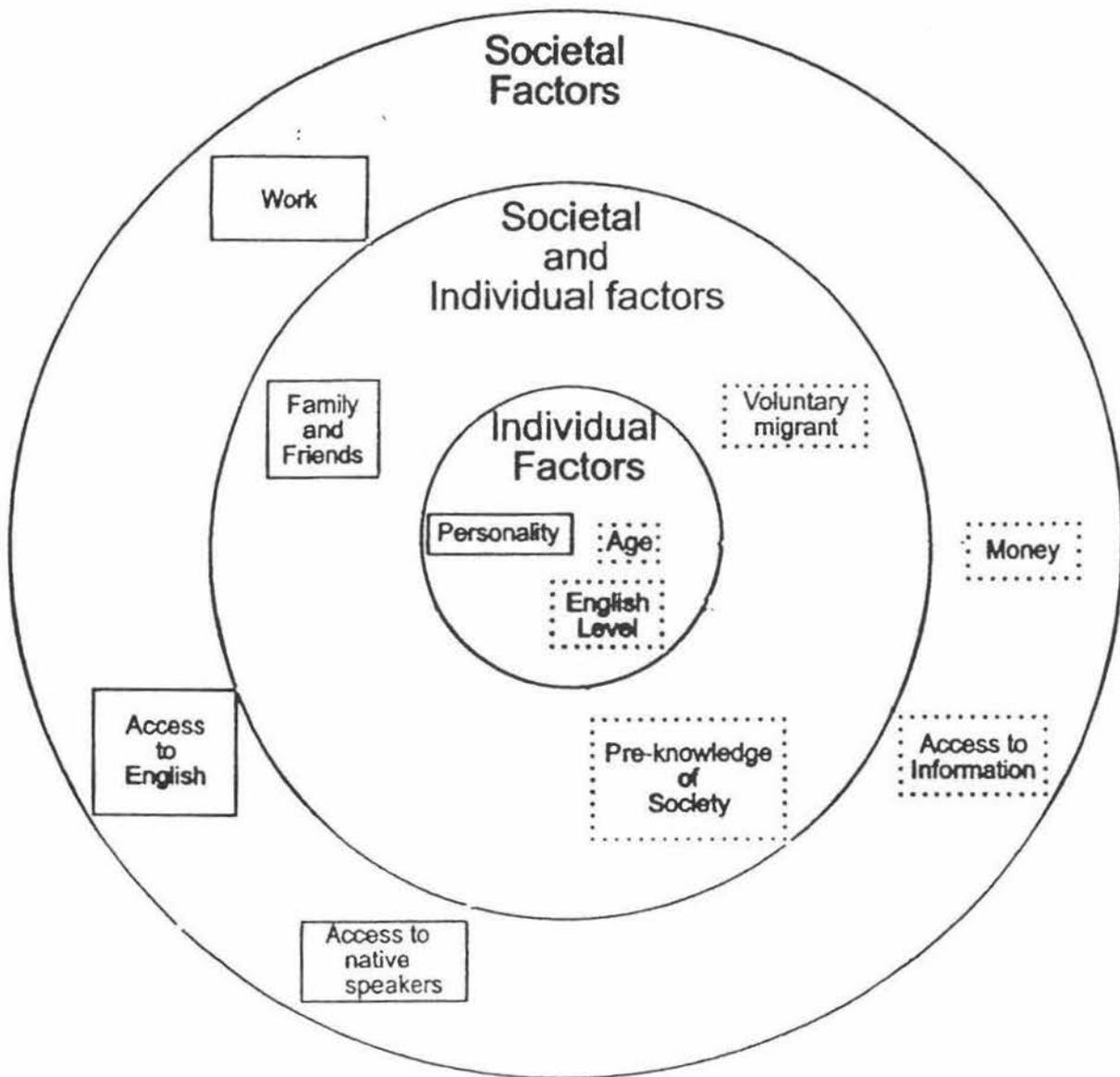
A most vital individual factor is the personality of the immigrant. This alone can affect everything that an immigrant does, and an immigrant with the positive attitudes mentioned earlier has greatly increased his or her chances of integrating successfully.

Equally important is having work, preferably suited to the immigrant's qualifications. Access to English is vital, and, equally valued, access to native speakers in the community. Finally, family and friends supply not only moral and often practical support, but they can hand on information and understanding that they have gained about community attitudes and organizations.

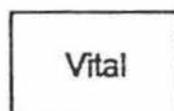
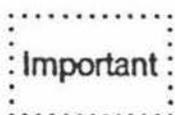
5.9.2 IMPORTANT FACTORS

Age and English level on arrival can influence an immigrant's future, especially in the area of gaining qualifications or employment. Money has importance in that it can give an immigrant both time to adapt, and choices in undertaking different ventures. Pre-knowledge of the society an immigrant comes to will help to prevent misunderstandings and even disillusionment, as will access to useful information. An immigrant couple who recently built a large house on the outskirts of Whangarei, with a view to taking tourists for short-term stays, found on applying for their licence to do this, that the access road they shared could not support extra traffic. The application was turned down. Being an enterprising couple, with a great deal of determination, they are planning a different business venture. They are also immigrants who chose this country, and this factor gives immigrants, in spite of other restrictions, the feeling that they have had some choice in deciding the course of their future.

Figure 5.1 Factors in Successful Integration



Key



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 THE PRESENT DAY

Almost 50 years after the arrival of the *Goya*, NESB immigrants still face difficulties, and in some cases discrimination, as they struggle to acquire English and become part of New Zealand society. The situation is not as stark as it was when my husband's family arrived, and spent their first five years in New Zealand a few kilometres outside Harihari, on the West Coast of the South Island. There, in unrelieved loneliness, the father chopped down trees, and the mother brought up children in a house equipped with a wood-burning stove and a kerosene lamp. At the end of five years, just as power lines were making their way down the main road towards them, the family "escaped" to Hawkes Bay, and the chance to interact with other people. They still felt outsiders, however; the children at school, and the father at work. There, his name (Slavtcho) was not even attempted, and he was called "Pedro", or "Peter". The mother died at the age of 37, still unable to speak much English, and never a part of her community.

The immigrants in Whangarei today do not often face open hostility, or the degree of indifference and ignorance met with in the 1950s. In fact, they find members of the community generally friendly to deal with. However, and especially for immigrants from non-European countries, there is a barrier which prevents them from becoming insiders,

and this barrier inhibits their ability to acquire the level of English and social knowledge they need to function fully in society here.

As New Zealanders, we need to do several things. Firstly, we need to put systems in place to ensure that all immigrants receive accurate and relevant information about the New Zealand way of life; not only on their arrival, but throughout the first months, or even years, of their life here. A telephone link with someone speaking the same L1 would be an inexpensive and efficient way of covering more urgent situations, and for the everyday information that every newcomer needs, a booklet in the immigrant's L1 could cover most areas. There are already some such sources of information; I envisage an indexed and easily updated booklet, written in very straightforward English, and translated into relevant languages.

Secondly, we need a fair and efficient policy to help NESB immigrants acquire adequate levels of English, and, when this has been achieved, bridges to help them re-enter their fields of expertise. Cost is a major deterrent for many immigrants, and English language programmes need to be varied and flexible if they are to become accessible to all those who need them. As happened in my husband's family, and as happens still in many immigrant families, wives (and, in particular, wives and mothers) find accessing rich sources of English beyond their powers, given the present lack of facilities.

In spite of improvements in assessing immigrants' qualifications, there remains a great need for a consistent and comprehensive system of equating overseas qualifications and

experience with local standards. Provision also needs to be made within professions for bridging courses for NESB professionals, and these courses need to follow national guidelines. It should be possible for immigrants to be given clear information on where they stand, and what they need to do in order to re-enter their profession.

Thirdly, we need to dispel some of the prejudices surrounding immigrants, especially those from countries other than Europe, and replace these prejudices with a more widely-informed understanding of immigrant groups. As a nation, we know relatively little about the history and present situation of many of the nations our NESB immigrants come from, and school social studies programmes might be one effective way of beginning to increase our level of world knowledge.

Finally, we need to develop the maturity to see ourselves as world citizens; proud of our own culture and traditions, but open to different customs, and not threatened by other ways of life. The findings of this research have shown that although most of the immigrants were prepared to make sacrifices in order to establish themselves and their families in New Zealand, many had not been able to anticipate how difficult and isolated their course was going to be. Recent research has highlighted the effects of immigration on first generation immigrants, and has begun to look at the second and third generations. More research in this area, including the barriers between “insiders” and “outsiders”, could be beneficial to those involved. It would also be very interesting to compare the effects of immigration on the children and grandchildren of voluntary immigrants with the effects on second and third generation members of refugee families.

What has been shown clearly in this research is that good will, confidence and expertise are eroded when there is no opportunity for immigrants to make a contribution to their community. The situation still exists in New Zealand where first generation immigrants must sacrifice themselves in the hope that the future will be better for their children. This should not be so.

APPENDIX 1: 1996 CENSUS: PEOPLE BORN OVERSEAS

Highlights

Population size

At the time of the 1996 Census there were 605,019 New Zealand residents who had been born overseas. This group made up 17.5 percent of the New Zealand population, up from 15.8 percent in 1991.

As figure 1 shows, the vast majority of New Zealand's overseas born population came from Europe and the Oceania region (which includes Australia and the Pacific Islands). In 1996 there were 285,921 people living in New Zealand who had been born in Europe or the former USSR, making up 8.3 percent of the total population. A further 153,987 people, or 4.5 percent of the population, were born in the Oceania region. Other groups, particularly those born in Asia, have grown at a faster rate in recent years but remain comparatively small. In 1996 there were 61,176 New Zealand residents born in Northeast Asia (1.8 percent of the total population); 37,332 (1.1 percent) born in Southeast Asia; and 19,284 (0.6 percent) born in Southern Asia.

In terms of individual countries, the United Kingdom and Ireland have historically been New Zealand's most significant source of immigrants. In 1996 there were 230,052 New Zealand residents who had been born in these countries.

Other important countries of origin were Australia (54,711), Western Samoa (42,174), the Netherlands (23,430), China (19,521) and Fiji (18,771).

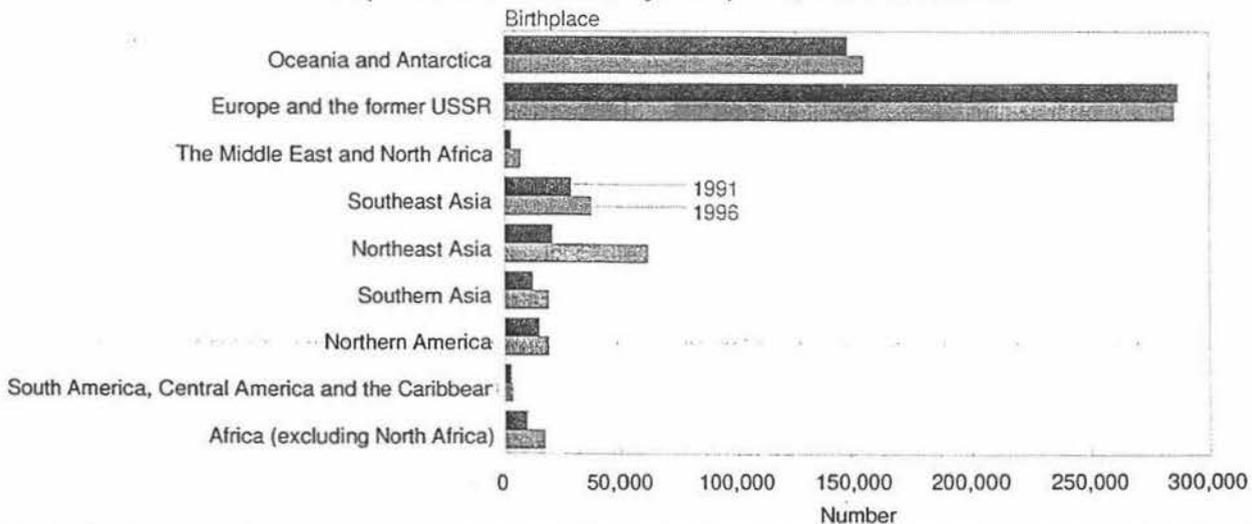
Population growth

Between the 1991 and 1996 Censuses, New Zealand's overseas born population increased by 77,679 people, or 14.7 percent. By comparison, the New Zealand born population grew by 1.3 percent. The fastest growing group was from Northeast Asia, whose numbers grew by 40,521, or almost threefold, accounting for over half the increase in the total number of overseas born. There was also significant growth in the number of New Zealand residents born in Southeast Asia (an increase of 8,445 or 29.2 percent), Africa (excluding North Africa) (7,626 or 77.7 percent), Oceania (7,209 or 4.9 percent) and Southern Asia (6,708 or 53.3 percent).

Amongst individual source countries, those from which the greatest growth in numbers was experienced between 1991 and 1996 were South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, South Africa and Japan. There were falls in the size of some of New Zealand's larger immigrant groups, including those born in the United Kingdom and Ireland, the Cook Islands, Western Samoa and the Netherlands.

Figure 1

People Born Overseas, by Birthplace, 1991 and 1996



APPENDIX 2: WHANGAREI ESOL HOME TUTOR STATISTICS 1998

Whangarei ESOL Home Tutor Scheme Statistics 1998

Number of Learners

116

Male

33

Female

83

Country of Origin

Austria	1	Holland	1	Myanmar	1	Taiwan	9
China	43	Hong Kong	4	Pakistan	1	Thailand	6
Croatia	2	India	1	Papua NG	1	Tonga	1
Ethiopia	2	Iran	1	Philippines	2	Vietnam	5
Fiji	1	Japan	7	Russia	8		
Germany	4	Korea	10	Samoa	1		
Greece	1	Malaysia	1	Sri Lanka	1		

Age
A (18-30)

35

B (31-50)

66

C (Over 50)

14

Learner Status
GRP

63

REF

3

RGM

78

RGW

2

Work Status
FTW

14

HMK

31

OTH

7

PTW

5

RET

10

SEL

3

STU

8

UEM

39

VOL

1

NZIS Category
POI

65

FRU

36

BUS

1

DEP

2

PER

7

REF

5

Referral
Other Migrant

66

Self

10

Education Agency

15

Advertisement

1

NZES

1

NZ English Speaker

16

Mangere

1

Social Service

3

Employer

2

Government Agency

1

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW FORMAT

INTERVIEW FORMAT

- The six questions (on cards) given to the interviewees –

Which is your age group?

10 - 14 40 - 49
15 - 19 50 - 59
20 - 29 60 +
30 - 39

What work did you do
in your country?

What work have you done
in New Zealand?

Are you working
now?

What family do you have
in New Zealand?

How many years did you
study English before you
came to New Zealand?

OFFICIAL SOURCES

Primary School
 Secondary School
 Correspondence
 Polytechnic
 Private Schools
 Private lessons
 Home tutors
 Kamo Class
 Private study
 Tops Courses

UNOFFICIAL SOURCES

Work
 Daily Contacts: family (+ in-laws)
 shopping
 neighbours
 friends
 children's school
 leisure activities (+ sports)
 Mainstream Courses – School
 Polytechnic
 Dictionary
 Films / Videos
 T.V. / Teletext
 Radio
 Newspapers / Magazines
 Books
 Computers / The Net
 Library
 Social Networks
 Church

PROGRESS: How far have you progressed in English since your arrival in New Zealand?

Level on arrival	1	2	3	4	5
Level now	1	2	3	4	5

Scale:

- 1 = practically none
- 2 = a little English
- 3 = English O.K.
- 4 = good English
- 5 = very good English

PROBLEMS: What problems do you have when trying to make progress in English?

THE COMMUNITY: How important do you feel community attitudes are (or have been) to you personally?

OTHER COMMENTS:

APPENDIX 4: CHANGES TO STUDENT ALLOWANCES



11 November 1998



All Students with Permanent Resident Status

Changes to Eligibility for Student Allowances

You may now be aware that the Government has recently announced changes to the eligibility criteria for Student Allowances for those students who have permanent residence (PR) status.

To qualify for student allowances from 1 January 1999 you will have to meet the following three criteria:

- you must be "ordinarily resident" in New Zealand;
- you must have resided in New Zealand for at least 2 years;
- you must have held PR status for at least two years.

These criteria must be met by all students with permanent residence status, as well as others that are deemed to automatically have permanent residence status, whether or not they have a currently approved student allowance in 1998.

If you are currently receiving a student allowance for a course which continues into 1999 and you do meet the new criteria, your details will be automatically transferred to the Department of Work and Income (WINZ) who will be responsible for student allowances from 1 January 1999. WINZ will ensure that your student allowance payment continues.

If you are currently receiving a student allowance for a course which continues into 1999 and you do not meet the new criteria noted above, your eligibility for that allowance will cease on 31 December 1998, at which time your allowance payments will cease. You will however, still be eligible to access financial support during 1999 through the Student Loan Scheme.

If you do not meet the new criteria as at 1 January 1999 you will be able to reapply for a student allowance as soon as you do meet the criteria. Details of how to apply can be obtained by ringing the WINZ freephone on 0800 88 99 00.

If during 1998 you had an allowance based on a "with dependants" rate but you no longer qualify as at 1 January 1999, you may qualify for an increased living cost component rate from the Student Loan Scheme of \$250 per week. You should discuss this with the student loan staff at your institution.

Joan Smith
Senior Manager
Student Loans and Allowances Division

Teachnz
Atene & Atene

Recruitment Line: 0800 832 246 (0800 Teachnz)
Internet: <http://www.teachnz.govt.nz>

National Office,
45-47 Pipitea Street, Thorndon, Private Box 1666, Wellington, New Zealand
Telephone: (04) 473-5544 Facsimile: (04) 499 1327
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz>

APPENDIX 5: THE SITUATION IN TAIWAN

The situation in Taiwan (according to John and Jean)

Some difference between Taiwan Government and New Zealand Government in developing some agriculture

Taiwan:

Local government will

- 1. Looking up the potential in developing “what kinds of agriculture is suitable in this area.”**
- 2. Develop and test the chosen type of agriculture by the Government Institute of Agriculture.
(Reference: <http://www.tari.gov.tw>)**
- 3. Transfer the technology to the farmer who wishes to do the agriculture.**
- 4. Farmer will do the agriculture and support by the Institute of Government if they have any technological problem.**

New Zealand:

- 1. Farmer need to do all the developing job**
- 2. Sent the application form and wait for a very long time.**

Is it correct?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, A. (1990). *Fundamentals of educational research*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Balasoglou, J. (1994). *Travels with my family*. Auckland: David Ling.
- Ball, C. (1998). *Strategies for successful learning*. Palmerston North: Workshop, CLESOL Conference.
- Ball, C. & Lewis, M. (1999). Autonomy for language learners. *Many Voices*, 14, 15-18.
- Banks, J.A. (1988). *Multiethnic education: Theory and practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Barnard, R. (1998). The need for systematic induction to the learning culture of our schools. *Many Voices*, 13, 4-7.
- Beaglehole, A. (1988). Children of Central European Refugees: Growing up in New Zealand in the 1940s and in the 1950s. *New Settlers and Multicultural Educational Issues*, 5, 30-35.
- Beaglehole, A. (1990). *Facing the past: Looking back at refugee childhood in New Zealand, 1940s – 1960s*. Wellington: Allen and Unwin.
- Beaglehole, A. (1988). *A small price to pay: Refugees from Hitler in New Zealand, 1936 – 1946*. Wellington: Allen and Unwin.
- Bogdan, R. & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston, Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Borrie, W. D. (1991). *Immigration to New Zealand 1854 – 1938*. Canberra, Australian National University.
- Boyer, T. Problems in Paradise: Taiwanese immigrants to Auckland, New Zealand. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 37, 59-79.
- Brown, R. W. (1990). The place of beliefs and of concept formation in a language teacher training theory. *System*, 18, 85-96.
- Brumfit, C.J. & Johnson, K. (Eds.). (1979). *The communicative approach to language teaching*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

- Campbell, G. (1999). Relative values: Could New Zealand cope adequately with the Kosovo refugees? *Listener*, 168 (no.3076), 22-24.
- Census of Population and Dwellings. (1996). *People born overseas*. Statistics New Zealand: Te Tari Tatau.
- Chang, K. (1997). *Interviews with migrants to New Zealand: Factors that have helped non-English speaking immigrants to be successful in finding employment in New Zealand*. Research Report.
- Collier, V. (1989). How long? A synthesis of research on academic achievement in a second language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23, 509-531.
- Cremer, R.D. & Ramasamy, B. (1996). *Tigers in New Zealand? The role of Asian investment in the economy*. Institute of Policy Studies: Asia 2000 Foundation of New Zealand.
- Crystal, D. (1987). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Du Fresne, Y. (1989). *The bear from the north: Tales of a New Zealand childhood*. London: Women's Press Limited.
- Ehrman, M.E. (1996). *Understanding second language learning difficulties*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Elliot, S. (1990). A refugee policy: Some practical implications. *New Settlers and Multicultural Issues*, 7, 12-16.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Freed, B. (Ed.). (1995). *Second language acquisition in a study abroad context*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Greif, S.W. (Ed.). (1995). *Immigration and national identity in New Zealand: One people, two peoples, many peoples?* Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press.
- Gubbay, D. (1987). Language and power. *New Settlers and Multicultural Education Issues*, 4, 84-102.
- Gudykunst, W.B. & Young, Y.K. (1997). *Communicating with strangers: An approach to intercultural communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hadley, A.O. (Ed.). (1995). *Research in language learning: principles, processes, and prospects*. Lincolnwood: National Textbook Company.

- Hashimoto, H. (1993). Language acquisition of an exchange student within the homestay environment. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 4, 209-224.
- Hawley, C. (1987). Towards a language policy. In W. Hirsh (Ed.), *Living languages: Bilingualism and community languages in New Zealand* (pp 45-53). Auckland: Heinemann.
- Hirsh, W. (Ed.). (1987). *Living languages: Bilingualism and community languages in New Zealand*. Auckland: Heinemann.
- Holmes, J. (1984). *Bilingual education*. Wellington: English Language Institute, Victoria University.
- Holmes, J. (1990). Community languages: Researchers as catalysts? *New Settlers and Multicultural Education Issues*, 7, 19-26.
- Hubbard, A. (1990). Sanctuary: How we let in the war criminals. *Listener*, 127 (no. 2620), 24-28.
- Hutching, M. (1998). *New Zealanders by choice*. Wellington: Dept. Internal Affairs.
- Ip, M. (1990). *Home away from home: Life stories of Chinese women in New Zealand*. Auckland: New Women's Press.
- Ip, M. (1995). Chinese New Zealanders: Old settlers and new immigrants. In S. Greif (Ed.), *Immigration and national identity in New Zealand* (pp 161-199). Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press.
- Ip, M. (1996). *Dragons on the Long White Cloud: The making of Chinese New Zealanders*. Birkenhead: Tandem Press.
- Jansen, A. (1990). *I have in my arms both ways*. Wellington: Allen and Unwin.
- Johnson, D.M. (1992). *Approaches to research in second language learning*. New York: Longman.
- Kaplan, R. (1993). *Balkan ghosts: A journey through history*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Kassabova, K. (1999). *Reconnaissance*. Auckland: Penguin.
- Keating, P.B. (1998). *Studying Asia; The challenge for tertiary educators*. Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies.
- Kennedy, S. & Dewar, S. (1997). *Non-English speaking background students: A study of programmes and support in New Zealand schools*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

- Kern, R.G. (1995). Students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 28, 71-92.
- King, M. (1985). *Being Pakeha: An encounter with New Zealand and the Maori Renaissance*. Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Lidgard, J., Bedford, R. & Goodwin, J. (1998). *Transformations in New Zealand's international migration system: 1981-1996*. Hamilton: Population Studies Centre, Discussion Paper no. 25.
- Lidgard, J., Ho, E., Chen, Y., Goodwin, J. & Bedford, R. (1998). *Immigrants from Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong in New Zealand in the mid-1990s: Macro and micro perspectives*. Hamilton: Population Studies Centre, Discussion Paper no. 29.
- Liev, M.H. (1995). (Refugees from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. In S. Greif (Ed.), *Immigration and national identity in New Zealand* (pp 99-132). Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press.
- Lo Bianco, J. (1989). Multiculturalism and the National Policy on Languages. *New Settlers and Multicultural Education Issues*, 6, 22-27.
- Lochore, R.A. (1951). *From Europe to New Zealand: An account of our continental European Settlers*. Wellington: A.H. and A.W. Reed.
- McCall, C. & Barker, A. (1998). The truth about immigration. *Reader's Digest*, (October), 17-22.
- McCargar, D.F. (1993). Teacher and student role expectations: Cross-cultural differences and implications. *The Modern Language Journal*, 77, 92-207.
- McGill, D. (1982). *The other New Zealanders*. Wellington: Mallison Rendel Publishers Ltd.
- McKinnon, M. (1996). *Immigrants and citizens: New Zealanders and Asian immigration in historical context*. Wellington: Victoria University, Institute of Policy Studies.
- Marton, F. (1981). Phenomenography – describing conceptions of the world around us. *Instructional Science*, 10, 177-200.
- Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G. & Beaty, E. (1993). Conceptions of learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 19, 277-300.
- Milmine, J. (1983). Report on the language and orientation programmes for Cambodian and Lao refugees, 7 July – 20 August 1982. *South East Asian E.S.L. Migrant Education News*, (Autumn), 61-67.

- New Settlers Education (1988). *ESOL Handbook: A guide for home tutor co-ordinators*. Wellington: Department of Education.
- New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc. (1993). *Multi-ethnic Aotearoa: Challenge of the future*. Wellington: Proceedings, National Conference.
- Nunan, D.(1992). *Research methods in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ogonowska-Coates, H. (1995). *Krystyna's story*. Wellington: Bridget William Books Ltd.
- O'Reilly, C. & others (Eds.). (1979). *Immigrant women: A study of sixty-two immigrant women in Christchurch*. Christchurch: Society for Research on Women in New Zealand Inc.
- Pearson, D. (1990). *A dream deferred: The origins of ethnic conflict in New Zealand*. Wellington: Allen and Unwin.
- Peirce, B.N. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 9-31.
- Pickard, N. (1996). Out-of-class language learning strategies. *ELT Journal*, 50, 150-158.
- Pinker, S. (1994). *The language instinct: The new science of language and mind*. London: Penguin.
- Poot, J., Nana, G. & Philpott, B. (1988). *International migration and the New Zealand economy: a long-run perspective*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Purdie, N. & others. (1996). Student conceptions of learning and their use of self-regulated learning strategies: A cross-cultural comparison. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 88, 87-100.
- Rose, C. (1985). *Accelerated learning*. England: Accelerated Learning Systems Ltd.
- Scollon, R. (1997). Is intercultural communication a problem? *Outreach*, 6, 1-2.
- Shameem, N. (1997). ESOL and first language maintenance: Language loss or language gain? A case study. *The TESOLANZ Journal*, 5, 15-25.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1981). *Bilingualism or not: The education of minorities*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1994). Mother tongue maintenance: The debate. Linguistic human rights and minority education. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 625-631.

- Skyrme, G. (1998). *ESOL Home Tutor Scheme Whangarei*. Whangarei.
- Skyrme, G. (1999). *A brief history of the home tutor service*. Whangarei.
- Smith, H. (1996). English language acquisition in the Lao community of Wellington: Recommendations for refugee groups. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 6, 200-215.
- Spolsky, B. (1989). *Conditions for second language learning: Introduction to a general theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spoonley, P., Carwell-Cooke, K.A. & Trlin, A.D. (1980). *Immigration and immigrants: A New Zealand bibliography*. Palmerston North: Massey University Library.
- Starks, D. (1997). Community languages and research methodology in New Zealand: The issue of social networks. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 3, 46-61.
- Thomson, K.W. & Trlin, A.D. (Eds.). (1970). *Immigrants in New Zealand*. Palmerston North: Massey University.
- Tollefson, J.W. (1991). *Planning language, planning inequality: Language policy in the community*. London: Longman.
- Trlin, A. (1979). *Now respected, once despised: Yugoslavs in New Zealand*. Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press.
- UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (1993). *The state of the world's refugees 1993: The challenge of protection*. New York: Penguin.
- Vasil, R. & Yoon, H. (1996). *New Zealanders of Asian origin*. Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies.
- Waite, J. (1992). *Aotearoa: Speaking for ourselves: A discussion on the development of a New Zealand languages policy*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Walker, R. (1995). Immigration policy and the political economy of New Zealand. In S.W. Greif (Ed.), *Immigration and national identity in New Zealand* (pp 282-302). Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press.
- Walker, U. (1996). Social networks as code choice determinants in individual bilingualism: A case study of four German-background children. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 2, 33-47.
- Willis, J. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman.

Yule, G. (1985). *The study of language: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zodgekar, A. (1997). *Immigrants in New Zealand society*. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington.